**Watch God Do It**

(Joel 2:25-27 KJV)

 *25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpiller, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. 26 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. 27 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.*

I

 must admit as a chosen vessel God—that Jehovah Jireh, God our provider is in the blessing business of restoring lives. In fact, it's the enemy of the Christian faith which in the personality of Christ he has come to kill and destroy. The devil is busy and because of his mischievous ways many today have lost jobs, family members, health and a myriad of other things both material and immaterial. Often times in situations like this it seems like God has not only abandoned us but in addition has also alienated us but rests assure brethren, that this is not the case. I believe that there are seasons that we all go through in this life.  There are times in our lives when it seems like everything is going flamboyant. We are financially secure, we are successful and our family members are splendid.  And then there are other times when the sky above us is darker than a thousand midnights and unforgettable, and it seems like the trials of life are eternal. In fact, everything that could go wrong seems to go wrong. The car breaks down, the bills can’t be paid, and children are out of control and our relationships which started out like a little house on the prairie seems now to be a Nightmare on Elm Street.

God has sent a word of comfort that you're not the only one going through life up's and down's—the patriarch Job had suffered the loss of children, livestock, homes and even his own flesh was stricken by satan. His wife even mocked him and had said that he might as well “curse God and die” in other word's he wasn't a man of God—but Job chose to continue to believe and have faith in spite of what was happening around him. And as we know, everything was restored back to him. Job in the end received double for his troubles. He now had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 teams of oxen and 1,000 female donkeys, and God blessed him to blossom ten more bountiful children that the enemy couldn't destroy. Job stood still, he kept the faith and implied to God, "God I've watched you turn many thing around" and in fact if you did it once, I know you'll do it again!

In the days of the Prophet Joel the nation of Judah faced pestilences in the land. They weren't centipedes—but a plague of swarming locusts, cankerworms and caterpillars. This happened in a day way before pesticides and long before the Orkin man, which a massive attack of locust swept across the southern kingdom of Judah. And the locusts devastated fig trees, barley fields, fruits of the land and even the vineyards. They consumed the crops that dominated the countryside, and critically crippled the economy, and there was a famine in the land. These insects, pestilences, were devouring everything in sight. The reasoning they were devouring the profits of the land was all because Judah seemed as if they were divorcing God spiritually. So God caused a epidemic, pandemic which spread rapidly and widely.

This was the condition of the land of Judah, in the days of the Preacher, Prophet Joel and interestingly enough this picture also resembles the condition of many people’s spiritual life. A similar phenomenon can occur in a person’s heart. Furthermore, spiritually pestilences can eat away our innocence, our joy, our contentment, our faith, and our peace of mind.

There are locusts in each of our lives in which they are eating up our opportunities, and drying up time, they gnaw at our conscience, wreck our relationships, and chew away our reputation and characters.

In the text there are four types of locust mentioned – the chewing locust, the swarming locust, the crawling locust, and the consuming locust. Theologically there are some bible scholars who interpret these four insects as different insects. But there are other people who understand them as references to various stages in the growth of a locust. So the point for us is those locusts come in various types. And the same is true of the locust in our lives that difficult circumstances come from different sources.

 Ironically, at times God Himself sends the locust into our lives. In fact, He allows these trials and tribulations. This was case with the locust in Joel’s day. In chapter 1 God called them, “My army.” The trouble the nation had experienced from these locusts was a direct wake-up call from God—and God uses them to stretch and strengthen our faith.

1. **The Public's Dysfunction:**

Joel was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah between 835-796 B.C. about the same time Elisha was prophesying to the Northern Kingdom, Israel in 848 BC. Joel speaks to people who had become very complacent and self centered. They took God for granted and worshiped idols. They had become dysfunctional, and insensitive to the condition of their spiritual lives. Joel warned them that sooner or later their sinful lifestyle would bring down the judgment of God, yet their physical and moral senses were unresponsive, unsympathetic, unreceptive and uncaring to the point that they seemed oblivious to their need.