

# I WILL RESTORE TO YOU THE YEARS

Remade and Used by God

TEXT:	Joel 1:4; 2:18-22
KEY VERSE:	Joel 2:25

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

*Joel 2:25 (KJV)*

I told God it was too late. I would never serve him again. I thought he had failed me. "It's past, you can't undo it. Even **YOU** Can't undo the past! It was very evident that God was **NOT** helping me. In fact, it felt like he was fighting me. Nothing worked! I was convinced that there was no way it could be made right.

*1 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

*Isaiah 59:1-2 (KJV)*

\* Notice: My sins did not hide **MY FACE** from him, but **HIS FACE** from me. He still watched over me; I just did not **SEE** it.<sup>1</sup> I learned, when I returned to him, that he was ALWAYS there; I just refused to see him. All these blessings that he is now pouring out on me, he was then holding in his arms, waiting for me to let him.

" I will restore THE YEARS..."

Cher had a hit song titled, "if I could turn back time." Satan would love to enslave you in chains of remorse for the rest of your life.

"If only..."

<sup>1</sup> Psalm 32:8

"What's done is done."

Not with God! It's not done yet!

"I will restore THE YEARS ..."

Like me, Israel had fought against the God who loved them. They put themselves at the mercy of Satan. An army invaded



You will never see the works of God  
if you are blaming God for the  
works of Satan.

Israel: an army they could not fight.

*Caterpillars!*

*Bazillions of 'em!*

*Ate everything in sight!*

- It wasn't God's fault, it was theirs!
- It wasn't God's fault, it was **mine**!
- It wasn't God's fault, it was **yours**!

DELIVERANCE

You can never see the works of God when you are blaming God for the works of the devil.

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*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

*John 10:10 (KJV)*

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Satan, "the thief," **NEVER** will give you an abundant life. **NEVER!** He does not come for **ANY OTHER REASON** But to steal, kill, and destroy. No matter how he packages it and presents it, it ends in the same - theft, death, and destruction!

Jesus does not come for **ANY OTHER REASON** But to give you life and abundance. I was keeping God from blessing my life, because I was **blaming** him instead of **trusting** him.



The thief NEVER will  
Give you an  
Abundant life!  
Never!

But wait a minute!

What about the army of caterpillars? God even said that **He** sent them!

1. We know that God cannot lie or contradict himself.
2. So, God's purpose for sending the caterpillars was not to steal, kill, or destroy.

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*13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

*14 Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God?*

*Joel 2:13-14 (KJV)*

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DELIVERANCE

# I. We Allow Our Own Destruction When We Reject the One Who Offers Life and Abundance Joel 1:4

Over and over, God promised life, blessing, and abundance if his people would love and follow him. He even gave them a means of atonement if they failed and sinned against him. Forgiveness was obtained by faith in a sacrificial lamb.

## READ

Joel 2:17-19; 23-27

Over and over, they rejected him for false gods. God said, "If you will just return to me<sup>2</sup>, then I will restore what the bugs ate!"<sup>3</sup> That's not all! Our God is not stingy, nor is he short of supply! He said, "You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied."<sup>4</sup>

In Leviticus 25, God commanded Israel to allow the land to rest every Seven years as a Sabbath. In verses 20 through 22, he made an amazing promise:

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*I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, so that it will produce a crop sufficient for **three years**.  
(Leviticus 25:21 ESV emphasis added)*

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God, who caused their crops to produce triple every six years, could restore what was lost to the caterpillars.

- Do you understand what he was saying?

God promised to restore what they had lost because of THEIR OWN STUBBORNNESS AND REBELLION! God will do the same for us!

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*For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.  
(Malachi 3:6 KJV)*

*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!  
(Matthew 23:37 KJV)*

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Jesus said that he would have protected Israel from destruction all those times their enemies conquered them, but THEY would not let him. They turned from God to idols of stone and remove themselves from the "shadow of the almighty."

So, the devourer had free reign!

You and I did the same. We were born in rebellion, whether it put us behind razor wire, or behind on the mortgage. When we refuse the grace of a loving God, we begin to walk toward destruction.

*Satan becomes our Shepherd, and we lack! He causes us to stumble and fall in a Stony wilderness.*

*He drowns us in a flood of evil. He destroys our soul! He is the darkness in the shadow of death.*

*The author of fear. He will leave us in that Valley, alone.*

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<sup>2</sup> Joel 2:17

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, v.25

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, v.26

*He offers us a banquet of the finest food and wine but leaves us hungry and sick.*

*As we feast, our enemies rob us blind!*

*We will assuredly spend our days fleeing trouble; when all the walls come down and do us in,  
then ... Then waits eternal hell!*

What in that picture could you desire more than the love of the Good Shepherd?

GOD DEARLY LOVES YOU!

He wants to make right what is wrong!

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*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden and overburdened, and I will cause you to rest [I will ease  
and relieve and refresh your souls.]*

*(Matthew 11:28 AMP)*

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SONGS 

When we refuse the grace of a loving  
God,  
we begin the walk toward  
destruction.

"I will restore THE YEARS ..."

DELIVERANCE

## II. We Allow God's Restoration When We Surrender to the One Who Offers Forgiveness

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*11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give  
you a future and a hope.*

*14 I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from  
all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the  
place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.*

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To those in bondage because of sin and disobedience, God offers deliverance and restoration when we return to Him. I will never comprehend why, but He also offers to restore what we have lost! I do not know God's specific plan to reconstruct your life. **I know that He has one.** I know that **He will not fail!**<sup>5</sup> I know He will make it new.

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*(Isa 43:18) Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.*

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<sup>5</sup> Philippians 1:6

*(Isa 43:19) Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.*

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*Have you said, "Well, there's just no way!"*

Read that again...and again. Read it out loud.

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*(Rom 10:17) So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

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"I will **MAKE** a way..."

Oh! Believe it!!

### III. Afterward, your Life Has A Powerful Purpose Joel 2:28

I realize that Joel 2:28 is a last-days prophecy<sup>6</sup>, but its direct application refers to the verses right before it. In other words, "It will come to pass AFTER you repent, AFTER I bless your food, wine and oil, AFTER I restore what you have lost, AFTER you rejoice in the abundance and plenty that I pour out on you, AFTER you see that I have not deserted you, that you are my people and I am your God, **THEN** I am gonna pour out My Spirit on you like you have **NEVER SEEN BEFORE** !

**GLORY TO GOD!**

When God takes a life and miraculously restores what was destroyed, He gets the glory from the story!

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*[Joe 2:26 KJV] 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.*<sup>7</sup>

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Satan would love to keep our focus on the destruction. In the midst of the devastation, God is the source of encouragement. Do not run from God! He is the One who **wants** to help, and the One who can restore.

## He will restore to you the years!

[read: #6 Rebuilding The Ruins: The Book Of Nehemiah]

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<sup>6</sup> Acts 2:17

<sup>7</sup> Jeremiah 33:9-11