



THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD CHRIST THE LORD PARISH
1 - 5 ADMIRALTY ROAD, LEKKI PHASE 1, LAGOS
DIGGING DEEP

Date: August 25th, 2026

THEME: MOUNTAIN MOVERS.

TOPIC: THE GOD WHO RESTORES LOST YEARS.

TEXT: JOEL 1:1-20; 2:1-32

KEY TEXT: JOEL 2:25-27

Memory Verse: "So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten..." - Joel 2:25

Supporting Scriptures: Deuteronomy 28:38-42; Psalm 126:1-6; Isaiah 61:1-7; Jeremiah 30:17-18; Amos 9:13-15; John 10:10; Acts 3:19-21

INTRODUCTION

Joel prophesied during a devastating national crisis in which successive waves of locusts destroyed Judah's crops, food supply and livelihood (Joel 1:4). The locusts illustrate how loss can enter suddenly, spread gradually, consume deeply, or return repeatedly. Yet God's promise is greater than every form of devastation: "I will restore to you the years" (Joel 2:25).

OUTLINE 1: UNDERSTANDING THE FOUR LOCUSTS

TYPE	PICTURE OF LOSS	EXAMPLES / APPLICATION	CENTRAL LESSON
Swarming Locust	Sudden and overwhelming loss	Job's rapid losses (Job 1:13-19); sudden illness, job loss, bereavement, business collapse or crisis.	Do not allow sudden tragedy to become the permanent definition of your life.
Crawling Locust	Slow and progressive loss	Samson's gradual compromise (Judges 16:4-21); declining prayer, communication, health, character or relevance.	Whatever is not confronted in its crawling stage may become a consuming force.
Consuming Locust	Deep and extensive loss	Naomi's losses (Ruth 1:1-5); addiction, bitterness, prolonged battles, fear or destructive relationships.	The depth of the damage does not determine the limit of God's restoration.
Chewing Locust	Persistent and repeated loss	Israel's recurring cycles (Judges 2:11-19); repeated disappointment, relapse, rejection, sickness or family conflict.	A long-standing problem is not necessarily an everlasting problem.

The combined activity of the locusts is not greater than the restorative power of God. God does not merely say, "I will explain the years." He says, "I will restore the years."

OUTLINE 2: WHY MAY GOD ALLOW SEASONS OF LOSS?

Scripture presents different sources of suffering: personal choices, the actions of others, life in a fallen world, satanic opposition, persecution, divine discipline, testing and mysteries beyond immediate explanation. Therefore, believers must respond with humility and discernment, not simplistic judgment (Job 42:7-9; John 9:1-3).

- To awaken people from spiritual carelessness and correct sin or disobedience (Romans 13:11-14; Hebrews 12:5-11).
- To expose false sources of security and produce genuine repentance (Deuteronomy 8:11-18; Joel 2:12-13).
- To reveal the heart, strengthen faith and teach dependence on God (Deuteronomy 8:2; James 1:2-4; 2 Corinthians 1:8-10).
- To prepare people for greater usefulness and display God's glory through restoration (Genesis 41:37-44; John 11:4, 40-44).

Caution: Every hardship is not necessarily a personal punishment from God. Examine each situation through Scripture, prayer, and Godly counsel.

OUTLINE 3: GOD'S RESTORATION AGENDA

1. **God does not reverse the clock, but He can restore the value, fruit, opportunities, dignity and purpose that appear to have been lost (Isaiah 61:7, Romans 8:28)**
2. **Fellowship, purpose, and ministry.** God restores communion with Himself and renews calling after failure (Psalm 51:10-12; John 21:15-19).
3. **Fruitfulness, provision, and opportunities.** God replaces barrenness with fruitfulness, provides faithfully and opens purposeful new doors (Amos 9:13-15; Philippians 4:19; Revelation 3:7-8).

4. **Honour, dignity, and relationships.** God removes shame and can restore relationships through repentance, truth, forgiveness, changed behaviour and healthy boundaries (Isaiah 61:7; Colossians 3:12-14).
5. **Health and wholeness.** God may heal miraculously, progressively or through medical means; ultimate bodily restoration awaits the resurrection (Jeremiah 30:17; James 5:14-16; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44).
6. **Acceleration and redeemed experiences.** God may use hidden years as preparation, accelerate His purpose and turn painful experiences into testimonies of grace (Genesis 41:14, 37-44; Romans 8:28).
7. **Beyond the former measure and ultimate restoration.** Restoration remains subject to God's wisdom in form, timing and measure, and culminates in the renewal of all things (Job 42:10-17; Revelation 21:1-5).

OUTLINE 4: HOW CAN WE POSITION OURSELVES FOR RESTORATION?

1. Recognise the condition: Identify what has been lost, what is declining and what requires urgent attention (Lamentations 3:40; Psalm 139:23-24).
2. Return to God wholeheartedly: Restoration begins with sincere repentance, confession and visible change, not entitlement or outward performance (Joel 2:12-13; 2 Corinthians 7:10-11).
3. Pray, fast and trust God's character: Seek God personally and corporately. Fasting does not manipulate God; it positions the heart to seek Him seriously (Joel 2:15-17; Isaiah 58:3-9).
4. Obey the Word and remove continuing causes of loss: Stop feeding the habits, relationships or compromises that sustained the devastation (James 1:22-25; Ephesians 4:22-32).
5. Recover what remains and seek wise help: Rebuild, reconnect, reapply, replant, retrain, reconcile or restart. Restoration may involve pastoral counsel, medical treatment, professional therapy, legal advice or financial restructuring (Nehemiah 2:17-18; Proverbs 15:22).
6. Forgive, persevere and praise: Release vengeance to God, maintain wise boundaries and continue in faith. Delay is not always denial (Ephesians 4:31-32; Galatians 6:9; Habakkuk 3:17-19).
7. Steward the restoration: Do not return to the habits or compromises that contributed to the former devastation. Remain grateful, faithful and watchful (Deuteronomy 8:10-18; 1 Corinthians 4:2).

KEY TRUTH: Restoration is not passive. It calls for repentance, faith, obedience, corrective action, perseverance and faithful stewardship.

CONCLUSION

The four locusts represent sudden, gradual, extensive and recurring loss, but God's promise is greater than every form of devastation. He restores fellowship, fruitfulness, provision, honour, health, relationships, purpose and opportunities. Yet the greatest restoration is salvation: the reconciliation of sinful humanity to God through Jesus Christ.

"I will restore to you the years." - Joel 2:25