

Commentary Notes - Joel

by Walter Beuttler

Walter Beuttler's sermon on the Book of Joel emphasizes God's call to repentance and the promise of restoration amidst judgment.

Scripture: Joel 1:4, Joel 2:12, Joel 2:28, Joel 3:17, Matthew 24:29, Acts 2:16

Topics: "Divine Judgment", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

Walter Beuttler preaches on the Book of Joel, highlighting the devastation caused by locusts as a divine chastisement, leading to the end of daily sacrifices. Joel's prophecy uses this calamity to foreshadow the greater day of the Lord, emphasizing the urgency of repentance and the call to true revival. The prophet Joel, son of Pethuel, prophesies to Judah, recognizing the continuous government of God and the need for repentance and spiritual renewal.

Transcript

A. THE BOOK OF JOEL

1. The immediate occasion of this prophecy is the devastation of the land by locusts
2. This plague was without parallel in the memory of even the oldest inhabitants and was so severe that it brought the daily sacrifices to an end
3. Authentic accounts of the effects produced by an invasion of locusts confirm in all points the description of Joel
4. Though Moses had mentioned locusts as one of the instruments of divine chastisement in Deut. 28:38-39, it had not been recognized as such
5. The book of Joel employs this unparalleled calamity to foreshadow a still greater one to come, namely the day of the Lord at the end of the dispensation of grace marked by great convulsions and extraordinary phenomena
6. The key phrase of the book is "the day of the Lord"

B. THE PROPHET JOEL

1. Nothing is known about Joel except that he was "the son of Pethuel" and prophesied to Judah

2. Joel recognized the continuing activity of the government of God expressed in the words "the day of the Lord." Whether it had come, whether it was imminent, or whether it would ultimately come, every day was "the day of the Lord" to Joel
3. The prophet sees the lowest depths of declension, the lowest ebb of spiritual weakness, but also the highest heights of glorious holiness and supernatural prosperity
4. He touches the extremities of spiritual potentiality from the rottenness of absolute corruption to the glowing zenith of Pentecostal vitality; from utter collapse to ringing Holy Ghost revival
5. With such a vision Joel puts his trumpet to his mouth and faithfully blows his God-appointed message. Thus Joel is the prophet of Pentecost, Acts 2:1-18

C. THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK

1. God's trumpet call to repentance
2. God's way to true revival
3. God's ultimate remedy for sin

(With due acknowledgment to Pulpit Commentary and Harold Horton in the Pentecostal Evangel)

A. THE DESOLATION, 1:1-20

1. To whom, in general, was this message addressed and why,
 - 1:2? To the older generation because of their experience and greater observation
2. How severe was this destruction, 1:2? It was without parallel in the memory of even the oldest inhabitants
3. To what is the prophet exhorting the older inhabitants in:
 - (1) 1:2? To reflect on the implication of this calamity of unprecedented drought
 - (2) 1:3? To impress their children and succeeding generations with the severity of this visitation of God in judgment as a warning to them
4. Point out the cause of this severe desolation, 1:4: It was caused by a plague of four different species of locusts, namely:
 - (1) The palmerworm, lit., the "gnawer" or "biter"
 - (2) The locust, lit., the "multitudinous one"
 - (3) The cankerworm, lit., the "licker"
 - (4) The caterpillar, lit., the "devourer"
5. Identify the nation referred to in 1:6: The hordes of locusts (compare Prov. 30:25 for use of "people") as the divine instrumentality which occasioned the great destruction through sheer strength of number and

voraciousness

6. To what is the congregation called in 1:8? To deepest sorrow in the manner of a betrothed maiden whose bridegroom dies before the wedding so that, instead of wearing a wedding dress, she now wears the garment of mourning

B. THE DESOLATION, 1:1-20 (cont'd)

1. Note the three classes of people called upon to lament and point out the reasons from:

(1) 1:5- The drunkards, because they were deprived of their favorite means of indulgence

(2) 1:11 - The husbandmen, because of the loss of their means of livelihood

(3) 1:13 - The priests, because of the loss of the means for maintenance of the offerings

2. Specifically, what was lacking for the worship of Jehovah, 1:10?

(1) Corn (grain), which was needed for the meat (meal) offering, Lev. 2:1, 12-16

(2) Wine, which was needed for the drink offering, Lev. 23:13

(3) Oil, which was needed for the meal offering, Lev. 2:1-4, 15, and for the light, Lev. 24:1-4

3. What is apparent from 1:12? That there was also a very severe drought

4. To what does God call his people in 1:13-14?

(1) To lamentation and repentance because of the forced cessation of the daily sacrifices

(2) To fasting and supplication for divine intervention in the national catastrophe

5. Comment on 1:15-20: This account of the devastation was given to justify the urgency of the appeal and to incite the people to a wholehearted response.

C. CALL TO REPENTANCE, 2:1-17

1. What is to be done in Zion, 2:1? To sound an alarm in order to arouse the people in view of the approaching day of the Lord

2. This coming day of the Lord will be characterized by what, 2:2? By unprecedented affliction caused by an implacable enemy

3. What is described in 2:3-9? The amazing characteristics of the army of locusts and the awful effects of their invasion

4. Comment on 2:10-11 in the light of the context and Matt. 24:29: This present and temporary visitation of locusts was evidently intended to be a type foreshadowing the yet future and final judgment of the day of the Lord

5. To what are the people exhorted in 2:12-14? To mourning and repentance of heart for their sins, not merely to an exhibition of external signs of grief without any corresponding inward feeling of sorrow of

heart

6. Why does God call attention to his character in the exhortation to his people, 2:13? To give the people an incentive to respond with the expectation that God will respond to their response

7. To what are the people called in 2:15-17? To an outward manifestation of their inward repentance in intercession and supplication

RESTORATION OF ISRAEL, 2:18-3:21

A. THE LORD'S RESPONSE, 2:18-32

1. How does God respond in:

(1) 2:19? He answers the people's prayer

(2) 2:20? He delivers them from the invader

(3) 2:21-23? He sends rain and verdure

(4) 2:24? He supplies their needs in abundance

(5) 2:25? He restores their losses

(6) 2:26-27? He gives them a new appreciation of God's might in judgment and mercy in repentance

2. To what does "the northern army" in 2:20 apply?

(1) Locally, to the hordes of locusts

(2) Prophetically, to the armies invading Palestine during the battle of Armageddon

3. What effect will the fulfillment of 2:24 have? It will cause the resumption of the daily sacrifices

4. Comment on 2:28-29 in the light of Acts 2:16-18:

(1) The word "afterward" in Joel 2:28 actually refers to "the last days"

(2) The promise of Joel 2:28-29 was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost and continues to be fulfilled "during the last days," Acts 2:38-39

(3) God's call to repentance in 2:1-17 evidently had a local as well as a prophetic meaning

(4) The prophetic aspect of this repentance related to:

a. The repentant sinners who come to Christ during the church age

b. The Jews who repent during the siege of Jerusalem prior to the return of Christ, Zech. 12:9-14

5. Comment on 2:30-32 in the light of Matt. 24:29-30:

(1) The prediction of Joel 2:30-32 will be fulfilled many centuries after the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-29

(2) These terrestrial and celestial phenomena are signs preceding the second advent of Christ at the end of the great tribulation and prior to the setting up of the millennium

B. ISRAEL'S RESTORATION, 3:1-21

1. "Those days," 3:1, refer to what time? To re-gathered Israel prior to the coming of the Lord, Ezek. 37:21-28

2. To what does the gathering of all nations in 3:2 refer? To the gathering of the Gentile nations in Palestine during the great tribulation, culminating in Christ's intervention to save his people from annihilation, Zech. 12:1-9

3. Comment on the reference to "the valley of Jehoshaphat" in 3:2:

(1) Also called the valley of decision in 3:14, the valley of Jehoshaphat is said to be the Kidron valley which separates Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives

(2) The prophet emphasizes Christ's glorious intervention by calling attention to Jehoshaphat's victory over Israel's neighboring nations several decades before

4. Of what does God complain in 3:2-8? Of the mistreatment to which his people were subjected at the hands of the Gentile nations

5. What is predicted in:

(1) 3:9-10? World-rearmament by Gentile nations

(2) 3:11-16? The gathering of the nations in Palestine for the judgment of the Lord

(3) 3:17-21? Christ's millennial reign in Zion

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