



LOGOS



Joel

Session 8: Joel  
10 October 2023



Joel

Statement from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of York

“We are grieved and deeply concerned at the violence in Israel and Gaza, and we unequivocally condemn the attacks by Hamas. We pray for those who are mourning, those who are injured, and all those fearing for their safety. We pray for restraint on all sides, and renewed efforts towards a just peace for all. The way forward must be for both sides to build confidence in a secure future through which Israel and its people can live in security within its internationally recognised borders, and Palestinians have their own state and live in their lands in security, and with peace and justice.”



The Book of the Twelve

8<sup>th</sup> Century BCE – Isaiah

Amos

Hosea

Micah

7<sup>th</sup> Century BCE – Jeremiah

Nahum

Zephaniah

Habakkuk

6<sup>th</sup> Century BCE – Ezekiel

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

The outliers- likely postexilic

Jonah

Obadiah

Joel

# Authorship and Setting



Little known about the author.

Most likely to be post exilic with a little editing as the book makes reference to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple and the walls of Jerusalem having already been built.



# Literary Style

Two sections

1.1-2.7, 2.28-end, differences to Hebrew book



Joel

Section 1 – swarm of locusts,  
then use as metaphor for Day of the Lord.

Section 2 – uses the imagery of the first section predicts the  
future Day of the Lord.

Woven use of other texts:

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Obadiah, Amos.

Used in New Testament Texts/Festivals:

Pentecost (Acts)

Romans 10 - gospel

Ash Wednesday



# Key Themes

The Day of the Lord

- Holy War

Valley of Jehoshaphat

- valley of Yahweh's judgement/decision

Salvation and judgment

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# The Locust Swarm



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1.4 What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten.  
What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten.  
What the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten...

1.8-12 Lament...

the crops are ruined, the vine withers, the trees are dried up.

1.13-20 Put on sackcloth and lament...

Call a fast, cry to the Lord.

Alas for **the day of the Lord** is near.



# The Day of the Lord – 4 images 2.1-17

v.1, 11, 15-16 Sound the war trumpets – God sounds the warning and is the commander of the army attacking.

v.3-9 The locusts as metaphor.

v.2, 3, 6, Darkness and anguish, fear and trembling.  
Traditional images of the DOTL.

v.2-3, 10-11, God's theophany – the cosmos is affected by God's appearance

Truly **the day of the Lord** is great;  
terrible indeed – who can endure it?



# A call to repentance 2.12-17



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Return to me with all your heart...

rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Return to the Lord for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
and relents from punishing.



# Oracle of Salvation 2.18-27



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Do not fear, O soil...do not fear, you animals...

O children of Zion be glad...

for he has given the early rain for your vindication.

The threshing floors shall be full, the vats overflow with wine.

I will repay for the years the swarming locusts have eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army which I sent against you.

Salvation =

God's actions to restore people to covenant communion.



## Section 2 – The Future Day of the Lord

2.28-32 Outpouring of God's Spirit (Acts 2.17-21 at Pentecost)  
a shift from Word (writing prophets)  
to Spirit (Samuel and Saul, [Isaiah 61], Jesus)

2.32 Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Roman 10.12-13

<sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. <sup>13</sup> For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

# Section 2 – The Future Day of the Lord

## 3.1-21 Judgement and Salvation

### 1. Court Case – God is judge of the nations (3.1-8)

God owns the land. It is lent to Israel, but he will judge them for their actions (covenant) and other nations.

Evil begets evil, the weakest suffer, and God judges.

The court then shifts to a battle in v 9.

# Section 2 – The Future Day of the Lord

## 3.1-21 Judgement and Salvation

### 2. The Valley of Jehoshaphat (3.9-16)

Valley of Kidron (West Bank)?

Valley of Yahweh's judgement or decision

I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and I will enter into judgement with them there (v.2).

Prepare for war, stir up the warriors. Let the soldiers draw near, let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the child say, 'I am a warrior' (v.9-10).  
(reversal of Isaiah 2)

## Section 2 – The Future Day of the Lord

### 3.1-21 Judgement and Salvation

v.11 Shifts to the angelic force which God calls down to bring judgement to the nations gathered.

v.13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.

Go in, tread, for the wine press is full.

The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.

The image of judgement is a harvest of grain and wine.

# Section 2 – The Future Day of the Lord

## 3.1-21 Judgement and Salvation

<sup>14</sup> Multitudes, multitudes,  
in the valley of decision!

For the day of the Lord is near  
in the valley of decision.

<sup>15</sup> The sun and the moon are darkened,  
and the stars withdraw their shining.

<sup>16</sup> The Lord roars from Zion,  
and utters his voice from Jerusalem,  
and the heavens and the earth shake.

But the Lord is a refuge for his people,  
a stronghold for the people of Israel.

# Section 2 – The Future Day of the Lord

## 3.1-21 Judgement and Salvation

The book end by emphasising the covenant with Israel and God's judgement of other nations (v.17-21).



# Group Discussion

**Reflect on the message of Joel**

What are your thoughts and questions?

**Joel as an Old Testament text and a Christian text.**

Joel ends by reminding the reader of the covenant with Israel.

New Testament writers take the message of salvation to mean the extension of the covenant beyond Israel to everyone who calls on the name of the Lord. Discuss.

**How might Joel act as a text to speak into our current context?**



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Jonah

Session 9: Jonah  
14 November 2023