

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Over six hundred years after you passed before Moses and proclaimed your name (Exod 34:6), Joel said, “Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster” (Joel 2:13). I praise you today as the gracious and merciful God, the God who loves and forgives me. You are the same, yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8)! Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about the overthrow of Athaliah. When Jehu killed Ahaziah, Athaliah (Ahaziah’s mother and Ahab’s daughter) made a grab for power. She killed all the royal offspring of the house of Judah and set herself up as queen. Only one of Ahaziah’s sons escaped her bloody purge: Joash. He remained hidden in the temple for six years while Athaliah ruled over the land. When Joash was seven years old, Jehoiada the priest approached the army, the Levites, and the elders of Judah, and revealed Joash to them. They joined with him to remove Athaliah and restore the king to the throne. Jehoiada is an example of courage *and* wisdom. He was willing to risk his life to do what was right, but he waited patiently for the right time to take action. This teaches me the importance of careful planning when taking a stand against evil. You also told me about Joel’s prophecy to Judah. Judah had recently been the victim of a vast swarm of locusts, and Joel used this disaster to illustrate the coming “day of the LORD,” a reference to the time when your wrath will be poured out on the wicked and Jesus Christ will return to earth. Joel called on the people to repent, for if they did, you might still relent and “leave a blessing behind” (Joel 2:14). This teaches me that your judgment can be transformed into salvation if people will accept your offer of grace and turn to you in genuine repentance (Joel 2:13).

Reflection

Sin dulls our moral senses and blinds us to our true condition. So it was with Judah—peace and prosperity had given rise to complacency and pride (Joel 1:5). How tragic that you are so often forced to bring disaster on us in order to wake us from our spiritual stupor.

Request

Father, give me a keen sense of the danger of sin. Keep my eyes focused on you and my heart firmly committed to obeying your voice.

Thanksgiving

Paul recognized a glorious truth in Joel: you are “Lord” of Jew *and* Gentile, and you save all those who call on your name (Rom 10:12–13). Thank you so much for the riches of your grace!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Whosoever Shall Call](#)” – D. A. Moxey.

Meditation Verse: Joel 2:32.