



April 24-25, 2021 Joel, Prophet to Judah

Bible Passage: Joel 1-3

Main Point: God warned His people to repent before the Day of the Lord.

Bible Verse: Return to the LORD your God. He is gracious. He is tender and kind. He is slow to get angry. He is full of love. Joel 2:13

YOUNGER/OLDER
LARGE GROUP

 PLAY Opening Video & Countdown

 PLAY Worship Songs

Worship leaders sing two songs with the children and collect the offering.

 SAY LEADER Script: Opening

Over the last two weeks, we have learned about two prophets, Hosea and Jonah. Remember that prophets are people that God sent to tell his message to everyone. What did we learn about God from these stories? [Allow kids to answer.] That's right. We learned that God loves people even when they do not deserve it. He loves to show mercy. This week we will learn about God's prophet Joel and the message he had for the Kingdom of Judah.

 PLAY Big Idea Video

 SAY LEADER Script: Recap *Big Idea*

K-5th:

If you remember, Israel and Judah were the two kingdoms made up of God's people. Both kingdoms had a series of bad kings who led the people into sin. When Joel spoke to the people in Judah, they were not living like they should have been- and things were not going well. They had been attacked by swarms of locusts, and there was a drought. That meant there hadn't been any rain in a long time. So plants and animals were dying.

God used these disasters to get the people's attention. Joel told them to stop sinning and to turn back to God. He said that if they did not repent, things were only going to get worse. But it wasn't too late yet. Joel said that God would rather forgive people than punish them. When the people turned away from the wrong things they were doing and cried out to God, he forgave them. He made it rain again and the people were saved.

Even now, those who trust in Jesus will be saved. You see, all of us have sinned and deserve for God to be angry toward our actions. Since God loves us very much, He sent a Rescuer. Jesus was punished in our place. We share in Jesus' righteousness when we trust in Him!

Ask the following review questions:

1. What insect invaded Judah? (locusts, Joel 1:4)
2. What did Joel tell the people of Judah to do? (Joel told the people to ask God to forgive them, Joel 1:13-14)
3. Is God quick to get angry? (No, God is slow to anger, merciful, and loving; Joel 2:13)
4. If a person wants to be saved, what should they do? (Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, Joel 2:32)

 PLAY *Bible Verse* Video

Bible Verse: Return to the LORD your God. He is gracious. He is tender and kind. He is slow to get angry. He is full of love. Joel 2:13

 SAY LEADER Script: Prayer and dismiss to small group

[Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.]

Let's thank God for His mercy and love. Let's ask Him to give us courage to tell others about Jesus.

"Lord God, we come before You so thankful for Your mercy toward us. Thank You for being a patient and compassionate God who wants to forgive. Thank You for Jesus, who takes away our sin. Give us a sense of urgency to share the gospel with others so they too may find forgiveness and eternal life. Amen."



**OLDER
SMALL GROUP**

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Welcome:

Invite kids to talk about their favorite and least favorite bugs. Discuss how bugs can be helpful (lady bugs help protect gardens) or harmful (mosquitoes bite and transmit diseases).

Say: In the Bible story we will hear today, the land of Judah was attacked by swarms of locusts. This was a warning from God! We'll find out more soon.

Activity: Warning Signs

Materials Needed: paper, markers, colored tape, scissors

Distribute paper, markers, and other supplies. Invite kids to design warning signs that no one could miss. Suggest kids writing WARNING on their papers and use colored tape and bright colors to make the sign stand out. When kids finish, allow volunteers to share their creations. Talk about places kids might find warning signs.

SAY A warning is a notice of danger before it happens. Today's Bible story is about the prophet Joel and the warning he gave to the people of Judah. Let's find out what he said

Activity: A Changed Heart

Materials Needed: construction paper, scissors, tissue paper, glue sticks, markers, Bible

Provide scissors and construction paper. Guide each kid to cut out a heart shape. Open your Bible and read Joel 2:11-13 aloud. Explain that God warned His people to repent before the Day of the Lord. God wanted the people to change their hearts and return to Him.

Say: God wants us to have a heart for Him, to love Him more than anything else. He wants us to tear away anything that does not honor Him. God loves us and wants us to return to Him. Tell kids to think of things they might be tempted to love more than God. (video games, sports, friends, and so on)

Provide tissue paper and instruct boys and girls to think about tearing away those things as they tear the tissue paper into small pieces. Encourage kids to glue the tissue paper pieces to their heart shapes. When the glue dries, allow kids to use markers to write Joel 2:13 on the back of their hearts. Invite kids to each toss one paper wad into the trash can. Guide them to say today's main point together: God loves people when they do not deserve it. Play three rounds to discard all the paper, repeating the main point each time.

Pray

Pray, thanking God for mercy and His faithful love. Ask God to show us things in our hearts we need to confess to Him so we can give Him our whole hearts.