

Sermon, September 11, 2011
“Grace Pours Down”, Joel 2:28-32
Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy

The Books of Prophecy

- Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
- Minor Prophets: Hosea, **Joel**, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

Overview of Joel:

- The author identifies himself as “Joel, the son of Pethuel” (1:1).
- Joel means “The LORD is God”.
- The book is directed at the southern kingdom of Judah.
- The time of the writings are not certain; it seems that sometime before an invasion of Judah/Jerusalem would be likely (Assyrian-701BC; Babylonian-598, or 588BC)
- However, the time of Joel’s writing does not affect his timeless message of present distress and future deliverance.
- **Overall Outline of Joel :**
 - I. Introduction (1:1)
 - II. Call to Repentance (1:2-20)
 - III. Sound the Alarm in Zion (2:1-17)
 - IV. Restoration and the Outpouring of the Spirit (2:18-32)
 - V. Judgment Against Israel’s Enemies (3:1-21)

Major Themes of Joel:

- Joel first portrays the desolation of the land, the lack of physical sustenance and the need for spiritual sustenance.
- Restoration requires the heart to be right before God, to cry out to Him in repentance for disobedience.
- The heart that is open will receive God’s grace and mercy.
- The ultimate triumph of God will prevail even when all looks lost.

*When you seek God for your sustenance
He freely pours out His Spirit and feeds you in abundance.*

1. There have been, are and will be times when all seems lost; when the judgment of God seems to devour you and all you love.

- **Joel 1:12** *12 The vine dries up And the fig tree fails; The pomegranate, the palm also, and the apple tree, All the trees of the field dry up. Indeed, rejoicing dries up From the sons of men.*
- Life is tough. It has been that way from the beginning of time
- **Genesis 3:17-19**
- God exercises His judgment everyday on a disobedient world.
- Human beings are broken, fallen, and separated from their true family.

2. God wants you to turn your heart toward Him always, to seek Him in the midst of Spiritual drought.

- **Joel 1:19** *19 To You, O LORD, I cry; For fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness And the flame has burned up all the trees of the field.*
- The human heart is destitute as it stands.
- Our fallen human nature does not want God and so eventually our spirit is bankrupt, dried up, famished, found wanting for something
- When your heart sees that all is lost, cry out to the Lord!

3. There is a final judgment coming and it will occur during your lifetime if you do not turn your heart toward God.

- **Joel 2:1-2** *Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of the LORD is coming; Surely it is near, 2 A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness.*

Sermon, September 11, 2011
“Grace Pours Down”, Joel 2:28-32
Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy

- There is an ultimate destination...heaven or hell...with God or without God...in relationship with your Creator or relationship with the destroyer...heavenly minded or worldly desire...
- There is indeed an alarm that sounds to every generation
- 9-11; hurricane Katrina; Indonesian tsunami; Berlin Wall; deep recession of late 70's; Vietnam War; Bay of Pigs; Korean conflict; communism apart from God; WWII; Hitler; WWI...
- There are individual alarms that sound as well where God is calling out to you...death, tragedy, drugs, alcohol, pornography, adultery, sexual impurity, car wrecks, home wrecks,...

4. God wants you!

- **Joel 2:12-13** *12 "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "Return to Me with all your heart, And with fasting, weeping and mourning; 13 And rend your heart and not your garments." Now return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness And relenting of evil.*
- The love of God pursues you and He wants you to “change your heart/mind” (repent)
- He wants a deep felt change in your being to follow Him and seek His ways...not a public demonstration of a meaningless profession...but a life-changing demonstration of one who is reborn!
- **John 3:5** *5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*
- God wants you born again into His family.

5. God wants you! He will restore you into the everlasting sustenance of bread and living water...in relationship with Him

- **Joel 2:26-29** *26 "You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied And praise the name of the LORD your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; Then My people will never be put to shame. 27 "Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel, And that I am the LORD your God, And there is no other; And My people will never be put to shame. 28 "It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. 29 "Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.*
- The drought and hunger of life without the Lord will be filled when you give your life to Him. “...plenty to eat and be satisfied...”
- You are a new creation, the old has gone and the new has come.
- **2 Corinthians 5:17-18** *17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*
- Born again of the Spirit...
- Unlike the disposition of His Holy Spirit in the OT times, coming and going, He promises the full and total presence of the Holy Spirit.
- **Romans 8:11; Ephesians 2:21-22; 1 Corinthians 3:16** *Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*
- **Acts 2:16-21** ...¹⁹ *'AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE. 20 'THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME. 21 'AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.'*

Conclusion:

- Whatever your present distress may be, remember that your deliverance is at hand
- **Joel 3:20** *20 But Judah will be inhabited forever And Jerusalem for all generations.*
- In the last days, judgment will take place and the people of God, those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (Jesus death on the cross)...**1 Peter 1:18-19**...will live with Him forever!
- You do not have to live a life of Spiritual hunger and thirst far from home in a strange land.
- You can live in abundance with the King of Life, your Creator, Father Son and Holy Spirit
- **When you seek God for your sustenance He freely pours out His Spirit and feeds you in abundance.**