

## WEEK 4 — OUTLINE

### *The Central Thought of the Book of Joel with Its Controlling Prophecy of Four Kinds of Locusts*

Scripture Reading: [Joel 1:1-4](#); [2:25-32](#); [3:11](#)

DAY 1 >>

#### **I. We need to see the central thought of the book of Joel with its controlling prophecy of four kinds of locusts:**

- A. The name Joel means “Jehovah is God” [1:1](#)).
- B. “Hear this, you elders, / And give heed, all you inhabitants of the land. / Has this ever happened in your days, / Or even in the days of your fathers? / Tell your children about it, / And let your children tell their children, / And let their children tell the next generation. / What the cutting locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; / And what the swarming locust has left, the licking locust has eaten; / And what the licking locust has left, the consuming locust has eaten” [vv. 2-4](#)):
  - 1. Four words are used for *locust* in [verse 4](#), probably referring to one kind of locust in various stages of growth ([cf. 2:25](#)).
  - 2. The four stages of this one kind of locust refer to the nations that devastated Israel in four consecutive empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, including Antichrist, who will be the last Caesar of the Roman Empire ([Rev. 17:8-11](#); [cf. Dan. 7:12](#)).
  - 3. The armies of these empires were like locusts [Joel 2:25](#)) coming to devastate and consume Israel totally, devouring her people, land, fields, produce, food, and drink and cutting off her offerings.
  - 4. These empires correspond to the four sections of the great human image in [Daniel 2:31-33](#), to the four beasts in [Daniel 7:3-8](#) ([cf. Rev. 13:1-2](#)), and to the four horns in [Zechariah 1:18-21](#).

<< DAY 2 >>

- 5. They will be overcome and terminated by Christ, who will set up the kingdom and reign among the saved Israel in the age of restoration ([Dan. 2:34-35](#)).

- C. Beginning approximately two hundred years before the coming of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, God sent the prophets to warn Israel, to advise them, and to call them to return to God; because Israel did not listen to the prophets, this forced God to send the four kinds of locusts to chastise His people; Israel has been suffering the cutting, swarming, licking, and consuming of the locusts for many centuries:
1. God's purpose in allowing Israel to suffer under the locusts was to bring forth a couple, Joseph and Mary, so that God could be born in man, of man, and out of man to become no longer only God but a God-man; hence, God used the suffering of the Jews to bring in the incarnation, an unprecedented event that brought God into man and mingled God and man as one.
  2. Furthermore, God has used the locusts to afford all the necessary facilities in the environment for the carrying out of His purpose:
    - a. The Roman Empire, the aggregate of the four empires, afforded everything necessary for the incarnated God to live and move and work on earth.
    - b. It also provided the means for Christ to be crucified for the accomplishment of God's redemption ([John 18:31-32](#)), the occasion for the pouring out of the Spirit as the processed and consummated Triune God upon all flesh to produce the church as the organic Body of Christ ([Joel 2:28-32](#); [Acts 2](#)), and the facilities for the spreading of the gospel to the entire inhabited earth ([Matt. 28:19](#); [Acts 1:8](#)).

« DAY 3 »

- D. The four empires, or kingdoms, signified by the locusts are worldly, but they are used by God's Craftsman (Christ—[Dan. 2:34-35](#)) as His instrument to chastise Israel and punish the nations; in this way God is accomplishing whatever is needed for Christ to be manifested in full so that the entire universe may be fully restored:
1. Christ is the last Craftsman used by God to break the four horns; the four craftsmen are the skills used by God to destroy these kingdoms with their kings; each of the first three kingdoms (Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece) was taken over in a skillful way by the kingdom that followed it ([Zech. 1:18-21](#); [Dan. 5; 8:3-7](#)).

2. Thus, the four craftsmen used by God are Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and ultimately Christ.
3. The fourth Craftsman will be Christ as the stone cut out without hands, who will crush the restored Roman Empire and thereby crush the great human image as the totality of human government at His coming back (2:31-35).
4. This stone signifies not only the individual Christ but also the corporate Christ, Christ with His “mighty ones” (Joel 3:11).

« DAY 4 »

**II. In the Bible and in the Minor Prophets four things are unveiled: God’s chastisement on His elect people, God’s punishment of the nations, the manifestation of Christ, and the restoration; these four matters are covered in Joel, a short book of three chapters:**

- A. First, God sent the locusts to consume Israel (1:2—2:11, 25); this was God’s chastisement because of Israel’s great evils.
- B. Then, this book reveals that God will punish and judge the Gentile nations because in their consuming of Israel they are excessive, acting without regard for justice (3:1-16a, 19).
- C. God’s chastising of Israel and His punishing of the nations issue in the manifestation of Christ:
  1. Regarding this manifestation, Joel speaks concerning the outpouring of the processed, consummated, compound Spirit, that is, the Spirit of God compounded with Christ’s humanity, Christ’s death and its effectiveness, and Christ’s resurrection with its power (2:28; Exo. 30:25, footnote 1); this is the Holy Spirit, who was poured out on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 16-21), and this Spirit is the consummated Triune God and the realization of Christ for the manifestation of Christ.
  2. This manifestation began with the incarnation of Christ and has been confirmed and strengthened by the outpouring of the Spirit, for through that outpouring the individual Christ became the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-13), the church as the great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:15-16).
- D. The church as the manifestation of Christ will bring in the glorious day of restoration (Joel 2:25-27), the age of the millennial kingdom (3:16-21), in which Christ will be manifested in a fuller way; the

restoration will consummate in the fullest manifestation of Christ in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth [Rev. 21:1-2](#)).

« DAY 5 »

### **III. We need to have a clear view concerning three matters:**

- A. We are living in an age, the continuation of the preceding ages, in which our God is still moving; He is working among the Jews and by the nations to perform His economy in the building up of the organism of the Body of Christ ([Eph. 4:16](#); [Col. 2:19](#)).
- B. We need to see that today we, the believers in Christ, are in the Body of Christ; we all are members of the Body of Christ, which is the organism of the Triune God; as members of the Body, we should aspire to be the overcomers, the mighty ones ([Joel 3:11](#)), who will return with Christ to deal with Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon and who will be Christ's co-kings in the millennium.
- C. Our goal as members of the Body of Christ is to enlarge the manifestation of Christ intrinsically; we desire to see the intrinsic enlargement of the manifestation of Christ in the Spirit of the processed Triune God and by the life of our Father, the eternal, almighty Divine Being.

« DAY 6 »

### **IV. We can take the overcoming way to enlarge the manifestation of Christ so that we may become His mighty ones [v. 11](#)) by walking, living, and having our being in and according to the mingled spirit ([Rom. 8:4](#)) through the following organic practices:**

- A. Calling on the name of the Lord ([Joel 2:32](#); [Rom. 10:12-13](#)).
  - B. Pray-reading His word as the Spirit ([Eph. 6:17-18](#)).
  - C. Praying unceasingly ([1 Thes. 5:17](#)).
  - D. Not quenching the Spirit but fanning the spirit into flame [v. 19](#); [2 Tim. 1:6-7](#)).
  - E. Not despising but respecting prophesying [1 Thes. 5:20](#); [1 Cor. 14:4b, 12, 31](#)).
- V. "I hope that we all will take not the ordinary Christian way but the overcoming way to be the mighty ones who can match the unique mighty One. Christ is now on the throne in the heavens, waiting for us to be perfected and matured. Eventually the time will be ripe for Him to come back to deal with the nations, to save the remnant of Israel, and to complete God's economy with us. Then the age of restoration**

**will be ushered in. That age will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of God's expression in Christ" *Life-study of Joel*, pp. 26-27).**

## << WEEK 4 — DAY 1 >>

### *Morning Nourishment*

**Joel** Hear this, you elders, and give heed, all you inhabitants of the  
**1:2** land....

**4** What the cutting locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten;  
and what the swarming locust has left, the licking locust has  
eaten; and what the licking locust has left, the consuming locust  
has eaten.

The first main point [in the book of Joel] is the plague of the four kinds of locusts (the nations) or of one kind of locust in four stages...[Joel 1:2-4](#) shows us the seriousness of the prophecy....The elders among the people should hear this message, and all the inhabitants of the land should give heed to it. They should tell their children about it, their children should tell their children, and their children should tell the next generation [vv. 2-3](#); [Psa. 78:6](#)).

Four words for locust are used in [Joel 1:4](#), probably referring to one kind of locust in various stages of growth. As we will see, this one kind of locust in four stages corresponds to the four sections of the great human image in [Daniel 2](#), to the four beasts in [Daniel 7](#), and to the four horns in [Zechariah 1](#). The cutting locust refers to the Babylonian Empire; the swarming locust, to the Medo-Persian Empire; the licking locust, to the Grecian Empire; and the consuming locust, to the Roman Empire. (*Life-study of Joel*, pp. 9-10)

### *Today's Reading*

[Joel 1:6a](#) speaks of the coming up of a nation, mighty and without number, against the land of Jehovah....The coming of such a nation is likened to one kind of locust in four stages: the cutting locust, the swarming locust, the licking locust, and the consuming locust ([v. 4](#); [2:2](#), [4-11](#)). The four successive kinds of

locusts refer to the nations which devastated Israel in four consecutive empires....This mighty nation is further likened to the great human image in four sections: the golden head—Babylon; the silver breast and arms—Medo-Persia; the bronze abdomen and thighs—Greece; and the iron legs with the feet—Rome (Dan. 2:31-33)....The coming up of a nation, mighty and without number, is further likened to four beasts: a lion, a bear, a leopard, and the one who is the totality of the first three (Dan. 7:2-8; Rev. 13:2a)....This nation is likened ultimately to four horns (Zech. 1:18-21). The four horns, the four beasts, the four sections of the great image, and the four kinds of locusts all refer to the same four empires. Throughout human history, in God's dealing with Israel and in God's punishment upon the Gentiles, these four empires have been and still are the center....The nation mentioned in Joel 1:6a came to devastate the land of Jehovah, devouring and breaking the people into pieces and making the land a desolation (vv. 6b-7a; 2:3; Dan. 7:7; Isa. 10:3; Jer. 25:11). Because of this desolation, there was no food to feed the people and no wine to cheer the people (Joel 1:5, 7, 10-12, 16a, 17), no meal offering and no drink offering for the priests to offer to God in His temple (vv. 9, 13, 16b), and no pasture for the beasts, herds of cattle, and herds of sheep (vv. 18-20)....The empires that have devastated the land of Jehovah include the empires from Nebuchadnezzar, the first king of the Babylonian Empire, through the Medo-Persian Empire and the Macedonian and Grecian Empire, to the last Caesar (Antichrist) of the Roman Empire....Babylon actually began with Babel, which was founded by Nimrod (Gen. 10:8-10), the first type of Antichrist....A plague of locusts is terrible. In just one day an entire harvest can be consumed; nothing can stop the devouring locusts. The armies of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome were like locusts coming to devastate Israel totally, devouring their people, land, fields, produce, food, and drink and cutting off their offerings.

Apparently, these four empires are human like the great human image representing the totality of human government. However, in the sight of God they are beasts. Babylon is the lion; Medo-Persia is the bear; Greece is the leopard; and Rome, being the totality of the first three, is the most wild and devastating beast of all. Ultimately, these four empires are four horns used by Satan to devastate God's chosen people. The prophecies concerning this are now history. (*Life-study of Joel*, pp. 10-12)

*Further Reading: Life-study of Joel*, msg. 2

## << WEEK 4 — DAY 2 >>

### *Morning Nourishment*

**Dan. 2:34-35** ...A stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the image at its feet of iron and clay and crushed them....And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

The central thought of Joel is that the nations, as the locusts, devastate Israel consecutively in four empires, from Nebuchadnezzar, the first king of Babylon, to Antichrist, the last Caesar of Rome; they will be overcome and terminated by Christ, who will set up the kingdom and reign among the saved Israel in the age of restoration. The four empires that devastate Israel and that will be overcome and terminated by Christ are the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, the Macedonian-Grecian Empire, and the Roman Empire. These four empires are signified by the great human image,...an image that will be destroyed by Christ as the stone cut out without hands (Dan. 2:34-35)....This stone signifies not merely the individual Christ but also the corporate Christ. The corporate Christ will come as a stone cut out without hands and will smite the human government into pieces. *Life-study of Joel*, p. 2)

### *Today's Reading*

Beginning approximately two hundred years before the coming of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, God sent the prophets to warn Israel, to advise them, and to call them to return to God. However, Israel did not listen to the prophets. This forced God to send the four kinds of locusts to chastise His people. Israel has been suffering the cutting, swarming, licking, and consuming of the locusts for twenty-seven centuries. God's purpose in allowing Israel to suffer under the locusts was to bring forth a couple, Joseph and Mary, so that God could be born in man, of man, and out of man to become no longer only

God but a God-man (cf. [Matt. 1](#)). Hence, God used the suffering of the Jews to bring in the incarnation, an unprecedented event that brought God into man and mingled God and man as one. Furthermore, God has used the locusts to afford all the necessary facilities in the environment for the carrying out of His purpose. The Roman Empire, the aggregate of the four empires, afforded everything necessary for the incarnated God to live and move and work on earth. It also provided the means for Christ to be crucified for the accomplishing of God's redemption ([John 18:31-32](#)), the occasion for the pouring out of the Spirit as the processed and consummated Triune God upon all flesh to produce the church as the organic Body of Christ ([Acts 2](#)), and the facilities for the spreading of the gospel to the entire inhabited earth ([Matt. 28:19](#); [Acts 1:8](#)). ([Joel 1:4](#), footnote 1)

[Daniel 7:12](#) says, "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was given to them for a season and a time." This indicates that as each empire was defeated, although its dominion was taken away, its culture was adopted by each succeeding empire. Thus each empire continued to live....The Roman Empire inherited the cultures of the three foregoing empires. The dominion of the Roman Empire is over, but its "life," its culture, continues. In a sense, we all are Roman citizens, for we are under the influence of the spirit of the Roman Empire, especially in the matters of politics and law. Today the world's culture is Roman, yet, being an accumulated culture, it contains the cultures of the Babylonians, Persians, and Greeks.

The crucial matter of God's purpose,...the suffering factor[,] is the factor which produced the incarnation. Through incarnation the almighty, eternal, infinite God was brought into humanity and mingled with humanity. Nothing, not even the creation of the universe, could be greater than this!...Hence, the suffering factor was the factor to consummate the divine incarnation; the suffering of the Jews was the factor to produce the incarnation. As a result of God's entering into humanity and His mingling with humanity, there is now a unique person—Jesus—who is both the complete God and a perfect man. God became a man, the man Jesus, and lived on this earth, making His home in Nazareth for thirty years. Surely this is the greatest miracle in the entire universe! (*Life-study of Joel*, pp. 12, 30)

*Further Reading: Life-study of Joel*, msgs. 1, 5

## << WEEK 4 — DAY 3 >>

### *Morning Nourishment*

**Zech. 1:18-21** Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there were four horns....These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. Then Jehovah showed me four craftsmen....These have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations who have lifted up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.

The four empires signified by the locusts are very worldly, but they are used by God's Craftsman (Christ—[Dan. 2:34-35](#)) as His instrument to chastise Israel and punish the nations. In this way God is accomplishing whatever is needed for Christ to be manifested in full, that the entire universe may be fully restored. (*Life-study of Joel*, p. 13)

The vision of the four horns and the four craftsmen ([Zech. 1:18-21](#)) was a comforting and encouraging word of promise to Israel as God's answer to Christ's intercession for Zion and Jerusalem [inverse 12](#). The four horns are the four kingdoms with their kings—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and the Roman Empire—also signified by the great human image in [Daniel 2:31-33](#) and by the four beasts in [7:3-8](#), that damaged and destroyed the chosen people of God. The four craftsmen ([Zech. 1:20](#)) are the skills used by God to destroy these four kingdoms with their kings. Each of the first three kingdoms—Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece—was taken over in a skillful way by the kingdom that followed it (cf. [Dan. 5; 8:3-7](#)). The fourth Craftsman will be Christ as the stone cut out without hands, who will crush the restored Roman Empire and thereby crush the great human image as the totality of human government at His coming back ([Dan. 2:31-35](#)). ([Zech. 1:18](#), footnote 1)

*Today's Reading*

Joel 3:1-15 speaks concerning the judgment of Christ upon the nations—the judgment upon the living (Acts 10:42; 17:31)....This judgment will take place at the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is the valley of decision (Joel 3:2, 12, 14)....The purpose of Christ’s judgment upon the living will be to recompense the nations’ mistreatment of Israel during the great tribulation (vv. 2b-8; Rev. 12:17; 13:7, 10; Matt. 25:41-46a). After Christ casts Antichrist and the false prophet into the lake of fire, He will set up His throne in Jerusalem, and all the living ones as the goats and the sheep will be gathered before Him to be judged by Him. The goats will be the evil ones, those who persecuted the Jews, and the sheep will be the good ones, those who helped the persecuted Jews during the tribulation.

Finally, Joel speaks regarding the victory of Christ with His overcomers over the nations and His reign among Israel in the age of restoration (3:9-13, 16-21)....First, according to verses 9 through 13, Christ with His overcomers (Rev. 17:14; 19:11-14) as the mighty ones will defeat Antichrist and his armies (the nations) at Armageddon....After the defeat of Antichrist, Christ will reign among Israel on the holy mountain of Zion within Jerusalem (Joel 3:16a, 17, 21b)....As Christ reigns in Jerusalem, He will be a shelter and a stronghold to the children of Israel (v. 16b). Because of this, no one will be able to damage Israel anymore....Christ’s reign among Israel on the holy mountain of Zion within Jerusalem will be in the restoration (v. 18; Matt. 19:28)....Joel 3:18a tells us that in the restoration the mountains will drop down fresh wine, and the hills will flow with milk. This indicates how rich the situation will be....In the restoration there will be no shortage of water, for all the waterways of Judah will flow with water (v. 18b). Wherever there is a waterway, there will be a river full of water....A fountain will go forth from the house of Jehovah, the temple, to water the entire holy land (v. 18c). This points to the situation in the New Jerusalem, where a river will flow out of the throne of God and of the Lamb to water the holy city....Joel 3:19-21a tells us that all the surrounding enemies of Israel will be punished. Therefore, the nations will be punished, Israel will be restored, and Christ will be manifested. This will be a prelude to the new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem. *Life-study of Joel*, pp. 20-22)

*Further Reading: Life-study of Joel*, msg. 3

## << WEEK 4 — DAY 4 >>

### *Morning Nourishment*

**Joel 2:25-26** And I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the licking locust and the consuming locust and the cutting locust, My great army that I sent among you. And you will eat to the full and be satisfied, and you will praise the name of Jehovah your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; and My people will never be ashamed.

The Bible covers four things: God's chastisement on His elect people, God's punishment of the nations, the manifestation of Christ, and the restoration. These four matters are covered in Joel, a short book of three chapters. First, God sent the locusts to devastate Israel. This was His chastisement for Israel's great evils. Second, this book reveals that God will punish and judge the Gentile nations. Third, Joel speaks concerning the outpouring of the processed, consummated, compound Spirit, the Spirit of God compounded with Christ's humanity, Christ's death and its effectiveness, and Christ's resurrection with its power. This is the Holy Spirit who was poured out on the day of Pentecost, and this Spirit is the consummated Christ for the manifestation of Christ. This manifestation began with the incarnation of Christ and has been confirmed and strengthened by the outpouring of the Spirit because, through that outpouring, the individual Christ became the corporate Christ, initiating the church life and the church age. The church is the great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:15-16). Hence, we are the manifestation of Christ. Now we are awaiting the fourth matter revealed in the book of Joel—the glorious day of restoration, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth. This is the revelation of the Bible, and this is the history of the universe. *Life-study of Joel*, pp. 12-13)

## *Today's Reading*

The final stage of God's sending of the locusts is the Roman Empire. While the Roman Empire was chastising rebellious Israel, God did something silently and mysteriously. God used the Roman Empire to keep the region around the Mediterranean Sea—the center of human habitation—in a peaceful order. Highways were built, shipping routes were established on the sea, and a common language, Greek, was spoken by all the peoples. It was at that time that God came to be incarnated by being born of a virgin in a small city, Bethlehem, and eventually lived in Nazareth. For thirty-three and a half years the God of everlasting love lived on the earth in His humanity as a man. After this He went to the cross and died the death of a criminal under the Roman form of capital punishment. Although the worldlings did not realize it, Christ died a vicarious, all-inclusive death. After three days He resurrected. On the same day, in the morning of His resurrection, He ascended to the Father and descended again to the earth to meet with His disciples. Forty days later, in the presence of His disciples, He ascended to the heavens. After ten more days, on the day of Pentecost, He came down again by being poured out as the Spirit upon three thousand of His believers, making each of the three thousand the same as He is in life and nature. The issue of that outpouring of the Spirit was a corporate Christ, which is the manifestation of Christ.

From this we see that it was through the Roman locusts that both God's redemption and the preaching of the gospel were carried out. First, the gospel was spread throughout the Roman Empire and then, as a result of Roman imperialism, to other parts of the world.

Today three things are taking place on earth: the consuming by the Roman locusts, the suffering of Israel, and the manifestation of Christ...The line of the manifestation of Christ will eventually bring us into the fuller manifestation of Christ in the age of restoration...[which] will consummate in the fullest manifestation of Christ in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth. This is the proper eschatology. (*Life-study of Joel*, pp. 24-25)

*Further Reading: The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 38, pp. 326-328; vol. 19, pp. 476-478

## << WEEK 4 — DAY 5 >>

### *Morning Nourishment*

**Col. ...Holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly  
2:19 supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews,  
grows with the growth of God.**

**Joel Hurry and come, all you surrounding nations, and be  
3:11-12 gathered. There cause Your mighty ones to descend, O  
Jehovah! Let the nations rouse themselves and come up to the  
valley of Jehoshaphat. For there I will sit to judge all the  
surrounding nations.**

We all need to have a clear view of the age in which we are living, of where we are, and of what our goal should be....We are living in an age, the continuation of the preceding ages, in which our God is still moving. He is working among the Jews and by the nations to perform His economy in the building up of the organism of the Body of Christ....We need to see that today we, the believers in Christ, are in the Body of Christ. We all are members of the Body of Christ, which is the organism of the Triune God. As members of the Body, we should aspire to be overcomers, the mighty ones (**Joel 3:11**) who will return with Christ to deal with Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon and who will be His co-kings in the millennium....Furthermore, we should be clear concerning our goal as members of the Body. Our goal is to enlarge the manifestation of Christ intrinsically. We do not care for a mere outward enlargement....On the contrary, we desire to see the intrinsic enlargement of the manifestation of Christ in the Spirit of the processed Triune God and by the life of our Father, the eternal, almighty Divine Being. *Life-study of Joel*, p. 26)

### *Today's Reading*

Both the consuming factor and the suffering factor have been useful to God.

The Jews had lost their nation and had been scattered everywhere, wandering for centuries. Humanly speaking, that was a tragedy. But on the day of Pentecost, after God had consummated His long process of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, He needed to pour Himself out upon the entire human race, not only upon one people but upon all peoples. For this outpouring a particular occasion was required, and the Roman Empire made it possible. First, the Roman Empire had scattered the Jews among all the peoples. Then, on exactly the right day, when the time was ripe, [it] provided the way for the scattered people to come back to Jerusalem to enjoy the feast. At that joyful time, God suddenly came down upon the people. From this we see that through the means of the suffering one, Israel, and by all the facilities provided by the consuming locust, the Roman government, God poured Himself out upon all flesh. Now we, as the church, are the manifestation of Christ, produced by the outpouring of the processed and consummated Triune God upon all flesh.

Today's locusts are also useful to God and to us, the members of the church, the Body of Christ. Because of the locusts we have such things as the telephone, the microphone, the recorder, the airplane, the computer, and the fax machine. Because of the locusts we in the United States enjoy the freedom of speech and the freedom to meet together as the church....In a very real sense, all the locusts are working for us. The millions of locusts swarming on earth today are serving us so that we may be here for the manifestation of Christ.

The consuming of the locusts and the suffering of Israel are both for us. This means that we in the church life today are the beneficiaries of both the Jews and the nations....Paul says that all things work together for good for us [Rom. 8:28](#)). Hence, we are the third factor—the beneficiaries. As the beneficiaries, we should thank the Lord for all that He has done for us through the consuming of the locusts and the suffering of the Jews.

The fourth factor in the book of Joel is the principle of restoration. In the future there will be an actual, practical, and real restoration, but today we, the third factor, are experiencing the restoration, the fourth factor, as we participate in and enjoy the manifestation of Christ, which has come through the first two factors, the consuming of the locusts and the suffering of Israel. *Life-study of Joel*, pp. 31-32)

*Further Reading: Life-study of Joel*, msg. 4

## << WEEK 4 — DAY 6 >>

### *Morning Nourishment*

**Joel 2:32** And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah shall be saved; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem will be an escape, as Jehovah has said, even for the remnant whom Jehovah calls.

**1 Thes. 5:16-20** Always rejoice, unceasingly pray, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophecies.

I hope that we all will take not the ordinary Christian way but the overcoming way to be the mighty ones who can match the unique mighty One. Christ is now on the throne in the heavens, waiting for us to be perfected and matured. Eventually the time will be ripe for Him to come back to deal with the nations, to save the remnant of Israel, and to complete God's economy with us. Then the age of restoration will be ushered in. That age will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of God's expression in Christ. *Life-study of Joel*, pp. 26-27)

### *Today's Reading*

[In] [1 Thessalonians 5:16-20](#)...pay attention to three points. First, pray unceasingly. Second, do not quench the Spirit. Third, do not despise prophecies. [Romans 10:12](#)...says that the Lord is rich. His riches are unsearchable ([Eph. 3:8](#)), but how can we participate in and enjoy the Lord's riches? Here is a very simple way. This way is to call upon Him.

We teach the practice of pray-reading the Word based upon what Paul said [in [Ephesians 6:17-18](#)]. [Verse 17](#) says that the Spirit is the word of God. The Lord Jesus said, "The words which I have spoken to you are spirit" [John 6:63](#)). The word in [Ephesians 6:17](#) is not the word in black and white. This word

equals the Spirit. The next verse, [verse 18](#), tells us that we have to pray this word, and we have to be watchful concerning this kind of prayer. In other words, we have to be watchful concerning our pray-reading. This is not just to be watchful concerning our reading of the Bible or our prayer in a common way. This is a particular prayer of praying the word, making the word our prayer.

[In [2 Timothy 2:22](#)] Paul charged Timothy to pursue Christ as these items by calling on the name of the Lord. This calling is not just by yourself but with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Yes, all these things have been gradually unveiled to us by the Lord in the past years, and they have even been printed in books. But in our practice, there is a big shortage. How much have you called on the Lord today? Do you pray-read the word consistently and adequately? Do you pray unceasingly? Do you fan the Spirit into flame ([2 Tim. 1:6](#))? We are told not to quench the Spirit, but nearly all of us quench the Spirit every day.

Now in our church practice, we promote the matter of prophesying....To prophesy is to speak God's word to people....To prophesy is to speak Christ forth into people....We minister Christ to others by our speaking. You may excuse yourself by saying that you do not have the gift to speak as some brothers have. But can you say that you do not have the gift to speak for the Lord, to speak forth the Lord, and to speak the Lord into people? We all have this gift, a gift to speak Christ ([1 Cor. 14:31](#)).

To carry out God's economy according to the high peak of God's revelation, we need all these practices. We were charged to walk, to live, and to have our being in and according to the mingled spirit ([Rom. 8:4](#)). How can we do this? We can do this only by these few steps: calling on the name of the Lord, pray-reading His word as the Spirit, praying unceasingly, not quenching the Spirit, and not despising or ignoring prophesying....A God-man's life is a life of calling on the Lord, pray-reading His word as the Spirit, praying unceasingly, not quenching but fanning the Spirit into flame, and not despising but respecting prophesying. (*Living a Life according to the High Peak of God's Revelation*, pp. 27-29)

*Further Reading: Living a Life according to the High Peak of God's Revelation*, ch. 4

<< **WEEK 4 — HYMN**

*Hymns, #894*

- 1 Will you be an overcomer?  
Christ is calling now!  
Will you then be such a follower,  
Though you know not how?  
  
Will you be an overcomer?  
Will you make this choice?  
Christ is calling, Christ is calling,  
Listen to His voice!
- 2 Will you be an overcomer?  
To the Lord be drawn!  
Keep the “first love,” never leave it,  
Till the break of dawn.
- 3 Will you be an overcomer?  
On His life depend!  
Dare to suffer persecution,  
Faithful to the end.
- 4 Will you be an overcomer?  
Testimony bear!  
Keep away from false religion,  
“Hidden manna” share.
- 5 Will you be an overcomer,  
Simple, real, and pure?  
Overcome all evil mixture,  
Ruling pow’r secure.
- 6 Will you be an overcomer?  
Trust the living Lord!  
Keep your “garments” from the deadness,  
Win the life-reward.
- 7 Will you be an overcomer?  
Never lukewarm be,  
Ne’er content with what you’ve gotten,  
More you need to see.
- 8 Will you be an overcomer?  
Christ is calling still!  
Will you now be loyal to Him,  
His demand fulfill.