

JOEL

JOEL — GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Joel was probably the earliest of the prophets whose writings have descended to us. His personal history is unknown further than the bare statement (1:1). His field of labor was presumably Judah rather than Israel, the southern rather than the northern kingdom, because of allusions to the center of public worship which was at Jerusalem (1:9, 13-14; 2:15), and because of non-allusions to Israel distinctively. Such places as 2:27, and 3:16 are thought to mean Israel as inclusive of Judah, i.e., the whole united nation. Although it is assumed that Joel was the earliest of the prophets, the evidence is inferential rather than direct. He is presumably earlier than Amos who is known to have prophesied somewhere about the close of the eighth century B.C., because he seems to be quoted by ^{<1056>}Amos 5:16-18. He also refers to the same heathen nations as ^{<1086>}Amos 3:4-6, and to the same physical scourges as prevalent in the land (1:4, 17, 20). (Compare the marginal references to Amos.)

OUTLINE OF JOEL

Joel 1

Introduction (vv. 1-3)

Announcement of a coming judgment of locusts (vv. 4-5)

Announcement of the coming judgment from the heathen nations, of which that of the locusts is a type (vv. 6-7)

A lamentation of sorrow (vv. 8-12)

A call to repentance (vv. 13-20)

Joel 2

A recurrence to the same judgments (vv. 1-3)

A description of their executioners in which there is a blending of the idea of the locusts with that of the warriors. The picture is made

vivid by the use of the present tense in the Revised Version (vv. 4-11)

A call to repentance (vv. 12-17)

A promise of future blessing (vv. 18-32)

a. The enemies overthrown (vv. 18-20)

b. The land blessed (vv. 21-27)

c. The Holy Spirit poured out (vv. 28-32)

JOEL 3

This chapter returns to the future blessing spoken of in the preceding chapter, for the purpose of amplifying some of its features, a peculiarity of all the prophets, as was indicated in one of our earlier lessons:

The overthrow of the enemy (vv. 1-15)

The deliverance of Jerusalem (vv. 16-17)

The blessing on the land (v. 18)

The permanency of the restoration (vv. 19-20)

QUESTIONS

1. What chronological relation does Joel bear to the other prophets?
2. To which kingdom were his messages sent?
3. What proof is there of this?
4. What future blessings are predicted for Israel?
5. When was the prophecy of 2:28-32 partially fulfilled?