

Wasted Years

*“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.”*
Joel 2:25-26 (NIV)

I recall drought conditions on the farm as a boy. It was my grandmother’s farm—about 150 miles north of Toronto. The land was poor, and a farmer could only scratch out a meager living under the best of conditions.

The year I refer to had a hot dry summer, with grasshoppers like a plague from the book of Exodus. Driving the car down the road was interesting as the tires slipped on the bodies of thousands of grasshoppers as though the car was driving on ice. They flew in clouds and the air was noisy with their sounds. They covered everything. Any crops that were able to survive with little rain were quickly consumed by the insects.

Because of crop failure, my father had moved his little family to the big city of Toronto and searched for work. Every summer my older brother and I would go back up to my grandmother’s farm and help work the land. It was hard work and the results of your labour bore

little fruit.

I believe that my father regretted his years of effort to make a success of his farm across the dusty road from my grandmother’s place. They were wasted years as far as he was concerned. Drought wiped out his little savings, and he had to sell up and move to where he could earn a steady wage to feed hungry mouths.

Some people can look back on their lives and see years of fruitless effort, trying to be successful in life. In vain they wish that they had made better decisions about career choices, places of employment and so on. They look to the future with the same hopeless feeling as they have reviewing the past.

A life full of regrets and bad choices is a prison we do not wish to be locked up in. However, in the grace of God there is hope for those who have come to the later years of life and find themselves full of sorrow at bad choices and the

high price they have paid for them.

The Lord tells His people that the lean years will soon be swallowed up in glory and feasting. Their wrong choices will be forgotten as they come into times of joy and celebration. God is the God of restoration and renewal. If you are someone in the later years of life and look back on your poor choices with sorrow, come to the God Who created you for Himself. Leave off the rebellion, the indifference, the failure. Rise up and make the final time here the best of your life.

If circumstances during your early years fought successfully against you, there is still time and grace from the Lord to make a success of your life. You may see that the latter years can be so much better than those of your youth. God will “repay you for the years the locusts have eaten.”

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