

## I. *The Locusts Are Coming!*

05-Dec-04          Joel 1:1-20          Robertson Chapter 1

*Theme:* Judgment begins in the house of God – we are called to cry out to the Lord and repent.

*Key Verses:* Joel 1:2-4 <sup>2</sup>Hear this, you elders, And give ear, all you inhabitants of the land! Has anything like this happened in your days, Or even in the days of your fathers? <sup>3</sup>Tell your children about it, Let your children tell their children, And their children another generation. <sup>4</sup>What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.

### Introduction

Two years ago, I was in a bit of a pinch because I suddenly had an opening to teach a Sunday school class only about one month before the class started. O. Palmer Robertson had recently visited the church for our Theology Conference, and he and his family stayed at our house. Perhaps receiving some inspiration from his visit, I decided to teach a class based on his commentary on Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. I so enjoyed my study of these little books that I decided to do some more studies in the so-called “Minor Prophets.” So, last year I taught the first book of The Twelve – Hosea – and this quarter, Lord willing, we will cover the next two Minor Prophets – Joel and Amos. You can see that Palmer continues to overshadow my studies of the Twelve, since once of the books I’ve used is his Welwyn commentary on Joel. I’ve also got his latest tome *The Christ of the Prophets* which I am currently wading through.

**Over the course of this quarter, we will do a verse-by-verse study of both Joel and Amos. We will be spending 4 weeks to cover the three chapters of Joel, and 9 weeks to cover the 9 chapters of Amos.** Let’s start by listing on a **flipchart** everything we know about Joel and Amos. [Write class answers on flipcharts in two columns – one for each prophet.] Well, hopefully we will know a bit more about these prophets at the end of the quarter.

Let’s start by turning our attention to the book of Joel.

### Exposition

#### A. Introduction (1:1)

##### 1. Structure

Introduction (1:1)

- A. Devastating Locust Invasion (1:2-14)
  - B. Physical Suffering from the Locusts (1:15-20)
  - C. The Day of the LORD Comes to God’s People (2:1-11)
    - X. CENTER: Call to Repentance (2:12-17)
- A. Reversal of Devastating Locust Invasion (2:18-27)
  - B. Spiritual Blessings from the LORD (2:28-32)
  - C. The Day of the LORD Comes to the Nations (3:1-21)

**After the introductory verse, the book of Joel can be divided into seven different sections.** As you might expect, these seven sections are carefully arranged. **The first three sections focus**

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**on judgment.** Each section intensifies this theme; the third section ends with this: “For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible, who can endure it?” (2:11).

**The final three sections have the theme of restoration and blessing. Each section reverses the judgment of its counterpart in the first half of the book.**

**The central section in this modified chiasm is the pivot point of the book. The central section is the call to repentance that enables God’s blessings to flow in reversal of the judgment prophesied in the first half of the book.** Dorsey says, “Repentance is crucial for the reversal of Judah’s fortunes. The negative-positive layout of the book, beginning with words of warning and judgment and ending with words of hope and future restoration, indicates that the book is intended to uplift and motivate the audience to a positive response by leading them from despair to hope. The placement of the promise of restoration after the call to repentance emphasizes the point that Judah’s repentance must precede restoration.”

### 2. The Prophet (1:1)

With that overview of the structure of the book of Joel, let’s turn our attention to the introductory verse. What can we learn about the prophet Joel? The answer is, “Not much!” Joel is almost silent about himself. First, we know his name, which means “The LORD is God.” However, there are at least 12 other men in the Bible called Joel (Boice). So that doesn’t help us too much. Second, Joel is the son of Pethuel, but we know nothing of his father other than the meaning of his name: “The Sincerity of God.” **We don’t know where Joel was from, or what he did for a living before “the word of the LORD ... came to Joel.” All we can really say about Joel is that he serves as “a voice crying in the wilderness” for the living God.** The message and the source of that message overwhelm the messenger and make him inconsequential. It is the “word of the LORD” that matters.

### 3. Date (1:1)

To add even more mystery and confusion to the background of this prophecy, we don’t even know when it was given. **There are no specific dating clues mentioned in the book.** Many of the prophets date their books by the kings of Judah or Israel. Joel does not. From the content of the book, it appears as if Joel were preaching to Judah, the southern kingdom, since he references Zion and Jerusalem multiple times, but does not address Samaria or Ephraim. Dates ranging from the early ninth century BC all the way to the second century BC have been proposed.

**I believe that Joel was written earlier rather than later for three reasons. 1) First, its position in the canon between Hosea and Amos links it to their time period.** The Twelve are arranged in chronological periods, with the first six prophets (Hosea–Micah) being in the 8th century; the next three being in the 7th century (Nahum-Zephaniah); and the last three (Zechariah-Malachi) being post-exilic (6th-5th centuries).

**2) Second, there is a clue by the nations that Joel mentions and does not mention.** Joel does not mention Babylon or Assyria – the two big nations to dominate the Near East in the mid-eighth through mid-sixth centuries BC. However, Joel does mention a number of nations, such as Egypt, Edom, Tyre, Sidon, Philistia, etc. Robertson points out, “A number of these nations are known have tormented Israel in the ninth century B.C.” **Therefore, a date in the later part of the ninth century or the early part of the eighth century is feasible.**

**3) Finally, there are several clear parallels of expression between Joel and both Isaiah and Amos:**

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Joel 3:16a – The LORD also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem.

Amos 1:2a – The LORD roars from Zion, and utters His voice from Jerusalem.

Joel 1:15 – Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

Isaiah 13:6 – Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

Either Joel precedes both Isaiah and Amos and is the source for their quotations, or he is later and he is quoting these two prophets. To assume Joel is quoting Isaiah and Amos would put him into the 7<sup>th</sup> century or even later, which appears to contradict the first two chronological clues. Therefore, I believe it is best to put Joel earlier than both Isaiah and Amos and have these later prophets quote from Joel. **Thus, in the handouts I've indicated a possible date in the table of kings and prophets of about 830-800 BC for Joel.**

In some prophetic books, knowledge of the book's date is important for understanding the context of the prophecy. Fortunately, **pinpoint knowledge of Joel's date is not necessary for grasping the prophet's message.** Joel's message is a timeless one of impending judgment that is averted by repentance and restoration by the grace of the LORD. Prior puts it this way: "It is in many ways providential that the book cannot be dated or traced to a particular person in a particular setting. The events described in it are, at one and the same time, unprecedented and timeless. **The message of Joel is, therefore, relevant to any situation in any generation.**"

### B. The Day of the Locust (1:2-14)

Having looked at the book's structure, prophet, and date, let's now dig into the first section of the book – the devastating locust invasion.

#### 1. *A Call to Hear (1:2-4)*

##### a. *The Audience (1:2-3)*

Right off the bat, Joel jumps into his message with a call to hear. His message is addressed both to the elders as well as to the inhabitants of the land. **Joel first addresses the elders, as they are held responsible for the spiritual and moral condition of the people.** The same principle applies to the church today. Robertson reminds us that "the attitude of the elders of a church is crucial in determining the receptivity of a congregation to the Word of God. Elders, be careful how you hear. The message of the book of Joel is directed to you first." So the elders are required to hear the word of the Lord. **But the people also have the same responsibility to hear the word for themselves. No one is left out.**

But before Joel can get to the point, he lets us know that message is going to be a real doozy. This is something that doesn't happen every generation. This is worse than the hundred-year flood. A disaster this bad hasn't happened in living memory. So listen up elders! Listen up church members! Listen up – and remember.

##### b. *The Plague of Locusts (1:4)*

So what is the fuss all about? Joel describes for us a plague of locusts. "The locusts are coming! The locusts are coming!" You may be saying, "What's the big deal? So what if a few grasshoppers are coming. That can't be all so bad." You would be wrong.

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You can sometimes tell a lot about a culture by examining their language and the words they have. For example, **in Hawaiian, they have at least 13 different words for lava.** There is 'a'ā for rough lava and *pāhoehoe* for smooth lava. Hard lava can be *lua'i pele*, 'ōahi or 'alā. And then of course there is the ever-popular open place (often with vegetation) surrounded by lava, *kīpohopoho*. Lava is very important for Hawaiians. You can tell that from their language. On the other hand, they have only one word – *hau* – that can mean amongst other things, *snow*.

Speaking of snow, if we go a bit further north to Alaska, **the Yup'ik Eskimo language has at least 15 different words for snow.** Their language is more difficult to pronounce, so I'll just list a few of the different kinds of snow they recognize: fine snow; drifting snow; clinging snow; fallen snow; fresh, fallen snow; soft, deep fallen snow; crust on fallen snow; and fallen snow floating on water. The English language has many different synonyms for snow, but our language doesn't have the same fine distinctions. Meanwhile, I could not find any Eskimo words for *lava*.

Now, if we look at **the ancient Hebrew language, we learn that it contains nine different words for locust. And here in Joel 1:4, we have four of them,** variously translated as: the chewing locust, the swarming locust, the crawling locust, and the consuming locust. The exact identification of these locust types is uncertain. Perhaps these terms refer to four different types or species of locusts. But more likely, these terms refer to four different stages in the life cycle of the locust. **What is clear, however, is that just like lava for Hawaiians, or snow for Eskimos, locusts are important part of the Hebrew culture.**

### *c. Descriptions of Locust Plagues*

And well they should be, because a locust plague could bring about devastation upon the land. Listen to these descriptions of locust plagues in the region.

*Prior:* **Augustine** writes in *The City of God*: “When Africa was a Roman province, it was attacked by a large number of locusts. Having eaten everything, leaves and fruits, a formidable swarm of them was drowned in the sea. Thrown up dead on the coasts, the putrefaction of these insects so infected the air as to cause a pestilence so horrible that in the kingdom of Masinissa alone 800,000 and more are said to have perished. Of 30,000 soldiers in Utique, only 10,000 remained.”

*Boice:* **In 1915 a plague of locusts covered Palestine and Syria** from the border of Egypt to the Taurus Mountains. The first swarms appeared in March. These were adult locusts that came from the northeast and moved toward the southwest in clouds so thick they obscured the sun. The females were about two and one-half to three inches long, and they immediately began to lay eggs by digging holes in the soil about four inches deep and depositing about 100 eggs in each. The eggs were neatly arranged in a cylindrical mass about one inch long and about as thick as a pencil. These holes were everywhere. Witnesses estimated that as many as 65,000-75,000 eggs were concentrated in a single square meter of soil, and patches like this covered the entire land from north to south. Having laid their eggs the locusts flew away.

*Boice:* Within a few weeks the young locusts hatched. These resembled large ants. They had no wings, and within a few days they began moving forward by hopping along the ground like fleas. They would cover four to six hundred feet a day, devouring any vegetation before them. By the end of May they had molted. In this stage they had wings, but they still did not fly. Instead they moved forward by walking, jumping only when they were frightened. They were bright yellow.

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Finally the locusts molted again, this time becoming the fully developed adults that had invaded the land initially.

*Prior:* When moisture and temperature conditions favor a large hatch, the crowding and unceasing contact and jostling of the nymphs stimulate significant changes, so that the grasshopper nymphs make a transition from solitary behavior to the swarming, gregarious and migratory phases of the dreaded plague. Plagues continue as long as climactic conditions favor large hatches.

*Boice:* According to a description of this plague by John D. Whiting in the December, 1915, issue of National Geographic Magazine, the earlier stages of these insects attacked the vineyards. "Once entering a vineyard the sprawling vines would in the shortest time be nothing but bare bark. When the daintier morsels were gone, the bark was eaten off the young topmost branches, which, after exposure to the sun, were bleached snow-white. Then, seemingly out of malice, they would gnaw off small limbs, perhaps to get at the pith within." Whiting describes how the locusts of the last stage completed the destruction begun by the earlier forms. They attacked the olive trees, whose tough, bitter leaves had been passed over by the creeping locusts. "They stripped every leaf, berry, and even the tender bark." They ate away "layer after layer" of the cactus plants, "giving the leaves the effect of having been jack-planed. Even on the scarce and prized palms they had no pity, gnawing off the tenderer ends of the sword-like branches and, diving deep into the heart, they tunneled after the juicy pith."

*Prior:* Such swarms can cover great distances (they have been seen 1,200 miles out to sea), can be of immense size (an area of 2,000 square miles was recorded around the Red Sea in 1881) and can contain huge numbers in tight density (up to 120 million per square mile). **One female grasshopper, which lays her eggs in June, may have 18 million living descendants in October.** Swarming hordes often block out the sun, riding high on the wind. **A swarm can contain up to 10 billion insects.**

*Prior:* Their noise, also, is appalling. The noise of locusts in a swarm has been likened to that of a jet engine, due to the twofold sound of whirring wings and crunching jaws. They get into houses, even through cracks and chimneys. Pliny claims that they can even gnaw through doors. They strip the bark off trees. When dead, they give out a revolting stench, and their bodies breed typhus and other diseases in both animals and humans. **It is clear that a locust invasion, especially one on the scale experienced by Joel's contemporaries, was a nightmare.**

Sounds fun, doesn't it? In the movie *Hidalgo* about a cowboy riding a mustang in an endurance race across the Arabian Desert, there is a scene of a locust plague. The sky turns to night as the locusts cover the sky. The hero manages to make shelter from himself against the insects. The next day, he finds out that the locust can also be his friend, since the dead insects laying around him are prime dinner material! But I digress ...

### 2. *A Call to Mourn (1:5-14)*

Having called both the elders and the inhabitants of the land to hear his message of the locust invasion, Joel next calls his hearers to mourn. Joel calls on four different classes of listeners to mourn: first the drunkards (1:5-7), then the people in general (1:8-10), followed by the farmers (1:11-12) and the priests (1:13-14).

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### a. *To the Drunkards (1:5-7)*

**First the drunkards are addressed.** On the surface, this seems like a rather unusual group to be singled out. And yet, when you consider the matter, it makes sense. **The joy of the drunkard is dependent upon the fruit of the vine. And when the locusts come, that joy will be turned into weeping and wailing.**

God is sending an army of locusts to destroy the vineyards of the land. The language of verse 6 personifies the locusts into an army of an invading nation. On one level, the locusts may picture a future invasion from Babylon (or Assyria), but I believe that the language throughout this chapter and into the next focuses on the announced locust invasion.

What happens when a person puts their hope or trust into something or someone? When they derive joy from that object of their affection? What happens when that source of joy dries up or fails? What then? I was disappointed when the Astros lost to the Cardinals in Game 7 of the NLCS (I'm writing this the day after the game). However, my joy is not dependent on a baseball team. Yes I was disappointed, but I wasn't despondent. This word of mourning to the drunkards warns us of looking for our joy in created things, because they will ultimately fail. The vine has been destroyed, and the fruit of the vine has dried up. **The only source of true joy is from the Lord. We are to turn from things and turn to the thing-maker.**

### b. *To the People (1:8-10)*

**Next, Joel directs the entire nation to mourn,** like a bride who has to take off her wedding gown to put on her funeral clothing because her new husband has died. The picture is one of great joy turned to overwhelming grief. **Why are the people instructed to grieve? Because their worship of the Lord has been cut off.**

The locust plague has destroyed the crops which are the basis for the Old Testament offerings. The daily offerings in the Temple in addition to two lambs included grain, wine, and oil (**cp. Num. 28:1-8**). The locust invasion has signaled a cutting off of the people from the fellowship of God. They don't have access to the Lord any more. They have been cut off. This is something deeply to be mourned. **A modern equivalent would be for a church member to be excommunicated and denied access to the Communion Table for the Lord's Supper.**

### c. *To the Farmers (1:11-12)*

**The third group instructed to mourn is the farmers.** Obviously, this group would be hard hit economically by the locust plague. Their entire means of livelihood could be gobbled up overnight by the ravenous horde of insects. Joel expands the crop list beyond grain, wine, and oil to show that it is an all-encompassing plague. All the crops are destroyed by the locusts. **It is an economic disaster.** Again, we are reminded what happens when we put our hope and joy into something that can fail. **Financial security is not the ultimate source of joy.**

The language here reminds me of the Garden of Eden, particularly the reference to "all the trees of the field." Adam was permitted to eat "of every tree of the garden" except one (Gen. 2:16). When he sinned, he was kicked out of the garden and lost access to all of the trees of the garden. Here in Joel, the sons of Adam (sons of men) have lost all the trees of the field.

### d. *To the Priests (1:13-14)*

**Finally, Joel commands the priests to mourn.** We've already seen them mourning in verse 9 for the loss of the grain and drink offerings, so it appears as if they have obeyed Joel's

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instruction in verse 13. However, Joel gives them additional instructions in verse 14. Altogether, **Joel gives 7 imperatives to the priests:** 1) gird and lament; 2) wail; 3) come and lie; 4) consecrate; 5) call; 6) gather; and 7) cry out.

**What are the priests to do? They are to lead the nation in a prayer meeting of repentance.** They are to consecrate a fast – a symbol of mourning. They are to call a sacred assembly and gather all the elders and inhabitants of the land together in the presence of the Lord. Notice how the gathering of “the elders and all the inhabitants of the land” in verse 14 balances out the call for these two groups to hear the word of the Lord in verse 2. Finally, once everyone is gathered together, the priests are to lead the prayer meeting of repentance, to “cry out to the Lord.”

### *e. What Is Their Sin?*

So, Joel announces a big locust invasion that will have a huge impact on the people. He calls four different groups of people to mourn, ending with the religious leaders calling a big prayer meeting to cry out to the Lord and confess their sin. Perhaps you’ve been wondering the same question I have: **what is their sin?**

Unlike all of the other prophetic books which speak about judgment coming upon the people of God, **Joel is unusually reticent in describing the sins which deserve the prophesied judgment.** Hosea spoke at length about spiritual infidelity. As we will see in a few weeks, Amos cries out against false religion, but in particular against social injustice. While Joel has no problem telling the people that judgment in the form of a locust plague is coming, he doesn’t tell Judah (or us) why.

**There could be two explanations for this. First, the sin of the people was so obvious, so well known, so out in the open, that it really wasn’t even necessary to describe.** Everyone already knew it – it was taken for granted. Prior hypothesizes that the sin had to do with corruption of worship, incorporating Canaanite fertility practices honoring Baal and Asherah. The drunkards would be attracted to this type of worship, since drunkenness was common in these rites. The farmers are implicated by supplying the false religion with their wine. This is certainly possible, and consistent with much of the rest of the writing prophets.

**However, I believe that the lack of a specific sin mentioned here may actually be for the benefit of God’s people today.** We too readily will look upon our ancient forebears in the faith and say, “Well, they were silly to sin like they did, but we know a lot better today. We would never behave in that particular fashion!” And so we try to dismiss the sin and the consequent judgment that goes with it. Not so easy to do here. The lack of a specific sin actually can help us more readily identify with the people of Joel’s day. **Whatever besetting sin is in your life, confess it to the Lord.** Cry out to the Lord along with the people of Joel’s day to forgive that sin and avert the coming chastisement it deserves. **Joel’s call to assemble together and cry out to the Lord is a timeless call – one that we still must hear and obey today.**

### **C. The Day of the LORD (1:15-20)**

The first section of the book of Joel (1:2-14) announces the locust invasion and a call to mourn. **In this next short section (1:15-20), the intensity of the judgment by locust invasion increases:** in addition to the destruction of the crops, now the animals and even the rest of creation are shown to suffer as well. **Furthermore, Joel introduces the concept of the Day of the LORD and links it to the locust invasion.** Thus, we are clearly told that the physical

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judgment of the locust plague has spiritual dimensions, since it is linked to the LORD and His day.

### 1. A Call to Mourn (1:15-18)

What is the Day of the LORD? This is a phrase that is repeated in 1:15, 2:1, 2:11, 2:31, and 3:14. It also appears three times in Amos 5:18-20. The exact phrase appears in 25 different verses in the Old Testament prophets, but there are hundreds of more references, such as “the day of His coming,” “in that day,” etc. The exact phrase occurs only 5 times in the New Testament, and in most of these verses it is referring to the second return of Jesus Christ.

If I am correct in positing an early date for Joel, then this is the first written reference to “the Day of the LORD” in the history of the Scriptures. Although this is the first written appearance, the term must have had some oral tradition of meaning in Israel, for Amos, the next historical writer to use the phrase, has to correct the misconceptions of his hearers (Amos 5:18-20). They thought that the “day of the LORD” would be a good thing for them. Amos told his sinful listeners that it would be a day of “darkness and not light” as they had expected.

We will have more to say about the Day of the LORD in future studies in the book of Joel, so suffice it to say for the moment that **the “Day of the LORD” is the day in which the Lord comes. A day in which He comes to inspect His people, to bless and forgive and restore His people, but also a day to judge His people and to judge the nations. It is the day in which the Lord comes.**

**Most of the time, particularly in the prophets, the Day of the LORD is a time of judgment, wrath, darkness, anger, vengeance, destruction, and punishment.** That is what we see here in Joel 1:15. Joel takes the promised locust plague and like Emeril (“Bam!”), he takes it up a notch. He links the locusts to the coming of the LORD. **The locusts come in judgment like the LORD comes in judgment.** The day of the locusts point to the Day of the LORD. In fact, Joel uses a pun to emphasize his point. There is a word play between “destruction” and “the Almighty” (*Shaddai*). To catch a sense of this, the phrase could be translated as “overpowering from the Overpowerer,” or “devastation from the Devastator.”

The litany of woe that follows captures all that has gone before in terms of destruction of crops and its impact on religious worship. Joel intensifies the lament by showing us how the domestic animals – the cattle and sheep – are also impacted and suffer because of the locust plague. This should remind us that **sin has not only consequences upon ourselves, but upon others and even upon creation itself.** Paul reminds us in **Romans 8:20-22** that all of creation suffers and groans under the curse of sin, awaiting deliverance just as we do.

### 2. A Call to Pray (1:19-20)

Joel has commanded the priests to gather the congregation “and cry out to the LORD” (1:14). That is exactly what he does here himself. **Joel cries out to the LORD. Furthermore, the animals who are suffering also cry out.** Throughout Scripture, animals are used to image human beings (e.g., substitutionary sacrifice). We should be doing what the animals are doing. Compare Joel 1:20 to Psalm 42:1 – “As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God.” The panting hart points us to the living God. Hubbard points out: “In Joel, having been denied the streams of water, the animals pant unto God. If wild animals call upon Yahweh’s help, how much more should his people who have been summoned to fasting and

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prayer.” Isn’t that the point? **The beasts of the field cry out to God when they are in trouble. Even more so, we are to cry out to God in prayer. Do we?**

### Conclusion

How can we apply the lessons of Joel chapter 1? Listen to Robertson: “What do these pests have to do with the purposes of God? That is the very point to which Joel speaks. God is the one who orders his creation to bring about a devastation of everything that might bring joy to life. These phenomena are ordered by the LORD. This chastening judgment on God’s people progresses from one object to another. **The judgment by locusts anticipates the Lord’s finalizing judgment among the nations. So it is not surprising to find the Old Testament imagery of devastation by locusts taking on apocalyptic dimensions in the book of Revelation (Rev. 9:2-12). Although judgment ends by calling all the nations of the world to account, it begins with the house of God.** This is a message especially needed by a complacent Christianity today. Joel has begun his message with an alarm-cry directed towards the people of the Lord. Judgment must begin with the house of God. The current temporal judgment anticipates the great coming Day of the LORD.”

Boice adds: “**The most important thing about Joel’s handling of disaster is that he sees God as responsible for it.** As we get farther into the book we discover that the locust invasion is a foretaste of the coming day of God’s judgment and is sent in advance of that day as a warning of it. In chapter 2, where the locust invasion is treated as a symbol of the coming Day of the Lord, Joel makes very dear that God causes both. **Those who object to tragedies like the locust plague err because they ask the wrong question. They are asking, ‘Why should disaster fall upon these? Why should God strike such innocent people?’ But what they should be asking is: ‘Why haven’t these disasters come on us? Why haven’t they destroyed us?’** [compare the teaching of Jesus re the tower of Siloam in Luke 13:2-5]. Our problem is that we have forgotten how sinful we are. We have forgotten that it generally takes a disaster of unparalleled proportions to wake us from sin’s lethargy. Both the delays in God’s judgment (the periods of grace) and the previews of judgment in such catastrophic events as locust plagues and earthquakes are for our good that we might repent.”

Prior concludes: “**Joel urges his contemporaries to cry to the LORD. Cry from your helplessness. Cry with all your agony and desolation. Cry to the LORD who is the only God.** Cry to the one who formed all things, including the locusts; who formed you out of the dust; who formed you for himself. Cry with a heart ready to listen rather than to argue or justify. Cry in humble admission that you have nowhere else to turn and that you are utterly dependent on the mercy of God. **That is the practical implication of living in relationship with the LORD God. When we meet circumstances like those facing the people of Joel’s day, we turn to God and cry to him for mercy and help in our time of need.**”

Next week: Lesson 2 – The Day of the LORD Is Coming! – Joel 2:1-17 – Robertson Chapter 2

Close in Prayer.