

The Prophecy of Joel

Joel 1:1-3:21

Introduction

The prophecy of Joel is thought to be the oldest of the 14 Books of the Prophets included in the Old Testament. Literally nothing else is known about the author except that he is the son of Pethuel, a fact which yields absolutely no clues to his life, ministry or death. However, in his book Joel mentions the Valley of Jehoshaphat who was the fourth king of the Southern Kingdom who began his reign in 869 BC and died in 845 BC; therefore, Joel penned this book some time after the valley was named after the king. It could have been during his reign or after his death, but not before 869 BC.

Joel's message is a call for Israel to return to the Lord. Today, the Israelis are as far from Him as their Savior as they have been since they crucified Him in AD 30. The plan of the Lord has always been for them to accept Him and one day they will. Joel reveals some of the details of their conversion as he repeats the words of the Lord concerning them.

Never Happen Before

Joel 1:¹ The word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel: ² Hear this, O elders, And listen, all inhabitants of the land. Has *anything like* this happened in your days or in your fathers' days?

By the time of Joel's prophecy Israel was already in trouble with the Lord because of her rebellion against Him. The Northern Kingdom was in full rebellion as it worshiped the golden calves and the god Asherah that Jeroboam brought to the country the first year of his reign. Joel is about to tell them about the events that will finally turn their hearts back to Him. Even though Joel is the earliest of the fourteen prophets to write down the Lord's instructions for the Jews, it's fulfillment will not occur until their time of tribulation just prior to and including the Day of the Lord. The events in this prophecy will occur only one time in history and the Lord wants all of them to know that utter devastation will come on Israel but it will bring the salvation of the people individually and the continued existence of the nation as the Lord's chosen people.

Tell Every Generation

Joel 1:³ Tell your sons about it, and *let* your sons *tell* their sons, and their sons the next generation.

The prophecy in this small book is so important that it must be told to every generation of Israel's people until it occurs. Sadly, it is hardly mentioned in their liturgy, merely glanced at if not altogether forgotten. Nevertheless, they should heed it because their salvation depends on its fulfillment.

Removal of Food

Joel 1:⁴ What the gnawing locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; and what the swarming locust has left, the creeping locust has eaten; and what the creeping locust has left, the stripping locust has eaten. ⁵ Awake, drunkards, and weep; And wail, all you wine drinkers, on account of the sweet wine that is cut off from your mouth. ⁶ For a nation has invaded my land, mighty and without number; its teeth are the teeth of a lion, and it has the fangs of a lioness. ⁷ It has made my vine a waste and my fig tree splinters. It has stripped them bare and cast *them* away; their branches have become white. ⁸ Wail like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the

bridegroom of her youth.⁹ The grain offering and the drink offering are cut off from the house of the Lord. The priests mourn, the ministers of the Lord.¹⁰ The field is ruined, the land mourns; for the grain is ruined, the new wine dries up, fresh oil fails.¹¹ Be ashamed, O farmers, wail, O vinedressers, for the wheat and the barley; because the harvest of the field is destroyed.¹² The vine dries up and the fig tree fails; the pomegranate, the palm also, and the apple tree, all the trees of the field dry up. Indeed, rejoicing dries up from the sons of men.¹³ Gird yourselves *with sackcloth* And lament, O priests; wail, O ministers of the altar! Come, spend the night in sackcloth O ministers of my God, For the grain offering and the drink offering are withheld from the house of your God.

Israel's rebellion against the Lord was not new. They were rebellious during the wilderness journey which resulted in 38 years of wandering until the younger generation came of age.¹ They rebelled during the age of the judges and all the kings, an act which sent them into exile. When they return their revival of love for the Lord was short lived.² By the time of the Lord's ministry their religious practices were so perverted that they failed to recognize their Savior who was the fulfillment of their Mosaic Law.³ Because they rejected Him, His salvation was offered freely to the rest of the nations of the world.

Today, Israel is just as arrogant and seemingly self-sufficient to the point of refusing to accept the Lord as their Messiah as she was in Joel's time. With each passing, year she loses her friendship and trust with other nations with whom she played the harlot.⁴ Ultimately, she will trust a new nation and its leader. She will enter into a seven year peace treaty full of hope that the peace of Jerusalem has finally arrived after all the passing centuries. She will beat her weapons into farming equipment and begin to prepare for a bumper crop that will feed the multitudes of Israel and those nations who need to buy from her. But her efforts will be futile. The Lord will send the locust in all its stages of life and all its varied species to strip their crops bare. Even the bark of the branches will be eaten away, revealing the white woody flesh below. If they would only strip off their fancy, opulent clothing, adorn themselves in simple modest apparel and turn their eyes to the Groom of their youth who led them out of Egypt, their sorrows would be over, and He would bless them. It's time for the Israelite ministers to grieve before the Lord because they have led their people far from their Groom, the Lord of lords and King of kings. Because the Lord will send the locusts to devastate their land, the ministers will have nothing to offer on the altar except their hearts that must be changed to accept Him as Lord.

Cry Out to the Lord

Joel 1:¹⁴ Consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly; gather the elders *and* all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord.¹⁵ Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is near, and it will come as destruction from the Almighty.¹⁶ Has not food been cut off before our eyes, Gladness and joy from the house of our God? ¹⁷ The seeds shrivel under their clods; The storehouses are desolate, The barns are torn down, for the grain is dried up. ¹⁸ How the beasts groan! The herds of cattle wander aimlessly because there is no pasture for them; even the flocks of sheep suffer.

In their starvation no other country will sell food to them and the Lord will expect them to set aside those days of hunger for Him. He will want them to gather in a holy assembly and

¹ The story found in Exodus

² The story found in the Kings, Ezra and Nehemiah

³ The story found in the four Gospels

⁴ Isaiah 23:17; Jeremiah 2:20; 3:1-8; Ezekiel 6:9-41; Ezekiel 20:30; 23:3-44

worship Him as Messiah and Savior. He will have cut off their food so that they have no place to turn for help but Him. If they do so, they will be protected from the devastation planned for the Day of the Lord. If they do not turn to Him, even their animals will suffer His wrath.

Say to the Lord

Joel 1:¹⁹ To You, O Lord, I cry; for fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness and the flame has burned up all the trees of the field. ²⁰ Even the beasts of the field pant for You; For the water brooks are dried up And fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

When Israel begins to starve and she has nowhere to turn but to the Messiah Whom they have repeatedly rejected, they will cry out to Him. He will hear them describe their surroundings that have been destroyed. He will hear them call out to Him for a personal relationship not seen since the days of Abraham, Isaac and even Moses and Joshua.

Day of the Lord

Joel 2:¹ Blow a trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; Surely it is near, ² A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, so there is a great and mighty people; there has never been *anything* like it, nor will there be again after it to the years of many generations.

When Israel finally returns to the Lord, His day will be near. It will be time for the trumpet to sound in the city of God and the alarm to sound on the temple mount. Outside the city of Jerusalem a mass of people will gather to take over the city and keep the Lord from setting up His throne. They will be led by the old serpent and they know the story of this event as well as anyone because each detail is recorded in the Bible.⁵

They will know it is time for the Lord's return and their ranks will begin at the foot of Jerusalem and fill the valley all the way to Mt. Megiddo. On the Day of the Lord, the darkness will begin to cover the earth about noon as the darkness rolls in like clouds.⁶ The people in the valley will be of such number that no one will have ever seen a crowd so large gathered in one place. But the darkness in the sky will not be from normal clouds rolling in; it will be from the great host of people they see flying in on white horses with the Lord.

Appearance of the Great Mighty People

Joel 2:³ A fire consumes before them and behind them a flame burns. The land is like the garden of Eden before them but a desolate wilderness behind them, and nothing at all escapes them. ⁴ Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; and like war horses, so they run. ⁵ With a noise as of chariots they leap on the tops of the mountains, like the crackling of a flame of fire consuming the stubble, like a mighty people arranged for battle.

Out of the eastern skies the mighty army of the Lord will descend from heaven. It will destroy everything in its path with fire. Run if you wish, but you cannot escape this army.

People Before Them

Joel 2:⁶ Before them the people are in anguish; all faces turn pale.

⁵ Seal 6 – Revelation 6:12-17; Matthew 24:29-33

⁶ Amos 8:9

Those gathered in the valley of Jehoshaphat will not expect what they see. The mere sight of the host of heaven with the Lord will strike dread and fear in the depths of their souls.

Path of the Great Mighty People

Joel 2:⁷ They run like mighty men, they climb the wall like soldiers; and they each march in line, nor do they deviate from their paths. ⁸ They do not crowd each other, they march everyone in his path; when they burst through the defenses, they do not break ranks. ⁹ They rush on the city, they run on the wall; they climb into the houses, they enter through the windows like a thief. ¹⁰ Before them the earth quakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and the moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness.

The Lord's army will comb every inch of the world in search of those who have aligned themselves with the devil. Their search will not be haphazard; they are in perfect order and no one will break from the ranks as they fulfill their mission on that day.

Voice of the Lord

Joel 2:¹¹ The Lord utters His voice before His army; surely His camp is very great, for strong is he who carries out His word. The day of the Lord is indeed great and very awesome, and who can endure it?

In front of this army will be their leader, the Lord of the host of heaven. He will be the only one who speaks and His shout will be heard across the universe, "It is done." With those few words, Armageddon will commence.

Return to the Lord in Your Starvation

Joel 2:¹² "Yet even now," declares the Lord, "Return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, weeping and mourning; ¹³ and rend your heart and not your garments." Now return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness and relenting of evil. ¹⁴ Who knows whether He will *not* turn and relent and leave a blessing behind Him, *even* a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord your God?

Joel's message flashes back to the Jews and their terrible plight of starvation. Even if the ministers have not recognized the Lord, the people can. If they will return to the Lord soon, their tribulation will not be so severe.

Consecrate the Starvation

Joel 2:¹⁵ Blow a trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, ^{16a} Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and the nursing infants.

The Lord will want His people to turn and worship Him, every one of all ages. In their starvation they have only one place to turn, the Lord.

Groom and the Bride

Joel 2:^{16b} Let the bridegroom come out of his room and the bride out of her *bridal* chamber.

When the Israelis return to the Lord and begin to worship Him, their prayer will be for the Groom to depart from His bridal chamber in heaven and return to earth along with His

bride, the church, which will be a great and mighty army that darkens the skies as they ride their white horses down to earth.⁷

Repent

Joel 2:¹⁷ Let the priests, the Lord's ministers, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, "Spare Your people, O Lord, and do not make Your inheritance a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they among the peoples say, 'Where is their God?'"

During those days the Lord will call for Israel's ministers to repent. They will lead their people to repent also. Israel is already a byword among the nations today, but then they will be the preeminent nation. All the nations will see Israel's God come to their aid and no one will wonder about to Whom they belong.

He Will Answer

Joel 2:¹⁸ Then the Lord will be zealous for His land and will have pity on His people.
¹⁹ The Lord will answer and say to His people, "Behold, I am going to send you grain, new wine and oil, and you will be satisfied *in full* with them; and I will never again make you a reproach among the nations.

When His people repent, the Lord will shower remarkable blessings on them. They will quickly move from poverty to an ample supply of all they need.

Armies Will Rot

Joel 2:²⁰ "But I will remove the northern *army* far from you, and I will drive it into a parched and desolate land, and its vanguard into the eastern sea, and its rear guard into the western sea. And its stench will arise and its foul smell will come up, for it has done great things."

On the Day of the Lord, when He shouts, "It is done," the armies which have gathered in the valley will rot where they stand along with all their animals and supplies.⁸ Within just a few hours all will be over except the clean up.⁹

Coming Blessing

Joel 2:²¹ Do not fear, O land, rejoice and be glad, for the Lord has done great things.
²² Do not fear, beasts of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness have turned green, for the tree has borne its fruit, the fig tree and the vine have yielded in full.²³
So rejoice, O sons of Zion, and be glad in the Lord your God; for He has given you the early rain for *your* vindication. And He has poured down for you the rain, the early and latter rain as before.²⁴ The threshing floors will be full of grain, and the vats will overflow with the new wine and oil.²⁵ "Then I will make up to you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the creeping locust, the stripping locust and the gnawing locust, My great army which I sent among you."²⁶ "You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied and praise the name of the Lord your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; then My people will never be put to shame."²⁷ "Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and there is no other; and My people will never be put to shame.

⁷ Revelation 19:7-9; Marriage of the Lamb – Revelation 19:5-9

⁸ Zechariah 14:1-8 and I have

⁹ Zechariah 14:6-7

Once again, the Lord will promise to restore all their land if they will only repent and turn to Him. During those last seven years, Israel's devastation will bring her shame but it will disappear never to return when they accept Him as their Messiah.

Spirit on All Mankind

Joel 2:²⁸ "It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹ "Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

After the seven years of tribulation for Israel, the Lord will set up His 1,000 year kingdom on earth and Israel will be the leading nation.¹⁰ At that time, the Holy Spirit will pour Himself out on all the people on the earth. At that time, the Lord will once again speak to the people around the world in dreams and visions.

Wonders in the Sky

Joel 2:³⁰ "I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke. ³¹ "The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. ³² "And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered; for on Mt. Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, As the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls.

But before that kingdom is set up and before the Day of Judgment, Israel must turn to the Lord. All who oppose Him on the Day of Judgment will be destroyed. In the middle of the tribulation, Israel will be distraught when the peace treaty is broken and the king of the west will make his home in their temple. The two witnesses who have been prophesying against Israel since the beginning of the peace treaty will be killed in the streets of Jerusalem and the world will instantly rejoice. Their bodies will lie in the street as evidence of the beast's great strength. But on the third day, as the world watches, they will come back to life and rise into the air.¹¹ At that time the atmosphere will begin to look like blood, fire, and columns of smoke. Then just before the Day of the Lord, the Day of Judgment, the sun and moon will begin to look like blood. At that time the priests of Israel will realize they were wrong because of the fulfillment of prophecy and the wonders in the sky. They will repent and lead the Israelis to repent and turn to the Lord. Only those who turn to Him will be saved.

Judgment in the Valley of Jehoshaphat

Joel 3:¹ "For behold, in those days and at that time, When I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, ² I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; and they have divided up My land. ³ "They have also cast lots for My people, traded a boy for a harlot and sold a girl for wine that they may drink. ⁴ "Moreover, what are you to Me, O Tyre, Sidon and all the regions of Philistia? Are you rendering Me a recompense? But if you do recompense Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense on your head. ⁵ "Since you have taken My silver and My gold, brought My precious treasures to your temples, ⁶ and sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their territory, ⁷ behold, I am going to

¹⁰ Revelation 20:1-8

¹¹ Revelation 11:3-6; Matthew 24 & 14; Joel 1

arouse them from the place where you have sold them, and return your recompense on your head. ⁸ "Also I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a distant nation," for the Lord has spoken.

Before the Day of the Lord when He restores His blessings on Judah and Jerusalem, He will make arrange for all those who hate Him to gather in the valley of Jehoshaphat. The call will be sent throughout the world and millions of people will respond by joining the forces of evil in the valley. Everyone who has taken advantage of Israel and despised her existence will be there. He will speak the words, "It is done," and they will be conquered and destroyed where they stand.¹² Their relatives who do not come will become servants of Judah during the 1,000 years and Judah will pass many of them along to the Sabeian nation as servants.

Prepare for War

Joel 3:⁹ Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare a war; rouse the mighty men! Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up! ¹⁰ Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, "I am a mighty man." ^{11a} Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, and gather yourselves there. Bring down, O Lord, Your mighty ones.

All the nations will join in the battle against Israel and the Lord. They will convert everything they can into a weapon of war. They are preparing for war against the mighty ones who will arrive from heaven with the Lord.

Judgment on the Day of the Lord

Joel 3:¹² Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. ¹³ Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. ¹⁴ Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. ¹⁵ The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness. ¹⁶ The Lord roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. But the Lord is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel. ¹⁷ Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, and strangers will pass through it no more.

Millions upon millions will gather shoulder to shoulder in that 80 mile track of land, ready to fight the Lord. At noon the sky will turn back as the mighty host of heaven blocks the sun on their way to earth. With the Lord leading the heavenly army, they will be coming to rescue Israel, defeat evil, and establish the long awaited kingdom on earth.¹³

Lord Dwells in Zion

Joel 3:¹⁸ And in that day The mountains will drip with sweet wine, and the hills will flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; and a spring will go out from the house of the Lord to water the valley of Shittim. ¹⁹ Egypt will become a waste, and Edom will become a desolate wilderness, because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, in whose land they have shed innocent blood. ²⁰ But Judah will be inhabited forever and Jerusalem for all generations. ²¹ And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged, for the Lord dwells in Zion.

¹² Bowl 6 – Revelation 16:12-16; Matthew 24:40-42

¹³ Revelation 14:6-20

By 6:00pm all will be accomplished in the valley of judgment. The host of heaven will be in their assigned places on earth and the sky will be clear waiting for the sun to set and the moon to rise. Israel will be finally the preeminent nation of the world and they will have a King who will reign over the entire world. He will have avenged His nation by punishing all who have hated her and He will have made Jerusalem in the heart of Judah, His home.¹⁴

Year 2011	At some time in the future 10 countries join together to form a Revived Roman Empire	The Lord snatches the church away.	The Church is in heaven with the Lord at their marriage ceremony and He gives the church wonderful gifts as His bride.		The Lord and the Church leaves the bridal chamber and fly to earth on white horses.												
	<table><tr><td><u>Western Toes</u></td><td><u>Eastern Toes</u></td></tr><tr><td>Britain</td><td>Macedonia</td></tr><tr><td>France</td><td>Egypt</td></tr><tr><td>Spain</td><td>Greece</td></tr><tr><td>Italy</td><td>Syria</td></tr><tr><td>North Africa</td><td>Turkey</td></tr></table>		<u>Western Toes</u>	<u>Eastern Toes</u>		Britain	Macedonia	France	Egypt	Spain	Greece	Italy	Syria	North Africa	Turkey	Israel converts all their weapons into farming equipment.	Kings of the North, South and East invade Israel to capture her.
	<u>Western Toes</u>		<u>Eastern Toes</u>														
	Britain		Macedonia														
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3 of the 10 presidents will be killed by the man who will be elected to rule this new kingdom. A false prophet will convince the people to vote for this new king. He will have been born in one of these countries.	The Lord's drought causes the crops to fail.	The new king of the Revived Roman Empire comes to her aid but never leaves, setting his throne up in the temple. The sun and moon look like blood after the war.	The world is called to come fight the Lord outside Jerusalem.														
The Church is still on earth.	The new king of the Revived Roman Empire makes a 7 year peace Treaty with	3 ½ Years of Tribulation for Israel	3 ½ Years of Great Tribulation for Israel	The Day of the Lord													
	Two witnesses arrive to prophecy against Israel. Israel gets the finally gets the temple rebuilt in Jerusalem. Sacrifices start.	Israel struggles and many try to run for their lives.	Israel converts their farming tools to weapons to fight.	Armageddon starts at noon.													
	Two witnesses die and are left in the street for 3 days, then they rise from the dead and ascend into heaven.	The Edomintes hamper the efforts of the Israelites.	All is calm by 6 PM as the sun begins to set.														

¹⁴ Matthew 24:29-31; Revelation 19:11-21; Habakkuk 3:3-18; Joel 2:1-11; Zechariah 12:2-10; Zechariah 14:1-21; Zechariah 13:2-9; Zephaniah 1:7