

Be Afraid – Be Very Afraid

Joel

by Don Falkos

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A vast army of locusts swept across Israel devouring everything in its path – the grain fields, the vineyards, the olive and fruit trees, and just about everything else. The land was devastated. The people wept at their loss. The priests wept since the people no longer had anything to offer in the Temple of the Lord. Then came the drought. Water sources dried up. People and animals alike suffered and died. Everyone fasted and prayed.

The prophet Joel said to the people, "The Day of the Lord is nearly upon us, and it is dreadful. Be afraid. Be very afraid. The Lord will lead a mighty army across a land like Eden, leaving behind nothing but desolation. The earth will quake; the heavens will tremble; the sun and moon will grow dark; the stars will no longer shine."

Then the Lord said:

Turn to me now in true repentance. Don't tear your clothes; tear your hearts instead. Fast, weep, mourn, and pray. But do so in earnest, not as a spectacle. Then I will show you unfailing love.

The enemies of Israel will face judgment. Tell them, 'Hammer your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears for the Lord will retaliate against you.'

A river of water will flow from my Temple restoring the land to life. I will pour out my Spirit on all those who serve me, both men and women, and they will prophesy. And whoever calls to me for help will be saved.

Then I, the Lord, will make my home among my people.