

The Power Of A Single Verse: Joel 2:25

What are the things that have eaten away at your soul during your sojourn on earth? Perhaps it was besetting sins that simply would not let go. Maybe it was an abusive relationship that left scars on your heart that to this day shuts out pretty much everyone. It could be loss, grief, abandonment, or unforgiveness. Whatever the 'locusts' may represent—gnawing away at your worth—God can redeem the years seemingly stolen from you. He is gracious and able to do so.

In the case of Israel, choices had to be made. And oh, what a disparate chasm between the two directions God's kids could choose!

CHOICE #1: Gnawing, flying, licking, consuming locusts militarily organized by the millions and commanded to destroy everything in their path. Agriculture, cattle, trees, wildlife, along with infestations into all dwellings through windows, doors, into beds, on human skin.

CHOICE #2: Joel 2:18-27:

Joel 2:18-27

Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things. Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

To choose Choice #1, all the Israelites had to do was nothing. Simply carry on in flagrant rebellion against God, who was loving—absolutely—but also just!

To choose Choice #2, they would need a change of heart. They would need to genuinely repent of their iniquity and return to the Lord. They would need to heed the Word of the Lord:

2Chronicles 7:14

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: How clearly do you perceive the choices presented you in Holy Scripture? How does Satan muddy the clear waters of God's Word in your walk with Him? What Biblical strategy might you employ to more consistently choose rightly?

*STUDY POINT: Look up and write down Scriptures that might be a part of your strategy of successful obedience to God's Word.

Joel 2:25

(KJV) And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

(NIV) "I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten— the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm— my great army that I sent among you.

I love Joel 2:25 because, like Israel, I also too easily slip into rebellion against God. I choose the flesh over the Spirit, and pay the subsequent consequences. Follower of Christ, God never confuses the issue of good and evil for us. It was clear in the Garden of Eden:

Genesis 2:15-17

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And it is clear to us today:

Galatians 5:17

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

So, what do we do with all of our bad choices from the past—to say nothing of our potential rebellions today? We can ask for forgiveness through Jesus:

1John 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

We can experience God's complete forgiveness instantly—through confession and repentance. And now the great news that follows—He will restore the years that the locusts have eaten!

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: In what specific ways—citing your own life experiences—does Joel 2:25 give you hope, as you continue to walk with Jesus?

Hallelujah!

~ Reverend Darren McClelland