Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 421 – The Word Comes To Joel Through Devoured Pastures (Joel 1:1-20)

1. As the word of the Lord came to Joel, what did he tell the old men and the inhabitants of the land to do with what they were going to hear?

Tell it to their children and them to their children: *"(1) The word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. (2) Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? (3) Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation"* (**Joel 1:1-3**).

- From contextual clues, it appears that Joel was a prophet before captivity (**Joel 2:1** and **Joel 3:1**). The rising of Judah and the fall of Egypt and Edom (**Joel 3:17-21**) came about after Judah went into Babylonian captivity (**Jeremiah 46:19** and **Ezekiel 25:12-14**). However, this book also references Grecian captivity (**Joel 3:1-6**). It could be the whole scope of these combined events.
- For lessons on Grecian captivity see **Daniel 8:1-27**, **Daniel 10:1-21**, and **Daniel 11:1-45**.
- Joel's message is that judgment was at hand (**Joel 1:15**; cf. **Zephaniah 1:1-7**).
- The word of the Lord came to Joel (**Genesis 15:1**, **I Samuel 15:10**, **II Samuel 24:11**, **I Kings 6:11**, **I Kings 13:20**, **I Kings 16:1**, **I Kings 17:1-8**, **I Kings 18:1**, **I Kings 21:17**, **I Kings 21:28**, **II Kings 20:4**, **I Chronicles 22:8**, **II Chronicles 11:1-2**, **Isaiah 38:4**, **Jeremiah 1:1-13**, **Jeremiah 34:1**, **Ezekiel 1:3**, **Daniel 9:1-2**, **Hosea 1:1**, **Jonah 1:1**, **Micah 1:1**, **Zephaniah 1:1**, **Haggai 1:1-3**, and **Zechariah 1:1**).
- From the old men to all the other inhabitants of the land, they need to hear what Joel was about to prophesy (**Isaiah 1:10**, **Jeremiah 7:1-2**, and **Matthew 13:9**). They weren't always willing to listen (**Jeremiah 5:20-21** and **Jeremiah 6:10**).
- Examining their days and the days of their fathers has multiple purposes (**Ezra 9:7**, **Malachi 3:7**, and **I Corinthians 10:1-13**).
- Passing on the word of God from generation to generation (**Deuteronomy 6:1-12**, **Deuteronomy 31:19**, **Psalms 44:1**, and **Ephesians 6:4**).

2. In this context, what is Joel prophesying about concerning the land?

That it's going to be a wasteland: *"(4) That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpiller eaten. (5) Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth. (6) For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. (7) He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white. (8) Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. (9) The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn. (10) The field is*

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wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth" (**Joel 1:4-10**).

- The palmerworm is a kind of locust (Strong's # 1501). The were devouring insects (**Amos 4:9**).
- Joel will later say that there will be restoration of what was eaten (**Joel 2:25**).
- The point of verse 4 is that whatever was left to be eaten of their crops was taken by the next line of insects to infest. This is like to what happened in Egypt (**Psalms 105:26-35**).
- The language of awake (**Romans 13:11-14, I Corinthians 15:34**, and **Ephesians 5:14**).
- As a result of their drunken complacency, the invader is coming (**Amos 6:1-7**).
- This nation that is coming against Judah is strong, innumerable, like a lion, etc. (**Isaiah 5:20-30**, **Jeremiah 4:5-9**, and **Joel 2:1-11**).
- This invading army will have laid waste the vine of the Lord (**Isaiah 5:1-10**).
- The illustration of the lamentation like a virgin for the husband of her youth (**Isaiah 32:9-20**). Think of a betrothed woman who had lost her to be husband (**Deuteronomy 20:7**).
- Their worship cut off (**Hosea 9:4**). This happened in Babylonian captivity (**II Chronicles 36:9-21**) and under the Grecian Empire (**Daniel 8:13-14** and **Daniel 11:21-35**).
- The wasted field (**Jeremiah 12:5-12** and **Jeremiah 14:1-6**).

3. What reaction was supposed to come from the husbandmen and vinedressers?

They were to be ashamed: *"(11) Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. (12) The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men"* (**Joel 1:11-12**).

- We know that, in the likely future from what this prophet is saying, God's people refused to feel ashamed for their sins (**Jeremiah 6:15** and **Jeremiah 8:12**).
- Repentance though requires shame, self-abhorance, godly sorrow, etc. (**Job 42:1-6**, **Ezekiel 36:31-32**, and **II Corinthians 7:9-10**).
- Their unfruitful results needed to be a driving force of change (**Romans 6:20-21**).

4. What were the priests told to do?

Lament and sanctify a fast in a solemn assembly: *"(13) Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God. (14) Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD"* (**Joel 1:13-14**).

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- Now the priests are directly dealt with in similar points as we have already discussed. The priests needed to take actions indicative of repentance (**Nehemiah 10:28-39**) because they were corrupt (**Ezra 9:7**, **Isaiah 9:16**, **Isaiah 28:7-9**, **Isaiah 56:10-12**, **Jeremiah 5:31**, and **Lamentations 4:13**).

5. Was "the day of the Lord" in this context a day of joyous occasion?

No: *"(15) Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. (16) Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? (17) The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. (18) How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. (19) O LORD, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. (20) The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness"* (**Joel 1:15-20**).

- The phrase "The day of the lord" is used when God brought judgment upon sinful people/nations (**Isaiah 2:12**, **Isaiah 13:1-9**, **Isaiah 34:8**, **Ezekiel 13:5**, **Ezekiel 30:1-3**, **Joel 2:11**, **Amos 5:18-20**, **Obadiah 1:15**, and **Zephaniah 1:7-18**). It is even a phrase that will, though not in this context, apply to the end of the world (**II Peter 3:9-14**).
- Then, as this chapter concludes, they are set forth to consider how their food, fields, the animals, etc. are all going to suffer from what is going to come upon them (**Jeremiah 7:20**, **Jeremiah 32:43**, and **Lamentations 5:7-11**).

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