

JOEL

AN OVERVIEW

Purpose

To warn the people of Judah of the impending judgment of Yahweh because of their sins and to urge them to turn back to God.

Author

Joel, son of Pethuel.

Date

Possibly written c.835-796 BC during the years of Joel's ministry. However, most scholars hold to a date after the exile (586 BC) because of internal evidence.

Audience

The people of the southern kingdom of Judah and God's people everywhere.

Setting

Joel calls all the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem to lament and return to the Lord during a time of national calamity.

Special Features

As prophecy, Joel relies on the balance of the declaration of judgment with the promise of salvation. Poetry plays a major role in this book, whose author is particularly adept at description, for example, the locust plague.



Key Verses

“Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming; it is near.” (2:1 ESV)

“Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.” (2:13b ESV)

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.” (2:28 ESV)

Key People

Joel, the people of Judah.

Key Places

Jerusalem, the Temple.