

JOEL

STUDY HANDOUT

Into:

Natural disasters provoke fear and dread because people cannot control these powerful and destructive forces. Joel begins his book with a description of such a natural disaster – a plague of ravenous locusts. This plague is a vivid warning of the power of God’s coming judgment and a clear appeal to run to the Lord for Mercy.

Author:

Joel son of Pethuel. We know very little about him. His name means, “The Lord is God.” Some theologians think he could have been a priest because of his frequent references to the work of priests (1:9,13,14; 2:17). However, this idea is not widely accepted because he could have been knowledgeable about the temple without being a priest.

Date:

Most Scholars lean toward the idea that the book was written during the reign of Joash King of Judah (835-796 B.C.) and in the time of the high priest Jehoiada.

Main Theme: In the light of impending judgment, there is always a message of hope for those who return faithfully to God.

Main Topics:

1. Judgment and Repentance:

- The Locust plague gave Joel an opportunity to call the people to repentance. This judgment could have been averted by sincere and humble repentance. (2:12-14)
- Israel thought it was the end due to the plague of locusts. God said repent and I will return everything to normal. Can relate to our time with COVID.
- God’s order in Joel and throughout the entire bible:
- Human Depravity -> Judgment -> Repentance -> God’s Restoration and Blessing

2. Day of the Lord

- Major theme in Old Testament Prophecy. 13 of 16 prophets address this subject.
- Since God is the Lord of time there is no period that is “not the day of the Lord” in the general sense. However, this term describes a period of time when God “comes down” in a powerful way to bring wrath and judgment on the wicked and salvation to the righteous.
- The concept of the Day of The Lord probably originated with the conquest of Canaan – which was in fact the Lord’s war. It was a period of judgment for the wicked Canaanites.
- The day of the Lord is not a single event in history. Periods of Israel’s early and latter history, the coming of Jesus, and His second advent are all called the Day of the Lord.
- The Day of the Lord is not just a day of wrath and judgment on the wicked. It is also a time of deliverance and blessing for God’s faithful people.

3. Joel 2:28 – Outpouring of God’s Spirit

- According to Apostle Peter (Acts 2:14 -21) The Day of Pentecost was a fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32
- Focus on Spirit Filled Life/ Walking in the Spirit.
- Jeremiah 31:31-35 speaks about a New Covenant where God’s laws will be in the hearts and minds of his people.

For Leaders: Think of questions that would make these 3 topics relevant to our day.