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Open English Translation of the Bible

Yoel

(Joel)

Introduction

This account was written around 400-500 before Yeshua/Jesus (B.C.), at a time when other nations were being ruled over by the Persian kings. Yahweh's message is brought to the people via Petuel's son, Yoel (Joel).
This document was written because God's revelation to Yoel included warnings about his coming judgement and punishment of the surrounding nations, known as *Yahweh's day*. When that day arrived, it would be the time for God's punishment of all those who had disobeyed him. The prophet explained that Yahweh was calling his people to turn away from their sinful lifestyles, and then he followed this up with a promise that his people would again live peaceful and prosperous lives and receive his blessings. It's also recorded here how Yahweh promised to send his spirit to all people groups.

Main components of this document

The destruction by locusts *1:1–2:17*
The promise of restoration of a peaceful life *2:18-27*
Yahweh's day of action *2:28–3:21*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

1:1 This is Yahweh's message that came to Petuel's son Yoel (Joel):

Destruction by locusts

2 Hear this, you elders,
and listen, all you people that live in this country.
Has this sort of thing ever happened in your lifetime
or in the days of your ancestors?
3 Tell your children about it,
and your children to their children,
and their children to the following generation.
4 What the cutting locusts left behind, the swarming locusts have eaten,
and what the swarming locusts left behind, the hopping locusts have eaten,
and what the hopping locusts left behind, the destroying locusts have eaten.
5 Wake up, drunkards, and weep.
Yes, wail, all you wine drinkers.
Wail about the sweet wine, because it's all gone now.
6 Because a powerful nation (of locusts) with innumerable soldiers has come against my land,
Its teeth are like a lion's teeth,
and the fangs are like those of a lioness.[1]
7 It's made my grapevine into a piece of rubbish
and my fig tree into splinters.
Stripping everything, it's stripped it and thrown it away.
Its branches have become white (without the bark).
8 Mourn like a young woman dressed in sackcloth after losing her young husband.
9 The grain offering and the drink offering have been discontinued at Yahweh's temple.
The priests mourn—Yahweh's servants.
10 The countryside has been devastated.
The soil mourns, because the grain has been destroyed.
The new wine dried up,
The fresh oil isn't good.
11 Feel shame, farmers, for the wheat and for the barley.
Wail, vinedressers, because the harvest from the countryside has perished.
12 The grapevine has dried up and the fig tree has been made weak.
The pomegranate tree, also the palm tree and the apple tree, all of the trees across the countryside have dried up.
→So humanity's joy has dried up.
13 Get dressed in sackcloth and sing dirges, you priests.
Wail, you servants of the altar.
Come, spend the night in sackcloth, servants of my god,
because the grain offering and the drink offering have been withheld from the house of your god.
14 Consecrate a fast,
call an assembly.
Gather the elders and all the residents of the country
to the house of Yahweh your god,
and cry out to Yahweh.
15 What a terrible day,
because Yahweh's day is near,
and it will come as destruction from the powerful one.[2]
16 Hasn't our food been cut off right in front of our eyes,
and joy and gladness cut off from God's house?
17 The seeds have shrivelled under their clods.
The storehouses are in ruins.
The granaries have been torn down,
because the grain has dried up.
18 How the livestock groan.
The herds of cattle are perplexed,
because there's no pasture to graze.
Also the flocks of sheep have suffered.
19 I call for help to you, Yahweh,
because fire has devoured the pastures in the wilderness,

1 **RV 1:6 · Cross-ref.** Rev 9:8.

2 **RV 1:15 · Cross-ref.** Isa 13:6.

Readers' Version

and the flame has burnt all the trees in the countryside.
20 Even the wild animals pant for you,
because the streams of water have dried up,
and fire has destroyed the pastures in the wilderness.

Yahweh's day arrives · Southern kingdom

2:1 Blow the shofar in Tsiyon (Zion),
and shout on the mountain of my holiness.
Let all of the country's residents tremble,
because Yahweh's day is coming,
yes, it's close.
2 It'll be a day of darkness and gloom—
a day of clouds and thick darkness
like the dawn being spread out on the mountains.
There hasn't been a great and mighty army like that since the beginning of time,
and after it there won't be again for many generations.
3 A devouring fire goes ahead of it,
and behind it a flame is burning.
Ahead of it, the land is like the garden of Eden,
but behind it is a wilderness of desolation,
and indeed, there's no escape from it.
4 At first, it appears like horses,
and they run like war horses.[3]
5 Like the sound of chariots, they leap along the tops of the hills—
like the sound of flames devouring stubble,
like a mighty people organised for war.
6 People flinch in horror when they see them coming.
All of their faces turn dark.[4]
7 They run like warriors.
Like men of war, they climb the wall.
Then they walk, each man choosing his own way forward,
and they don't veer off their paths.
8 There's no jostling each other—
each man marches straight forward.
They handle those who present weapons against them
and their progress isn't interrupted.
9 They rush on the city.
They run along the wall.
They climb through the windows into the houses like thieves.
10 The earth shakes as they approach.
The heavens tremble.
The sun and the moon become dark,
and the stars cease their shining.[5]
11 Yahweh speaks in front of his army,
because there's a huge number of them,
because those executing his commands are very powerful.
Yes, Yahweh's day is really terrible,
and who could possibly survive it?[6]

A call for genuine repentance · Southern kingdom

12 Yahweh declares:
Even now,
return to me with all of your hearts,
and with fasting and weeping, and with mourning.
13 Yes, tear your hearts and not your clothes,
and return to your god Yahweh,
because he's gracious and merciful,
slow to get angry, but displaying loyal commitment,
and relenting from sending disaster.
14 Who knows? He might change his mind and relent
and leave a blessing after him:
grain and wine that you can all use as offerings for your god Yahweh.
15 Blow the shofar in Tsiyon (Zion),
declare a fast,
announce an assembly.
16 Gather the people,
consecrate the congregation,

3 **RV 2:4-5 · Cross-ref.** Rev 9:7-9.

4 **RV Joel 2:6b · Note** We don't have a good understanding of an uncommon Hebrew word used here, so other translations might differ.

5 **RV 2:10 · Cross-ref.** Rev 8:12.

6 **RV 2:11 · Cross-ref.** Rev 6:17.

Readers' Version

assemble the elders,
gather the children
and the ones suckling the breasts.
May the bridegroom come out from his chamber
and the bride from her room.
17 Let Yahweh's servants the priests weep between the porch and the altar.
And let them say, "Have pity on your people, Yahweh,
and don't allow others to mock the people that you inherited,
and then other nations to rule over them.
Why should the other nations ask, 'Where is their god?' "

The restoration of the harvests · Southern kingdom

18 Then Yahweh was jealous for his land,
and he had pity on his people.
19 Then Yahweh answered and told his people,
"Listen, I'll send you grain and new wine and oil,
and it'll be enough for you all,
and I'll no longer make you a country for the other nations to mock.
20 And I will distance the northern army from you,
and I will banish them into a land of dryness and desolation—
their face into the eastern sea
and their back into the western sea.
Their stench will rise,
and their odour will spread,
because they've made many powerful moves."
21 Don't fear, land. Be glad and celebrate,
because Yahweh has been doing powerful things.
22 Don't worry, you animals in the countryside,
because the pastures in the wilderness have sprouted,
and the tree has borne its fruit—
the fig tree and the grapevine have produced their best.
23 And be glad, you descendants of Tsiyon (Zion),
and celebrate about your god Yahweh,
because he's given you the early rain as vindication,
and he's brought down showers for you—
the early rains and the late rains like before.
24 Then the threshing floors will be full of grain,
and the vats will overflow with grape juice and olive oil.
25 "And I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust and the hopping locust,
the destroying locust and the cutting locust have eaten—
my huge army that I sent among you.
26 You'll all eat and be full,
and you'll praise the name of your god Yahweh,
who's done miracles among you all,
and my people will never feel shamed.
27 Then you'll all know that I'm right there in Yisrael (Israel)—
that I'm your god Yahweh and there isn't any other,
and my people will never feel shamed.

Yahweh's spirit poured out

28 And it will happen after that,
that I'll pour out my spirit onto all peoples,
and your sons and your daughters will prophesy.
Your elderly will dream dreams,
Your young people will see visions.
29 At that time I'll pour out my spirit
even on the male and female slaves.

The warning about Yahweh's day · Southern kingdom

30 Then I'll do miracles in the skies and on the earth—
blood and fire and columns of smoke.
31 The sun will be turned into darkness
and the moon into blood,[7]
ahead of the coming of Yahweh's incredible yet scary day.
32 Then it will happen that everyone who calls on Yahweh's name will be saved,

7 RV 2:31 · Cross-ref. Mat 24:29; Mrk 13:24-25; Luk 21:25; Rev 6:12-13.

Readers' Version

because on Mt. Tsiyon (Zion) and in
Yerushalem (Jerusalem) there'll be a way of escape, just as Yahweh has said,
and among the survivors who Yahweh is calling.[8]

Yahweh's judgement of the nations

3:1 Listen, in those days
and at that time
when I return those who were taken away as captives from Yehudah (Judah) and Yerushalem (Jerusalem),
2 then I'll gather all the nations,
and bring them down to Yehoshafat's (Jehoshaphat's) valley.
Then I'll judge them there
because they scattered my people—Yisrael (Israel) my inheritance—among the nations,
and they divided up my land.
3 Then they threw dice to decide who'd get my people—
they traded a boy for a prostitute,
and sold a girl for wine so they could drink.
4 Tsor (Tyre), Tsidon (Sidon), and all of the regions of Peleshet, what are you to me?
Are you trying to get even with me?
If you are, I'll very quickly deflect your actions back on yourselves,[9]
5 because you took my gold and silver,
and you took my precious treasures into your temples.
6 Then you sold the people of Yehudah (Judah) and Yerushalem (Jerusalem) to the Hellains (Greeks),
so that they'd be taken far away from their homeland.
7 Listen, I'll stir them up there in the place where you sold them,
and I'll deflect your behaviour back on yourselves,
8 because I'll sell *your* sons and daughters to the people of Yehudah,
and they'll sell them to people from Sheva—to a faraway nation."
Yes, Yahweh has spoken.
9 Proclaim this among the nations:
"Prepare for war.
Arm the warriors!
Let them approach.
Let all the men of war start coming.
10 Hammer your plough blades into swords
and your pruning hooks into spears.[10]
Let the weak say, 'I am strong.'
11 Hurry and come all you surrounding nations,
and gather yourselves there."
Yahweh, send down your warriors.
12 "Let the nations rouse themselves
and come to Yehoshafat's (Jehoshaphat's) valley,
because I'll sit there to judge all the surrounding nations.
13 Swing the sickle, because the harvest has ripened.
Come on, go down, because the wine-pressing pit is full.
The vats overflow, because their wickedness is great."
14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision,
because Yahweh's day is near in the valley of decision.
15 The sun and the moon become dark,
and the stars withhold their brightness.
16 Yahweh will roar from Tsiyon (Zion),
and from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) he'll utter his voice,[11]
and the heavens and the earth will shake.
But Yahweh will be a shelter for his people
and a fortress for the Israelis.

The blessing of God of his people · Southern kingdom

17 "Then you will know
that I'm your god Yahweh,
living in Tsiyon (Zion), on my sacred mountain.
Then Yerushalem (Jerusalem) will be sacred,

8 RV 2:28-32 · Cross-ref. Acts 2:17-21.

9 RV 3:4-8 · Cross-ref. Isa 23:1-18; Eze 26:1–28:26; Amos 1:9-10; Zech 9:1-4; Mat 11:21-22; Luk 10:13-14.

10 RV 3:10 · Cross-ref. Isa 2:4; Mic 4:3.

11 RV 3:16 · Cross-ref. Amos 1:2.

Readers' Version

and foreign warriors won't pass through it again.
18 Then at that time, the mountains will drip sweet wine,
and the hills will flow with milk,
and all of Yehudah's (Judah's) streams will flow with water,
and a spring will go forth from Yahweh's residence and water the Shitim valley.
19 Mitsrayim (Egypt) will become uninhabited,
and Edom will become a lonely wilderness
because of the violence against the people of Yehudah—
they shed innocent blood in their country.
20 But Yehudah will remain forever,
and Yerushalem (Jerusalem) will continue throughout the generations,
21 and I will declare their blood to be innocent (which I hadn't done previously),
because Yahweh resides in Tsiyon (Zion)."

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