

The Book of Joel

I. ISRAEL AND GOD'S JUDGMENT: A REVIEW OF THE PAST (JOEL 1:1-20).

A. The severity of the locust judgment.

"That which the palmer worm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten" (1:4).

B. The title name for the locust judgment.

"Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come" (1:15).

II. ISRAEL AND GOD'S JUDGMENT: A PREVIEW OF THE FUTURE (JOEL 2:1--3:21).

A. The identity of this invasion. What nation or enemy is Joel speaking of here in chapters 2 and 3? He may be referring to several in general, giving special emphasis to the last in particular.

1. The Babylonian invasion in 586 B.C., led by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Ki. 24).
2. The Russian invasion, during the middle of the tribulation, to be led by Gog (Ezek. 38, 39).
3. The final invasion, at the end of the tribulation, to be led by the antichrist at the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16; 19:11-21).

B. The gathering place of this invasion.

"I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will judge them there" (3:2).

C. The twofold purpose for this invasion gathering.

1. The purpose of the antichrist--to destroy Israel and her God. (See Ps. 2.)
2. The purpose of God--to destroy antichrist and his allies.

D. The outcome of this invasion.

"The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:16).

E. The blessings after this invasion has been crushed.

1. God's Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh. (See 2:28-32.) It should be noted that this passage event will mark the fulfillment of Moses' desire. (See Num. 11:29.) Peter would later quote this passage in Joel on the day of Pentecost. (See Acts 2:16-21.) This he did, not to indicate that Pentecost was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (for it was not), but, rather as an example of it.
2. All human needs will be provided for (2:21-27).
3. Nature itself will be transformed (3:18).
4. Christ himself will reign in Zion (3:21).