

The Voices of God to Israel: The Minor Prophets

8 – THE PLAGUE AND THE DAY OF THE LORD (JOEL 1:1-2:11)

I. The Plague of Locust (Joel 1:1-20)

A. The Prophet (Joel 1:1)

- The writer proclaims that this is the word of the Lord that came to Joel, son of Pethuel.
- Nothing more is presented concerning the who the prophet was.

B. The Locust Scourge (Joel 1:2-4)

- The elders and inhabitants are asked if anything like this has ever happened before.
- They are to tell their children and the succeeding generations about the calamity
- They are to tell them about the massive locust invasion that ate and destroyed everything.

C. The Call to Mourn (Joel 1:5-14)

- The prophet calls different groups of people to mourn the devastation and its effects.
- The prophet points out the destruction on the agricultural products of the land.
- As the land and its produce are destroyed, the people are affected.
- The “nation” in verse 6 could refer to the locust horde or an invading army.
- The priests are called to consecrate a fast and call a sacred assembly.

D. The Prayer for Mercy (Joel 1:15-20)

- The prophet proclaims that the day of the Lord is at hand.
- The day of the Lord will come as destruction from the Lord.
- The devastation will take away all food supplies so that everyone and everything is affected.
- The prophet proclaims that he is crying out to the Lord since everything is devoured.

II. The Coming Day of the Lord (Joel 2:1-11)

A. The Warning (Joel 2:1-3)

- The Lord calls for the trumpet to sound the alarm in Zion.
- The people are to tremble because the day of the Lord is at hand.

The Voices of God to Israel: The Minor Prophets

- The day of the Lord is described as a day of darkness and gloominess.
- The coming army, described as spreading through the horizons, will come.
- This army will be so great that no one has ever seen such or ever will again.
- This army is compared to a fire that consumes everything.
- Lands like the garden of Eden will be turned in desolate wilderness.
- Nothing will escape the destruction of this army.

B. The Calamity (Joel 2:4-11)

- The army consisting of horses, both cavalry and chariots, will come quickly.
- The people will respond in anguish to the terror of the coming army.
- The army will plunge through the defenses in a solid formation.
- The coming army will be accompanied by natural and cosmic disasters.
- The Lord will command this destruction with the voice of his word.
- Since the day of the Lord is great and terrible, the question is raised concerning who can endure it.