

# Book of Joel

## Study BIBLE



## Introduction

Book No	29
Name	Joel
Written By	Joel
Testament	Old
Category	Minor Prophets
Date Written	Approx. 835 - 796 BC
Place Written	Jerusalem
Audience	To the people of Israel
Purpose	To warn Judah of God's impending judgment because of its sins and to urge the people to turn back to God
History Covered	835 - 796 BC
Chapters	3
Verses	73
Key Verse	Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:  And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. (2:12, 13)
Key People	❖ Joel
Key Places	❖ Jerusalem

## Purpose of the Book

Joel prophesied at a time of great devastation to the entire land of Judah. An enormous plague of locusts had stripped the countryside of all vegetation, destroyed the pastures of both the sheep and the cattle, even removed the bark from the fig trees. In only a few hours what was once a beautiful, lush land had become a place of desolation and destruction. Contemporary descriptions of the destructive power of swarms of locusts corroborate Joel's picture of the plague in his time.

The plague of locusts Joel wrote about was greater than anyone had ever seen. All crops were lost and the seed crops for the next planting were destroyed. A famine and drought had seized the entire land. Both people and animals were dying. It was so profound and disastrous that Joel saw only one explanation; it was the judgment of God.

Power, strength, might—we stand in awe at the natural and man-made display. But these forces cannot touch the power of omnipotent God. Creator of galaxies, atoms, and natural laws, the Sovereign Lord rules all there is and ever will be. How silly to live without him; how foolish to run and hide from him; how ridiculous to disobey him. But we do. Since Eden, we have sought independence from his control, as though we were gods and could control our destiny. And he has allowed our rebellion. But soon the day of the Lord will come.

It is about this day that the prophet Joel speaks, and it is the theme of his book. On this day God will judge all unrighteousness and disobedience—all accounts will be settled and the crooked made straight.

We know very little about Joel—only that he was a prophet and the son of Pethuel. He may have lived in Jerusalem because his audience was Judah, the southern kingdom. Whoever he was, Joel speaks forthrightly and forcefully in this short and powerful book. His message is one of foreboding and warning, but it is also filled with hope. Joel states that our Creator, the omnipotent Judge, is also merciful, and he wants to bless all those who trust him.

Joel begins by describing a terrible plague of locusts that covers the land and devours the crops. The devastation wrought by these creatures is but a foretaste of the coming judgment of God, the “day of the LORD.” Joel, therefore, urges the people to turn from their sin and turn back to God. Woven into this message of judgment and the need for

repentance is an affirmation of God’s kindness and the blessings he promises for all who follow him. In fact, “anyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved” (2:32).

Joel prophesies the inauguration of the age of the church—a time when all people everywhere can call on the name of the Lord, be saved from their sins, and become participants in the kingdom of God. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the church becomes the body of Christ in the world. The redemptive purposes of God are therefore extended and made available through every Spirit-filled believer.

This is the time in which we now live. Ours is the wonderful privilege of not only experiencing salvation ourselves, but also of being those who bring the Good News to all who will listen. What Joel was to ravaged Judah, the church is to a ravaged world; namely, a prophetic voice, bringing God’s viewpoint into clear focus, calling for repentance, and extending the hope of salvation from the final and terrible Day of the Lord.

The message of Joel is concise and clear: “If you think the plague of locusts is bad, wait until you see the final judgment of the Lord.” But, as every true prophet of God, Joel does not stop with the prediction of doomsday. He clearly announces the day of God’s grace.

As you read Joel, catch his vision of the power and might of God and of God’s ultimate judgment of sin. Choose to follow, obey, and worship God alone as your sovereign Lord.

### Overview

- ❖ 29<sup>th</sup> book of the BIBLE, Old Testament, 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 12 minor prophets and 7<sup>th</sup> of the 17 prophetic books
- ❖ Joel was the son of Pethuel “Persuaded of God”).
- ❖ It is believed that he did not live far from Jerusalem.
- ❖ Joel was an early prophet of Judah.
- ❖ It is possible that Joel may have been a contemporary of Elisha in Israel.
- ❖ Joel was God’s spokesman during the reign of King Joash (835-796 B.C.).
- ❖ On the day of Pentecost following the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, the apostle Peter quotes from Joel in Acts 2:17-21
  - The theme of disasters appears through the Book of Joel.

- Locusts
  - Plagues
  - Famine
  - Raging fires
  - Invading armies
  - Celestial phenomena
- ❖ Joel tells the people that even though some disasters have struck, it is not too late to repent and avoid a greater disaster from God

## Hebrew Names of GOD used in Joel

NA

## Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

It is Jesus who promises the coming of the Spirit in response to His finished work of redemption and return to the Father (John 14:15–18; 16:5–24). In the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost we have the spiritual return of Christ to indwell His people and direct His body, the church. His literal and physical return is foretold here in Joel.

## Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

Joel is remarkable in his references to the Holy Spirit. It is obviously the Holy Spirit who has inspired the prophet to see God's hand in all that is taking place and to be able to leap forward to the terrible Day of the Lord.

## Mega Themes of Joel

### PUNISHMENT

Like a destroying army of locusts, God's punishment for sin is overwhelming, dreadful, and unavoidable. When it comes, there will be no food, no water, no protection, and no escape. The day for settling accounts with God for how we have lived is fast approaching.

God is the one with whom we all must reckon—not nature, the economy, or a foreign invader. We can't ignore or offend God forever. We must pay attention to his message now, or we will face his anger later.

### FORGIVENESS

God stood ready to forgive and restore all those who would come to him and turn away

from sin. God wanted to shower his people with his love and restore them to a proper relationship with him.

Forgiveness comes by turning from sin and turning toward God. It is not too late to receive God’s forgiveness. God’s greatest desire is for you to come to him.

**PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Joel predicts the time when God will pour out his Holy Spirit on all people. It will be the beginning of new and fresh worship of God by those who believe in him, as well as the beginning of judgment on all who reject him.

God is in control. Justice and restoration are in his hands. The Holy Spirit confirms God’s love for us just as he did for the first Christians (Acts 2). We must be faithful to God and place our life under the guidance and power of his Holy Spirit.

**Life Lessons in Joel**

<b>Truth</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
<p><b>Growing in Godliness</b></p> <p>We teach our children godliness when we instruct them about God’s nature, character, and the ways He blesses and disciplines His people. They “catch” godliness when we model it for them in our own lives. Joel instructs the elders to tell their children about God’s judgment on Israel that came in the form of a locust invasion. By instructing our children about the discipline of the Lord, perhaps we can help them avoid the mistakes we have made.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Tell your children and encourage them to tell their children Help them learn from your mistakes and God’s dealings with you, as well as with His people.</li> <li>❖ Gratefully about God’s ways, nature, and character. receive the Holy Spirit, as He is poured out on children, adults, and the elderly.</li> <li>❖ Praise God that the Holy Spirit is no respecter of age, gender, or social or economic status.</li> <li>❖ Understand that this prophetic word continues to be fulfilled in the church today.</li> <li>❖ Receive the fullness of the Spirit and the gifts He imparts to you (Acts 2:1–21).</li> </ul>

<p><b>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</b></p> <p>Even the ability to love God and to respond to His salvation invitation comes to us by His grace. He has supplied both the means of salvation and the ability for us to respond to it. This revelation of our loving Father can only lead us to a deeper place of heartfelt devotion to Him.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Call on the name of the Lord Jesus for salvation and deliverance. Recognize that God is lovingly calling you to come and follow Him.</li> <li>❖ Talk to Jesus; ask Him to forgive you and to be in charge of every area of your life. Jesus has provided completely for your salvation; when you call on Him, He will come and save you.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pursuing Holiness</b></p> <p>Joel presents a vivid picture of the consequences of sin and shows us how to respond with true repentance. The kind of repentance that leads to holiness is not merely an outward show, but an inward, sincere, heartrending brokenness over sin. When sin occurs corporately, as it did in Israel, God calls upon leaders to gather the people in a solemn assembly in which they fast, pray, and cry out for His mercy and forgiveness. As we see sin in the church and in the nations, we would do well to heed Joel's exhortations and cry out to God corporately for our generation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Understand that the sin of God's people is serious and calls for sincere repentance and mourning on the part of spiritual leaders.</li> <li>❖ Leaders, call for a sacred assembly, a gathering designed for fasting and repentance for corporate sin in the church or in a nation. Cry out to God for His mercy.</li> <li>❖ Warn God's people of sin's consequences.</li> <li>❖ Return to God with all your heart, not just with superficial holiness. Fast, weep, mourn, and confess your sin. God desires to bless you and to show you His character, which is gracious and merciful.</li> <li>❖ Cry out to God, and ask Him to give you spiritual eyes to see the multitude of people still in the valley of decision. Pray that the church would earnestly seek those who do not know Jesus, so that they might come to salvation.</li> </ul>

### **The Walk of Faith**

By faith, we are able to receive all that God has done for us. Joel gives a clear Old Testament picture that we are not saved by our works or by our own effort. God alone has supplied everything we need for salvation, for deliverance, and for a completely restored relationship with Himself.

- ❖ Receive God's provision. In His pity and compassion, He provided grain, new wine, and oil. These elements represent: covenant relationship (Deut. 7:13); the ability to honor God with the tithe (Deut. 14:22, 23); and restoration (Joel 2:24). Ultimately, they speak of our Savior, Jesus Christ, whose blood was represented by wine, His body by bread, and His Holy Spirit by oil. God alone can provide all of this
- ❖ Understand that God is the One who will defeat your enemies and remove judgment and reproach. Remember that, in the Cross, we see the ultimate victory over our enemies.
- ❖ Rejoice and be glad. It is God who provides the ability to bear much fruit, both naturally and spiritually.
- ❖ Receive God's full restoration. Despite a just act of God brought upon His people by their sin, He restored their land and all that was lost.
- ❖ Ask God to restore every place in your life that has been broken or made barren by sin, and praise Him for His righteousness!

### **Praise Points in Joel**

- ❖ His willingness to receive repentant sinners (2:12-14)
- ❖ His provision for our needs (2:19-20; 3:16)
- ❖ His healing, which he often brings to our past hurts (2:25-27)
- ❖ His spirit, whom he gives to all believers, male and female, young and old (2:28-29)
- ❖ His salvation for those who call on him (2:32)

- ❖ His blessings that far exceed our basic needs (3:18).

### Worship Insights in Joel

- ❖ God calls his people to self-examination, repentance, and worship, especially in a corporate context (1:14; 2:12-17).
- ❖ Times of happiness and prosperity should elicit praise to God (2:20-23).

### An Outline of Joel

I. Title: The Word of the Lord to Joel: [Joe 1:1](#)

II. Words of Exhortation: Joel 1:2-2:17

A. Listen and Tell of the Extraordinary: [Joe 1:2-4](#)

B. An Impassioned Call to Lament: [Joe 1:5-14](#)

C. The Day of the Lord: [Joe 1:15-20](#)

D. Call to Alarm before the Advancing Army: [Joe 2:1-11](#)

E. Call to Return to Yahweh: [Joe 2:12-17](#)

III. Words of Assurance: Joel 2:18-3:21

A. Promises of Prosperity and Freedom: [Joe 2:18-27](#)

B. New Life in the Spirit and Deliverance: [Joe 2:28-32](#)

C. God Judges Israel's Enemies and Restores His People: [Joe 3:1-21](#)