



Minor Prophets Part 1

Lesson 4: Joel

1. Introduction to Joel

Nothing is known about Joel's personal life except the name of his father was Pethuel.

Although his birthplace is not mentioned, it is likely he was a native of Judah, and possibly a citizen of Jerusalem.

He was one of the earlier prophets. He probably knew both Elijah and Elisha in his youth.

God has a purpose in raising up prophets. Joel's summoned the people to repentance, promising that if they were obedient to God, the land would be restored to its former fruitfulness.

His prophecies called Israel to prayer. He preached repentance with great emphasis. He was one of the first prophets to use the term "The day of the Lord".

Joel's prophecy has to do locally with Judah and Jerusalem. His message concerns an invasion of locusts that scourge the country. This event becomes a type of another invasion which is to occur in the "Day of the Lord".

This is commonly found in Old Testament prophecy – The prophet delivers a message regarding a local circumstance, but it is also a prophetic word about a future event.

2. The plague of locusts

Joel 1:4

The National Geographic magazine in December 1915 described a locust plague that began in February of that year from Syria to the borders of Egypt. It described it saying that a loud noise was heard by the flapping of the locust wings. Some flew quite low. Others flew hundreds of feet high. There were so many of them that they darkened the sun. The government of Turkey required every man from the ages of six to sixty to gather 11 pounds of locust eggs daily and deliver them to officials. They were burned for fuel.

In Joel's day, in less than two months, every green leaf was devoured, and bark was peeled from the trees. When Joel uses the term "The Great Day of the Lord" it of course had local significance. The plague was a national disaster. The locusts had cut off all sources of food supply. All of the grapevines have been stripped bare.

- Locusts totally devoured the vegetation.
- No fruit will be left for the making of wine and strong drink.

Joel 1:5

3. The plague of locusts is prophetic of an end time army.

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Joel 1:15

The invading swarm of locusts foreshadowed the northern army that would sweep down into Israel. While Joel 1:15 has application to Joel's time, it is a greater significance and application to the great and terrible Day of the Lord. It is a prophecy about the gathering and the judgment of the nations at Armageddon

Joel 1:6. 7

This army of the north that will come into Israel in the last days is also described in Ezekiel chapter 38 and 39

The locust army of Joel chapter 2 is apparently related to the army of the fifth trumpet as described in Revelation chapter 9

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Joel 2:1

There are two soundings of the trumpet in Joel. The first in Joel 2:1 The second is in Joel 2:15.

Joel 2:15

In Numbers 10, we find two trumpets blown. One blows the alarm to call the congregation into the presence of the Lord. The second is to advance.

Today, the second alarm has already gone forth. God is calling his people to action – to bring in the end time harvest of souls. Although these verses they have primary reference to Israel, they also refer to God's people everywhere.

- The Battle of Armageddon

The great and terrible Day of the Lord is also called the Battle of Armageddon.

Joel 2:23

The former rain came down on the day of Pentecost.

Peter quoted from Joel's prophecy declaring the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was a fulfillment of that prophecy.

Then there is the latter rain which falls before the great and terrible Day of the Lord

Joel 2:28-32

There are apocalyptic events that occurred during this time. Wonders in the heavens and on the Earth, blood, fire, and pillars of smoke. This sets the stage for the great battle of Armageddon, the scene of which stretches from the valley of Megiddo to the valley of Jehoshaphat.

The prophetic picture of the Battle of Armageddon can be found in 2 Chronicles 20 with Jehoshaphat's battle.

Second Chronicles chapter 20 shows how the host of surrounding nations was a great multitude that came up against Jerusalem. Jehoshaphat called for a fast to seek the Lord.

2 Chronicles 20:3-5

2 Chronicles 20:12

2 Chronicles 20:15-17

As Judah praised the Lord, the enemies of Israel were smitten and everyone helped destroy one another. This great victory took place near Jerusalem, and it is a rehearsal of the battle which will be on a much greater scale in the great and terrible Day of the Lord.

Joel declares that God will bring on all nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat.

Joel gives a picture of Gentile nations assembling for war and coming down into the valley.

Joel 3:9-16

The Lord will fight against those nations. The destruction of the enemy is clearly pictured in Zechariah.

Zechariah 14:12-15

The prophet Joel concludes with the Lord Himself, making his habitation in Jerusalem. With the battle of Armageddon complete He will begin his millennial reign.

Joel 3:20**4. A call to repentance.**

After sinning and the judgement of the locusts, Joel called for the elders to proclaim a fast and cry out to the Lord.

The Book of Joel is a beautiful picture of what happens when God's people turn away from sin, repent, and come back to the Lord.

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Joel 2:12, 13**Joel 1:14**

- If the people were to repent and honor God, He may hold off the promised destruction.

Joel 2:14

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Joel 2:15, 16

- Seek the Lord in prayer.

Isaiah 55:6**5. After repentance there is restoration and blessing.**

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Joel 2:23

In nature, it rains at the proper time to ensure plentiful harvests.

Joel 2:24

Supernaturally, the Holy Spirit will usher in great revival at the proper time.

The Lord will restore the years lost to pestilence.

Joel 2:25

6. Joel is the prophet of Pentecost

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Joel 2:28, 29

- A partial fulfillment occurred at the revival in Jerusalem at Pentecost.

Acts 2:4

Acts 2:16-18

- Mercy will be shed abroad. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Joel 2:32

Joel 2:21

Joel 2:26

7. What can we learn from Joel?

- We often speak of repentance of the individual. However, repentance is also corporate.

Joel repeatedly calls everyone – leaders, elders, families – to return to God. Repentance is not just personal; it is something communities practice together.

2 Chronicles 7:14

There are times when the people of a nation should come together to repent and pray.

Prayer matters in times of national crisis.

Joel highlights fasting, lament, and prayer as meaningful responses to disaster – not denial or panic, but humble dependence on God.

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Joel 2:12, 13

External displays of sorrow mean little without inner change.

- God can restore what seems permanently lost.

Joel 2:25

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Acts 2:16-18

Joel is speaking about the age of the church when God's Spirit empowers men and women, young and old. God's presence is not limited to leaders or just a few.