

12/30/15

### Intro To Joel

The Prophet Joel is a very important Minor Prophet, as he provides for us the last day prophetic scenario of “The Day of the Lord”, based on a literal historical judgment of locust as a type of severe devastation in the last times.

\* He is known as “The prophet of the Day of the LORD”, the other prophets quoted Joel for the Day of the LORD”.

We are told the twelve Minor Prophets were gathered and grouped by Ezra Ei “The Great Synagogue” in 475 B.C. called “The book of the twelve.”

1. Our Bible distinguishes the Minor Prophets from the Major Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.
2. We are told that the title “Minor Prophets” was given due to their shorter prophetic content to the larger content of the “Major Prophets”, but that is not true to form because Daniel has less chapter than Hosea and Zechariah.
3. The “Minor Prophets” are in no way less importance or inferior to the Major Prophets, both spoke and wrote under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit. 2Tim. 3:16-17; 2Pet. 1:19-21

The book of Joel provides for us rich detail about God’s two-fold judgment on the people of his day in Judah and the Last days.

### **I. The prophet Joel.**

#### **A. The man Joel.**

1. The name Joel means “Jehovah is God”.  
1:1
  - a. Reminding us that God is sovereign and He does as He will.
  - b. Reminding us that God is very aware of all activity on the earth.
  - c. Reminding us that God is in control of both nature and the nations on earth.
2. The prophet Joel was the son of Pethuel.  
1:1
  - a. Nothing is known of Pethuel apart from this single mention of him.
  - b. The LXX has son of Bethuel.
3. The name Joel was a common name and is found 20 times in the Scriptures, 12 are distinct and different from each other.
  - a. From the first born of Samuel. 1Sam. 8:2
  - b. To The son of Zechri in the book of Nehemiah. Neh. 11:9
4. The man Joel was probably and most likely from Jerusalem, if not very near to it, suggested by the phrases he uses.

- a. He speaks repeatedly of Zion. Joel 2:1, 15, 23; 3:16, 17, 21
- b. He addresses the children of Zion. Joel 2:23
- c. He Judah and Jerusalem. Joel 2:32; 3:1-20
- d. He addresses them as children of Judah and Jerusalem. Joel 3:6, 8, 19
- e. He mentions the priests, and the temple worship. Joel 1:9-16  
\* This we know nothing about Joel.

**B. The messenger of Joel.**

- 1. Joel is one of the twelve Minor prophets of the Old Testament and one of the nine pre-exilic prophets.
  - a. There are six Minor Prophets prior to the captivity of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria in 722 B.C.
    - 1) Obadiah 845 B.C.
    - 2) Joel 835 B.C.
    - 3) Jonah 765 B.C.
    - 4) Amos 760 B.C.
    - 5) Hosea 740 B.C. he is the sixth in chronological order.
    - 6) Micah 735 B.C.
  - b. There are three Minor Prophets prior to the captivity of the Southern Kingdom by Babylon from 606-586 B.C.
    - 1) Nahum 710 B.C.

- 2) Zephaniah 625 B.C.
- 3) Habakkuk 608 B.C.
- c. There are three Minor Prophets after the return from captivity of Babylon from 536-425 B.C.
  - 1) Haggai 520 B.C.
  - 2) Zechariah 520 B.C.
  - 3) Malachi 430 B.C.
- d. He is one of the six minor prophets who doesn't date his prophecy in the opening.  
\* The others are Obediah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Malachi.
- 2. Joel is believed to be the second Minor prophet in the order of chronology.
  - a. If in fact Obediah is the first.
  - b. If not then Joel is the second.
  - c. He is the second in the order of our English Bible.
- 3. Joel was God's prophet.
  - a. The opening verse declares, "The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. Joel 1:1
  - b. There are many phrases that affirm that he was God's prophet.
    - 1) The Lord gives voice before His army. Joel 2:11a
    - 2) Now therefore, says the Lord. Joel 2:12a-b
    - 3) Then the Lord will be zealous in His land. Joel 2:18a

- 4) I will pour out my Spirit among all flesh. Joel 2:28b
- 5) As the Lord has said. Joel 2:32c
- c. Of the twenty-one times the personal pronoun “I” appears, only one refers to Joel, the rest to God Himself. Joel 1.19
- d. The judgment of God towards the nations is declared. Joel 3:2, 12
- 4. The Lord came to Joel with such phrases guaranteeing the trustworthiness of the proclamation as inspired by God.
  - b. Joel did not speak of his own will or impulse but as the Holy Spirit carried him along. 2Pet 1:20-21
  - a. Joel falls under the definition of divine Scripture that is “ex-spired” out from God, for the purpose of doctrine, reproof, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2Tim 3:16-17
- 5. Joel is known as the prophet of the day of the Lord which appears five times, once “that day”. Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14, 18
- 6. Joel is quoted by Amos, Isaiah, Micah and Malachi.
  - a. Joel 1:4-Am. 4:9
  - b. Joel 2:3-Is. 51:3
  - c. Joel 2:11-Mal. 3:2

- d. Joel 3:10-Is. 2:4
- e. Joel 3:18-Am. 9:13

### *This was the prophet Joel!*

## II. The time of the prophet Joel.

- A. The time in which Joel prophesied and wrote his prophecy is much debated.
  1. Some place him with an early date, pre-captivity.
  2. Others with a late date, post-captivity.
  3. Most scholars placed him as the earliest if not second to Obadiah, about 835-825 B.C., ten to twenty years after Obadiah.
  4. Modern criticism has tilted the scales to an early date 400 B. C. or earlier, but I think they are wrong.
- B. Some of the important things to note.
  1. The Northern Kingdom is not mentioned of having gone into captivity.
  2. There is no mention of Babylon or of the rebuilding of the temple.
  3. The entire scenario fits best in a pre-exilic date in the days of Joash and Jehoiada the High Priest who hid Joash from his Grandmother Athaliah in the Lord's house for six years because she had killed all the seed royal. 2Kings 11-12

- \* Jehoash reigned forty years in Jerusalem, 835-796 B.C. vs. 1b
5. The Phoenicians and the Philistines then would be the ones mention. Joel 3:4
    - a. Amos the prophet confirms this fact by declaring judgment on them. Amos 1:6, 9
    - b. The carrying away of those in Judah is confirmed by Chronicles. 2Chron. 21:17
  6. The second verse of Joel chapter three has a two-fold fulfillment, short-term and long-term as we will see.
  7. During this time Israel's enemies were local as seen in this prophecy and in Kings. 2King 12.1-13:4
  8. Again he is called to minister to Judah near Jerusalem. Joel 2:1,15, 23, 32; 3:1,16-17, 20-21
  9. Joel probably knew Elijah & Elisha through the school of the prophets.
- C. The fact that there is no direct mention of idolatry or corruption means anything, both implied by the judgment of God in the future is striking to me.
1. He addresses the elders, the one most responsible for the moral standard. Joel 1:2

2. Joel addresses the drunkards of his day, a prevailing sin, like in the days of Amos. Joel 1.5
3. The priest and farmers are called to mourn as a result of God's judgment for sin. Joel 1:8-10, 13
4. The people are called to repent by renting their hearts not their garment. Joel 2:12
  - a. The temple services were not what they should of been. Joel 1:9, 13-14, 16; 2:14,17
  - b. The temple had become neglected and needed repairs. 2King 12.6

*This was the time of the prophet Joel!*

### III. The book of the prophet Joel.

- A. The division of the book of Joel.
  1. The division depends how Joel is interpreted.
    - a. Some interpreted Joel purely literal.
    - b. Others interpret Joel allegorical.
    - c. Still others interpret Joel strictly apocalyptic, the unveiling of the end times.
  2. The message of Joel is historically literal, with figurative language and prophetic proclamation.
    - a. Joel is literal with figurative language. Joel 1

- b. Joel is literal and prophetic with figurative language, having short-term and long-term fulfillment. Joel 2
  - c. Joel is literal and prophetic regarding the Great-Tribulation and the Millennium with figurative language. Joel 3
  - d. Joel contains only three chapters, a total of only 73 verses.
3. The various divisions.
- a. Simple division.
    - 1) Historical: God's wrath poured out on His people. Joel 1:1-2:27
    - 2) Prophetic: God's spirit poured out on His people. Joel 2:28-3:21
  - b. Xavier
    - 1) The message of judgment: dealing with the past. Joel 1:1-2:11
    - 2) The message of repentance: dealing with the present. Joel 2:12-27
    - 3) The message of hope: dealing with the future. Joel 2:28-3:21
  - c. Dr. McGee.
    - 1) Literal and local plague of locusts, Chapter. Joel 1:1-14
    - 2) Looking to the day of the LORD (prelude), Chapters. Joel 1:15-2:32
    - 3) Looking at the day of the LORD (postlude). Joel 3
      - a. The Great Tribulation. vv. 1-15

b. The Millennial Kingdom. vv. 16-21

**B.** The key verses.

1. The Day of the Lord appears five times, once “that day”. Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14, 18
  - a. For the locust plague. Joel 2:11, 25
  - b. For the end of the present age. Joel 2:31
  - c. For divine judgment near upon the nations. Joel 3:14
2. The alarm for warning. Joel 2:1
  - a. God never sends judgment without warning first.
  - b. God’s warnings are in order to avert judgment.
3. The call to repent. Joel 2:12
  - a. It is an acknowledgment of one’s sin against God.
  - b. It is a one’s turning from one’s sin.
  - c. It is abandoning one’s sinful life-style.
  - d. It is a renting of the heart not the garments.
4. The promise of His Spirit. Joel 2:29
  - a. For the church age.
  - b. For those during the Great-Tribulation period.
5. They would know that He was the Lord their God. Joel 2:27; 3:17

- a. He dwells in the midst of Israel.
- b. He dwells in Zion.

*This is the book of the prophet Joel!*

#### IV. The message of the prophet Joel.

- A. A message of judgment: dealing with the past. Joel 1:1-2:11
  - 1. The call for the acknowledgment of His judgment. Joel 1:1-12
    - a. The elders and people are called to communicate the severity of God's Judgment to their children. Joel 1:1-3
      - \* Our responsibility to transmit our faith and God's dealings with us to our children is clear in the Scriptures. Deut. 4:9; 6:6-7
    - b. The plague of locust in their progressive four stages of development are described. Joel 1:4
      - 1) Jesus said, "He who has an ear".
      - 2) The Spirit says, "Let him hear". Rev. 2-3
    - c. The drunkard is called to awaken as the locust have picked the vine and fig trees clean, portrayed as a nation. Joel 1:5-7
      - 1) Drunkenness is one of the major signs of a decaying nation, leading to many other sins.

- 2) The vine and the fig tree are both symbols for Israel. Is. 5; Hos. 9:10; Jer. 24:6-8; 29:17
- d. The call to lament by the people, priest and the farmer for the loss of the harvest, is to be as a virgin betroth to a husband in sackcloth, grieving over being deprived of the blessings of marriage. Joel 1:8-12
  - \* Sackcloth depicts grief, sorrow and affliction for the judgment affect on all the harvest, having no joy.
- 2. The call to lament by the priest in sackcloth and fast calling the elders and people to the house of God and cry out to the Lord. Joel 1:13-14
  - \* This was a call to national repentance, since God called them to be His holy nation. Ex. 19:5
- 3. The call to recognize the hand of God against them from food, to fire in the pastures and the animals without water. Joel 1:15- 20
  - \* Amos 5:18-20; Zeph. 1:14-15
    - a. The Day of the Lord is used to identify God's judgment on Israel in the present. Joel 1:15
    - b. The phrase is prophetic as a foreshadowing of the future seven years of Tribulation, Jacob's trouble,

the seventieth week of Daniel. Jer. 30:7; Dan. 9:27

- c. Joel identifies himself with the nation and intercedes, “O LORD to You I cry out.” Joel 1:19
- 4. The call to blow the trumpet and warn the people to tremble in view of “the day of the Lord”, a day of darkness, gloom and mourning unlike any in the past or future. Joel 2:1-2
  - \* Joel moves in to chapter two which continues the literal and adds the prophetic through symbols, figures and metaphors.
- 5. The description and devastation of God’s army under His command, the locust being personified, the short and long-term fulfillment. Joel 2:3-11
  - a. This is the present judgment and certainly Russia in the latter days, long-term fulfillment? Ezk. 38-39
  - b. The literal affects of the plague of locusts, nothing escapes them, in appearance like a horse, destroying the people by their overwhelming ranks, eclipsing the sunlight. Joel 2:3-10
    - \* The locusts have no King, yet they all advance in ranks. Prov 30:27

**B.** A message of repentance: dealing with the present. Joel 2:12-27

- 1. The call to repentance. Joel 2:12-17
  - a. The Lord calls out for godly repentance to avert judgment, tearing their hearts not their garments, the true sign of genuine repentance that God may be gracious and merciful to them. Joel 2:12-14
    - 1) Godly repentance. 2Cor. 7:10
    - 2) Those poor in spirit. Matt. 5:3
    - 3) God looks at the heart. 1Sam. 16:7
    - 4) A broken and contrite heart. Ps 51:17
    - 5) Slow to anger of great kindness “hesed” steadfast love. Ex. 34:6-7
    - 6) He relents from bringing judgment, calling it strange or unusual, He rather forgive as Nineveh! Is. 28:21
  - b. The call to repentance by sounding the trumpet for all the people and priest to intercede that God spare them. Joel 2:15-17
- 2. The promise of restoration by repentance. Joel 2:18-27
  - \* Sending rain and a harvest, not being a reproach to the nations, removing the locust and giving rain, restoring the year the swarming locust had eaten, knowing He was God and never put to shame.

- C. A message of hope: dealing with the future. Joel 2:28-3:21
1. The promise of God's Spirit to be poured out. Joel 2:28-32
    - a. The short-term fulfilled at Pentecost. Joel 2:28-29
      - \* The apostle Peter quoted Joel, confirmed the First church council. Acts 2:17-18; Acts 15:6-17
    - b. The long-term fulfillment before the Lord's return. Joel 2:30-31
      - 1) The apostle Peter quoted the entire passage though it was not fulfilled at Pentecost. Acts 2:19-21
      - 2) The signs deal with the upsetting of nature, prior to the Lord's return to the earth. Joel 2:30-31
        - \* Natural phenomena didn't occur at Pentecost, it will at the Second Coming. Matt. 24:29-31
  - c. The Salvation of man is in view by God's Spirit and the remnant of Israel in Mount Zion. Joel 2:32
    - 1) Paul also quotes the first part for the salvation of sinners. Rom 10:13
    - 2) This was predicted by the prophets, Jesus and the New Testament writers.
      - \* Is. 2:12; 13:6, 9-12; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezk. 13:5; 30:3; 39:29; Joel; Amos 5:18, 20; Ob. 15; Zeph. 1:7, 14; Zech. 12:10; 14:1; Mal. 4:5; Matt. 24:29-31;

- Mk. 13:24-26; Lk. 21:25-28; 2:32; Acts 2:20; 1Thess. 5:2; 2Thess. 2:2; 2Pet. 3:10
- c) Paul's statement is that all Israel, the remnant shall be saved. Rom. 11:26-27
  2. The promise of God's judgment to be poured out on the nations. Joel 3:1-17
    - a. The judgment will take place after God gathers the Jews to Jerusalem, in the Valley of Jehoshaphat for the scattering of His people throughout the nations and dividing His land. Joel 3:1-2
      - \* This judgment is the judgment of the nations. Matt. 25:31-46; Gen. 12:1-3
    - b. Their judgment is based on how they treated and exploited boys and girls for their own pleasures, God seeing the sin against Him. Joel 3:3-4
    - c. The retaliation and theft against the people of God by their enemies was in reality against God. Joel 3:4-8
      - 1) Rome in 70 A.D. killed 1,600,000 Jews, 600,000 became captives, those under seventeen years of age were sold as slaves and others for Roman sports.
      - 2) Only the strongest and tallest were paraded through Rome behind



- their chariots to celebrate their conquest.
3. The promise of God's wrath to be poured out. Joel 3:9-17
    - a. This is the battle of Armageddon, beating their plowshares into swords and their pruning hooks into spears. Joel 3:9-11
    - b. The defeat of the nations for their wickedness in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the sickle is put to the harvest in the Valley of decision. Joel 3:12-14
    - c. The sun, moon and stars will be upset at that time, the Lord will roar from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, causing heaven and earth to shake, but will be a shelter and strength to His people Israel. Joel 3:15-16
    - d. The Jews will know that He is their Lord and God, dwelling in Zion, the holy mountain and Jerusalem will be holy, no aliens shall ever pass through her. Joel 3:17
      - 1) Jesus will roar as a Lion. Amos 3:8, Rev 10:3
      - 2) A lion roars after it has its prey!
  4. The promise of God's Millennial Kingdom. Joel 3:18-21

- a. The earth will be restored to a lush nature and a fountain will flow from the house of the Lord "in that day", the Day of the LORD. Joel 3:18  
\* Zechariah describes this in detail. Zech. 14
- b. The retribution of Egypt and Edom will be carried out, desolation, for their violent murders against Judah. Joel 3:19
- c. The eternal abode of Judah and Jerusalem is declared by God's forgiveness of their guilt. Joel 3:20-21  
\* Remember the judgment of Edom by Obediah!

***This was the message of the prophet Joel!***