

## **Week 4 | “God’s Word to Joel—Joel 1:1-3”**

### **I. WE NEED SOMETHING FROM HEAVEN**

1. **Joel 1:1** “The Word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel.”
- B. Here in this short, powerfully complex verse, we learn about the one thing that authenticates Joel’s message, “The Word of the Lord that came to Joel...” The nation of Israel, and the inhabitants of the land are bound to listen to Joel because his words came from an unseen realm.
- C. When it comes to God and His Kingdom, and as His ambassadors, His messengers, His preachers, His evangelists, we aren’t in the business of speculation, but of divine revelation. We aren’t in the business of handling rumors, and secondhand stories about God.
- D. The message that we’ve been called to deliver, just like Joel, is a message that doesn’t originate with us, it doesn’t come from us, but it COMES TO US, from God. In a culture that has enough wisdom that’s come from the earth, we too need something that COMES DOWN FROM HEAVEN.
- E. Like Joel, we need something holy, something eternal, something divine, *not just something earthly*. We’re not in need of more human speculation, we need divine revelation. Because of the grave nature of the present crisis, and the one still looming, God’s family couldn’t/can’t afford to offer hypothesis.
- F. Apart from the mention of Joel’s father, Joel doesn’t tell us about his tribe, the family from which he came from, the date of his prophecy, or how he received God’s Word upon his life. But in the lack of information, we can assume that God wanted us to know more about the prophecy, or the God behind the prophecy, than the prophet.
  1. **Joel 1:2** “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?”
- G. Though Joel is currently silent about the specifics of what’s happened among them, he’s appealing for the AGED/SPIRITUAL LEADERS to either validate his claim or mention a time they remember that was worse than this present crisis. These are the OLDEST LIVING WITNESSES among them.
- H. Moving from the ELDERS/OLDEST LIVING WITNESSES, Joel then asks the, “...inhabitants of the land...” if they will either validate his claim or speak of something, they remember that was worse. This was simply a rhetorical question, a question that only had one answer, NO!
- I. God’s judgment’s against Jerusalem and the nation of Israel are the most severe judgments that God will release upon any nation. But the blessings that God gives to Jerusalem and the nation of Israel are greater than He gives to any other nation.
  1. Alongside of the wild, abundant grace through Israel’s election are also matched with the wildest, most painful judgments. When the blessings are high, so also are the consequences when that grace for blessing is rejected.
  2. **Luke 24:48** “...For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.”

- J. When sin and tragic departure from God happen in one generation, we shouldn't be surprised when the trouble that also befalls them is greater than any trouble before it.
1. **Joel 1:3** *"Tell your children about it, let your children tell their children and their children another generation."*
- K. It's here that Joel gives us our first clue that God is behind their present trouble. Though we don't know specifically what's happened, the fact that Joel's asking them to remember it into 3 generations signifies the importance for this trouble to live on beyond their lives.
- L. One might wonder why would you pass on calamities from generation to generation, even to 3 generations? It makes sense why you pass on the positives, but why the negatives? The concern then, as it is today; we easily forget the trouble of our past (*this is a solemn warning for future generations*).
- M. It's essential that God doesn't have to have a Genesis in every generation. Meaning, it's essential to the continued work of God throughout the ages that God can build on the previous generations and not have to continually rebuild.
- N. But this means that we have to pass down from generation to generation the truths of God contained in the Word of God. We have to hand down solid Biblical truth related to the way God judges people, ministries, and nations. The way that God desires to pour out His Spirit in blessing, power, deliverance and salvation.
- O. If we don't do this, we will fail to empower the people of God to partner with the Holy Spirit in building SUCCESSIVE ministry that grows in its intensity year by year, and decade by decade (*The time I slammed my hands on the glass table*).

## II. HOW DOES GOD'S WORD COME INTO OUR LIVES?

- A. According to most standards, the disciples we're well equipped to head out and do the work of the ministry. At this point they'd traveled with Jesus all over the land watching Him *preach, teach, heal, counsel, serve, rebuke, and wait on God*. They themselves had been sent out in small groups with power and had personally seen God move through their lives casting out demons and healing the sick.
- B. But in **Luke 24:49**, after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and moments before His ascension He said to the disciples, *"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*
- C. From Jesus' perspective, even after all the ministry they'd watched and personally experienced, they also needed something more, something that was worth waiting for, something from heaven.
- D. So, do we also have to be in a specific place for the Word of God to come to us? Do we have to stand in a certain way? Do we have to pray in a certain way? Or do we have to read from a certain translation?
- E. Beyond form, beyond eloquence, beyond right translations, we have to be in a certain posture, a heart posture before the Lord. Some of the most profound experiences I've had in the grace of God have come outside of Church services, outside the prayer room, and without music.
1. This is because God only needs our hearts, and lives to be in a certain place, a certain posture.

- F. If you and I are going to experience God and receive the Word of God in our lives, we have to wait for Him. We have to open up our hearts, the Bible, our hands, and give Him time. Here's three way's that I've sustained daily Bible reading for 20 years;
1. Pray Before I Read— (1) Holy Spirit breathe upon the Word (2) Give me wisdom beyond my years from the Bible (3) Let it be Your Word that comes out when I pray, when I preached, and when I counsel others
  2. I Always Read With A Pen In Hand and A Computer Nearby—I do this as an act of faith, telling the Lord I'm ready to hear what you have to say to me.
  3. I Read Through Either The Whole Bible, Or A Book Of The Bible, Consistently—Though I've done this any number of ways, you have to commit to reading consistently, thoroughly either through the whole Bible or specific books/sections at a time.
    - a. *Cover to cover—10 chapters a day—33-year Bible study plan*
- G. **Jeremiah 23:16-22**—*We have to stand in the counsel of God*
- H. **Luke 10:38-42**—*Mary chose the good part*
- I. **Luke 24:30-32, 45**—*Their hearts burned with them, and He touched their understanding*