**Joel**

**The Day of the Lord**

**What you need to REMEMBER:**

There are two basic types of prophetic messages, ‘forthtelling’ and ‘foretelling.’ ‘Forthtelling’ is speaking-forth, or speaking-out, God’s message into a particular situation. ‘Foretelling’ reveals something that will happen in the future.

The are many examples in the Scriptures when prophetic utterances ‘speak-forth’ directly into a contemporaneous situation while also possessing a double meaning that ‘foretells’ future developments. Such is the sometimes complicated and mysterious relationship between prophetic forthtelling and foretelling. Prophesies always meant something to the original recipient, but sometimes there was another layer of meaning that could be missed by the original hearer.

**What you need to KNOW:**

Joel prophesied in the Southern Kingdom of Judah probably during the prosperous reign of King Uzziah (792-740 B.C.). Uzziah was a trusted and competent leader who ensured security and prosperity for the people. However, something out of his control happened. A ravaging plague of locusts was followed by an enduring drought which resulted in the devastation of their agrarian economy. The destruction not only created food insecurity for the region, but also limited the ability of the people to bring grain offerings into the Temple as a part of their religious observances. The prophesies in the book of Joel speak to these 8th Century BC events, but also use them as an inflection point to foretell events that will occur centuries later.

The phrase ***“the day of the Lord”*** is repeated 6 times in this short, three-chapter book. This term is used to point out that God’s purposes always come to pass and that it is the Lord who orchestrates all things and brings them to their appointed final outcomes. Joel’s message is: A Day is Coming when there will be no doubt that He is in charge – The Day of the Lord is Coming, count on it!

Joel says that when the day of the Lord arrives God Himself will ***‘pour out (his) Spirit on all people’(2:28),*** He will save ***“everyone who calls on the name of the Lord”(2:32)***, and that ***“at that time (He) will restore the fortunes (of his people)”(3:1)***. “The Day of the Lord” will be a time of great blessing for God’s people, but it will also be the day that the Lord ***“swings the sickle” (3:13)*** in judgment against the wicked.

Some of the prophesies of Joel were “forth-telling,” calling the ancients to repentance. Others “foretell” the coming of the Church which would be populated by individuals on whom the Lord would “***pour out His Spirit,”*** and where ***“everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Note how Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32 in Acts 2:17-21).*** Moreover, Joel’s prophesies “foretell” ***“the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord” (2:31),*** at which time all wickedness will be removed from God’s good earth at the final ***“great judgment day of God Almighty” (Revelation 16:14).***

**GET GOING!**

**Take a leisurely stroll through this short, but densely packed prophesy.**