

**TITLE AND NUMBER:** 103. The years the locusts have eaten



**REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S):** Joel 2: 23-27

Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the Lord your God, for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers both autumn and spring rains, as before. The threshing-floors will be filled with grain; the vats will overflow with new wine and oil. I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten – the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm – my great army that I sent among you. You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the Lord your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed. Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the Lord your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed.

**LOOKING FURTHER:** Joel 2:12-13; John 10:3-4, 10; Psalm 23

### What does this Bible passage tell us?

Tough stuff happens in everyone's life, doesn't it? And it can stack up until we feel our lives are dry and empty. Things like an unhappy childhood, unemployment, serious illness, bereavement, a broken relationship, the impact of a bad decision. It can seem as if there are not many green shoots of hope left.

Life looked like that to Joel. It looked like that for the whole nation because a great swarm of locusts had cleared the land of everything edible. It made Joel think of God's Judgement Day.

The good news was (and still is!) that God said, 'Return to me with all your heart' and then, 'I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten.' He longed to be generous to His people.

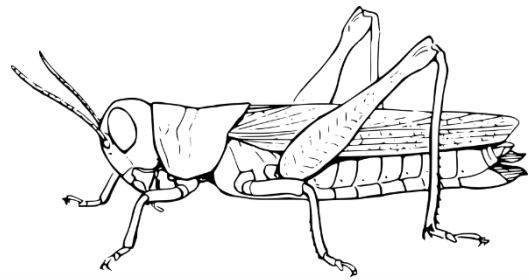
What a promise! God says He will repay us for all those times of emptiness in our lives. Remember what Jesus said: 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' That promise is for us.

But what do we have to do? Joel told the people to return to God with all their hearts. Perhaps we need to do that, too. And Jesus talks about us following Him, just as Holy Land sheep follow their shepherd. Then we shall have life to the full.

### Reflections:

- Remember the 'tough stuff' that has happened in your life. Sometimes God restores us in ways we do not expect because He always has our best interests at heart. How do you feel now reading that God promises to restore 'the years the locusts have eaten'?
- What do you think 'returning to God with all your heart' means?
- Think about what Jesus said, wanting His sheep to have life, and life to the full. What would a 'full life' look like for you?

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

