

Joel 1:1-12 – God’s Invading Army

Joel deals with God’s temporary judgment of his people and the permanent judgment of the enemies of God. God promises to save and prosper his chosen people.

Read Joel 1:1.

Who wrote the book of Joel? What do we know about Joel? (1:1)

When was the book written? (1:1)

Where did Joel prophesize? (1:1)

Read Joel 1:2-12.

Some people understand the locusts to be literal plant eating locusts. Some people understand the locusts to represent an invading army like the Assyrians or the Babylonians. Are the locusts literal or figurative? How can we make this determination? (1:2-12)

What two groups of people are addressed in verse 2? What are they called to do in verses 2 and 3? (1:2-3)

Is verse 4 a past event to Joel or is it a future event? What event occurred which needed to be remembered from generation to generation? (1:4)

In verse 5, drunkards are called to awake, weep and wail. How did this event impact the drunkards? (1:5)

Verse 6 mentioned a nation beyond number and says it's teeth and fangs are those of a lion or lioness? Is the army, with teeth like a lion, figurative language of a large swarm of locusts or of an army of people? Note the focus on teeth. Is that more appropriate to describe locusts or people? (1:6)

What damage was described in verse 7? Is this damage more likely caused by literal locusts or by an army of people? If people, what does the stripping of the bark from the trees refer to? Versions which indicate that the fig trees have become stumps appear to favor the interpretation of an army of people. Other translations have the fig trees damaged but not reduced to a stump. (1:7)

Who is called to lament in verse 8? What does sackcloth represent? (1:8)

In verse 5, the drunkards were to weep. In verse 9 the priests mourned. How were the priests affected by the destruction? (1:9)

What destruction is described in verse 10? (1:10)

Who was called to wail in verse 11? Who else had cause to lament? The barley harvest corresponded to the Passover. The wheat harvest corresponded to the Feast of Weeks, about 7 weeks after Passover. What happened to the barley and wheat? (1:11)

In verse 12, what vegetation was affected? (1:12)

What impact did the destruction have on the "children of man"? (1:12)