

A WEEKLY WORD

Readings for the week of October 13, 2024, (Thanksgiving Sunday):

Joel 2:21-27

Psalm 126

1 Timothy 2:1-7

Matthew 6:25-33

It is part of the human condition to experience hardships, pain and suffering. It is comforting to know that our heavenly Father is able to, and wants to restore us. The beginning of wholeness in our lives is restoration between God and us.

1 Timothy 2:3-6 says, *“This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all--this was attested at the right time.”*

When we become reconciled with Jesus, He restores our relationship with God. That makes it possible for Him to do as Joel 2:25 says, *“I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army that I sent against you.”*

The locust can refer to anything in our lives that has oppressed us, or been a hindrance to us, and kept us from being all that God created us to be.

I am reminded of Job 1, where God gives Satan permission to torment His servant, Job. God establishes the boundary though, that Satan is not permitted to take Job's life.

God does allow difficulties in our lives, but it is always for a purpose, for our ultimate good. It is always out of His awesome love for us. God is Sovereign, and always sets boundaries that Satan, the enemy of our souls, must obey.

In Job 42, we read about God's restoration in Job's life. Verse 5 of that chapter gives us some insight into God's purpose in allowing these troubles into Job's life. That verse says, *“I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you.”* God loves and cares for all of us: physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Through his trials, Job came to see and know God more personally than he had before.

I can personally attest to this. I am physically disabled, which has caused many challenges in my life, but I can honestly say that my disability has caused me to call out to the Lord more than I would have done, if I had been able-bodied.

God is never the One who causes our trials. Sometimes He allows them, but Satan does not have free access to us. Sometimes, trials come to us because of mistakes we have made. Just remember that God is motivated by His love for us, but Satan is motivated by wanting to bring destruction in our lives.

God is still Supreme. When you receive Jesus into your life, God's Holy Spirit comes to dwell in you. I John 4:4b says, *"for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."*