



# Minor Prophets

## Lesson 12

### Joel Chapters 1-3

*Like many of the Minor Prophets, little is known about the author of this short book. No information is given in the text about his background or identity other than he was most likely not a priest. Even the date of his writing is not specific, although there are several references made to Israel's pre-exile state. No mention is made of a monarchy, which could mean the kingdoms no longer existed but had gone into exile, or it could have been written before the kingdoms were established. Similarly, because of the many references made to the priests it could be assumed the Temple was still standing and functional, or it could have been after the return and rebuilding of the Temple. Therefore, the significance of the book will not be found in its specifics, but will be found in its themes of judgment or discipline and repentance and restoration. Joel's prophecy can be viewed in two distinct focal points. Chapters 1-2 focus on the "locust plague" which is also referred to as a vast "northern army" that is reaping destruction on the land. Because of its vividness and accuracy of detail, most theologians agree that this is*

*probably a reference to an actual locust invasion that devastated the region.*

*Chapter 3 focuses on the coming "Day of the Lord" judgment which is also described by many other major and minor prophets. The destruction of the locust in chapters 1-2 is being used as an example of the devastation that takes place when the Lord judges evil and gives recompense to those who have rejected His rule. Sincere and heartfelt repentance and return to obedience is the only remedy for such a serious rebellion as what God's people had participated in. The theme of the Day of the Lord is parallel in many other of the prophets' writings with both past, current, and future application in accordance with whatever specific judgment the prophet is referencing. Joel seems to be making a case for a current agricultural calamity that the Lord is using to get the attention of His people. He also suggests a future and final Day of the Lord judgment at the end of history when God will finalize His covenant promises to His people Israel and bring all those who are saved in the New Covenant into His eternal Kingdom.*

### READ JOEL 1

1. *In Joel 1:2-4, Joel makes the comparison of the coming judgment to that of a locust swarm. Describe another time when God used locust as judgment. Exodus 10:1-5*

2. *How could this event correlate to Deuteronomy 28:15-21 and 37-43?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. *What does Joel recommend they do? 1:8, 11, 13-14. How does that clarify the meaning of true repentance?*

READ JOEL 2

4. *How was the purpose for blowing of the horn in 2:1 different that the purposes 2:15?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. *How does Joel's imagery in 2:10-11 give us the reality of a future Day of the Lord? See Matthew 24:29 and Revelation 8:12.*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. *From 2:12-17, what does God tell them to do to prepare for it? What should that mean to us today if a future Day of the Lord is being referenced also?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. *Who is Joel quoting in his hopeful statement in 2:13? Exodus 34:6*

8. *In 2:18-27, what does God promise if they will trust Him in this?*
9. *Read 2 Chronicles 20 and describe how Jehoshaphat applied the principles of repentance and faith in God from question 6 to his desperate situation.*
10. *What significant event does Joel state will take place before the final Day of the Lord judgment, and when was that fulfilled? Joel 2:28-32, Acts 2:17-21*

READ JOEL 3

11. *In Joel 3:2, 9, 11-13 and Isaiah 34:1-4, to whom is God directing His Day of the Lord judgment?*
12. *Where will the judgment of the nations take place (3:2, 12), and why is that significant in light of question 9?*



*The prophecy related to Armageddon predicts “he gathered them into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” (Revelation 16:16)*

*Armageddon is a place that is to be the focal point of a world conflict where the nations will be gathered for war.*

*As noted before, the prophet Joel refers to the Valley of Jehoshaphat twice in chapter 3 as a place where the nations will be gathered for judgement (Joel 3:2, 1113). In a third place in this same chapter, Joel refers to “multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the LORD (Yahweh) is near in the valley of decision.” The word “DECISION” is more accurately rendered “concision” or “threshing.” This establishes a very clear link between Revelation 16:16 referred to before, and the references in chapter 3 of the prophecy of Joel.*

*The reference to Armageddon in Rev 16:16, “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” is very closely linked to Joel 3:14, “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision (or threshing).” This link can be related to the battle that will take place when Yehshua returns to set up God’s kingdom on earth. The connection is established by the meaning of the word Armageddon, which as already shown signifies, “a heap of sheaves in a valley for judgement.”*

*In relation to the Valley of Jehoshaphat in Joel 3, it is recorded, “I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat,” (verse 2) and “let the heathen be wakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge round about.” (verse 12)*

*Geographers tell us that there was no such physical place as the Valley of Jehoshaphat. This seems to be an anomaly, but it appears to have an important connection with Armageddon considering the strong connection between the references in Revelation and Joel to “a heap of sheaves in a valley for judgement,” and “a valley of threshing.” Both references are to a battle of the Lord like no other recorded in the Bible.*

*We need to refer to 2 Chronicles 20. This is where it is recorded that Yahweh destroyed, without the people of Israel having to fight the enemies of Judah, in the time of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. This was a miraculous victory for Israel and brings to mind that reference in Zechariah 14:3 which says, “then shall Yahweh go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle.”*

*From 2 Chronicles 20, the following facts emerge. Jehoshaphat, whose name means “Yahweh will judge”, witnessed a battle which required no fighting by the people of Judah, Israel. Forces led by Ammon, Moab and Mt Seir had assembled in Engedi against Judah. The people of Judah were in great fear and gathered with Jehoshaphat before the Temple in Jerusalem to pray and seek Yahweh’s help. It is interesting to note here that this was in accordance with the prayer of Solomon at the time of the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 8). Jahaziel in “the spirit of Yahweh” revealed to them that “the battle is not yours but God’s.”*

*~Comments quoted from BibleFocus.net*

***Prayer requests:***

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***Group time notes:***

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