

**ABATT**  
**Joel**  
 Christian Life Assembly  
 Jim Hoffman

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The Minor Prophets		
Prophet	Date of Writing	Prophesied to:
Obadiah	845-750	Israel/Edom
Joel	835-796	Judah
Jonah	793-753	Niniveh
Hosea	753-715	Israel
Amos	760-755	Israel/Judah
Micah	770-710	Israel/Judah
Nahum	663-612	Niniveh
Zepheniah	635-625	Judah/Assyria/Nations
Habbakuk	610-605	Judah/Nations
Haggai	520	Judah
Zechariah	520-470	Judah
Malachi	460-410	Judah

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**The Minor Prophets**

- Joel is the author of the book known by his name and was likely written between 835 and 800 B.C.
- Here is the proof of Joel's authorship - **Joel 1:1 The word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel.**
- Joel writes in the aftermath of a horrible and devastating invasion of locusts which destroyed their crops, their economy, and their lives in general.

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**The Minor Prophets**

Joel 1:4 What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten. What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten, and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten.

ESV

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**The Minor Prophets**

- Joel uses the locust invasion to prophesy about how God deals with sin and the locusts point to something even bigger in the last days.
- Just as the swarms of locusts came in waves so will God's judgments on sin come in the Great Tribulation.
- When the locusts came there was no stopping them which pictures the seals, trumpets, and bowls that God will use to judge the world in the last 7 years of history.

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**The Minor Prophets**

- Joel clearly indicates judgment is coming, but never identifies any of Israel's sins – probably because he assumes the reader already knows what was going on.
- Given that Joel quotes from many biblical texts we can conclude that he was a student of the scriptures of his time.
- He had a good understanding of Israel's history and after writing this book, their future as well.

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### The Minor Prophets

- The theme of Joel is the **Day of the LORD**, a phrase that is found 5 times in Joel as well as 14 times in the rest of the prophets.
- In its larger meaning the term, "**Day of the Lord**", refers to an eschatological event known more commonly as the Great Tribulation.
- Isaiah 13:9 Behold, the **day of the Lord** comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. ESV

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### The Minor Prophets

The "Day of the Lord" could be best described as a period of time wherein God openly steps into world history.

There is little disagreement among conservative theologians that the term is synonymous with the Great Tribulation, but there are some who see its length as 3.5 years and others as a period of 7 years.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 1:13 Put on sackcloth and lament, O priests; wail, O ministers of the altar. ESV
- The need in Joel's day for Judah is the same as the church's need today – REPENTANCE.
- Notice who the onus is on to lead God's people in repentance, the "priests" – who is that today? Church leaders, not just the professionals, but anyone who has followers or influence.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 1:14 Consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly. Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord. ESV
- Sin should bother all of us and should create in us a sense of urgency to deal with it as we see its devastation.
- Fast, gather the elders, and cry out to the Lord!

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### The Minor Prophets

- **Joel 1:15 Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is near, and as destruction from the Almighty it comes.** ESV
- The phrase, “destruction from the Almighty” is a clear indication the swarming locusts are God’s judgment.
- In Joel’s day a severe plague of locusts had come upon the land consuming the vegetation – when the locusts were done it was as if a fire had come through the land.

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### The Minor Prophets



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The Minor Prophets

- We tend to look at the unsaved in our land and blame them for the ills of our country – but can we expect the unsaved to act like anything but unsaved people?
- Our focus ought to be inward to see where we are spiritually – being in slightly better shape than those around us is not a plateau to rest upon.
- I see little hope of “fixing” the culture until we, the church, are “fixed”, and the church won’t be fixed until we as its individual members, are fixed.

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The Minor Prophets

*A fair question at this point is, “what would a ‘fixed’ Christian look like”?*

*Answer – full surrender.*

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The Minor Prophets

*“Fallen man is not simply an imperfect creature who needs improvement: he is a rebel who must lay down his arms.”*

*C.S. Lewis*

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 1:16 Is not **the food cut off before our eyes, joy and gladness from the house of our God?** 17 **The seed shrivels under the clods; the storehouses are desolate; the granaries are torn down** because the grain has dried up. 18 How the **beasts groan!** The **herds of cattle are perplexed** because there is no pasture for them; **even the flocks of sheep suffer.** ESV

- As Joel looked around, he saw some obvious signs of his people losing the blessings of God – if we see like signs in our day we should ask why?

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### The Minor Prophets

- What might we see in America?

- Christians not concerned about the murder of the unborn.
- Sexual anarchy – typified by more than 2 gender choices.
- Biological males are competing against girls in high school sports.
- We accept lies like saying there is “my truth” and “your truth”.
- Politicians lie and as long as the lies help our side we look away.
- Far more pulpits preach psychology than doctrine.
- The divorce rate in the church is the same as it is in the world.
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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 2:12 “Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; 13 and rend your hearts and not your garments.” ESV

- In light of the coming judgment the people of God are to “rend (tear) their hearts” so that they are open to the work he wants, even needs, to do in them.

- Joel understood that repentance can be just a show, or it can be real – there is a difference.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 2:17 Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say, "Spare your people, O Lord, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, "Where is their God?"" ESV
- "Between the vestibule and the altar" – to be in this spot in the temple places one directly at the entrance to the Holy Place where the priests ministered daily.
- It is to draw near to God – and as James said, "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you."

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### The Minor Prophets

- **God's response** - Joel 2:18 Then the Lord became jealous for his land and had pity on his people. 19 The Lord answered and said to his people, "Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations. 20 **I will remove the northerner far from you, and drive him into a parched and desolate land**, his vanguard into the eastern sea, and his rear guard into the western sea; the stench and foul smell of him will rise, for he has done great things." ESV

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 2:18 Then the Lord became jealous for his land and had pity on his people. ESV (Godly jealousy)
- Deliverance from the drudgeries of a sin-stained life always begins with God, "**then the Lord**".
- We may have been laboring in prayer, we were keenly aware of the spot we were in, but until God responds and begins to pour life into our hearts, we will do no better than to experience regret.

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### The Minor Prophets

- In the future **“day of the Lord”** when his people repent he will step in and turn back the enemies of Israel in the valley of Armageddon.
- Notice it is the **“northerner”** in particular that is mentioned – probably Gog and Magog which can be traced to the areas of Russia and Turkey.
- Noah’s one grandson was named Magog and he settled in the north above Israel – Gog is the land he settled.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 2:19 **“The Lord answered and said to his people”.**
- So how does God pour life into our hearts? He sends revelation – as he reveals his timeless truths to us, we are then enlivened to begin to claw our way back.
- Getting good advice and hearing good psychology might be helpful, but neither can provide the powerful agent of change we find in his word.

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### The Minor Prophets

- The next phase of our deliverance is signaled when we begin to prove our faith in God by rejoicing in the work he is doing in us.
- Joel 2:21 **“Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things!”** ESV
- Sin makes us cowards because we can start to fear that God is done with us – when he has moved to assure us of his love we begin to come out of our fear.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 2:25 I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent among you.... Joel 2:27 You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame. ESV
- The final stage of deliverance is the restoration of blessing and fellowship with God.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel is sometimes called “the prophet of Pentecost”.
- Joel 2:28 “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. 29 Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. 30 And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.” ESV

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### The Minor Prophets

- What happened on Pentecost (Acts 2) was but a shadow of Joel’s prophecy.
- On the day of Pentecost all of the Jews present in Jerusalem received (poured out) the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.
- Later on in Acts 8 and Acts 10 the Spirit is given in like fashion to the Samaritans (half breed Jews) and the gentiles represented by Cornelius and his house.

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### The Minor Prophets

- But what happened in Acts is still not the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy – how do we know that?
- Joel tells us - “And it shall come to pass afterward”.
- Joel’s 2:28 prophecy is for “after” some things, not the least of which is described in 2:27, “You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God and there is none else. **And my people shall never again be put to shame.**” ESV

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### The Minor Prophets

- The only period of time for the Jews where “**And my people shall never again be put to shame**” applies is in the end time events of Revelation.
- We know Israel does not repent and return to the Lord in any global or continuing fashion until the glorious return of Christ at Armageddon.
- Joel’s 2:28 prophecy was partially fulfilled at Pentecost and will see its ultimate fulfillment in the last days.

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### The Minor Prophets

- This explains why the sun wasn't turned to darkness and the moon to blood in Acts chapter 2.
- The day of Pentecost ushered in the time when God would pour out his Spirit on all believers – He was active in the O.T., but he comes in a new way on Pentecost.
- That "way" continues today and will continue right up to and including the "Day of the Lord" when the sun will turn black, and the moon will turn to blood. (both images are figurative)

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 3:2 I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. And I will enter into judgment with them there, on behalf of my people and my heritage Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations and have divided up my land. ESV
- Jehoshaphat means, "Jehovah is Judge".
- When you see "the Valley of Jehoshaphat" you can usually assume it is synonymous with Armageddon, especially when there is a battle, or judgment connected to it.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 3:9 Proclaim this among the nations: "Prepare for war! Wake up the mighty men, Let all the men of war draw near, Let them come up. 10 Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, 'I am strong.'" NKJV
- The call in verse #9 is not to Israel, but to the nations of the world who are set on destroying the people of God.
- They've been summoned to Armageddon for the biggest mismatch in all of history – God VS the World.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 3:12 Let the nations stir themselves up and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. 13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Go in, tread, for the winepress is full. The vats overflow, for their evil is great. ESV
- Rev 19:15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ESV

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### The Minor Prophets

- Zephaniah adds, "The great **day of the LORD** is near--near and coming quickly. Listen! The cry on the day of the LORD will be bitter, the shouting of the warrior will be there."
- That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness" (Zeph 1:14-15).
- The dark terror of divine judgment was to be poured out on unbelieving Israel (Isa 22; Joel 1-2; Amos 5; Zep 1) and on the unbelieving peoples of the world (Eze 38-39; Zec 14).

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 3:14 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Go in, tread, for the winepress is full. The vats overflow, for their evil is great. 14 Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. ESV
- As a part of the "Day of the Lord" redeemed Israel is back in their land for the millennial kingdom.
- When God speaks of judgment he often speaks in agricultural terms - We produce fruit, and he picks it.

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### The Minor Prophets

- The law of sowing and reaping applies to individuals, and to nations as well – and remember whatever you sow you will reap and reap more than you plant.
- If you grow a life without God, he will give you the eternity you seem to prefer – a life without him!
- Armageddon was the biggest agricultural valley in Israel, so it is fitting that the biggest judgment happens there as well.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Joel 3:16 The Lord roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth quake. But the Lord is a refuge to his people, a stronghold to the people of Israel. ESV
- As was pictured by the locusts, judgment is coming upon the land – a judgment so bad that the earth will quake.
- But for those willing to turn from sin to God (the definition of repentance) there is hope and a place of refuge.

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Questions?

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