

## Joel and YHWH

### Commentary for January 1, 2013 — What Joel Says about God

“The Book of Joel” is the article for this month, but first read the [“January 2013 Newsletter.”](#) YHWH speaks through the prophet in Joel 1:2 to 2:17. We learn the following things about YHWH. First, God is punishing Judah and Jerusalem because of their sins. Second **“the Day of YHWH”** is coming. This day shall be so frightening that the people of Judah and Jerusalem will be terrified. It will be destruction from God’s own hand (Joel 1:15, 2:1). Third, God shall heal the land just before that infamous day of judgment comes. YHWH calls for repentance immediately before He does these things.

**“And YHWH shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executes his word: for the day of YHWH is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?**

**‘Therefore also now,’ says YHWH, ‘turn you even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto YHWH your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repents him of the evil. Who knows if he will return and repent?’”<sup>1</sup>**

• *Joel 2:11–14*

### **YHWH Speaks for Himself to the People**

From Joel 2:18 to 3:21 YHWH speaks for Himself. He describes Himself as jealous of His people as well as pitying them (2:18). Upon their repentance, YHWH’s people have asked Him questions, and He will answer. His answer will be a healing by sending them grain, wine, and oil in abundance through the healing of the land. His people will be satisfied and will cease to be a reproach to the nations (2:19).

He tells the land not to fear, but to be glad and rejoice. In other words it will be productive because **“YHWH shall do great things”** (2:21). Again, He repeats the good news that they will have good crops and success in their endeavors. In fact, it appears that the land of Judah (and also in greater Israel) will have abundant rain in the future (2:23).<sup>2</sup>

**“And you shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of YHWH your God, that has dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am YHWH your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.”**

• *Joel 2:26–27*

Then YHWH Himself talks about **“the Day of YHWH”**:

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Martin’s article, [“The Repentance of God in the Bible”](#) shows how God’s mind can be changed.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the rainfall in that part of the world will return to a more agriculturally productive climate as it was in the time of Christ. Although classified as a Mediterranean climate: temperate, hot and dry in southern and eastern desert areas, a description of semi-desert is also correct. Only 35% of the small country of Israel is agriculturally productive. See Dr. Martin’s article, [“Biblical Meteorology.”](#)

**“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of YHWH come.**

**And [at that time] it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of YHWH shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as YHWH has said, and in the remnant whom YHWH shall call.”**

**• Joel 2:31–32**

This situation is similar to the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt, just before the exodus when miraculous events happened, and when YHWH’s people were required to call on Him in order to be saved. In the time of Joel there will be no physical salvation unless they call upon YHWH as He instructs them to do.

YHWH then tells the defeated peoples who recently oppressed Judah that He Himself will **“sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah”** (Joel 3:8). They did it to Judah; God shall do it to them. The people of Judah in turn will sell them to the Sabeans (Joel 3:8). This is terrible retribution from God, but YHWH says it shall be so, because **“YHWH has spoken it.”**

Then great armies will gather in **“the Valley of Decision,”** but YHWH Himself shall be present there. Again, miraculous events shall occur when:

**“YHWH also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but YHWH will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.”**

**• Joel 3:16**

What will be the result for the people of Israel? What will they be sure of?

**“So shall you know that I am YHWH your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.”**

**• Joel 3:17**

They will know that God exists and that He will protect them from now on. Their knowledge will not require faith. They shall know that YHWH is their God. The land shall be changed to be well-watered and productive. A strong-flowing stream shall come from the Temple:

**“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of YHWH, and shall water the valley of Shittim.”<sup>3</sup>**

**• Joel 3:18**

The Book of Joel has many more treasures. Enjoy this month’s article.

David Sielaff  
[david@askelm.com](mailto:david@askelm.com)

---

<sup>3</sup> The location of Shittim was east of the Jordan River (Numbers 25:1ff; Joshua 2:1, 3:1; Micah 6:5). Joel 3:18 may indicate geologic changes that will direct waters both toward Shittim and toward the Dead Sea as indicated in Ezekiel 47:1–10. Or, perhaps Joel 3:18 is indicating another Shittim on the west side of the Jordan which Joel’s audience was aware of in his day, but we are not aware of today.