

# JOEL

Week 1: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012 (Joel 1)

---

## Into the Bible

1. The Locust plague of Joel is no surprise. Look at the following two passages and observe why a plague of locusts may have destroyed the land.
  - Deuteronomy 28:15
  - Deuteronomy 28:36-42
  
- Deuteronomy 28:49-52 talks of other results of Israel's sin. Compare this passage with Joel chapter 2:1-11. What do you observe?
  
2. Joel 1:8 calls the people to mourn. The Bible never avoids mourning as a response. Look at these verses and describe the reason for and result of mourning.
  - Nehemiah 1:3-7
  - Ecclesiastes 7:2-4
  - Joel 2:12
  - Matthew 5:4
  - 2 Corinthians 7:8-11
  - Revelation 21:4
  
3. Joel calls for the people to declare a holy fast and call a sacred assembly. In Ezra 9:4-10:6 there is an account of such a sacred assembly, and another in Nehemiah 9:1-10:39. What principles can we learn about how we respond to the Lord from these two passages?

## Application

1. When disaster strikes how should we respond as followers of Jesus? If possible, share in your group some real life examples and discuss how you did respond and what you learned.
2. In what ways do you ensure that you are always hearing and obeying the Lord?
3. How does the nearness of the "day of the Lord" (that is, the return of the Lord to bring all things under his rule) affect the way you live your life? Or does it?

## Going beyond

1. The Day of the Lord is a period of time where God will bring all things back under his own rule. There are a number of different events that will occur in this time. What events are outlined in the verses below?
  - 1 Corinthians 15:24-28
  - Isaiah 11:1-16
  - Daniel 9:25-27
  - Daniel 12:1-4
  - Joel 3:1
  - Ezekiel 37:21-23
  - Ezekiel 38:1-23
  - 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
  - 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10
  - Revelation 6:12-17
  - Revelation 9:20-21
  - Revelation 14:6-7
  - Revelation 19:11-21
  - Revelation 20:1-3
  - Revelation 20:11-15
  - Revelation 21:1-4

## Into the Bible

1. Read Joel 2:1-11.

- What is your first reaction to this passage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- What is the 'army' referred to here? Refer to 2:25.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Why do you think the Lord calls for the alarm to be sounded (2:1) before his 'army' sweeps over the land?

2. Read Joel 2:12-17. This is a call to deep repentance, with a profound promise of forgiveness.

- Discuss verse 13 which repeats a rich statement about the character of God first revealed to Moses in Exodus 34:5-7. Also see Nehemiah 9:7 and Psalm 103 to get a sense of how these attributes of God have been revealed in the history of Israel.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- What is your reaction to the comparison between this passage (12-17) and the opening passage of this chapter (1-11)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- What do the following verses teach us about God's heart for those who have rejected Him? Hosea 14:1-3, Ezekiel 18:23 and 33:11, 2 Peter 3:9.

3. Read Joel 2:18-27. What promises does God make in this passage? Are they conditional?

4. Read Joel 2:28-32. Where do we find the fulfillment of verses 28-29? If God has fulfilled this part of the prophecy, do you think he will fulfill the rest of it?

## Application

1. Joel 2:12 and 2:15 refer to fasting as part of a heartfelt turning towards God. Have you ever fasted to seek God? According to the wider context of Joel 2:12-17, what is fasting a sign of, and how should we approach it?

2. Joel 2:16-17 paints a picture of people dropping everything to seek God where they are. When was the last time you did this? Could you set aside some time this week, and if necessary cancel some plans to draw near to God?

3. What promise is offered to those who seek God in 2:14 and 2:28-29?

## Going beyond

The fulfillment of Joel 2:31 is described in Revelation 6:12. What is the context here? When will these acts of judgement take place? What assurance does God give in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 to those who have put their hope in Him?

## Into the Bible

1. Read Joel 3:1-8.

- Why does God say he will judge the nations?

- What form will the judgment take?

2. Read Joel 3:9-16.

- Where else in Scripture are the signs of Joel 3:15 described? See Isaiah 13:10, Revelation 6:12-13.

3. Psalm 2 speaks of the nations opposing God's people and His plan. Read the Psalm and consider the following questions:

- How does Acts 4:23-29 indicate this Psalm has been partly fulfilled in Jesus?

- What warning and what assurance are given in Psalm 2:12? Compare this verse with Joel 3:16.

4. Read Joel 3:17-21. What promises does God make here?

5. What is God's final and greatest promise to His people in verse 21? How has this been fulfilled?

## Application

1. In Matthew 24 Jesus refers to the events of Joel 3:15/Isaiah 13:10 in his teachings about end times. What does he tell us to do in light of the signs of the times in:

- Matthew 24:29-33.

- Matthew 24:42-46.

2. What does it mean in practice to live in light of the return of Jesus and the Day of the Lord when Jesus comes to bring all things under his rule? See Romans 13:8-14.

## Going beyond

Joel 3:18 refers to a fountain flowing from the Lord's house, that is, the temple. Where else do we see this phenomenon referred to in Scripture, and what is its significance? See Psalm 46:4, Isaiah 41:18-19, Ezekiel 47:1-12 (also compare Revelation 22:1-2 with this passage).