



Overview for Joel

Purpose: The prophecy warned of God's future judgment on those who oppose Him, persecute His Church, oppress the Jewish nation, or generally sin against Him. Joel presented the possibility of God turning from judgment to blessing if the unrighteous would repent. This book was written to warn the people to turn back to God and prepare for the "day of the Lord," the time of great future crisis when God will destroy His enemies and set up His Kingdom on earth.

Author: Joel, whose name means "Jehovah is God." Nothing is known about Joel other than that he was the son of Pethuel. He was possibly an inhabitant of Jerusalem.

To Whom Written: The people of Judah (the Southern Kingdom), and God's people everywhere, until the return of the Lord.

Date Written: Unknown, but Christian scholars maintain a very early date for Joel, estimating between 837 B.C. to 796 B.C. Historians believe that Joel's writings were compiled about 400 B.C.

Setting: The people of Judah had become wealthy and complacent, and had turned to idolatry. The prophet rebuked their self-centeredness, and warned

that this type of lifestyle would result in God's judgment. References within the book to "blowing the trumpet," "solemn assemblies," and "consecrating a fast," suggest that the prophecy may have been issued from the Temple court.

Key People: Joel and the people of Judah.

Summary: The Book of Joel opens with a vivid description of an unprecedented plague of locusts (Joel 1:1 — 2:11). In verse 15 of chapter 1, the prophet introduced a key point of the book: the day of the Lord. The plague was then used as a type of coming judgment upon Israel.

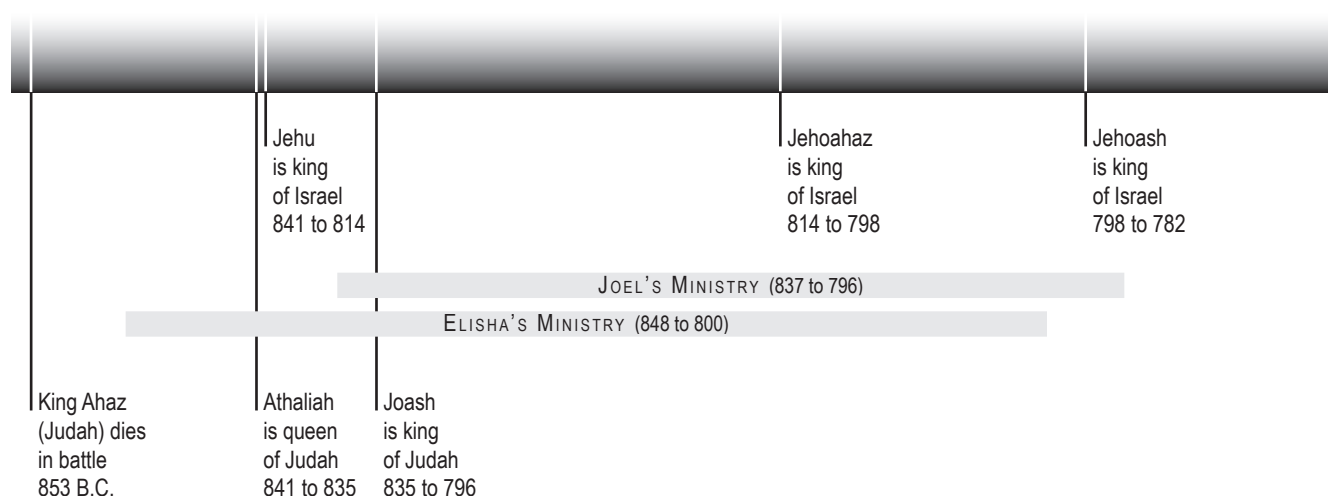
In the second segment of the book (Joel 2:12-19), the prophet called the people to repentance. He promised a return of God's blessing if the people would repent and turn from their sins. The hope of future blessings is described in verses 20-32.

In chapter 3, the prophet foretold the day of Jehovah, in which judgment will be poured out upon unbelievers. In conclusion, the triumph of Jerusalem and the redeemed is described in Joel 3:18-21.

Perhaps Joel's most profound contribution was the promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and during the latter rain (Joel 2:28-32).

Timeline

Some dates are approximate, as reference materials differ.



Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.

- I. Introduction (1:1)
- II. The day of the Lord in Joel's time (1:2-20)
 - A. The disastrous locust plague (1:2-14)
 - B. The disastrous drought (1:15-20)
- III. The day of the Lord in the latter time (2:1 — 3:21)
 - A. The invasion from the north (2:1-11)
 - B. The challenge to the people (2:12-17)
 - C. The restoration of Israel (2:18-32)
 - D. The judgment of the nations (3:1-17)
 - E. The blessing of Israel (3:18-21)