

The Book of Joel

<p>Who is Joel</p>	<p>Joel was a prophet to the <u>Southern Kingdom of Judah</u>. He identifies himself in the book as the son of Pethuel. What's most interesting about Joel is that he's the prophet in the Bible who most liked to draw upon <u>natural imagery to make a spiritual point</u>. For example, locusts devouring the land of Judah plays a prominent role in the book. And he uses it to teach Judah about judgment.</p>
<p>When Joel Wrote</p>	<p>The Book of Joel dates to the late 9th century BC (between 835-800 BC). Unlike most other prophets, Joel gives us no information about the kings in his time period. The reason for this is because Joel wrote during the reign of Joash. Joash was too young to rule, so the priest Jehoida ruled in his place until he came of age. The book also refers to priests, temple rituals, and nations like Phoenicia, Philistia, Egypt and Edom. All were prominent during this time period.</p>
<p>Why Joel is in Your Bible</p>	<p>Joel's contribution to the Bible can't be understated. He was a minor prophet with a major message. His message was this: <u>The Day of the Lord</u>. While many biblical prophets talk about this theme, none focus on it so specifically like Joel does. <u>The Day of the Lord</u> denotes the idea of the judgment of God. It's coming according to Joel (it did; and will continue to).</p>
<p>Why Joel is Important</p>	<p><u>The Day of the Lord</u> is a day where the moon turns to blood; a day where armies devastate the land as locusts and consuming fires. So important was this theme to New Testament writers, that three of them quote directly from Joel: Luke, Paul, and Peter.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Peter's Sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:15-17; 19-21)</u>: These people are not drunk as you suppose. This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: "in the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people... I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. 2. <u>Paul's 2nd Letter to the Thessalonians (2:1-3)</u>: Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, ² not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us—whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter—asserting that the day of the Lord has already come. ³ Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness^[a] is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. 3. <u>Peter in 2nd Peter (3:10)</u>: ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare
<p>How Joel Preaches about the Day of the Lord</p>	<p>Thinking of Joel as the prophet who uses nature to teach about God's judgment will help you as you read his prophecy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>An Invasion of Locusts</u> – As armies of locusts devoured the land <u>so will the Lord</u> on his day of judgment. Armies will invade like an invasion of locusts (Persians; 587 BC; 400+ years after he predicted it). 2. <u>Sun, Moon, Blood</u> – As the sun and moon cover the earth, so too will God's judgment. It won't be limited to Judah on the great day of the Lord. 3. <u>Wonders in the Heavens</u> – As the skies declare the glory of God, so to will the skies when God does new things among his people and those who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.
<p>What We Must Understand about the Day of the Lord from Joel's Perspective</p>	<p>The Day of the Lord is not <u>just</u> one particular great day of judgment coming in the future. The Day of the Lord has multiple fulfillments throughout history. And the NT teaches us that one of those great days will come in the future and follow the same pattern as fulfillments in the past. As a result, the Day of the Lord refers to a period of judgment followed by restoration. As a result, it has 3 basic features.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Judgment of God's people. 2. The Judgment of Foreign nations. 3. The purification and restoration of God's people through suffering. Therefore, even judgment is designed to restore.

The Cycle in Joel

<i>God Judges His People</i>	
<p>² Hear this, you elders; listen, all who live in the land. Has anything like this ever happened in your days or in the days of your ancestors? ³ Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation. ⁴ What the locust swarm has left the great locusts have eaten; what the great locusts have left the young locusts have eaten; what the young locusts have left other locusts have eaten. ⁵ Wake up, you drunkards, and weep! Wail, all you drinkers of wine; wail because of the new wine, for it has been snatched from your lips. ⁶ A nation has invaded my land, a mighty army without number; it has the teeth of a lion, the fangs of a lioness. ⁷ It has laid waste my vines and ruined my fig trees. It has stripped off their bark and thrown it away, leaving their branches white. (1:2-7)</p>	<p>⁷ They charge like warriors; they scale walls like soldiers. They all march in line, not swerving from their course. ⁸ They do not jostle each other; each marches straight ahead. They plunge through defenses without breaking ranks. ⁹ They rush upon the city; they run along the wall. They climb into the houses; like thieves they enter through the windows. ¹⁰ Before them the earth shakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine (2:7-10)</p>
Fulfillment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Southern Kingdom of Judah falls to the Babylonians in 587 BC. They devastated the land and destroyed the temple just as Joel prophesied. 2. The Romans devastated the Land and destroyed the 2nd Temple in 70 AD just as Joel and Jesus prophesied 3. In the Future, God will judge his people similarly through the Man of Lawlessness Paul predicts.

<i>Then Repentance Brings God's Judgment of the Nations Who Harmed Them</i>	
<p>¹⁸ Then the Lord was jealous for his land and took pity on his people. ¹⁹ The Lord replied^[a] to them: "I am sending you grain, new wine and olive oil, enough to satisfy you fully; never again will I make you an object of scorn to the nations. ²⁰ "I will drive the northern horde far from you, pushing it into a parched and barren land; its eastern ranks will drown in the Dead Sea and its western ranks in the Mediterranean Sea. And its stench will go up; its smell will rise." (Joel 2:18-19)</p>	
Fulfillment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Babylon Falls to the Medes/Persians. 5. Rome ceases to exist. 6. In the future, God will operate similarly with nations that persecute God's people upon their repentance.

Then God Does New Things Among His People	
<p>²⁸ "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. ³⁰ I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ³¹ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. ³² And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls.^[c]</p>	
Fulfillment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spirit poured out at Pentecost. 2. In Future, the Jews will look upon the one whom they have pierced. 3. In Future, nations are gathered and judged by Jesus.
<p>*Good for God's People. Bad for Unbelievers.</p>	