

8. Joel

*Joel 1; Devastation of locusts (1:1-14); day of the Lord (1:15-20)

- Joel describes the effects of a severe locust plague that had invaded the land. This devastating event was a sign of an even worse calamity to come; the destructive day of the Lord. "Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, and it will come as destruction from the Almighty" (1:15). The day of the Lord will be characterized by famine, drought and fire. Gladness and joy will be cut off from the house of God (1:15-20).

*Joel 2; Prophecy of future desolation (2:1-11); call to repentance (2:12-17); deliverance promised (2:18-27); promise of the Spirit (2:28-29); day of the Lord (2:30-32)

- "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" (2:1). "The land is like the garden of Eden before them but a desolate wilderness behind them, and nothing at all escapes them" (2:3). The locust invasion may be a foreshadow of an invasion of demonic locusts in the day of the Lord, during the Great Tribulation (Revelation 9:1-11). Trumpet judgment five is the release of demonic locusts to torment men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. "The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, and who can endure it?" (2:11). The giving of the Holy Spirit (2:28-29; on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2) and the day of the Lord (2:30-32) are described.

*Joel 3; Judgment of the nations and Armageddon (3:1-16); the Millennium (3:17-21)

- "For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, 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" (3:1-2). This is a description of the war of Armageddon. The word "Jehoshaphat" means "Yahweh judges" and may refer to the Kidron Valley on the east side of Jerusalem, lying between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives. The Valley of Jehoshaphat is only mentioned twice in the Bible (3:2, 12), and is also referred to as the "valley of decision" twice in verse 14. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision" (3:14).

- During the Millennium, "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" (3:18). The house of the Lord is Messiah's (millennial) temple. "Edom will become a desolate wilderness, because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, in whose land they have shed innocent blood" (3:19). The judgment upon Edom may be a reference to the war of Armageddon (refer to Isaiah 34:1-17, 63:1-6; Obadiah 1:15-21).