

THE BOOK OF JOEL, Lesson 1
Introduction & Chapter 1

Teacher: John M. Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ, Wednesday Bible Class, August 2003

AUTHOR: Joel, the son of Pethuel (the name "Joel" means "Jehovah is God")

THEME: The Day of Jehovah is a day of JUDGMENT and a day of SALVATION.

DATE: 830 BC

HISTORICAL SETTING: Joel wrote to the nation of Judah during the reign of King Joash (835- 796 BC; see 2 Kings 11:21). The nation had experienced a severe drought and a plague of locusts, both of which Joel saw as punishment for the sins of the people (see Deuteronomy 28:38-39). Joel uses this catastrophe to call the people to repentance. Joel not only pictures God's judgment, but also His blessings to the people. There is much in the book that is fulfilled in the New Testament -fulfilled in the ministry of Christ and His apostles.

CHAPTER ONE

I. THE DAY OF THE LORD IS AT HAND, chapter 1

A. The desolation that has come upon them, vv. 1-12

1. Joel calls all in the nation to take heed to what had happened.
2. A literal invasion of locusts has overtaken the land: the palmerworm (gnawing locust), the locust (swarming locust), the cankerworm (creeping locust), and the caterpillar (stripping locust).
3. Joel pictures these locusts as a "nation" that has come upon Judah and laid all things bare.

B. The response to the desolation, vv. 13-14

1. Joel calls all Judah's religious leaders together.
2. They are to gather the people in a fast and a solemn assembly to call the nation to repentance.

C. The character of the desolation, vv. 15-20

1. It is the day of the Lord, a day of destruction!
2. Even animals suffer because of man's sin!

NOTE: On the term "day of the Lord," compare Joel 1:15; 21:1, 11,31; 3:14 with Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Jeremiah 46:10; Ezekiel 30:2ff; Amos 5:18ff; Obadiah 15; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:5

THE BOOK OF JOEL, Lesson 2
Chapters 2 -3

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I. DESOLATION & DELIVERANCE, chapter 2

A. A Prophecy of Desolation. vv. 1-17

1. Blow a trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm: the day of the Lord comes!
2. A great army of locusts is pictured.
3. The nation is called to repentance in view of God's judgment.
4. A true change of heart is needed, and must be demonstrated.

B. A Promise of Deliverance, vv. 18-32

1. God will pity His people, and bless them- they will rejoice.
2. God will remove His people from their enemies.
3. The people will know that the Lord is their God!
4. God will pour out His spirit upon all flesh: many will speak for God.

Note: on verses 28-32, Peter makes application of these words to what happened on The day of Pentecost- see Acts 2:16-21

5. Judgment is portrayed; yet God provides a way of deliverance.

II. JUDGMENT AGAINST THE NATIONS, chapter 3

A. God will restore His people, vv. 1-17

1. At that time, God will gather the nations into the valley of Jehoshaphat and he will judge all the heathen nations.
2. God will decide about men (verse 14).

B. A glorious future, vv. 18-21

1. God will pour out great blessings upon His people.
2. Egypt and Edom shall be made desolate.
3. The Lord dwells in Zion!