

Joel

We do not know a lot about the author. We do know his name means "Jehovah is God" and that he was a son of Pethuel. It would appear that Joel was a prophet to Judah and prophesied in and around Jerusalem.

Joel was probably one of the earliest of the minor prophets and was probably written in the seventh century BC.

Joel starts writing about a locust plague. He first addresses the drunks and tells them their wine is gone. It should be noted that drunkenness is the only sin Joel names in his book (1:5-7).

The farmers (1:8-12): It seemed to them this was a hopeless situation, anything being produced was destroyed by the locust and there also was a drought on top of that. It has also affected the livestock (1:18-20). All the farmers could do was grieve like an engaged girl whose fiance has died.

The priests (1:13-20): This situation was bad because of what happened- the meal offering and drink offering could not happen. When this happened it could be looked at as setting aside the covenant relationship between God and His people.

Joel 2

Joel mentions the day of the Lord several times for different events such as the locust invasion and in chapter two he will use this term to describe the coming of the Assyrians. Remember the *day of the Lord* refers to a decisive intervention of God in history.

Joel 2:1-27

Joel was telling Judah that the locust invasion was just a symbol of the invasion that was coming from the fierce army from the north. The time frame of the Assyrian invasion took place in 701 BC.

In this invasion, the Assyrians had their way with the land but God delivered Jerusalem from being taken by them (Psalm 46). Joel tells them to do three things.

1. Blow the trumpet (v 1-11)
 - a. Joel is telling the watchmen to blow their trumpets to warn the people of this invasion but also to call a fast in verse 15. Joel also uses the examples of the locusts and their destruction to describe the destruction the Assyrians will do.
2. Return to God (v 12-17)
 - a. Joel calls the people back to God, to return to Him and to confess their sins and repent and return to the Lord. Joel reminds the people that God is merciful and loves to restore his people.
3. Believe Him (v 18-27)
 - a. Joel then looks beyond the invasion to the time when God will restore the land.

- i. He will drive out this powerful army (which he did -Isaiah 37:36-38). Many people believe Psalm 126 came out of this event.
- ii. The Lord will restore the **ravaged** earth and bring back the harvest.

Joel has described the day of the Lord, the locust invasion, the impending day of the Lord, the invasion of the Assyrian army, and then Joel will describe the ultimate day of the Lord.

Joel 2:28

“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, and your young men shall see visions.”

Afterward- does not mean **“immediately”** but **“after 2:18-27”**. This passage is quoted by the apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost and *afterward* means **“the last days”** (Acts 2:17). The last days started with John the Baptist and the **earthly** ministry of Christ and will end with the Day of the Lord which would start with the Tribulation and conclude with the New Heaven and Earth.

Verses 28-29

Peter quotes this as happening on the **Day of Pentecost** (Acts 2:17-18). Peter says we are living in the last days.

Verses 30-32

“And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. 31The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. 32And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

Peter also quotes these verses in Acts 2:19-21 and Peter is referring to the day of the Lord.

Joel 3:1-16: Judgment poured out

Verses 1-8

The battle will take place in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat means “the Lord judges”. In verse 14 it is called *the valley of decision*- God’s decision to punish the nations for how they treated Israel. This is probably referring to the **Battle of Armageddon** (Revelation 16:16).

It should be noted that God calls the Jews His people even though they disobeyed him and walked away from him. God still did not **abandon them**.

Verses 9-16

Battle of Armageddon- The image found in these verses are also found in Revelation 14:14-20, 16:16.

Joel 17-21

These verses describe Christ's second coming and his reign. The temple will be restored and also the desert and the towns.

Amos

Amos was a humble farmer and shepherd. He was not from the political elite or part of the Jewish religious establishment. He lived some seven hundred years before Christ during the reign of King Urriah of Judah (790-740 BC) and Jeroboam II (793-753 BC) in Israel. He lived in a village (Tekoa), twelve miles south of Jerusalem.

Amos wrote in a time of prosperity in both kingdoms and the people were active in religion. But they had several major problems that would bring about their destruction.

1. Money was more important than God.
2. The judicial system was corrupt.
3. The rich took advantage of the poor.

Amos 1:1-2:16: Warning to the Gentile nations in this area

Amos uses a very famous Jewish saying from that time "for three transgressions and for four", which refers to a number of wrongdoings that have finally come to an end. In this case, it is referring to God's patience running out on these Gentile kingdoms.

Amos tells what will happen to these Gentile kingdoms.

Syria- Aram (Damascus) 1:3-5

- Damascus was the capital of Syria and God will bring judgment because of war crimes. The dynasty of King Hazael ends, his son Ben-Hadad was defeated. *House of Eden* is describing a paradise that was ruined. The Assyrians took them into captivity.

Philista 1:6-8

- The five key Philistine cities are mentioned (Joshua 13:3). Their crime was taking; for raiding Jewish villages and selling the villagers as slaves and selling those slaves to Edom- Israel's ancient enemy. Both the Assyrians and the Babylonians would take them into exile.

Tyre 1:9-10

- During both David's and Solomon's reigns, Tyre and Israel got along very well. In fact, they had a covenant that was more than a treaty but involved a friendly partnership. But Tyre broke this covenant and was selling their friends (Israelites) into slavery.
- In 332 BC Alexander the Great leveled Tyre.

Edom 1:11-12

- The history of this relationship goes back to the book of Genesis and the feud between Jacob & Esau. This feud is picked up hundreds of years later when the nation of Israel (Jacob) asked to pass through the Edomite (Esau) land on their way to the promised land and the Edomites would not allow them (Numbers 20: 14-21).
- King Saul would subdue them and David conquered them. Edom revolted from Judah in 2 Kings 8:16-22.
- The point is that the Edomites hated the Jews and would do anything they could do to trip them up.
- Temen and Bozrah are the main cities of the Edomites.
- When the Romans wiped out Jerusalem in 70 AD they also destroyed what was left of the Edomites.

Ammon 1:13-15

- The Ammonites along with the Moabites were descendants of Lot and his daughters (Genesis 19:30-38) and they were sworn enemies of the Jewish people. Their capital city was Rabbah which would be destroyed by the Assyrians in 734 BC and the Ammonites would go into captivity.

Moab 2:1-3

- The Moabites would not give the Jews passage on a highway (Deuteronomy 23:3-4; Judges 11:7). Also, the king of Moab hired Balaam to curse the Jewish people (Numbers 22-24). The Moabite women seduced the Jewish men to have sexual relations with them along with worshipping their idolatry (Numbers 25). In the book of Judges, we see that the Jews were under the control of the Moabites for eighteen years (Judges 3).

Before we look at what God says to Judah we need to remember that nations are responsible to God for what they do and He judges them (Acts 17:24-28).

Judah 2:4-5

- The Jewish people were glad to hear the judgments on the Gentile nations that surrounded them. But then the Lord talks about them and their judgment. The Jews in Judah were guilty of three things:
 - 1) Rejection of the law. Which was seen in 2) failure to keep the Lord's decrees and resulting in 3) worshipping false gods.
- The judgment would be the same that Tyre and Edom would receive. This judgment is referring to warfare. The Babylonians would destroy Judah and Jerusalem and take thousands captive. A small remnant to return seventy years later and rebuild and establish the nation again.

Israel 2:6-16

- We need to remember that both Israel and Judah were enjoying peace and prosperity and they thought since this peace and prosperity were going on they were good with God- judgment for their sin did not enter their mind.
 - But Amos exposes their sins.
1. Injustice Amos 2:6-7
 - a. What was happening was the rich were suing the poor who could not pay their bills and forcing them into slavery. Amos gives us an example: If the poor could not pay their bill for a pair of sandals the rich would go after them. There was no mercy, no forgiveness, no assistance given to the poor. In other words, the poor were run right into the ground.
 2. Immorality Amos 2:7b
 - a. This could mean several things, it could mean that the father and son were having sex with a temple prostitute in the pagan temples, which would be a sin of immorality and idol worship. It also could refer to the father and son having sex with a household servant or it could refer to a form of incest. Whatever was going on it was sin and rebellion against God.
 3. Open Idolatry Amos 2:8
 - a. It appears the garments were seized by the creditor when the loan could not be paid. Then the creditors would take these garments and lay on them and be involved in sexual immorality and drunkenness.

Three lessons we should learn from this section:

1. The sovereignty of God means every nation is accountable to Him. No nation is immune from this.
2. The sin of a nation will reach a point when God's tolerance ends and judgment comes.
3. The judgment of God is impartial it does not matter the relationship.

2:9-12: Amos reminds them of their past

- God led them out of Egypt, took care of them in the wilderness, and destroyed nations so that they could possess the land.
- God gave them the prophets and gave them the Word of God.
- God also raised up Nazirites (Numbers 6) to be examples of dedication to the Lord. But in truth the Jews did not want either; the Word of God or examples of godly living.

Whenever we fall away God always wants us to remember what He has done for us (Revelation 2:5; 3:3). God says the same thing to the Jews - "Remember".

2:13-16: Judgment is coming

Both Israel and Judah will be crushed. Israel by the Assyrians and Judah by Babylon.

3:1-2: God called Israel

God says He is talking to the whole family which means both **Judah** and **Israel** and both rebelled against God.

1. God chose them (Deuteronomy 7:6-8).
2. God delivered them from bondage.
3. God's calling involved responsibility.

Our salvation looks like this also.

1. **God** called us (John 15:16; Ephesians 1:4).
2. **God delivered** us from bondage.
3. God's calling in our lives involves **responsibility**. Privilege always brings with it responsibility.

The rest of Amos talks about the sin of Israel and her destruction by the hands of the Assyrians- but there is a promise made in chapter 9 verses 11-15 of Israel being restored, but it also talks about us.

9:11-15: Being restored

The first ten verses of this chapter it describes the destruction of two Jewish kingdoms and then we have this promise.

Verse 11

*In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen
and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins
and rebuild it as in the days of old,*

This verse is talking about restoring and rebuilding the **dynasty** of David and establishing the kingdom that was promised (2 Samuel 7:16). **This dynasty** will be restored when Christ comes and rules the whole earth (Isaiah 9:6-7; Ezekiel 34:23-24; Micah 5:2).

Verse 12

*that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name,"
declares the Lord who does this.*

This verse is a very important verse for the **church**. Acts 15 tells us about the Jerusalem Council. In this very important council meeting they were trying to figure out how to receive the Gentiles into the church. Up until this time, it was largely a Jewish church. Anyway, Peter, Barnabas, and Paul told the council God was working with the **Gentiles**. James, who was the head man in the Jerusalem church, got up and quoted Amos 9:11-12, in support of God working in the Gentiles. In other words, James was saying that the Gentiles getting **saved was** spoken of in Amos 9:12.

Verse 13

*“Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord,
“when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed;
the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it.*

Verse 13 is a picture of harvests so big that the gathering of one crop will not be finished before the time to plant the next crop. There will also be a huge harvest of grapes. The picture God is giving is an abundance of food and drink.

Verse 14

*I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.*

God will restore Israel and the reason he does is Israel’s renewed **faith** and **loyalty** to the Lord (Deuteronomy 30:1-3; Jeremiah 29:12-14).

Verse 15

*I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted
out of the land that I have given them,”*

says the Lord your God.

God promises to plant Israel in their land God gives them never to be uprooted again.

Amos tells us that God is in control of all nations. Also, Amos sees the **future** of the **church** and also the day of the Lord.