

JOEL: THE JUDGMENTS OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

II: God's Judgment Of Judah With An End-Time Army

(Joel 2:1-17)

I. Introduction

- A. "The Day of the Lord," a term used of the time when God administers judgment on sin and deliverance for His people, can be applied to an event in Israel's past history as well as to end-time events.
- B. Joel's prophecies, written likely when young King Joash ruled under the regency of priests (835-796 B. C.), deal with both uses of this term, the existence of a locust plague in Joel's era that prefigured a military invasion in the Great Tribulation. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1258, "Introduction to the Book of Joel")
- C. We view the judgment of Judah with an end-time army in Joel 2:1-17 for our insight and application:

II. God's Judgment Of Judah With An End-Time Army, Joel 2:1-17.

- A. The Mosaic Covenant provided that if Israel violated God's Law, He would punish her in various ways, including destruction by locusts (Deuteronomy 28:42) and/or by an invading army (Deuteronomy 28:49-51).
- B. Where Joel 1:1-20 reported on God's judgment in Joel's day by locusts (Ibid., ftn. to Joel 1:4), Joel 2:1-17 predicted His judgment by an invading army in the end time "Day of the Lord" (Ibid., ftn. to Joel 2:1-11).
- C. Joel 2:1-11 describes the great destruction that will occur with the invasion of an end-time army (as follows):
 1. Joel called for the watchman of Zion to blow the ram's horn to alert his people of danger, that all the inhabitants of the land might tremble, for the day of the Lord was near, Joel 2:1. (B. K. C., O. T., p. 1416)
 2. That day would be one of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, what is often associated with God's role as a Mighty victorious Warrior (Deuteronomy 4:11; Psalm 18:9, 11) and will be literally true during the future Great Tribulation (Revelation 6:12-13), Joel 2:2a; Ibid.
 3. Similarly, an invading army will approach Jerusalem spread out upon the mountains on the horizon, a great and powerful army unlike any Israel had ever faced nor ever would face again, Joel 2:2b.
 4. This army would be so destructive that the land before them, likened to the lush Garden of Eden, will become behind them a desolate wilderness, with nothing escaping their devastation, Joel 2:3.
 5. This army will be like horses or running war horses, making the noise of the rumbling of chariots as they leap on the tops of the mountains like the crackling of a flame of fire, devouring the stubble, prepared for battle, what likely refers to the use of personal jet thrusters of a modern army of our era, Joel 2:4-5 ESV.
 6. Those whom they will attack will be in anguish, terrorized, and the invaders will charge, scale a wall, march in file, burst through defenses unhalting, leap on the city, run on the walls, climb into houses and enter windows like a thief, all practices of modern invaders not typical of Joel's era, Joel 2:6-9 ESV.
 7. The earth will quake and the heavens will tremble, the sun, moon and stars will be darkened as predicted in Revelation 6:12-13, and the Lord will utter His voice through agency of the invaders, a voice of powerful judgment, for the day of the Lord will be so great no man can withstand it, Joel 2:10-11 ESV.
- D. In view of this coming desolation by the end-time invading army, God called Judah to repent, Joel 2:12-17:
 1. Even in this time of sudden disaster by an overwhelming invasion force, God will call His people to return to Him with all their heart, with fasting, weeping, mourning, rending their hearts and not just their clothes, returning to the Lord their God Who was gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in loyal love, for God relents over disaster, Joel 2:12-13 with Exodus 34:6-7.
 2. Joel urged his people to repent, for God might relent of His judgment and leave behind Him a blessing that the people might be able in peace again to offer grain and drink offerings to the Lord their God, Joel 2:14.
 3. God's prophet called for the ram's horn to sound in Zion once again, but this time to call for a fast and a solemn assembly, to gather the people, to consecrate them and to assemble the elders, the children and even the nursing infants, to urge the bridegroom to leave his room and the bride her chamber of their wedding night and for the priests between the vestibule and the altar to weep, saying, "Spare Your people, O Lord, and make not Your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they [Israel's enemies] say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" (Joel 2:15-17 ESV)

Lesson: When God's severe judgment falls on His people even in the invasion of their enemies in the future Great Tribulation with all of its terror and destruction, even then there will be room for repentance IF it is GENUINE!

Application: (1) If we have sinned, may we truly confess it WHILE there is TIME that we might be blessed of the Lord. (2) May we repent and confess our sin SOONER than LATER since God's punishment enhances over time!