

Joel.

Outline of Joel.

The author is called Joel the son of Pethuel, [Joel 1:1](#). We only know Joel's personal history from the text itself, though there are 13 other Joel's in the Bible he cannot be identified to any of them. Odd references in the text suggest that he comes from Southern Palestine, possibly living in Jerusalem. See [Joel 2:1,15,32](#); [Joel 3:6,16,17,21](#). He seems to have a good knowledge of the temple services and people. However, his reprimand of the priest suggest that he is not a priest. See [Joel 1:9,13,14,16](#); [Joel 2:14,17](#).

Joel's Message is mainly concerned with Judah and Jerusalem.

Various dates have been suggested for when the book was written, probably either during the reign of Joash or after the exile, though there is no reference to the ruling king or the Northern kingdom. Joel also used the name "Israel", [Joel 2:17](#) and referred to the end of the captivity, [Joel 3:1,2,17](#).

"For the day of the Lord is at hand;" [Joel 1:15](#), a warning is the main teaching of the book, the day when God will reveal Himself in the final destruction of His enemies, a day of terror for the sinner, a day of blessing for the people of God.

Outline of the contents of Joel.

A threefold disaster:- Locust, drought and destructive fire.

The locust arrive [Joel 1:2-12](#)

A call for repentance [Joel 1:13,14](#)

The coming terror of the "For the day of the Lord." [Joel 1:15-20](#)

The beginning of the judgement day.

A vision of the coming judgement. [Joel 2:1-11](#)

Time to repent. [Joel 2:12-17](#)

Prevent Judgement and obtain blessing.

The blessings in the immediate future. [Joel 2:18-27](#)

The Spirit is poured out. [Joel 2:28-32](#)

The Nations are judged.

Revenge on those who attacked the Jews. [Joel 3:1-3](#)

Phoenicia is judged. [Joel 3:4-8](#)

Judgement of the World. [Joel 3:9-17](#)

Blessings after judgement. [Joel 3:18-21](#)

The initial reference to the "day of the Lord" described future fall of Israel and Judah by Assyrian, but each of these also warn of a world wide judgement to come, see [Matt 24](#); [Mark 13](#).

Joel was calling the people to repent, to turn back to God in true worship, if they do not then judgement will occur, with the coming armies. The people did not know that it would be many years before the invasion actually occurred because the message was coming from a loving and very patient God. God was trying to get the people to turn back to Him, to submit to His will. God knew what was the future for the Jewish nation.

The name "Joel" has the meaning of "Jehovah is God" while "Pethuel" means "Persuaded of God."

A threefold disaster:- Locust, drought and destructive fire.

The locust arrive [Joel 1:2-12](#)

Joel warns the people they must repent, v13,14. The arrival of the locust is only a warning of the coming "Day of the Lord". Joel does not warn the officials but the "old men", those who knew of the previous blessings, handed down through families. These events had never been seen before.

The locust exist in three stages, initially they crawl, they then develop wings and are able to fly, finally they form up into very large flying swarms, travelling miles. When they land every plant is eaten. The text indicate that this is what is to happen.

v5 It is time to awake from your drunken life, a possible indication that they were insincere in their worship, all they thought of was their pleasure in life, the vineyards, these are about to be destroyed by the coming

"locusts." and drought. Wine and bread were the main foods of the Jewish diet, both were in danger, all people will be affected, not just the "drunkards".

Joel message was a warning from God, will they listen?

v8-12. Joel now gives a message to the farmers, "cry for your crops are to be ruined," v18 the cattle are being damaged by the action of mankind, be ashamed, you are to be embarrassed. Joel has prophesied that man, crops and the land are to be in mourning together.

v15-20. The sad conditions of the land, for the "day of the Lord" has come to the nation. Without the blessing of God nature cannot survive. Joel is praying for the nation, initially, as a result of the locust and the drought, the land has been destroyed. Things are so bad that even the animals are crying out to the Lord. Joel does not ask for anything he simply tells God of the situation, he knew that God would respond in the way which was right.

Reason for situation.

The people had taken the blessing of God for granted, they needed to turn back to true worship, to humble themselves before Him. God is reminding them that without the blessings of God nature and man cannot survive.

The coming Day of the Lord [Joel 2:1-27](#)

Joel refers to the "Day of the Lord" twice, v1,v11. A special event according to the plans and directed by God.

Stop looking at the effect of the locust, it is a symbol of what is about to happen. In [Joel 2:4-7](#) we see that the text is describing a real soldier as locust do not have swords.

A number of enemies were coming, nations were about to attack the promised land, like locust the army was coming. These armies, coming from the North, v20, were to destroy all the possessions of the people. Just like the locust they will come, like the dawn spreading light over the land, v2. This attack was probably by the Assyrians during the reign of King Hezekiah, they will destroy the land but God protected Jerusalem.

See [Isaiah 7:17-25](#).

Joel gives the people three instructions:-

1) [Joel 2:1-11](#). **Blow the trumpet**, warn the people of the coming army. Trumpets were also used to assemble the people, v15 tells us they should call a fast, repentance and prayer was the instruction. Prayer, the weapons against the coming army.

Joel makes it clear that God is in charge of the coming army, [Joel 2:11](#), They are carrying out His plan. God is able to use heathen nations to fulfil His plans for and on the earth, [Jeremiah 25:9](#); [Isaiah 10:5-7](#). God is very able to create cosmic disturbances if necessary, [Joel 2:10](#).

2) [Joel 2:12-17](#). **"Turn to Me with all your heart,"** Joel again calls the people to repent of their sins and turn to the LORD for help. As yet they do not know when this army will come, but they must be sincere in their worship, any one can go to church, but the desires must be true. They must humbles themselves before God, NOW.

We can return to God because *"He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm."* v13. Joel tells the people they must **ALL** turn back to the Lord, v15-17, from children to elders, from priests to babies. He even gives them the words for a prayer, v17. They must pray for the glory of God before all nations and His covenant with the Jews.

3) [Joel 2:18-27](#). **Trust and Believe**. Joel looks into the future, God will heal the nation and bless His people, just as He removed the locust, so the Assyrian army will be defeated, [Isaiah 37:36-38](#).

The Coming "Day of the Lord," [Joel 2:28-3:21](#)

Joel has finished giving the immediate warnings, now he turns to the ultimate, "the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord." v31.

[Joel 2:28-3:2](#). The Spirit is poured out.

Peter referred to parts of this passage at Pentecost, [Acts 2:17](#), Joel promised that before the "Day of the Lord" the Holy Spirit will be poured out and there will be signs in heaven and earth. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit was only given to special people to enable special events, Joel is saying "All flesh", that includes old and young, Jew and Gentile, "whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved.", v32.

Joel also prophesied *"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great*

and awesome day of the Lord." v30,31, these did not occur at Pentecost, only the miracle of hearing the message in their language, "tongues", they are yet to come.

"The Last days" will involve both tribulation and glory, perilous times, satanic work and a falling away of the church, [1 Tim 4:1-5](#); [2 Tim 3:1-8](#); [2 Peter 3:1-9](#); [1 John 2:18-23](#); [Jude 18,19](#).

Joel 3:1-16. Judgement **poured out**. God is to deal with the nations based upon how they had treated His people.

1) **Nations, I will judge you.** [Joel 3:1-8](#). A great battle is to happen in the "Valley of Jehoshaphat," probably referring to "the battle of Armageddon," [Rev 16:16](#).

Joel lists the wrong done by the nations upon the Jews, sold into slavery, robbed of their possessions, taken the things owned by God to offer to their gods, "you have taken My silver and My gold." v5.

2) **Prepare for war you nations** [Joel 3:9-15](#). It is believed that this passage describes "the battle of Armageddon," [Rev 16:16](#), when the nations will attempt to destroy Jerusalem. Some terrible signs will happen, "*The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness.*" v15. See also [Matt 24:29-31](#); [Mark 13:19-27](#); [Luke 21:25-28](#).

Joel commands the nations to prepare for war, turn your tools into weapons, v10

3) Prepare for defeat you nations. [Joel 3:16,17](#). "*The Lord also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake;*" The nations will perish at the voice of the Lord.

3) Blessings are poured out. [Joel 3:17-21](#). All things will change when the Lord, the King, comes back to earth, a cleaned people a pure earth and a glorious King. Jerusalem will be cleansed, and become a true Holy city, "*A fountain shall flow from the house of the Lord.*" See [Ezekiel 36:24-27](#).

The final thought from Joel:- "For the Lord dwells in Zion."

Triumphant