

Joel 2:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

Analysis

Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field (Hebrew al-tir'u behemot saday)—continuing the personification, Joel addresses animals. The locust plague devastated pastures, leaving livestock starving (1:18, 20). Now God promises restoration even for animals. The phrase behemot saday (בְּהֵמוֹת שָׂדֵי, beasts/cattle of the field) includes domesticated livestock and wild animals—all creation benefits from God's restoration. This reflects Genesis 1 where God created animals and declared creation "very good" (Genesis 1:31). God cares for all His creatures: "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season" (Psalm 145:15).

For the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit—the Hebrew ki desh'u ne'ot midbar (כִּי יִדְשְׂאוּ נְאוֹת מִדְבָּר) describes pastures greening with fresh grass. The verb dasha (דָּשָׂא, to sprout/green) appears in Genesis 1:11 when God created vegetation. This restoration recapitulates original creation—God renewing what sin and judgment devastated. **The fig tree and the vine do yield their strength** (Hebrew te'enah vagefen natenu cheilam)—the verb natan (נָתַן, to give/yield) describes trees producing to full capacity. Cheil (חֵיל, strength/wealth/abundance) indicates vigorous, abundant fruiting.

The progression moves from land (v. 21) to animals (v. 22) to people (v. 23)—comprehensive restoration of the entire created order. This anticipates the New Creation where "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie

down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6). Christ's redemption doesn't merely save souls but renews all creation (Colossians 1:20: "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself").

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern agricultural societies depended entirely on livestock for plowing, transportation, milk, wool, and meat. The locust plague's devastation of pastures threatened not just crops but the entire economic system. Wild animals also suffered—Joel 1:20 describes them crying out to God for water. God's restoration of pastures demonstrates His comprehensive care for all creation. The specific mention of fig trees and vines (Israel's signature crops) signals complete agricultural recovery. These trees require years to mature, so their fruitfulness indicates extended blessing beyond immediate crisis relief.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's care for animals challenge anthropocentric views that only humans matter spiritually?
2. What does restoration of wilderness pastures (uninhabited areas) teach about God's comprehensive care for all creation?
3. How should believers treat animals and creation knowing they participate in God's redemptive plan?

Interlinear Text

אֵל	תִּירָאוּ	בְּהֵמָה	וְעַל	כִּי	דָּשָׂא	וְנָא
H408	Be not afraid	ye beasts	of the field	H3588	do spring	for the pastures
	H3372	H929	H7704		H1876	H4999
מִדְבָּר	כִּי	עֵץ	נֹשֵׂא	פְּרִי	תֵּאֵנָה	וְגַפֵּן
of the wilderness	H3588	for the tree	beareth	her fruit	the fig tree	and the vine
H4057		H6086	H5375	H6529	H8384	H1612
וְנָתַן	חֵילָם:					
do yield	their strength					
H5414	H2428					

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 8:12 (Parallel theme): For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.

Psalms 65:12 (Parallel theme): They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

Isaiah 51:3 (Parallel theme): For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

Psalms 67:6 (Parallel theme): Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

Psalms 36:6 (Parallel theme): Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.

1 Corinthians 3:7 (Parallel theme): So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Genesis 4:12 (Parallel theme): When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

Jonah 4:11 (Parallel theme): And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

Ezekiel 36:8 (Parallel theme): But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.

Ezekiel 36:35 (Parallel theme): And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited.

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