

## I. Difficulties in Dealing With the Prophecy of Joel

- A. Joel is unknown outside his prophecy
- B. Joel does not give us any conclusive evidence about the date of his prophecy
  - 1. Joel's prophecy may have been the first book written or may have been one of the last
  - 2. Key points to note:
    - a) There is no reference to a king
    - b) No mention of the problem of idolatry
    - c) Priests are seen in a positive light as the spiritual leaders of the people
    - d) Judah and Israel seem to be used interchangeably
    - e) There are many similarities of thought between Joel and other prophets
  - 3. The positive side is that the date does not affect the interpretation of the message
- C. There is then the difficulty of interpreting exactly what is happening in the book
  - 1. Begins with a lament over a locust plague that has devastated Judah
  - 2. After that, there is considerable difference of opinion of what happens

### Assignment:

*Read Isaiah 1-12*

*Pay particular attention to the vision of God in chapter 6. Isaiah's entire prophecy is shaped by what happened in the presence of God.*

## II. Basic Message of Joel's Prophecy

- A. Begins with a lament over a locust plague (Chapter 1)
  - 1. First it is recounted (vs. 1-13)
    - a) John Whiting describes a similar plague that occurred in Palestine in 1915
  - 2. Moves to a call to humiliation (vs. 14-20)
- B. Moves to a warning concerning the day of the Lord (Chapter 2)
  - 1. Sound an alarm (vs. 1)
  - 2. Again describes a locust plague (vs. 2-11)
  - 3. Call to repent (vs. 12-17)
    - a) God's conditions: ***Return to Me*** (vs. 12-13)
    - b) Prophet's appeal for whole heartedness (vs. 13-17)
- C. The immediate restoration of God's blessing (2:18-27)
  - 1. Follows immediately on repentance
  - 2. Ultimate blessing: ***Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel*** (vs. 27)
- D. Future day of blessing and judgment (2:28 - 3:21)
  - 1. Blessing: *I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind* (2:28)
  - 2. Appropriation of the blessing: *And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered* (2:32)
  - 3. Reason that this is a blessing: valley of decision-judgment on the sinful earth
  - 4. Final blessing of the day of the Lord: the righteous will be delivered and live in peace on earth