

# Joel

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**MEANING** “Yahweh is God.”

**AUTHOR:** Joel

**TIME WRITTEN:** The evidence seems to favor a date of about 835 B.C.

**POSITION IN THE BIBLE:**

- 29th Book in the Bible
- 29th book in the Old Testament
- 7th of 17 books of Prophecy
- 2nd of 12 Minor Prophet Books
- 28 have preceded it. 37 to follow it.

**CHAPTERS:** 3

**VERSES:** 73

**WORDS:** 2,034

**KEY WORD:** The Great and Terrible Day of the Lord

**THREE KEY VERSES:**

1. **Joel 2:11** - “he LORD gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; who can endure it?”
2. **Joel 2:28-29** - “And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.  
And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”

**KEY CHAPTER:** Joel 2

1. Joel calls for Judah’s repentance and promises God’s repentance (2:13-14) from His planned judgment upon Judah if they do indeed turn to Him.
2. Though the offer is clearly given, Judah continues to rebel against the Lord, and judgment is to follow.
3. In that judgment, however, is god’s promise of His later outpouring, fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2:16

**OBSERVATIONS ABOUT JOEL:**

1. Disaster strikes the southern kingdom of Judah without warning.
  - a. An ominous black cloud descends upon the land—the dreaded locusts.
  - b. In a matter of hours every living green thing has been stripped bare.
  - c. Joel, God’s spokesman during the reign of Joash (835-796 B.C.), seizes the occasion to proclaim God’s message.
  - d. Although the locust plague has been a terrible judgment for sin, God’s future judgments during the day of the Lord will make that plague pale by comparison.
  - e. In that day, God will destroy His enemies, but bring unparalleled blessing to those who faithfully obey Him.
2. Joel.
  - a. Although there are several other Joels in the Bible, the prophet Joel is known only from this book.
  - b. Joel identifies himself as the son of Pethuel (1:1), meaning “Persuaded of God.”
  - c. His frequent references to Zion and the house of the Lord, suggest that he probably lived not far from Jerusalem.

- d. Because of his statements about the priesthood in 1:13-14; and 2:17, some think Joel was a priest as well as a prophet.
  - e. Joel was a clear, concise, and uncompromising preacher of repentance.
  - f. If in fact Joel was an early prophet of Judah, than he may have been a contemporary of Elisha in Israel.
3. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter quotes from Joel in Acts 2:17-21.

## SUMMARY OF JOEL

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. This brief book develops the crucial theme of the coming day of the Lord.
  - 1. It is a time of awesome judgment upon the people and nations that have rebelled against God.
  - 2. It is also a time of future blessing upon those who have trusted in Him.
- B. The theme of disasters runs throughout the book.
  - 1. Locusts
  - 2. Plagues
  - 3. Famine
  - 4. Raging fires
  - 5. Invading armies
  - 6. Celestial phenomena
- C. Promises of hope are interspersed with the pronouncements of coming judgment.
- D. There are two major divisions in the book.
  - 1. The Day of the Lord in Retrospect. (1:1-20)
  - 2. The Day of the Lord in Prospect. (2:1 - 3:21)

### THE DAY OF THE LORD IN RETROSPECT. (1:1-20)

- A. Joel begins with an account of a recent locust plague that has devastated the land.
  - 1. The black cloud of insects has stripped the grapevines and fruit trees and ruined the grain harvest.
  - 2. The economy has been brought to a further standstill by a drought and the people are in a desperate situation.

### THE DAY OF THE LORD IN PROSPECT. (2:1 - 3:21)

- A. Joel makes an effective use of this natural catastrophe as an illustration of a far greater judgment to come.
  - 1. Compared to the terrible day of the Lord, the destruction by the locusts will seem insignificant.
  - 2. The land will be invaded by a swarming army. Like locusts, they will be speedy and voracious.
  - 3. The desolation caused by this army will be dreadful.
  - 4. **Joel 2:11** - "The day of the Lord is great, and very terrible; who can endure it?"
- B. Even so, it is not too late for the people to avert disaster.
  - 1. The prophetic warning is designed to bring them to the point of repentance. (2:12-17)
  - 2. **Joel 2:12** - "Now, therefore, says the Lord, turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning."
  - 3. Unfortunately, God's gracious offer falls on deaf ears.

- C. Ultimately, the swarming, creeping, stripping and gnawing locusts (1:4; 2:25) will come again in a fiercer form.
  - 1. But God promises that judgment will be followed by great blessing in two senses:
    - a. A material sense. (2:18-27)
    - b. A spiritual sense. (2:28-32)
- D. These rich promises are followed by a solemn description of the judgment of all nations in the valley of decision (3:14) in the end times.
  - 1. The nations will give an account of themselves to the God of Israel who will judge those who have rebelled against Him.
  - 2. God alone controls the course of history. **Joel 3:17** - "So ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain."
- E. Joel ends with the kingdom blessings upon the remnant of faithful Judah. **Joel 3:20** - "But Judah shall abide forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation."