

Joel: The Prophet of Fire
God's Remedy for National Crisis, Part II
Joel 2:28-32
Pastor Phil Winfield
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God communicates to his people. He can speak in a still small voice or he can use a hammer. In Joel he uses a hammer.

Joel is unlike some of the more well known prophets that we are familiar with. Daniel for instance was around a very long time. He in fact came on the scene during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar lasted through a couple of upheavals in government and actually served Darius and Cyrus and later served notice of doom to Nebuchadnezzar's grandson Belshazzar. He lived for a long time on the pages of scripture. Isaiah may have ministered for 50 years. Jeremiah wrote both a long and a short book and lived on the pages of Bible history for many years. But Joel is one of those prophets that just showed up, spoke up and shut up. He announced, "The day of the locust, The day of the Lord, and even forecast the day of the Antichrist." He finally ends with the day of restoration. The he disappeared from the Bible narrative. God can get his message out. As we have seen he can do it with the preaching of his word or with hurricanes and earthquakes. But God can speak.

1) God has a prescription for repentance – (verse 12-17)

- a) Repentance takes time
 - i) The time is now
 - ii) The time is plenty – It's not too late.
- b) Repentance is heart-rending. Verse 1
- c) Repentance is not found in ritual. Verse 13 -
- d) Repentance is a step toward God verse 13
- e) Repentance should be public.
 - i) The elders, The children the young the old, the rich the poor, everyone.
 - ii) Stop the show for once and get right with God.
 - iii) Stop the Church Show...

(1) Humiliation comes before celebration.

(a) 1 Peter 5:5-7 “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”⁶Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,⁷casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

2) God makes promises to the repentant verse 18-27

- a) God **relents** when we repent – verse 18
- b) God promises **prosperity** when we repent - verse 19,
- c) God promises **protection** (personal and national) when we repent – verse 20
- d) God promises **continuing prosperity** when we repent – verse 23-24.
- e) God promises to **give back the past** when we repent. Verse 25-27

i) What the locusts of life have eaten God can give back. The years you lose in sin God can make a thing of the past. The years you lost in self absorption God can make you forget.

- (1) No more barrenness
- (2) No more fruitlessness
- (3) No more shamefulness

ii) Only God can do something about your past. We can turn over all the new leaves we want, we can make resolutions, we can make promises but none of those deal with the past.

(1) Locust plagues of the past:

(a) Public sins:

- (i) Addictions
- (ii) Habits
- (iii) Hate
- (iv) Envy
- (v) Strife
- (vi) Unforgiveness
- (vii) Self absorption
- (viii) Selfishness

(b) Private sins:

- (i) Pornography
- (ii) Physical and mental fornications
- (iii) Unfaithfulness

- (iv) Indifference
- (v) Apathy
- (vi) Lost opportunity
- iii) He gives contentment – verse 26
- iv) He gives us a reason to praise – verse 26
- v) The only thing he takes away is our shame. – verse 27

3) God gives special privileges to the repentant. Verse 28-32.

- a) We have security for the future – one of the greatest blessings of knowing the Lord Jesus and of having experienced real repentance is that we have security for the future. Notice:
 - i) Verse 28 “afterward”
 - ii) 3:1 “in those days at that time”
 - iii) 3:18 “in that day”
 - (1) God tells his secrets to his own servants. We saw last week that God in Isaiah 46:8-10 can do something that no one else can. He can predict the future. More than that he is making history happen.
 - (a) *Isaiah 46:8-10 “Remember this, fix it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels. ⁹ Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. ¹⁰ I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.*
 - iv) Look at 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
 - (1) Verse 2 The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night
 - (2) Verse 3 “sudden destruction comes on them”
 - (3) Verse 4 “But you... are not in darkness”
 - (4) Verse 9 “ God did not appoint us to wrath...”
 - (5) Verse 11 comfort one another with this.
 - v) So we have wonderful confidence that God knows what the future is, anticipates the future, controls the future and tells us the future. We are so blessed! The future of those that reject the Lord is horrible but the future of the believer is blessed.
- b) We have the spirit for the present – verse 28-31. Now we enter into one of the most misunderstood and misapplied passages of scripture in the whole Bible. I want us to look at this passage completely so we will take all of the time we have left to study it in relation to the rest of the Bible. The

Spirit is to be poured out! First let me say that to deny this Bible passage would be to deny the authority of Scripture. Sometimes some of my Baptist friends in order to avoid controversy and Pentecostalism just avoid this passage of Scripture. Then also some of my Assembly of God and Pentecostal friends point to this and others as proof texts saying that prophecies, visions and dreams are normative for our day. We should not doubt or examine any manifestation of what they say is the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy in acts chapter 2 fashion. So let's look at this together.

- i) When is the Spirit poured out?
 - (1) Verse 28 "afterward" and "in those days" verse 29. After what and in what days?
- ii) Upon whom is the spirit poured out? All Flesh verse 28 and 29 including:
- iii) Men and women;
 - (1) Young and old
 - (2) Bond and free
 - (3) Basically we are looking at a time when all levels of society among God's people will have the Pentecostal or apostolic gifts. 2 Corinthians 12:12.
- iv) What accompanies the gifts that might identify the timing? Verse 30-31
 - (1) Cosmic disturbances
 - (2) Earthy catastrophies
 - (3) Strange occurrences with the sun and moon.
 - (4) Does this sound familiar? Of course it does.
 - (a) *Mt 24:29 (NKJ) "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*
 - (5) When does this sound like it is going to happen? It is going to happen during the Tribulation Period.
 - (6) But what about Acts 2? Let's go there.
 - (a) Verse 16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: See

there pastor, even Peter says that this is what Joel said would happen; so when people say they are having dreams, visions, signs, miracles, wonders and tongues it is proof that it is real. It is partially true

- (b) Look at verse 1- today in so called apostolic churches where the sign gifts are prevalent do we see...sounds from heaven; rushing winds; cloven tongues of fire? I don't think so.
- (c) Look at verse 17-21. Even on Pentecost did all of Joel's prophecy happen? Smoke, blood, vapor, cosmic disturbances? No they didn't.
- (d) Joel's prophecy was partially fulfilled.
 - (i) God's spirit was poured out but not on all flesh.
 - (ii) All through history there have only been a few prophets, a few miracle workers - Moses and Joshua; Elijah and Elisha; and Jesus and his apostles were the only ones. Perhaps a woman like Deborah, Hannah, Huldah or the two daughters of Philip were given a special outpouring of the Spirit. But nothing like we are talking about. All Flesh!
 - (iii) Curiously Moses wished for this. (relate Story Eldad and Medad) Numbers 11:29 ²⁹ Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the LORD's people were prophets *and* that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"
- (7) We are certainly justified in seeking the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Without his anointing and guidance we can't do anything of lasting consequence. But what does the fullness of the Spirit look like for today? Is it manifestations and miracles, words of faith and word of knowledge? Are we to go to God seeking revelation beyond the revelation of his word?
 - (a) Ephesians 5:18 ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹submitting to one another in the fear of God.
 - (i) When we are full of the Spirit we will be submissive one to

another. When we are full of the Spirit. Wives will submit, husbands will love, children will obey, parents will be patient, and employees will work hard and employers will treat employees with respect.

(b) Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

(i) What is curious is that when we are full of the word of God we will do the same things as when we are filled with the Spirit of God. THERE IS NO SHORT CUT TO SPIRITFULNESS. IT ALWAYS INVOLVES YIELDING TO THE WORD OF GOD! EVEN TODAY GOD'S SPIRIT IS Poured OUT IN MEASURE ON THOSE THAT YIELD TO HIS WORD AT THE DIRECTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(c) Also when the Spirit is in control we look like this:

(i) Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

v) All of that to say that acts chapter 2 was a partial fulfillment of Joel 2.

(1) Partial fulfillment is not strange in the Bible. Jesus in Luke 4 partially fulfilled the following prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-3. look at it. Now look at Luke 4:16. Do you see that Jesus put a period where Isaiah put a comma? Partial fulfillment. It happened many times in scripture.

(2) Now then when does this happen; this pouring out of his Spirit on all flesh? Look at Revelation chapter 7:4; now verse 9. You see when the Spirit came down in Acts 2 what was the result? 3000 plus saved. What happens when the Witnesses are sealed and sent? Multitudes are saved. These are going to be the young the old, the bond the free, the rich the poor, all flesh the 144,000 and all

who believe.

(3) But in a measure we have the same Holy Spirit poured out on us today!

- vi) Finally what other special privilege do the repentant enjoy?
- c) We have salvation for eternity - verse 32
- d) Whoever calls – will be saved. When it says that in Romans 10:13 it is a quote from Joel chapter 2.
- e) But those that call on him will do so because he first called on them.
 - i) Acts 2:38-39 ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, ⁱ“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the ²remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and ^jto your children, and ^kto all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”
 - ii) Also 3:19-21

i Luke 24:47

2 forgiveness

j Joel 2:28, 32

k Acts 11:15, 18; Eph. 2:13

Pastor Phil Winfield

Grace Church,

Des Moines, IA

www.gracehome.com