

Book 29: Joel The Day of the Lord

- The book of Joel is short, but powerful.
- It may very well be the oldest of the Bible's prophetic books.
- Other than this book, we don't know much about the prophet Joel's life or ministry.
- Joel 1:1 says he is the son of Pethuel, but Pethuel is not mentioned anywhere else in Scripture.
- Amos starts his book (Amos 1:2) by quoting Joel 3:16.
- Since Amos prophesied around 790 B.C., this would put Joel earlier than that, perhaps about the time Elijah or Elisha.
- Joel's references to Zion and the temple put his location in Jerusalem and Judah.
- Joel begins by commenting on a recent locust plague and the resultant famine, calling the nation to repentance.
- He then jumps to future events, foretelling the disastrous judgments of the Day of Lord in the coming Tribulation.
- Joel also foretells a future time of the outpouring of God's Spirit.
- Because God always sees the end from the beginning, this earliest prophetic book is perhaps more relevant today than in the day it was written.
- We live in a time much closer to the Day of the Lord than Joel, therefore repentance is that much more needed.
- Furthermore, we live in a time when the Holy Spirit's power is freely available to us.

Joel: A Few Facts

- Joel is one of two Minor Prophets to deal extensively with the coming Day of the Lord. The other is Zephaniah.
- Like Hosea, which we looked at last week, Joel clearly calls the people to repentance.
- Unlike Hosea, Joel does not speak directly to specific sins.
- Joel uses the phrase "the Day of the Lord" five times in this short book. That is the most times that exact phrase appears in any book of the Bible.
- Peter begins his sermon on the day of Pentecost by quoting the prophet Joel regarding the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- Joel gives us the Bible's best description of a locust plague.
- This judgment provides a prophetic bridge between the books of Exodus and Revelation.

- In Exodus, the eighth of ten plagues to come upon Egypt was a devastating swarm of locusts.
- In Joel we read about locust plague in Judah that has important prophetic implications.
- Joel's locust plague looks ahead to Revelation 9, which describes demonic locust-like creatures. They will torment the earth for five months during the Tribulation, during the ultimate fulfillment of the Day of the Lord.

Joel: Key Phrase: The Day of the Lord

- The expression "the Day of the Lord" in a prophetic book needs to be viewed in two related ways.
- The first refers to a near or present time when God was acting in judgment and personally intervening in world affairs.
- The second points to the future and is directly related to end-times events.

Joel: Key Verses

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| 1. | 1:2-3 | Telling Our Children |
| 2. | 1:13-14 | Getting Right with God |
| 3. | 2:12-13 | Tearing Your Heart |
| 4. | 2:28-29 | "I Will Pour Out My Spirit" |
| 5. | 2:32 | Whoever ... Shall Be Saved |
| 6. | 3:1-3 | Judgment in the Valley |
| 7. | 3:14-16 | The Valley of Decision |