The Chapters of Joel

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Joel

SECTION OUTLINE ONE (JOEL 1-3)
Joel writes about current and future conditions in Israel.

I. CURRENT CONDITIONS (1:1-20): The worst locust plague in Judah’s history has settled upon the land.

A. The devastation (1:1-12, 15-18)
   1. The severity (1:1-4, 6-7, 15): The crops are consumed by a fourfold attack:
      a. The cutting locusts (1:1-4a, 15)
      b. The swarming locusts (1:4b)
      c. The hopping locusts (1:4c)
      d. The stripping locusts (1:4d, 6-7)
   2. The sorrow (1:5, 8-12, 16-18): Hungry cries of anguish are heard everywhere.

B. The proclamation (1:13-14)
   1. Dress in sackcloth (1:13a).
   2. Declare a fast (1:13b-14a).

C. The supplication (1:19-20): Both people and animals cry out for divine intervention.

II. COMING CONDITIONS (2:1-3:21): There will be three future "days."

A. The day of Pentecost (2:28-32; see also Acts 2:14-18; Rev. 6:12-14)
   1. The contents (2:28-32)
      a. God’s Spirit will be poured out upon Israel (2:28-29).
      b. Great signs will occur in the heavens (2:30-31).
      c. Salvation will be offered to all (2:32).
   2. The chronology (see Acts 2:14-18; Rev. 6:12-14)
      a. Present fulfillment (see Acts 2:14-18)
      b. Future fulfillment (see Rev. 6:12-14)

B. The day of the Lord—a title for the coming Great Tribulation (2:1-21; 3:1-16): Using the locust plague as an object lesson, Joel describes a future invasion where enemy soldiers (not insects) will ravage the land.
   1. The alarm (2:1, 15)
   2. The admonition (2:12-14, 16-17): God calls for Israel’s repentance.
   3. The assurance (2:18-21): God promises deliverance following this repentance.
   4. The attack (2:2-11): A fierce and seemingly unstoppable foreign army will invade Israel, marching in precise fashion, causing great fear.
   5. The anger (3:3-8): God is furious concerning Israel’s past and future mistreatment by the pagan Gentiles.
   6. The announcement (3:9-11): These pagan Gentiles are warned to prepare for the worst, for God himself will soon battle against them.
   7. The assembling (3:1-2, 12): God plans to drive his enemies into the valley of Jehoshaphat (called the Kidron Valley in the New Testament) so he can kill them.
   8. The annihilation (3:13-16): The enemies will be crushed like overripe grapes.

C. The day of Christ—a title for the Millennium (2:22-27; 3:17-21)
   1. Body blessings—the provision of food (2:22-26; 3:18-19)
   2. Soul blessings—the presence of God (2:27; 3:17, 20-21)