

Insights From Joel

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Insights From Joel

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Introduction

One of the ways I've been studying the Word of God is by making a list of everything that each book of the Bible teaches. This has resulted in more than a thousand pages of material. Although it's interesting and I've learned a lot from writing it, that's a lot of bullet points to read through!

The purpose of this book is to extract the most interesting insights from that massive list. This isn't intended to summarize each book of the Bible because that's what my "Chapter Summary of the Bible" is for. It's also not intended to list the major points of each book because you're probably already familiar with them. Finally, it's not intended to offer in-depth commentary because that's what my regular commentary is for. This book is simply a collection of points that I found interesting.

I hope there's some material here that you find edifying.

Jon Cooper
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Joel

- There are times when God uses insects to carry out His will (Joel 1:4). He can even use them to punish nations.
- God considers the land of Israel to belong to Him. Any army that invades that land is invading *His* land (Joel 1:6, 2:18).
- The Bible doesn't say that plants “die”. Instead it consistently says that they “wither” (Joel 1:12, 17). God doesn't call the destruction of plants a “death”. This means the loss of a plant isn't the same thing as the death of a person or animal.
- This book is a prophecy about the terrible things which will happen to Israel during the seven-year tribulation period. Joel 1:15 says that this period is “the day of the Lord”, which is how the Old Testament refers to the tribulation.
- Joel teaches that there will be priests in those days, and he calls those priests the “ministers of God” (Joel 1:13). This means God is going to sanction the temple that will exist in the tribulation era, along with the sacrifices which are offered in it. There's no indication that the third temple is evil, or that the priests who serve in it are doing something wrong. Instead God tells the priests to mourn when they're no longer able to offer sacrifices. Joel specifically calls the third temple “the house of the Lord your God” (Joel 1:14, 16).
- When disaster strikes Israel during the tribulation period, God commands the priests to gather both the elders and all of the inhabitants of the land to His temple so they can cry out to Him (Joel 1:14).

- Before the disasters of the tribulation strike, there will be joy and gladness in the third temple (Joel 1:16).
- These disasters of the tribulation period make it impossible to continue to offer sacrifices because the meat supply is gone (Joel 1:16).
- During the tribulation period, a terrible fire will consume the wilderness of Israel and burn down all the trees of the field (Joel 1:19).
- During the tribulation period, animals will cry out to God because they have no food or water (Joel 1:20). It seems that animals are not only capable of crying out to God, but there are times when they actually *do* cry out to God.
- The tribulation period will be a time of terrible darkness (Joel 2:2).
- The tribulation period will be the worst time that has ever been, or ever will be (Joel 2:2).
- When the tribulation period begins, the land of Israel will be like the Garden of Eden (Joel 2:3).
- The army which attacks Israel during the tribulation period doesn't appear to be human. Its soldiers are described as looking like horses (Joel 2:4) and being able to run up walls (Joel 2:9). Stabbing them with a sword doesn't hurt them at all (Joel 2:8).
- Fasting, weeping, and mourning are signs of true repentance (Joel 2:12).
- God's focus during the tribulation era seems to be centered on calling Israel to repent (Joel 2:15). Although the entire world will be affected by the judgments, God's focus is very much on Israel. The church isn't mentioned

at all, which is more evidence the church won't be in this world at that time.

- When God commanded the Jews to gather together before Him, He included newborns and infants (Joel 2:16). This is consistent throughout the Bible. God never sent them off to children's church or the nursery. Instead He kept families together.
- During the tribulation period there will be brides and bridegrooms in Israel (Joel 2:16). Apparently people will still get married and have children during that terrible time.
- God calls the people of Israel His heritage (Joel 2:17).
- God calls the tribulation-era priests "the ministers of the Lord" (Joel 2:17). It seems that He doesn't consider the priesthood of those days to be illegitimate. Instead He specifically commands the priests to go to the altar in the third temple and pray that He would save His people.
- God will respond to the prayers of the tribulation-era priests by saving the Israelites (Joel 2:18-19).
- There are times when God blesses a nation by causing plants to grow and trees to bear fruit (Joel 2:22).
- It's good to rejoice in the promises of God, even if we haven't received them yet (Joel 2:23).
- God is the one who gives rain (Joel 2:23).
- After tribulation period has ended God will give the Israelites abundant crops, and will overflow their vats with wine and oil (Joel 2:24).
- It's good to praise God for the food that He gives us to eat

(Joel 2:26).

- After the tribulation period has ended God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. In the millennium people will prophecy and have prophetic visions and dreams (Joel 2:28).
- Before the tribulation period begins there will be signs in the heaven (the sky) and in the earth (Joel 2:30-31). Specifically, the sun will be turned to darkness (which may be describing an eclipse). It's possible certain eclipses are a sign of coming judgment. God did say that one of the reasons He created the sun and moon was to serve as signs (Genesis 1:14).
- In the tribulation period God will gather all nations and bring them to the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:1). The reason God will do this is to judge the nations for driving the Jews out of Israel and dividing (taking away) their land – which He calls *His* land (Joel 3:2).
- Taking land away from Israel brings God's judgment upon nations (Joel 3:2).
- When nations attack the Jews, God takes it personally (Joel 3:2-3).
- God believes in national borders and becomes angry when nations violate them (Joel 3:6).
- In the tribulation period slavery will exist and will be widespread (Joel 3:3, 6).
- In the tribulation period God will punish the nations that sold the Jews into slavery by selling them as slaves to the Jews, who will sell them to the distant Sabeans (Joel 3:8). God will do to them what they did to the Jews.

- The phrase "let the weak say, I am strong" is actually mocking the Gentile nations that are going to war against God Himself (Joel 3:10). It's something God says to mock His enemies who think they can defeat Him.
- In the tribulation period, the legendary battle of Armageddon will be fought with old-fashioned weapons (swords and spears). It seems that modern technology doesn't exist at that time (Joel 3:10).
- There are times when God mocks His enemies (Joel 3:10).
- God isn't afraid of the combined might of all the end-times Gentile nations (Joel 3:11-12).
- When the Gentile nations gather in the valley of Jehoshaphat, they will be slaughtered. God compares it to a ripe harvest which will be reaped with a sickle (Joel 3:13).
- God calls the valley of Jehoshaphat the valley of decision because that's where He will judge the Gentiles (Joel 3:14).
- This end-times battle will be accompanied by signs in the heavens (Joel 3:15). This is another case where an important end-times event is signified by some sort of visible heavenly sign that includes the sun, moon, and stars.
- After the tribulation period is over, the city of Jerusalem will be holy. The reason it will be holy is because God will dwell there (Joel 3:17).
- After the tribulation period is over, God will fill Israel with wine and milk (Joel 3:18).
- After the tribulation period is over, Egypt and Edom will

be desolate (Joel 3:19).