

## The Day of the Lord

## The Book of Joel

Not much is known about the prophet Joel except for what's in this book!

The only detail Joel gives us in the introduction is who his Father is!

On Father's Day, what a blessing to think about this one specific detail!

Joel's name means "Yahweh is God", another worthy Father's Day highlight!

The focus of Joel's prophecy is the "Day of the Lord", which represents times when God directly intervenes in a dramatic way to bring about His judgment/wrath on the wicked, and His grace & salvation on the righteous!

There are 17 specific references to the "Day of the Lord" in the O.T.  
5 of those are in the book of Joel. There are 4 more references in the N.T.

The specific "Day of the Lord" that Joel speaks to at the beginning of the book, is when God will send the Babylonian army to bring judgment upon His people!

He points to that coming day of judgment by drawing an analogy between that day, and the current crisis they were facing with a plague of locusts!

**Joel 1** - The locusts had brought widespread destruction - to crops, livestock, livelihoods, even their worship! But something worse was coming!

It would be like me saying that this "Day of the Lord" will be like our Covid-19 pandemic, with great loss of life, jobs, autonomy, independence, again even worship. And as bad as that was/is, something far worse was still ahead!

Joel caught a glimpse of such things - the fall of Jerusalem, the exile of God's people, etc. He tried to warn them! But his warnings fell on deaf ears!

Sometimes we too, just like God's people in Joel's day, lose sight of what is ahead of us because we are so focused on what we are experiencing right now!

When things are going great, we often get lost in our temporary pleasures. When things are bad, like 2020/21, we can't imagine things getting worse! But a day of reckoning is coming for us too! Locusts & viruses are only precursors!

Joel knew this and tried to warn the people! "Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near..." - Joel 2:1

But there is also another side to the "Day of the Lord!" Read Joel 2:12-17!

There is always hope with God, who is our good, good Father!

- "Rend your hearts and not your garments" – Vs. 13
- "Return to the Lord your God, for He is..." - Vs. 13
- "He relents over disaster." – Vs. 13

If the people of God would have responded to Him in such ways, they would not have had to fear such judgment & wrath! God had provided a way!

Unfortunately, they did not listen to Joel's words of warning! They did not "return to the Lord" & "rend their hearts", and the Babylonians came like a plague of locusts and brought about great destruction upon God's people!

But Joel, knowing that this would be the outcome, speaks of another coming "Day of the Lord" that will yield a different future! **Joel 2:28-32**

Pentecost was coming! God's Spirit would one day pour out over His people and enable them to respond to the call of God on their lives!

For God's people in Joel's day, this "Day of the Lord" had not yet come. For us today, it has already taken place, & we have the opportunity to live into that future! But we too must call upon the name of the Lord, as Joel declared!

There is still a day of reckoning before us all, the "Day of the Lord" when Jesus Christ returns as judge! He will come to judge the living & the dead, and there will be great joy & great sorrow, salvation & condemnation!

The question will be, "What side of Christ's judgment will we be on?"  
What will that "Day of the Lord" look like for us?

A final analogy – That day will be like two opposite extremes of what happens when a child encounters the return of his/her father from work!

- Some children come running & jump into their dad's arms b/c they know that they belong, they are loved, & that their place is in His loving arms!
- Others run and hide because they know that they have been disobedient and they fear the wrath of the father upon them! Which one will it be?

Let us not forget that the children who run into the Father's arms don't do so because they are perfect children, but because they have a perfect substitute that paid the debt they owed! And in exchange they were given the status of "beloved child!" Jesus is our hope for the "Day of the Lord"!

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