



The Great and Terrible Day of the Lord

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The book of Joel is a prophetic book, whose major subject is the day of the Lord, also called the great and terrible day of God Almighty.

Why should we be talking about this particular day? Because it may be a day in our lifetime.

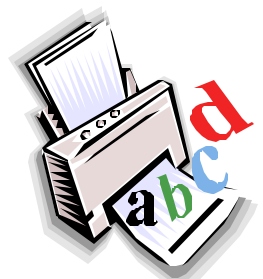
Joel 1:1 3

The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.

Has this been in your days?

Joel knew this prophecy might be to another generation, and he was encouraging the reader to question.

Has this been in our day? Has this been in the time we've been on the earth? has it happened yet? If it hasn't happened yet, we are to let others know: tell our children about it, and let them tell their children, and on down to other generations.



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It sounds, then, that God set his heart to tell us about these things so we wouldn't be caught unprepared in such a day.

This is a day we want to miss. It's a time of wrath, and the Scripture says God's people are not appointed to wrath (1st Thes 5:9).

Now, God likes to use something that has happened, or is happening, as an example to show us something even greater that is yet to happen.



A plague of insects, at least four different types eating up everything.

There are many insects that go in droves through the farms and over the fields. When they get done, all is ruined! gone!

They are like mowing machines eating everything in their pathway!

Joel 1:4

That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.

By the time these insects are through - they've devoured everything around. There is nothing left for them to eat, and it causes a shortage of food in the land.

Joel 1:5

Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.

There are lots of drunkards in the world, and God would even awaken them concerning this day. They'll weep and howl because there will be nothing left with which to make their booze.

Joel 1:6, 10

For a nation is come up upon My land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion.

He hath laid My vine waste, and barked My fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white.

The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.



Peeled down to the bare wood! nothing left in the fields! Everything is devoured by these insects.

Joel 1: 14

Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord

So the remedy to all this is to bring the people to an awakening. That's the only way they're going to get through.

They're going to have to sanctify a fast, and gather together to petition the Lord for help.

There are times in life when you can find the help that you need. You can get your friends to help you, or find help some other way.

But there's a time coming when nobody can help - nobody, that is, but God. A time coming as a nation when only God can help.

Israel is a nation who many times faced this very thing: times when they were in trouble,

and there was no way out.

There was no man that could help them. Their king couldn't help them. There was no one to help - until they called on the Lord.

King Jehoshaphat: When Jehoshaphat learned that three invading armies were heading towards Judah and Jerusalem to invade them, he set himself to seek the Lord. He called all the people together to fast and pray; young and old, women and children, and even little children.

II Chronicles 20:17-18

Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you.

God fought that battle!

God stirred such a confusion among those three armies that they turned on one another, and destroyed one another.

There are times when the battle is so severe that there's no way to fight that battle - apart from God stepping in to help.

God can hide you in His shelter in a time of storm. God can work those miracles! He is that One who can turn aside an enemy, the One who can destroy things that tend to want to destroy you!

But, it's up to you and me to know where we stand; to be prepared always in our hearts that no matter how great the battle, there is a place we can go and find help.

This will face Israel so greatly in the days ahead, even as illustrated in this prophecy. But not only Israel; all the nations of the world will be affected.

Joel 1:15

Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

The day of the Lord is a day of thick darkness, a day of gloominess, a day of a terrible time. And this day is brought on by the Lord.

It's a day when God is going to turn His hand and punish the world for its wickedness. It's going to be a day of calamity, a day of trial, a day of darkness, a day of sadness.

There is no way people can survive in that day - apart from God's help. Who wants to be caught in a day such as that?

We need to serve God with our whole hearts today - and every day.

Now, the day of the Lord is a day that leads up to the great day spoken of in the Scripture - that great battle spoken of even by sinners: the Battle of Armageddon, the worst of all wars.

There has never been a war like this one! and there will never be another war like this one!

Joel 2:1-8

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand

The setting here is just preparatory to the day of the Lord. We may be much closer to that day than what we can imagine or think.

Yet, we live like everything will go on for ever just as it has been going, that there will never be an end to life as it is now.

But let me tell you there is an end. There is an end to the church-age, an end to this good and acceptable year of the Lord.

Let's be ready in the day that this ends, because that's the day that the Lord will come and take us home . . . if we're found ready.

That's the end of the church age. But that's also the beginning of the great judgment of God. The church being taken out of the world and, on it's heels, that terrible day of judgment falling.

God has warned over and over to be ready.

Matthew 24:44

Therefore be ye also ready:
for in such an hour as ye think not
the Son of man cometh.

What do you think that means? For in such an hour as you think not.

A time that you're not thinking about the Lord's coming, when you may be taken up with many things, and greatly distracted away from the Lord.

Matthew 25:13

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

That's not me talking; God is talking, and God is warning. Jesus is coming in such a day and hour as you think not.

Luke 21:36

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

It's not just a matter of going. It's a matter that we have to be prepared to go. We've got to be ready - and we've got to stay ready. We've got to be ready every hour of every day, because we don't know what day or hour He is coming.

If we're prepared, we're going. If we're not prepared, we are not going. It's as clear as that!

Do you believe if right now was the hour He appears, you would be ready? Do you believe you could be ready if you had about ten minutes - could you be ready?

Or do you have a few things you need to take care of? a few things you ought to get straightened out?

We need our house set in order, and we need to keep our house in order. I'm talking about our spiritual house.

I'm talking about our lives. I'm talking about being ready when Jesus comes.

If we're ready when He comes, we're going to be taken out of this world before the Great and Terrible Day of the Lord comes.

We will hardly get our feet in the air, rising up to be with the Lord, when this day of judgment will already be upon the world.

Joel 2:1

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand

What a trembling will be in the land!

All because they weren't ready to go to be with the Lord, because they rejected Him.

Joel 2:2, 3

A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

In the time of this great and terrible day of the Lord, an invading army is coming from the north, and it's coming down upon Israel.

Now, there have been a lot of countries that would like to invade Israel. The Arabs have wanted to rub them out ever since they've been there.

This nation, and this city called Jerusalem, is the burdensome place of the last days. It's not a good place to be. There are going to be more troubles breaking out, more difficulties and problems than the people will know how to handle.

An army coming. Now, the army coming is similar to the plagues of the bugs. They'll eat everything in their path!

Joel is describing what this army will be like as they come, and what will be there.

Before them the land is like the garden of Eden, and behind them a desolate wilderness is left.

When they pass through, everything in their path is going to be destroyed. They'll burn the houses, and destroy everything in their way.

Joel 2:4

The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.

This Scripture was written generations ago by the prophet Joel in the manner of the times wherein it was written.

In that day there were horses and horses and more horses. Everything was the horse, the mule, the donkey. Also the bull, the oxen. Something to ride. Something to work.

When it came to war, there were chariots and horses. And the sword was their weapon of war. Things that are used in the Scripture as figures of speech were the given things of that day.

Stop to think of an invading army coming in our present day, and the damage that will be done - remember this is modern days.

They'll come with aircraft, helicopters, armored tanks, big artillery shells, missiles. They'll come blasting all in their path, destroying the land before them.

The power and the might of today's military. You know the rockets, the missiles. No stone wall will hinder their armourment.

You're not going to have to wait a year to starve the enemy out! Just pull up there and let the artillery go to work.

You could blow a hole in a wall with explosives so quickly! A terrible war! We live in a generation where they can drop a bomb down your chimney out of an airplane miles away.

The things that can be done, and all they do is find more and more ways to do violence. A war today, no matter where it's fought, is such a violent affair.

War today is a matter of how much violence can one produce against his enemy. The army that can put up the biggest front of violence is the army that will prevail.

It may be like the garden of Eden when they go through, but look at it after they leave! It will be just like the Bible said it would be.

You can't see where horses or chariots passing over a land could do all that damage. But bring it down into modern days.

The day of the Lord is going to be down here in modern times. The battle was described as horrible back then when Joel wrote about it. How much more it will be horrible today. God has warned us to sound the alarm.

You and I should think soberly. I am warning you - you've got to be ready to make heaven; and, in the process, miss this day.

If you knew exactly when this day was coming, what would you do?

Would you sit waiting for something to happen? or, would you try to avoid it?

Listen, the only way you'll be able to get away from this war is to be ready when Jesus comes.

I absolutely believe in the depths of my heart that the church won't face this day. Why would God bring such a day upon us?

What has the church done that He would want to destroy it that way? that He would want to pour out His wrath without mixture? It's not reasonable.

These days are back to back. In my mind it's like one day and the next. Or in the morning here, and the afternoon there.

We've got to be ready in that hour, in that moment. The Church has got to be ready.

You, as a person, have got to be ready. You've got to be saved, born of God, and walking uprightly with Him in righteousness from day to day.

Be ready - so that you won't be left behind because of something you refuse to do, or for some sin you're not willing to put aside, things that would hinder you in your walk.

Hebrews 2::3

How shall we escape,
if we neglect so great salvation

Hebrews 3:14

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end

II Peter 3:9-12

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

