

5. An army of literal locusts is once again described in **verse 4**. What do these locusts resemble according to Joel? Do the faces of locusts actually resemble the faces of horses? How does the imagery of horses galloping into battle resemble the imagery of an army of locusts?

6. Is it possible that thousands upon thousands of locust wings buzzing at the same time sounded like an enemy's chariot wheels as the chariots raced into battle during Joel's day? Note: Even more terrifying, the locusts are just a foreshadow of real military invasions that would come to Judah in the future because of the nation's disobedience. What kind of picture does **verse 5** paint of the coming invasions?

Part II: The day of the LORD is great and very terrible, who can endure it? (Joel 2:6-11)

1. To "*writhe*" means to twist in pain. According to **verse 6**, how will this attack affect the people of the land? What does the color of the people's complexion indicate about what they will face in the future? As described in **verses 7-9**, what similarities do you see between this invading army and an invasion of locusts?

2. During the time of Pharaoh, the locusts attacked Egypt because of Egypt's sin against the Israelites and their unbelief in the God of Israel. (See **Exod. 10:12-15**) Who do we find the locusts being sent to punish for disobedience in the Book of Joel? (See **Deut. 28:38-46**) How destructive will the locusts and future invading armies be according to **verses 6-9**? Is America in danger for turning its back on God? If so, how?

3. According to **verse 11**, why do we see "*the earth quaking*", "*the heaven's trembling*", and the "*sun, moon, and stars*" being affected cosmologically (**vs. 10**)? How powerful is "*the God of the Bible*" in comparison to the strongest military forces in the world today? What will it take for mankind to bow in worship to the LORD? (See **Phil. 2:5-11**)

4. What can we learn about “*the day of the LORD*” from **verse 11**? What is a “*rhetorical question*”? (Hint: Google it) **Verse 11** ends with a rhetorical question, “*Who can endure it?*” What is the obvious answer to this question?

Part III: A call to the nation for genuine repentance (Joel 2:12-18)

1. In light of Israel’s desperate situation, what are the Israelites told to do in **verse 12** if there is to be any hope for them as a nation? What can we learn from this passage about our own country? What is the difference between genuine repentance (*contrition*) and false repentance, or getting caught with your fingers in the cookie jar, (*attrition*)? What are some ways that people can genuinely repent and turn to God with “*all of our heart*” today? (See **Rom. 10:13; 1 John 1:9**)

2. Joel told the Israelites in poetic fashion that their sin against God and others “*should rip their hearts apart from the inside*”, this is very different from simply tearing their clothes on the outside (**vs. 13**). Why? What can we learn about our gracious and merciful God from **verse 13b**? Where else do we find this concept being used in the Bible? (See **Exod. 33:19; Rom. 9:14-16**) What are the circumstances surrounding their usage? How might God respond today if we as a nation repent and turn back to Him (**vs. 14**)? What makes **Psa. 51:1-4** such a good illustration of true repentance?

3. For the second time in the chapter, a trumpet blows (**vs. 15**). What is the “*shofar*” (or “*rams’ horn*”) blowing for this time around? What is a sacred assembly? Why was it called? Who was required to be there according to verses **15 & 16**? How does the calling of the infants as well as the bridegrooms and brides illustrate the urgency of the crisis (**vs. 16**)? (See **Deut. 24:5**) How does this imagery relate to our current COVID-19 crisis today?

4. According to **verse 17**, who must take the lead in guiding the nation to repentance? How are these spiritual leaders to do this according to **verse 17**? Why is it so important for spiritual leaders to repent first before they try to make a difference in other people’s lives? How has the example of spiritual leaders positively or negatively affected you in the past? On a scale of 1-10, how would you grade current state of the Church at large in America today? In your opinion, is helping or hurting the cause of Christ?

5. Joel in some ways sounds similar to Moses when Moses reasoned with God following the Golden Calf incident (**vs. 17b**). In what way are the two comments similar? (See **Exod. 32:11-12**)

6. **Verse 18** is the major transition point in the Book of Joel. While the first half of the book deals with Judah's punishment for her sin against God, **verse 18** points to Judah's future hope and blessing if the nation repents. How do **verses 12-18** relate to our situation in the United States today? Are you willing to repent of your sin, commit to following Jesus Christ as best you can and to seriously pray for our nation? (See **1 Sam. 12:22-25**) Then why not start right now?

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- In a certain sense, the day of the LORD is already here and is demonstrated at times through natural disasters.
- In another sense, the day of the LORD is still future and will ultimately be fulfilled during the end times just before the return of Jesus Christ.
- God is calling our nation to genuine repentance; if we do, He might relent from bringing His wrath upon us for disobedience.
- Repentance and prayer for our nation needs to begin with the religious leaders in the body of Christ and spread to Christians throughout the land if it is to bring national repentance.
- Today, nations are urgently being called to repentance and to a true worship of "*the God of the Bible*". It is by grace through faith in Christ alone that we are saved; there is no other way to salvation.
- Genuine repentance will bring forgiveness and future blessings from God to His people.