

OT-OV

Lesson 125

1. Last week I taught in part an overview of the book of Joel.
2. Joel was authored by Joel himself from Judah. The prophet deals with the judgment of God on both Jew and Gentile and the coming blessing on Israel when the Messiah shall reign on planet earth. Joel wrote of conditions in Judah when Judah was in need of discipline.
3. Joel wrote the book of Joel according to Joe 1:1 and Acts 2:16. The author cannot be identified with any of the other Old Testament persons bearing this name and nothing is known of him outside the book.

Joel 1:1 The word of the LORD that came to Joel son of Pethuel.

Acts 2:16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

4. There is no other reference to Joel in the Old Testament but his writings indicate he was the only son of Pethuel and lived in Judah--probably in Jerusalem.
5. There are those who make a case for an early writing of the book in 830 and a later writing in 400. Last week I gave you arguments for both the earlier and later datings. With only internal evidence, dating is the greatest problem of the book.
6. So far scholars have not been able to agree on the dating of the book of Joel. There is no overwhelming information to support either the early date or the later date but most scholars select 830; certainly the nation of Judah seemed to always be in need of warning and exhortation to repent.
7. The question as to when the book was written, oddly enough has little effect on the interpretation of the Scriptures penned by Joel. Joel paints a picture of major discipline repentance and eschatological restoration.
8. The swarms of locust of Joel 1:2-12 depict foreign armies disciplining Judah much like what we have historically seen in the Assyrian-in c. 700, Babylonian-in c. 600 and Roman-in c. B.C.60 and 70 A. D. invasions.

Joe 1:2 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 forefathers?

Joe 1:3 Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation.

Joe 1:4 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.

Joe 1:5 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.

Joe 1:6 A nation I have invaded my land, powerful and without number; it has the teeth of a lion, the fangs of a lioness.

Joe 1:7 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.

Joe 1:8 Mourn like a virgin in sackcloth grieving for the husband of her youth.

Joe 1:9 Grain offerings and drink offerings are cut off from the house of the LORD. The priests are in mourning, those who minister before the LORD.

Joe 1:10 The fields are ruined, the ground is dried up; the grain is destroyed, the new wine is dried up, the oil fails.

Joe 1:11 Despair, you farmers, wail, you vine growers; grieve for the wheat and the barley, because the harvest of the field is destroyed.

Joe 1:12 The vine is dried up and the fig tree is withered; the pomegranate, the palm and the apple tree-- all the trees of the field-- are dried up. Surely the joy of mankind is withered away.

9. While a locust plague and drought were surely involved as illustrations, the occasion for Joel's prophetic message is most properly seen in Judah's spiritual failures.

10. Judah's first call to repentance.

Joe 1:13 Put on sackcloth, O priests, and mourn; wail, you who minister before the altar. Come, spend the night in sackcloth, you who minister before my God; for the grain offerings and drink offerings are withheld from the house of your God.

Joe 1:14 Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.

Joe 1:15 Alas for that day! For the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

Joe 1:16 Has not the food been cut off before our very eyes-- joy and gladness from the house of our God?

Joe 1:17 The seeds are shriveled beneath the clods. The storehouses are in ruins, the granaries have been broken down, for the grain has dried up.

Joe 1:18 How the cattle moan! The herds mill about because they have no pasture; even the flocks of sheep are suffering ...

11. The message of Joel is divided into a near term application and a far term application. In each case Joel is motivated to write of a discipline, a response to that discipline and then a promise of restoration in both the near term and the eschatological terms respectively.

12. There is a second invasion of locust which would seem to occur as a warning just before the Lord returns to rescue His people.

Joe 2:1 Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming. It is close at hand--

Joe 2:2 a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Like dawn spreading across the mountains a large and mighty army comes, such as never was of old nor ever will be in ages to come.

Joe 2:3 Before them fire devours, behind them a flame blazes. Before them the land is like the garden of Eden, behind them, a desert waste-- nothing escapes them.

Joe 2:4 They have the appearance of horses; they gallop along like cavalry.

Joe 2:5 With a noise like that of chariots they leap over the mountaintops, like a crackling fire consuming stubble, like a mighty army drawn up for battle.

Joe 2:6 At the sight of them, nations are in anguish; every face turns pale.

Joe 2:7 They charge like warriors; they scale walls like soldiers. They all march in line, not swerving from their course.

Joe 2:8 They do not jostle each other; each marches straight ahead. They plunge through defenses without breaking ranks.

Joe 2:9 They rush upon the city; they run along the wall. They climb into the houses; like thieves they enter through the windows.

Joe 2:10 Before them the earth shakes, the sky trembles, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine.

Joe 2:11 The LORD thunders at the head of his army; his forces are beyond number, and mighty are those who obey his command. The day of the LORD is great; it is dreadful. Who can endure it?

13. Judah's second call to repentance.

Joe 2:12 "Even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning."

Joe 2:13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Joe 2:14 Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing-- grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God.

Joe 2:15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly.

Joe 2:16 Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber.

Joe 2:17 Let the priests, who minister before the LORD, weep between the temple porch and the altar. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

14. As earlier pointed out Israel has always needed revival and discipline for their failures. While continuing to observe the mechanics of the old covenant, they often were thoughtless in their understanding and careless in their liturgical practices. They were spiritually fruitless and dabbled with idolatry. Joel is convinced Judah's apostasy cannot long be tolerated.

15. Joel not only draws attention to Judah's present spiritual need and the terribleness of the day of the Lord, he also sees a glorious future for those who will return to the Lord.

16. The purpose of Joel's prophecy, then, is to call Judah back to God before the day of the Lord comes, to assure the return of God's blessings, and to promise future restoration and vindication.

17. Discipline, Repentance and then RESTORATION!

Joe 2:18 Then the LORD will be jealous for his land and take pity on his people.

Joe 2:19 The LORD will reply to them: "I am sending you grain, new wine and oil, enough to satisfy you fully; never again will I make you an object of scorn to the nations.

Joe 2:20 "I will drive the northern army far from you, pushing it into a parched and barren land, with its front columns going into the eastern sea and those in the rear into the western sea. And its stench will go up; its smell will rise." Surely he has done great things.

Joe 2:21 Be not afraid, O land; be glad and rejoice. Surely the LORD has done great things.

Joe 2:22 Be not afraid, O wild animals, for the open pastures are becoming green. The trees are bearing their fruit; the fig tree and the vine yield their riches.

Joe 2:23 Be glad O people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you the autumn rains in righteousness. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.

Joe 2:24 The threshing floors will be filled with grain; the vats will overflow with new wine and oil.

Joe 2:25 "I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten-- the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm-- my great army that I sent among you.

Joe 2:26 You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed.

Joe 2:27 Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the LORD your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed.

Joe 2:28 "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.

Joe 2:29 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

Joe 2:30 I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

Joe 2:31 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Joe 2:32 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, among the survivors whom the LORD calls.

17.1 The Nations Are Judged By The Returning Messiah In The Restoration

Joe 3:1 "In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,

Joe 3:2 I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will enter into judgment against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel, for they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land.

Joe 3:3 They cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine that they might drink.

Joe 3:4 "Now what have you against me, O Tyre and Sidon and all you regions of Philistia? Are you repaying me for something I have done? If you are paying me back, I will swiftly and speedily return on your own heads what you have done.

Joe 3:5 For you took my silver and my gold and carried off my finest treasures to your temples.

Joe 3:6 You sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks, that you might send them far from their homeland.

Joe 3:7 "See, I am going to rouse them out of the places to which you sold them, and I will return on your own heads what you have done.

Joe 3:8 I will sell your sons and daughters to the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, a nation far away." The LORD has spoken.

17.2 In The Process of the Restoration the Nations Are Brought To Megiddo and the Last Battle of Armageddon.

Joe 3:9 Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men draw near and attack.

Joe 3:10 Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weakling say, "I am strong!"

Joe 3:11 Come quickly, all you nations from every side, and assemble there. Bring down your warriors, O LORD!

Joe 3:12 "Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the and Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the nations on every side.

Joe 3:13 Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow-- so great is their wickedness!"

Joe 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

Joe 3:15 The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine.

Joe 3:16 The LORD will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the sky will tremble. But the LORD will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.

17.3 Blessings For God's People In God's Restoration

Joe 3:17 "Then you will know that I, the LORD your God, dwell in Zion, my holy hill. Jerusalem will be holy; never again will foreigners invade her.

Joe 3:18 "In that day the mountains will drip new wine, and the hills will flow with milk; all the ravines of Judah will run with water. A fountain will flow out of the LORD'S house and will water the valley of acacias.

Joe 3:19 But Egypt will be desolate, Edom a desert waste, because of violence done to the people of Judah, in whose land they shed innocent blood.

Joe 3:20 Judah will be inhabited forever and Jerusalem through all generations.

Joe 3:21 Their blood guilt, which I have not pardoned, I will pardon." The LORD dwells in Zion!

18. The Locust:

18.1 Despite their clear metaphorical function, the locusts are so dramatically described that their importance is sometimes exaggerated. The Hebrew term translated locust were well known as any number of destructive insects which destroy a farmer's crop.

18.2 The locust describe the invasion of Israel as discipline in the near term; it is predicted but no date is given as to when or by whom.

18.3 The narrative well describes swarms of locusts instinctively doing as they were created, or squadrons of cavalry obediently doing as they were trained.

18.4 The eschatological features of The Day of The Lord passages have led many commentators to connect it with the demonic locusts of Rev 9:1-11.

Rev 9:1 And the fifth angel sounded and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

Rev 9:2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

Rev 9:3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Rev 9:4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

Rev 9:5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

Rev 9:6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

Rev 9:7 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

Rev 9:8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

Rev 9:9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

Rev 9:10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

Rev 9:11 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

19. The Day of the Lord:

19.1 This is a major theme which Joel announced with alarm; he describes the great and dark destruction falling first on Israel and then the nations. This negative aspect however is balanced with a bright picture of restoration.

19.2 The Day of The Lord is that era in which God no longer restrains the full execution of His judgment, but directly intervenes in human society and the cosmos.

19.3 While the negative is first emphasized the positive is presented as an encouragement to the faithful remnant and a motivation to those warned.

19.4 The practical implication is clear: God's judgment is coming soon; there is just enough time to repent effectively, but not enough to delay safely.

20. I think at this point it will be helpful to review the Doctrine of The Day of The Lord.

20.1 The term "day of the Lord" is that period of time when the Lord openly intervenes in the affairs of men.

20.2 It will be inaugurated with the rapture of the Church.

1Co 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

1Co 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

1Co 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1Co 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

1Co 15:54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

1Co 15:55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

1Co 15:56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

1Co 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1Co 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

1Th 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

1Th 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1Th 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

20.3 The day of the Lord covers the time of the coming tribulation (Revelation chapters 6 through 19) and the reign of Christ on David's throne (Revelation chapter 20).

End Lesson