

JOEL.

(DATE ABOUT 800 B.C.)

THE Message of the LORD that came to Joel-ben-Pethuel. 1

An Appeal to the Old Men.

You Elders, come listen to this, 2

And attend, all who dwell in the land!

Has this ever been in your lifetime?—

Or occurred in the days of your fathers?

About it relate to your children,—

And let your sons tell it to their sons,

And they to the sons who succeed them. 3

What the grub left, now the locust has eaten!

And the Licker devours what the Locust had left!

And the orts of the Licker the Swarmer consumes! 4

Awake, drunkard, and weep!

Howl, you drinkers of wine!— 5

For the sweet drink is cut from your mouths!

For a powerful people comes up to My land, 6

Who cannot be numbered;

And with lion-like teeth;

And jaws like a tiger are theirs!

They have wasted My vine,

And have shattered My fig, 7

And have stripped and exposed

To the whiteness its twigs!

I weep like a girl who is clothed with a sack, 8

For the loss of the love of her youth!

The gift and the wine, from the LORD's house is gone! 9

The Priests perish, who wait on the LORD!

The field grieves,—the ground mourns,—for the corn is destroyed! 10

The wine-bunch is dry, and the olive tree pines.

Faint, ploughmen,—and vinedressers wail! 11

For the barley and wheat!—

Harvest dies from the field!

The Vine is scorched up, 12

And the Fig-tree droops down;

And the Rimon, the Palm, and the Plum,

With all trees of the field are dried up!

And pleasure is burnt from the children of men!

Come gird you, and mourn, all you Priests, 13

Let who serve at the Altar bewail!

Go! lie down in sackcloth you servants of GOD,—

From God's House is withheld bread and wine!

Proclaim fasts! Preach restraint! 14

Let the elders collect,

All who dwell in the land,

At the House of the LORD,

And cry to your GOD,—to the LORD!

- 15 Alas! for the Day of the LORD has come near!
And from the ALMIGHTY destruction has come!
- 16 Are not our victuals cut off in our sight?
And laughter and joy from the House of our GOD?
- 17 The seeding is withered,
Pants under the clods,
The grain stores are ruins,—
The corn has decayed!
- 18 How the cattle are groaning!—
The flocks in the sheep pens are weeping!—
For they have no food,
And the sheep flocks are wasted!
- 19 So I cry to you, LORD,—
For fire burns up the grass on the pastures!
Flame has burnt all the trees of the land!
- 20 And to you low the cows in the field,
For the springs of the brooks are run dry,
And the fire has burnt up the grass of the pastures!

A Mail over Quick-coming Gloom!

- 2 Blow the Trumpet in Zion!
Arouse My Holy Mountain!
Let all tremble who dwell in the land;
For the day of the LORD marches on,—it comes near!—
- 2 A day of thick darkness and gloom,—
A day of black clouds and of blackness,
Like darkness spread out on the Hills;—
A numerous People and mighty!
Their like has not been from of old,—
Nor after them will be repeated,
To the years of the ages on ages!
- 3 Before them a fire consumes,—
And after them bright flames are blazing!
The land like a Garden of Eden before,
And after, a desolate desert!
And there is no refuge against them!—
- 4 What terrible horsemen they seem!—
Like chariots onward fierce rushing
- 5 With a crash on the top of the mountains!—
They crackle like roarings of flame,
Like fire devouring the stubble!
Like a powerful army when charging in war
- 6 The Nations before them all quiver,—
All faces before them are livid!
- 7 Like heroes they rush on their way,—
They mount up the wall as do warriors,—
Advancing each one in his rank,—
And who never break out from their line,—
- 8 Or anyone jostle his fellow!—
They boldly march straight on their way,
And from the artillery shrink not!
- 9 They charge to the walls of a town!—
They rush on approaching the buildings!
Like robbers they climb to the windows,
Before them earth trembles, skies shake;—
- 10 The Sun and the Moon put on mourning!
The Stars also cease from their shining

Thus the LORD utters His voice
 At the head of His army!—
 His encampment is spread very wide,
 And His order works very strongly;
 And great is the Day of the LORD,—
 And terrible!—Who can abide it?

“But, now,” says JEHOVAH, “return,—
 And with all your hearts come near to Me,
 With fasting, and weeping and grief;
 Tear your hearts,—and not only your robes
 And return to JEHOVAH your GOD.”—
 For He has compassion,—is kind,—
 Slow to anger and great in His mercy;—
 And it grieves Him to punish the sinful,—
 Who knows but that He will turn back,
 And leave us a blessing behind,
 Of bread, and of wine for our LIFE-LIVING GOD?

The Call to Repentance.

Blow the Trumpet in Zion!
 Fix a Fast, and proclaim a restraint,—
 Let the Nation collect to a solemn Assembly,—
 Bring up the old, and collect all the young
 Bring out the child at the breast,
 With the Bridegroom and Bride from their chamber.
 And weep at the Porch and the Altar,—
 You Priests who attend on the LORD,
 Let them cry, “O! LORD, pity Your people;
 Give not Your estate to reproach,
 For the Heathen to govern among them.
 For why should they ask in the heathen,
 ‘What has become of their GOD?’”

Then the LORD will feel love for His country.
 And for His poor people feel pity;
 And answering the LORD will reply,—
 “I will send you the corn and the wine,
 And you of the oil shall have plenty;
 You shall not be a scorn to the heathen,
 But I will drive from you the Northmen,
 And expel to a desert and waterless land,
 With his van to the Sea of the East,
 And his rear to the Sea of the West,
 And his stink shall come up,
 And his stink shall arise,
 Although he has done mighty deeds!”

Fear not, my country, but laugh and be glad,
 For the LORD can accomplish great things!
 Fear not, you herds of the field,—
 For the herbs of the pastures shall spring,
 And the trees shall be loaded with fruits,
 And the fig and the vine give their wealth!
 Let the children of Zion be glad
 And rejoice in JEHOVAH your GOD,—
 Who will give you the rain by its law,
 And pour for you plentiful showers,
 And the rain of the Spring, as before,
 And fill up your garners with grain,

- 25 And pour out wine and oil for your cellars,
And repay you because of the years
That the locust, and licker, and gnawer,
And Grub have devoured,—
My Great Army I sent upon you.
- 26 And then you shall eat and be full,
And give thanks to the Name of the LIFE,
Your GOD Who does wonders for you,
That My people may never be shamed,
27 But learn that in Israel I dwell,
And that I am your LIFE-GIVING GOD ;—
And that there is no one beside,
And My people need never be shamed !
- 3 And then after that I will pour My Spirit upon all mankind ;—
And your sons and your daughters be glad ;
And your Old Men be dreamers of dreams ;
And at visions your young men shall look !
2 And also on servants and slaves,
3 My Spirit I then will pour out,
And fix signs in the sky, and on earth,—
4 Blood, and Fire, and Columns of smoke !
The Sun shall to Darkness be turned,
And the Moon shall be changed into Blood,—
Ere the Day of the Lord will arrive,
That Great and that terrible Day !
5 All who call on the LORD'S Name will escape,—
For on Zion's hill, and in Salem, a refuge shall be,
As the LORD has declared,—
And whom the LORD calls will be safe !
- 4 ¹ For be sure in those days, and that time,
When Jerus'lem and Judea's captives I free,
2 I will gather together the Nations
And bring to the plain of GOD'S land,
And there will deliver My judgment
On them on account of My race,
And Israel, My own, whom they scattered
To the heathen, who broke up My land,
3 And who played at their dice for My people ;
And paid for a whore with a boy,
And bought wine with a girl, to be drunk !
- 4 What are you Tyre and Sidon to Me ?
With the whole of Philistia's vales ?
Would you take your vengeance on Me ?—
If you try silly vengeance on Me,
I vengeance will send on your heads !—
5 Because you have taken My silver and gold,
And carried My beautiful things to your Temples !
6 And the sons of Jerusalem, and Judea's sons,
You have sold to the sons of the I'on,
To carry them far from their borders,
7 But I will rouse them from the place where you sold them,
And your vengeance will bring on your heads,
8 And sell of your sons and your daughters.

¹ NOTE.—Ch. 4, v. 1. In all versions which rest on the Vulgate Latin there are only three chapters in Joel, but I follow

the original Hebrew division, making four chapters.—F. F.

To the hands of the children of Judah,
And they will sell them to Shabaim!
To a Nation afar—for the LORD has declared it!

A Promise of Success.

- Proclaim to the Nations, "Prepare for the war!" 9
 Arouse, heroes! come on,—advance all men to battle!
 Beat out your ploughshares to swords, and your scythes into spears! 10
 Let the feeble exclaim, 'I am strong!'
 Quick! March! all you neighbouring Nations, 11
 And collect to the spot where the LORD
 Intends you to conquer your foes!
 Nations! arouse and advance to the Plain of God's Justice!
 For there I will sit and will judge all the Nations around Me." 12
- Swing the scythe, for the harvest is ripe,— 13
 Come! Tread! For the wine-press is filling!
 Make the vats overflow, for the reaping is great,—
 Crowds upon crowds on the Plain of the Judgment!— 14
 The day of the LORD has arrived on the Plain where He fixes their
 doom.—
 The Sun and the Moon are in black, 15
 And the Stars are withholding their beams.
 For the LORD out of Zion will roar,
 And send from Jerusalem His voice!
 Then the skies and the Earth will be shaken; 16
 But to His People the LORD will be kind,
 And give help to all Israel's sons
 Who acknowledge that I, Who AM LIFE, am their GOD; 17
 Residing in Zion, on My Holy Hill.
 And Jerusalem then shall be sacred,—
 And foreigners no more oppress!
 Then the Mountains shall drop with sweet wine, 18
 And milk shall flow down from the slopes,
 And Judah's brooks stream full of water;—
 And a spring shall flow from the LORD'S House,
 And water the Vale of Acacias!
- But Mitzer shall be like a waste, 19
 And Edom a desolate pasture,
 For their crime to the Children of Judah,
 Whose innocent blood they have shed in their lands.—
 But Judah for ever shall last,— 20
 And Jerusalem ages of ages!
 And I will requite for their unavenged blood; 21
 For the LORD has His dwelling in Zion!

END OF THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JOEL.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

This prophetic warning was uttered about 800 B.C. It takes the form of a didactic Psalm, as most other of the addresses of the Prophets did, their essential duty being to preach righteousness of life, not to foretell events, as now by a change in our language is popularly supposed. In the English language, as in ancient Hebrew, the word "prophecy" meant "to preach"; the restriction of it to the sense of "foretelling" was a perversion of the eighteenth century.—F. F.