



The Prophet Joel

Lesson Aim: To know God judges our hearts and wants our hearts to turn to Him.

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The God of Power

THE WORD

Bible Story: Joel 2:1, 13, 25, 28, 32

What He has done: God sent a message to His people through the prophet Joel.

Key Verse: Joel 2:13

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Acts 2:4

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Prepare to meet your God, O Israel. He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals His thoughts to man, He who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth—the Lord God Almighty is His name." "Seek good, not evil, that you may live.

Then the Lord God Almighty will be with you, just as you say He is." Amos 4:12b-13; 5:14

Unit 7: The Prophets and God's Power			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
32	Elijah on Mount Carmel, 1 Kings 18:21, 24, 26-27, 31-32, 36-39	God sent fire to prove He is the one true God.	To acknowledge God as the one true God.
33	Elijah and Elisha, 2 Kings 2:1, 7-15	God chose Elisha to be Elijah's successor when He brought Elijah up to heaven.	To know God gives us spiritual gifts and mentors to help us accomplish the work He has for us.
34	Elisha and the Chariots of Fire, 2 Kings 6:15-20	God sent invisible horses and chariots of fire to protect His people.	To know we are surrounded by God's protection.
35	The Prophet Joel, Joel 2:1, 13, 25, 28, 32	God sent a message to His people through the prophet Joel.	To know God judges our hearts and wants our hearts to turn to Him.
36	Jonah and the Ninevites, Jonah 1:4-5, 7, 11-12, 17; 3:4, 8-9; 4:1-2, 5-11	God gave Jonah and the Ninevites each a second chance.	To know God gives second chances because He cares about everyone.
37	Amos and the Plumb Line, Amos 4:12b-13; 5:14; 7:7-8	God sent Amos with a message of justice and righteous living to the Israelites.	To know the Bible is the standard God gives us for living upright lives.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read John 14:15-27. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for faithfully pursuing us. Fill the children with Your Holy Spirit so they might recognize Your voice and turn their hearts toward You. Amen."

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**THE WORSHIP
THE WORD &
THE WAY**

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Meet & Greet	None
		Game: Locust Wars	Green paper, scissors or paper shredder, floor tape or chalk, two baskets, optional: picture of a locust
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org	Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Prepare to Meet Your God" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Everyone Who Calls" "I Lift Up My Eyes" "He Is Mighty to Save" "Neither Death nor Life" "Search Me, O God" "To Him Who Sits on the Throne" Additional Hymn Suggestions: "How Great Is Our God" "How Great Thou Art" Additional Song Collection Suggestions: Worship Jamz Series Shout Praises Kids: Hymns
		Worship Scripture Reading: 2 Peter 3:9	Bible
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	Lesson 35 The Love Sub script or storybook
THE WORD	Up to 10	Read the Word: Joel 2:1, 13, 25, 28, 32	Bibles, Bible Story Scripture reference poster, highlighters
THE WAY	Up to 25	Discuss the Word	Bibles, Christ Connection Scripture reference poster, highlighters, WARNING–CHOICE–PROMISE poster
		Christ Connection: Acts 2:4	
	Golden Bowl	Golden Bowl, pencils, note cards	
	Final 5	Final Five Minutes	Treasure Treats—Wristband length strip of sackcloth, Daily Ways, basket, paper, pencils, crayons or markers, prayer notebook, Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse Song "Prepare to Meet Your God," CD player
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Snack: Locust Food	Any green snack, (for example celery sticks, small salad, green candy, etc.)
	Up to 10	Game: Sackcloth Relay	Two large cloth sacks (extra large pillow cases); cones, chairs, or floor tape
	Up to 15	Craft: Prophets' Traffic Light	Sturdy paper (white, red, green, and yellow), yarn, pencils, crayons or markers, tape or glue, hole punch, scissors, "WARNING – CHOICE – PROMISE" poster from THE WAY, optional: cups
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Picture God's Power	Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse poster, dry erase board and marker or chalkboard and chalk, timer
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Unscramble the Verse	Paper, marker, Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse poster, Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse Song, CD player, timer
	Up to 5	Bible Timeline Review	Date with story title or name printed on card

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Getting started

THE WELCOME

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's question.

Meet & Greet Question: What is your favorite bug?

GAME: LOCUST WARS

Purpose: Children will discover that God sent a message to His people through His prophet Joel.

Supplies: Green paper, scissors or paper shredder, floor tape or chalk, two baskets, optional: picture of a locust

Prepare: Cut or shred an equal number of green paper sheets into strips to be "grass" for each team. With floor tape or chalk, mark a line on the floor to divide the play area in half. Place a basket in the center of each half of the play area.

Option: To lengthen the game or to use less grass, only allow children to pick up one piece of grass at a time, depositing it in the basket before retrieving another one.

Have you ever seen a locust? (Children respond.) **A locust is like a grasshopper that eats all of the green plants it can find. In some places in the world, millions of locusts will come together every several years and eat every plant around them. People sometimes think the locusts look like an invading army. Let's form two armies of locusts and see which locust army can eat all of their grass first.**

Directions:

1. Divide children into two teams (locust armies).
2. Spread equal amounts of grass on each side of the line.
3. Assign one side of the play area to each army.
4. On your signal, the children hop like locusts (bouncing on hands and feet like a frog) to pick up the grass on their side of the play area and deposit it into the team basket.
5. The first locust army to gather all their grass, wins.

The prophet Joel lived in Judah when a swarm of locusts destroyed all the crops. The locust swarm looked like a giant army taking over the land. God sent a message through Joel to the people. He used the locusts to help the people understand his warning that the Day of the Lord was coming.

Limited space? Have the locust armies take turns. Time each army to determine which one picks up the grass in the least amount of time.



The God of Power

THE WORSHIP

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play music as children move to the designated area.

Today, we worship the God of Power who spoke through the prophet Joel. Joel taught that the Day of the Lord was coming. He described how the Lord will come in power one day to judge the nations. Joel also announced God's promise that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. To call on the name of the Lord means to depend on Jesus to be the Lord of your life.



As we worship Him today, let's look forward to the day He will return and thank Him for saving everyone who calls on His name. Sing the Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse Song "Prepare to Meet Your God," and sing: "Everyone Who Calls." You may also choose to sing songs that focus on the return of Christ.

The prophet Joel explains that God is most interested in our hearts. As we give our offering, let's ask God to search our hearts and bring us closer to Him. Play: "Search Me, O God" as background music while collecting the offering.



We don't know when Jesus will return. He is patient with us. He wants everyone to call on His name and be saved. Read 2 Peter 3:9.



Perform The Love Sub script or read storybook: Prophets & Promises Unit 7, Lesson 35.



Joel's choice: "Rend your hearts"

THE WORD

Teacher Tip: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write their name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word—knowing God is my goal."

Last time, we learned Elisha's servant saw the hills were filled with horses and there were chariots of fire around Elisha. What did Elisha ask God to do to the enemy? (Blind them.)

Today, we will hear about the prophet Joel. If a Bible Timeline is available, point to Joel (Circa 830 B.C.). For a Bible Timeline Review activity, see the GOT TIME? segment of this lesson. **His main message from God was for the people of Judah to return to Him with all their hearts.** If a Bible Times map of Israel is available, point to Judah (a region to the west of the Dead Sea which includes Jerusalem). **The prophets Elijah and Elisha pointed others to God through His miracles. The later prophets, like Joel, pointed others to God by bringing messages from Him. As His messengers, God gave each of the later prophets at least one warning, choice, and promise to give to the people.**



Let's play Find It First! Bring out your Bible; keep it right in front of you. Hand out spare Bibles. **Today's Scripture verse is behind the curtain** (or secret door, secret window, etc.). Child reveals the Bible Story Scripture reference: Joel 2:1, 13, 25, 28, 32. **Let's see who can Find It First. Ready? Set? Go!** Children race to find it first. The winner helps others find it. **Let's highlight our Key Verse: Joel 2:13.**

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us? Child prays aloud. Be seated.

A swarm of locusts took over and destroyed the land and crops in Judah. Joel used locusts as a picture of what the Day of the Lord would be like. The Day of the Lord is the day the Lord will come in power to judge the earth. Read the warning in Joel 2:1.

To rend means to tear or pull on your clothes out of sorrow or frustration. Listen now to the godly choice Joel explained to the people. Read the choice in Joel 2:13.

Now, let's hear some of God's promises to those who turn their hearts back to Him. Read the promises in Joel 2:25, 28, 32.



Turning our hearts toward God

THE WAY

Additional Supplies: Print and display a poster with the following words in large print: WARNING – CHOICE – PROMISE. Optional: To experience the ripping (rending) of the sackcloth, children can make and wear sackcloth garments and rub ashes (charcoal pencil) on their faces.

When God gave the prophets a message for His people, it usually came as a warning, a choice, or a promise. Point to WARNING, CHOICE, and PROMISE on the poster as you discuss each one below. **What was God’s WARNING for the people of Judah?** (Just as the army of locusts came to take over their land, the Lord and His army would come one day to judge the nations for their sins.)

In Bible times, when God’s people were sorry for their sins, they made an outward sign to God by wearing ripped, torn sackcloth and rubbing ashes on their faces. But, some people were just pretending to be sorry. Let’s review the CHOICE God gave the people. Read Joel 2:13. **Is God more interested in our hearts or our clothes?** (Children respond.) **Why?** (Children respond.) **To rend is to rip or tear. What do you think it means to rend your heart?** (Children respond.) **To rend your heart means to be truly sorry for your sins. The second part of the choice is to return to God. What does that mean?** (To return to doing things His way.)

Here is a piece of torn sackcloth. Give each child a strip of cloth (the Treasure Treat). **See how hard it is to rend it. Feel how rough it is against your skin. Just as God’s people wore sackcloth to show God they were sorry, wear this as a wristband as one way you can show God you are sorry for your sins.**

We all sin by getting into habits or ways of thinking that are wrong in God’s eyes. Let’s take seven seconds of silence to ask God to remind you now of one habit of sin in your life. Ask God to help you return to Him and to do things His way starting today! Allow seven seconds of silence for this prayer.

Joel gave four PROMISES from God for those who turned to Him. What did God promise?

1. To restore what the locusts and the armies had taken.
2. To pour out His Spirit on His people.
3. To save everyone who called on the name of the Lord.
4. To judge the nations for their sins.

Which is your favorite of these four promises? (Children respond.)



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

CHRIST CONNECTION

800 years after Joel told the people about God’s promise to pour out His Spirit, the promise came true. Just before Jesus went back to heaven, He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. Let’s read how God kept His promise.



FIND IT FIRST > **Everyone, place your Bible closed on your lap.** Choose a child to reveal the Christ Connection Scripture reference: Acts 2:4. **Let’s see who can Find It First! Ready? Set? Go! Find it and highlight it.** Read Acts 2:4.

THE WAY *continued...*



Revelation 5:8

GOLDEN BOWL

Teacher Tip: Write the names of classmates, local church leaders, and children in other nations or others who need prayer on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in a golden bowl.

Revelation 5:8 says our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. I'm going to lift each one of your names to God's throne as you pray for each person silently. Then, we will pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) aloud together. Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say aloud and the ones hidden in our hearts. First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____. Read names in Golden Bowl.

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

TREASURE TREAT: Today, your Treasure Treat is your sackcloth wristband (strip of cloth). Explain to your family that in Bible times, people wore sackcloth to show they were upset and sorry for their sins.

DAILY WAY CHALLENGE: Did anyone bring in a completed Daily Way from last time? Praise or reward those who return a Daily Way. Distribute Lesson 35 Daily Way 5-day Bible study. **Complete this week's Daily Way at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Join the Daily Way Challenge by returning your completed Daily Way.**

Teacher Tip: Collect Daily Ways in a basket or other container and periodically reward children as a group for completing the challenge.

OFFERING OF ART: Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of the swarm of locusts ruining the plants and land in Judah. Draw the prophet Joel wearing sackcloth and saying, "The Day of the Lord is coming!"

PRAYER REQUESTS: As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG: Play the Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Prepare to Meet Your God," in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SNACK: LOCUST FOOD

Purpose: Children eat a green snack while personally connecting to the story.

Snack Suggestion: Any green snack (e.g., celery sticks, jello, green candy)

What came like an army and ate the crops in Judea? (Locusts.) This green snack reminds me of the green crops the locusts ate. Joel used the locusts as an example to give the people a warning, a choice, and a promise from God. He told them to show they were sorry by turning their hearts back to God instead of pretending to be sorry by ripping their clothes.

Directions:

1. Serve the snack and drink.
2. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
3. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: **"What is a good choice you have made?"**

GAME: SACKCLOTH RELAY

Purpose: Children practice turning from wrong and making godly choices instead.

Supplies: Two large cloth sacks (extra large pillow cases); cones, chairs, or floor tape

Prepare: Use the cones, chairs, or floor tape to mark a circular course around the room.

Optional: Children may hop around the course without sacks.

God sent a message through the prophet Joel to give the people of Judah the choice to repent, to be truly sorry for their sin and return to Him. It is turning away from wrongdoing and choosing to do things God's way. The people wore sackcloth as an outward sign to show God that they were sorry. Let's have a sackcloth relay race. As you race, listen to the actions I call out. If the action is pleasing to God, continue hopping in the same direction. If the action is not pleasing to God, "repent," turn around, and hop in the opposite direction.

Directions:

1. Form two teams. Give the first child on each team a sack. The child stands at the starting line with both feet in the sack and both hands holding up the edges of the sack.
2. On your signal, the children in the sacks hop around the course.
3. As they hop, call out one of the actions below. Add to the list with additional actions that fit the children in your class.
Praise God. Help a parent. Cheat on a test. Help a neighbor.
Tattle. Steal a candy bar. Give a gift. Make fun of others.
4. When a child hops over the starting point (no matter which direction they were traveling and they may not have completed the course), they hand their sack to the next child on the team.
5. The first team to have everyone race the course, wins.

Limited Space? Children sit in a circle. On your signal, children pass a cloth. When you call out an action, the child with the cloth decides whether to keep the cloth moving in the same direction or to switch directions. Challenge the children to move the cloth faster and faster and make quick decisions.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: PROPHETS' TRAFFIC LIGHT

Purpose: Children will make traffic lights to help them remember that many of God's prophets delivered their messages from God in the form of warnings, choices, and promises.

Supplies: Sturdy paper (white, red, green, and yellow), yarn, pencils, crayons or markers, tape or glue, hole punch, scissors, "WARNING – CHOICE – PROMISE" poster from THE WAY, optional: cups

Prepare: Cut a standard-size sheet of sturdy white paper in half vertically; makes two crafts. Create several 3-inch circle templates or children may draw circles using the rim of a cup. Display the "WARNING – CHOICE – PROMISE" poster. Cut a 12-inch length of yarn for each child.

Teacher Tips: Arrange the traffic light circle colors to reflect actual traffic lights in your area. For younger children or if your time is limited, you may choose to precut the circles and write "**WARNING**" on the red circle, "**CHOICE**" on the yellow circle and "**PROMISE**" on the green circle.

Optional: Create a craft to be used throughout the study of the Prophets. Before attaching the circles, place three small notepads on the white paper. (Use small store-bought notepads or create your own by stapling the top of some circle-cut white paper.) Attach the appropriate color circle to the top of each notepad. Children may write the Scripture passage or copy the entire warning, choice, and promise for each lesson into the appropriate notepads.

Today, we heard the prophet Joel's message from God to the people in Judah. What three things did Joel's message have? (A warning, a choice, and a promise.) **What was Joel's warning?** (The Day of the Lord is coming. An army will take over the land just as the locusts did. The Lord will come to judge the nations.) **What was the choice?** (Turn your hearts back to God.) **What were God's promises?** (To restore what the locusts and the armies had taken. To pour out His Spirit on His people. To save everyone who called on His name. To judge the nations for their sins.)

Directions:

1. Using the template or a cup, trace 3 circles on sturdy paper—one each from red, yellow, and green paper. Cut out each circle.
2. Write "**WARNING**" on the red circle, "**CHOICE**" on the yellow circle, and "**PROMISE**" on the green circle.
3. Turn the white paper vertically. Arrange the circles on the page from top to bottom: red, yellow, and green. Tape or glue the circles into place. Trim the white paper to create the appearance of a stoplight, as needed.
4. Punch two holes at the top of the white paper. Tie one end of the yarn through each hole to create a hanger.

Take your "PROPHETS' TRAFFIC LIGHT" home and hang it where it will remind you that God gives you warnings, choices, and promises. You can always choose to turn from wrongdoing and do what is right in God's eyes!

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

“Prepare to meet your God, O Israel. He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals His thoughts to man, He who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth—the Lord God Almighty is His name.” “Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the Lord God Almighty will be with you, just as you say He is.” Amos 4:12b-13; 5:14

GAME: PICTURE GOD’S POWER

Purpose: Children learn the meaning of the Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse poster, dry erase board and marker or chalkboard and chalk, timer

Our Bible Memory Verse describes God’s power. What are some of the things these verses say that God does? (Makes the mountains and the wind, tells His thoughts to us, makes day and night happen, is everywhere on the earth.) **What does the verse say His name is?** (The Lord God Almighty.) **Let’s think of more powerful acts of God.**

Directions:

1. Choose one child to draw. Child thinks of one way God is powerful. (He sent Jesus to die on the cross, created trees, created sheep, heals people, gives food, etc.) Younger children can focus on drawing one of God’s creations.
2. Set the timer for 60 seconds. (Add more time, if needed.) On your signal, the child draws a simple picture (cross, tree, sheep, person dropping crutches, plate of food, etc.) without talking.
3. The other children try to guess what the picture represents.
 - If a child guesses correctly before the time is up, that child takes the next turn.
 - If no one guesses, the child who was drawing picks the next child to draw.

GAME: UNSCRAMBLE THE VERSE

Purpose: Children memorize the Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Paper, marker, Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse poster, Unit 7 Bible Memory Verse Song, CD player, timer

Prepare: Display the Bible Memory Verse poster. Divide the Bible Memory Verse into five or six phrases. Write each phrase on a separate sheet of paper and fold the papers in half so the words are hidden. For non-readers, number the papers in order. For more of a challenge, increase the number of phrases.

Directions:

1. Children stand in a circle.
2. Shuffle the folded papers. Give each paper to a different child.
3. Play and sing the Bible Memory Verse Song as children pass the folded papers around the circle.
4. After a short time, pause the music. When the song stops, the children holding the folded papers race to put them in order on the floor in the center of the circle. Time how long it takes. Children may look at the Bible Memory Verse poster for help. Non-readers may use the numbers to help them put the phrases in order.
5. Play again. Each time you play, challenge the children to beat their previous times. Eventually, remove the poster for an added challenge.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE TIMELINE REVIEW

Prophets & Promises Part Two studies the miracles and stories of the Bible from Elijah through Malachi. Review recent Bible stories to see the continuing story of who God is and He has done.

Elijah (Circa 870-845 B.C.) Elijah was Israel's prophet during the reign of evil King Ahab. This king led many Israelites to worship false gods. When prophets of false gods called upon their god Baal to send fire, nothing happened. What happened when Elijah called upon the one true God to send fire from heaven? (God sent fire from heaven.) What did this prove to everyone there? (Children respond.)

Elisha (Circa 845-800 B.C.) Elisha was the next prophet after Elijah. God had a plan for Elisha when He chose him and gave him Elijah as a teacher. When Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind, what did Elisha do? (He took Elijah's cloak and parted the Jordan River just as Elijah had done.) Everyone who saw this miracle knew Elisha was a prophet of the Lord. When surrounded by the enemy, what did Elijah's servant see when God opened his eyes? (He saw the hills filled with God's horses and chariots of fire.) What did Elisha ask God to do to the enemy army? (Blind them so he could lead them to Samaria.)

Joel (Circa 830 B.C.) Joel warned the people of Judah that the Day of the Lord was coming. He compared it to an invasion of locusts. He told them they had a choice to return to God by turning away from sin. He told them God's promises to restore what the locusts had taken, to pour out His Spirit on all people, to save anyone who called upon His name, and to judge the nations for their wrongdoing. Which promise from God means the most to you? (Children respond.)

How to create a Bible Timeline from Elijah through Malachi:

1. Print each scroll on sturdy paper.
2. Choose a wall or other visible location to display the timeline.
3. Before each lesson, add the scroll for that lesson to the Bible Timeline using the list below. Add the Unit 10 cards for Prophets & Promises Lessons 48-52.
4. To review, ask the corresponding questions as you point to the associated scroll.

Elijah – Malachi: Elijah (Circa 870-845 B.C.) > Elisha (Circa 845-800 B.C.) > Joel (Circa 830 B.C.) > Jonah (Circa 781 B.C.) > Amos (Circa 760 B.C.) > Isaiah (Circa 710 B.C.) > Micah (Circa 700 B.C.) > Zephaniah (Circa 630 B.C.) > Jeremiah (Circa 626 B.C.) > Habakkuk (Circa 603 B.C.) > Ezekiel (Circa 593 B.C.) > Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Circa 580 B.C.) > Daniel (Circa 580 B.C.) > Haggai and Zechariah (Circa 530 B.C.) > Malachi (Circa 430 B.C.)

Unit 10: 400 Years of Silence (Circa 400-2 B.C.) > The Birth of Jesus (Circa 7-2 B.C.)