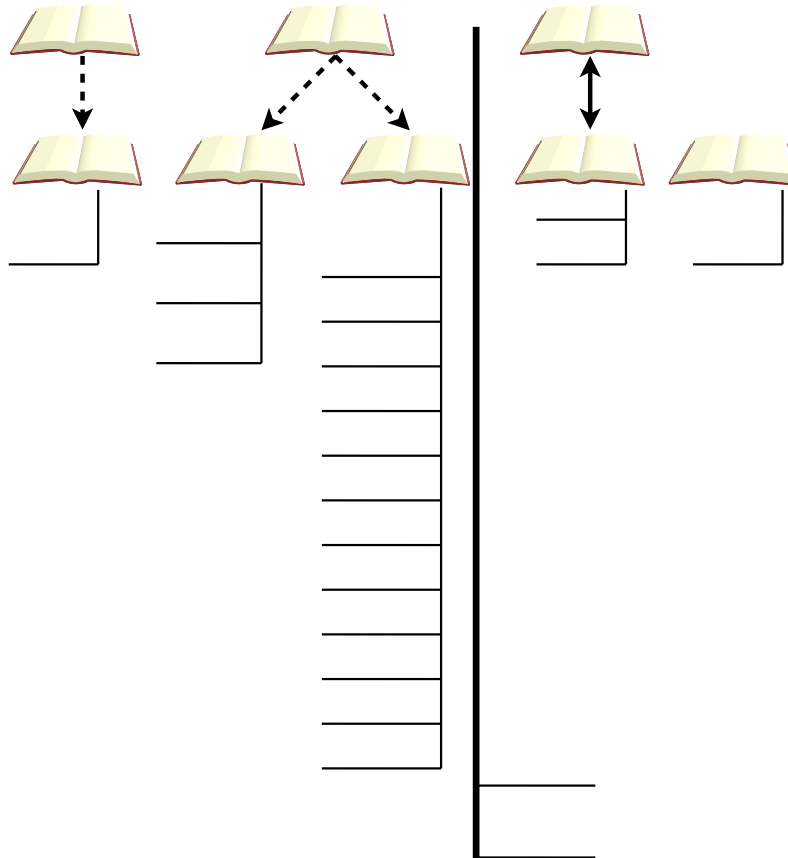


XVII. UNIT 17: “LOCUSTS AND THE “LAST DAYS”: *The Book of Joel*

I. LOOKING BACK: The Rise & Fall of the Jewish Monarchy



II. LOCUSTS & THE “LAST DAYS” – The Book of Joel

A. The “Details”

1. The prophet’s name means “The Lord is _____.”
2. His prophecy begins with a _____ use of an actual disaster (i.e. locust plague).
3. Joel was extremely familiar with Jerusalem and the _____ (i.e. a “Southern” prophet):
 - a. Specific _____ are mentioned (1:9).
 - b. There are repeated eferences to “priests,” “altar,” “_____ of God,” “Judah,” and “Zion” (1:13-16; 2:15-17).

B. The “Difficulties”

1. A Puzzling Chronology: There are no internal “hooks” for _____ this book.
2. A Biographical Vacuum: No information about the _____ other than his _____ name.
3. A Broad Message: No specific _____ are addressed; it is more of a “free-floating” proph-
ecy.

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4. A Messianic Silence: There are _____ prophecies about the future Messiah.
5. An Expansive Application: It provides prophetic details ranging from the 8th century BC to the _____ coming of Christ.
6. It is not clear “who _____ whom” in this book* (*another dating issue*):

<p><i>...a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people; their like has never been before, nor will be again after them through the years of all generations.</i> Joel 2:2</p>	<p><i>A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness,</i> Zephaniah 1:15</p>
<p><i>Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, “I am a warrior.”</i> Joel 3:10</p>	<p><i>He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.</i> Isaiah 2:4</p> <p><i>He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore;</i> Micah 4:3</p>

**Scholars estimate that 27 phrases or expression from Joel appear in other Old Testament books.*

C. The “_____” (of The Lord)

1. This phrase appears _____ in this book (cf. 1:15; 2:1,11,31:3:14).
2. The “Day of the Lord” also appears in _____ other prophetic books (Obadiah, Amos, Isaiah, Zephaniah, Ezekiel, and Malachi)
3. The “Day of the Lord” is when YAHWEH _____ Himself as He really is.
4. It will be a day of judgment and/or _____.

D. The “Declaration”

1. Joel issues a timeless call to _____ that is rooted in the covenant revelation by YAHWEH about Himself:

J o e l 2 : 1 2 - 1 3	E x o d u s 3 4 : 6 , 1 0
<p><i>“Yet even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.”</i></p>	<p><i>The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. ...And he said, “Behold, I am making a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or in any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the LORD, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you.</i></p>

E. Joel and the New Testament

1. Paul quotes Joel in his declaration about the inclusiveness of _____:

For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
—Romans 10:13
2. _____ cites Joel extensively to introduce his first Pentecostal sermon.
3. Peter establishes forever an unbreakable continuity between God’s elect (“chosen”) people over the past _____ years and on into the future (see comparative chart on next page):

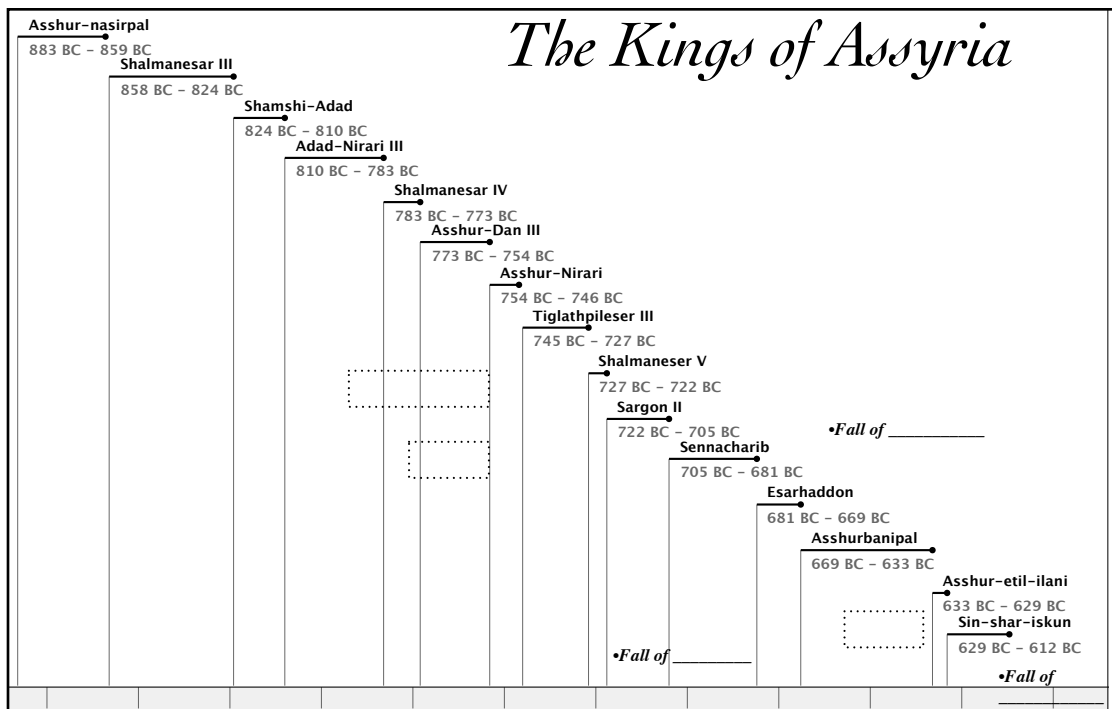
Acts 2:14-21	Joel 2:28-32
<p>But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."</p>	<p>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. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. "And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.</p>

4. This day is also an answer to the prayer of _____ in Number 11:29:
"But Moses said to him, 'Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!'"
5. God reversed the Jewish _____ order in this prophecy and in its fulfillment:
"Blessed are you, Hashem [the name], our G-D, King of the Universe for not making me a gentile. Blessed are you for not making me a slave. Blessed are you for not making me a woman." (from the Jewish Talmud;
6. The first half of Joel's prophecy was fulfilled at _____. The last half will be fulfilled in the "_____ " of the "last days":
"When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale.

—Revelation 6:12-13

III. THIS AIN'T PREACHIN' TO THE CHOIR! — The Books of Jonah & Nahum

A. Cold Hearts Meet Cold Feet: The "Big Picture" on the Big Bully



1. The Assyrian “MO and Rap Sheet”

a. The Assyrians were _____ beyond imagination. Their treatment of captives of war included:

- (1) Leading captives by means of _____ in their _____.
- (2) _____ captives alive
- (3) Cutting off body _____.
- (4) Tearing out _____.
- (5) Making “_____” of human heads:

“Their men, young and old, I took as prisoners. Of some, I cut off the feet and the hands; of others I cut off the noses, ears and lips; of the young men’s ears I made a heap; of the old men’s heads I built a minaret.”
 [Assurnasirpal, King of Assyria 883-859 B.C.]

2. Assyria and Israel: Two Centuries of “Stormy Weather”

a. **853 BC** — Ahab (Israel) and Ben-Hadad (Syria) made a rare and brief _____ to fight Shalmanessar III (874-853 BC) at the Battle of Qarqar.

b. **841 BC** — _____ of Judah paid tribute to Shalmanessar.

c. **745-727 BC** — Tiglathpileser III (745-727 BC) attacked _____ during the reign of Pekah (2 Kg. 15:29)

d. **722 BC** — Shalmanessar V/Sargon II attacked and destroyed _____ and deported Israel. (2 Kings 17)

(1) The “_____” people were the result of this invasion.

e. **701 BC** — Sennacharib attacked Lachish (Judah) and destroyed it.

(1) He fortified _____ and made it the capital of Assyria.

(2) He constructed the world’s oldest _____ to bring water into Nineveh (30 miles!).

(3) Hezekiah built his famous “_____” to prepare for Assyrian attack. (Pool of Siloam).

f. **681-669 BC** — Esarhadden made Manasseh of Judah help him provide building supplies for Nineveh and perhaps even _____ which he also refurbished:

“I called up the kings of the country Hatti and the region of the other side of the Euphrates, namely Ba’lu, king of Tyre, Manasseh, king of Judah . . . ; all these I sent out and made them transport under terrible difficulties to Nineveh, the city where I exercise my rulership, as building material for my palace: big logs, long beams . . .” (ANET, p. 29)

“And at the beginning of my rule, in the first year of my reign, when I took my seat upon the royal throne in might, there appeared favorable signs in the heavens....Through the soothsayers’ rites encouraging oracles were disclosed, and for the rebuilding of Babylon and the restoration of [the step-tower] Esagila they caused the command to be written down.”

3. Nineveh “That Great City”

a. It is one of the _____ cities in the world, built by Nimrod the great-grandson of _____! (Gen. 10:11)

b. Assyria is mentioned _____ in the Bible; over half are in the prophets (44x in Isaiah alone!)

c. Social _____ occurred half-way through the reign of Ashur Dan III, which coincides with the lifetime of the prophet Jonah.

d. It was an intimidating city: _____’ tall towers, _____’ tall walls and _____ gates.

e. Two of its kings' palaces averaged 625,000 _____ !

4. Jonah: The Resume'

- a. We know when and where he lived: _____ (Gath-Hepher) 790-750 BC during the reign of Jeroboam II, the most powerful king of the _____ kingdom. (cf. 2 Kings 14:25)
- b. He was a prophet by " _____," not "*election.*"
- c. Hearing God speak and being faithful to His _____ was nothing new to Jonah.
- d. Jonah was the first (and only) prophet to the _____ in the Old Testament. (*i.e., He went to Nineveh.*)

5. Jonah: The "Wreck"

- a. This is a book about a _____, not a prophecy about a _____ (of the 1300 words, 8 contain the prophetic message!)
- b. Jonah is the only created thing in this book that _____ Yahweh.
- c. Jonah's attempted "sailor-assisted _____" was even used by Yahweh to convict/convert(?) the pagan sailors.
- d. Jonah's sense of _____ (if real) had degenerated to _____. He chose to disobey God for love of _____.
- e. Jonah was so committed to the "notion of _____" that he was blinded to God's passion for _____.

6. Jonah and the New Testament

- a. This is perhaps the _____ "New Testament" book in our Old Testaments:
 - (1) It is similar to _____ in its movement of Gospel Grace from Jew to Gentile
 - (2) Peter's decision at _____ stands in contrast to Jonah's decision in the same city.
 - (3) This book establishes the fact that _____ love is available to those _____ it.

7. Jonah and the Christian

- a. Jonah's anger over the _____ of his enemies stands in stark contrast to Jesus' sorrow over _____ refusal to repent (cf. Jonah 3:10-4:1 and Luke 19:41-44).
- b. This is *not* a story about a _____ or a failed _____. It is a story about a covenant-keeping God who seeks to enlarge the _____ of that covenant.
- c. Jonah's patriotism drove him to seek the _____ of his enemies. Jesus tells us to love and pray for them. (Luke 6:27-28).
- d. Jonah's "patriotism" was a disguise for his commitment to his own _____. This is made clear in the ordeal with the plant and worm.

IV. NAHUM: The Sequel to Jonah

A. The Setting:

1. The Date

- a. **3:16-17** — Nineveh appears to be at its _____.
- b. **3:8-10** — speaks of the fall of _____ (No Amon) as past and Nineveh's demise as imminent.

GETTING THE BIG PICTURE

- (1) Thebes fell to Asshubanipal in _____ BC.
- (2) Nineveh fell to a coalition of Medes and Babylonians in _____ BC.

G E T T I N G T H E B I G P I C T U R E

B. The “Sequence”: A Remarkable Prophecy

Passage	P R O P H E C Y
1:10; 2:5	Inhabitants of Nineveh would be characterized by _____ prior to the fall of the city.
2:6	The river would overflow and wash away the city _____.
3:15-19	The palace would be _____; The Assyrian king burned himself alive in his palace.
3:12	Surrounding “palaces” would easily fall to the attackers; Asshur the _____ center fell, Nimrud, the _____ center fell and finally Nineveh, the administrative center of the empire.
3:18-19	Destruction would be _____ and _____; Alexander the Great marched over the top of Nineveh and didn’t even know its ruins lay beneath his feet!

C. Yahweh: A Remarkable God — Nahum 1:7

1. “Buried” in the midst of this book on God’s retributive justice is an amazing statement about His own character (perhaps an echo of Jonah?):

“The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.

—Nahum 1:7

D. Nahum and the Christian

1. _____ is an attribute of God. It is sure but not always _____ (i.e. 100+ years between Jonah and Nahum).
2. Moral _____ is a more powerful enemy than _____ might.