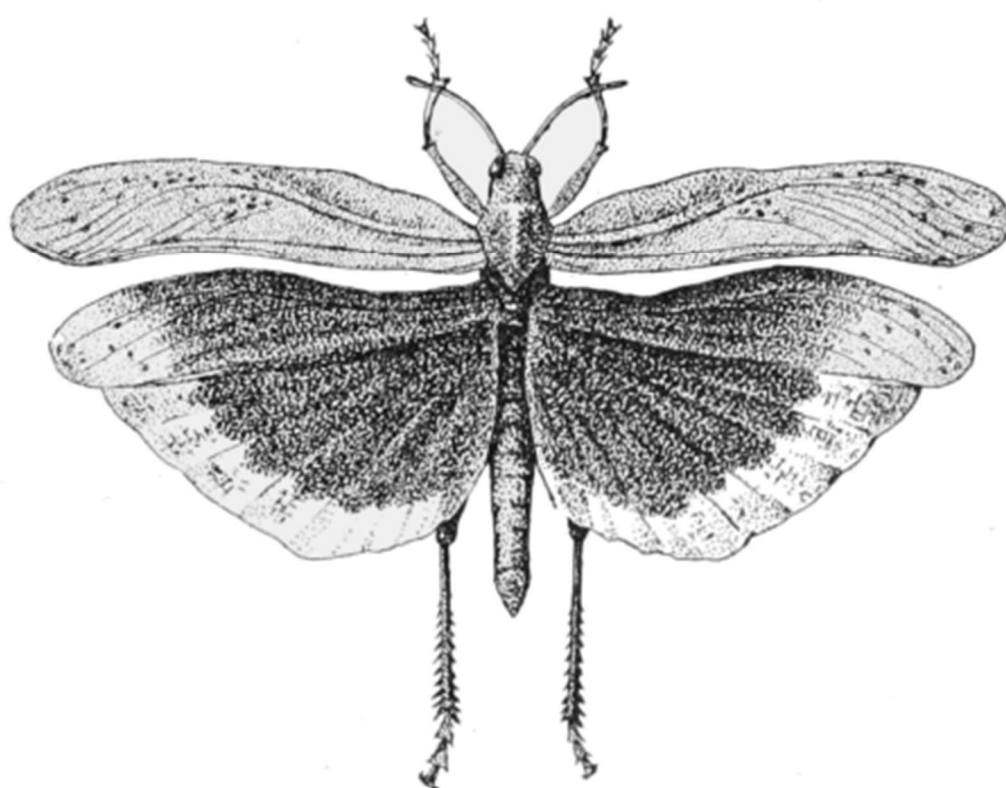


JOEL

Horror & Hope



Rainier Hills Christian Fellowship

Women's Ministry

Fall 2022

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Fall 2022

Welcome ladies!

I can not wait to study the book of Joel with you! Don't be fooled by the size of this prophetic & poetic book. These three chapters in Joel are packed full of imagery that is both gripping in its horror and breathtaking in its hopefulness. I pray your heart and mind will be stirred to reverence, worship, and longing as you study with us in the coming weeks.

This study guide is meant to help you as we immerse ourselves in "the word of the Lord that came to Joel." It includes the full text of Joel (optional to use), and a list of resources for those who may be new to our study method or who just want a refresher.

Each weekly study guide section includes:

- Tool suggestions
- "Joel as a whole" – questions to help you think about the bigger picture in this book
- "Focusing in" - questions geared to help you look more deeply at the specific verses we're studying for the week
- Notes pages – for use during the teachings

Your study guide is designed for you to explore Joel on your own *before* listening to the teaching. Doing your own work in advance will deepen your understanding, give you a more robust conversation in your discussion group, and prepare you to get the most out of the teachings. Depending on the season of life you're in, or the circumstances of any given week, you may do more or less work in advance. That's life! Yet we also know that the more you put into your own work, the more you will get out of it. So, do what you can, and know that there is abundant grace for the weeks that are stretched too thin!

I'm praying for you!

Lord, give us humble and hungry hearts as we approach your Word. Give us clarity of thought to understand your Word, and wisdom to apply your Word to our lives. We trust you to draw us near, and to conform us more and more into the image of your Son, as we submit ourselves to your Word in Joel. Amen.

Your servant,
Catrina Majack.

Recommended Resources for Preparation

Books & Articles:

Women of the Word: How to Study the Bible with Both Our Hearts and Our Minds, by Jen Wilkin

This book explains the many tools we're encouraged to use during our study of Joel. It's an easy read and will be a valuable resource to help you study any and every book of the Bible. Available at the RHCF lobby bookshelf or your favorite book retailer in print or audio book.

Learning the Lyrics of God: How to Read the Bible's Poetry, by Leland Ryken

From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is filled with poetry. About one third of the Bible is wholly or largely poetic in format, and poetic language pervades the Bible's narratives, epistles, and other genres. Even though poetry poses interpretive challenges different from interpreting prose, a few principles can help readers and teachers handle these parts of the Bible with confidence. The process begins by immersing ourselves in the images, metaphors, and symbols of the Bible's poems, allowing the distinct features of the genre to govern our encounter with the text.

- Abstract from article

Article available at:

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/learning-the-lyrics-of-god>

JOEL

1:1 The word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel:

²Hear this, you elders;

give ear, all inhabitants of the land!

Has such a thing happened in your days,

or in the days of your fathers?

³Tell your children of it,

and let your children tell their children,

and their children to another generation.

⁴What 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.

⁵Awake, you drunkards, and weep,

and wail, all you drinkers of wine,

because of the sweet wine,

for it is cut off from your mouth.

⁶For a nation has come up against my land,

powerful and beyond number;

its teeth are lions' teeth,

and it has the fangs of a lioness.

⁷It has laid waste my vine

and splintered my fig tree;

it has stripped off their bark and thrown it down;

their branches are made white.

⁸ Lament like a virgin wearing sackcloth
for the bridegroom of her youth.

⁹ The grain offering and the drink offering are cut off
from the house of the Lord.

The priests mourn,
the ministers of the Lord.

¹⁰ The fields are destroyed,
the ground mourns,
because the grain is destroyed,
the wine dries up,
the oil languishes.

¹¹ Be ashamed, O tillers of the soil;
wail, O vinedressers,
for the wheat and the barley,
because the harvest of the field has perished.

¹² The vine dries up;
the fig tree languishes.

Pomegranate, palm, and apple,
all the trees of the field are dried up,
and gladness dries up
from the children of man.

¹³ Put on sackcloth and lament, O priests;
wail, O ministers of the altar.

Go in, pass the night in sackcloth,
O ministers of my God!

Because grain offering and drink offering
are withheld from the house of your God.

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.

¹⁵ Alas for the day!

For the day of the Lord is near,
and as destruction from the Almighty it comes.

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.

¹⁹ To you, O Lord, I call.

For fire has devoured
the pastures of the wilderness,
and flame has burned
all the trees of the field.

²⁰ Even the beasts of the field pant for you

because the water brooks are dried up,
and fire has devoured
the pastures of the wilderness.

2:1 Blow a trumpet in Zion;
 sound an alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
 for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near,
² 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.
³ Fire devours before them,
 and behind them a flame burns.
The land is like the garden of Eden before them,
 but behind them a desolate wilderness,
 and nothing escapes them.
⁴ Their appearance is like the appearance of horses,
 and like war horses they run.
⁵ As with the rumbling of chariots,
 they leap on the tops of the mountains,
like the crackling of a flame of fire
 devouring the stubble,
like a powerful army
 drawn up for battle.
⁶ Before them peoples are in anguish;
 all faces grow pale.
⁷ Like warriors they charge;
 like soldiers they scale the wall.

They march each on his way;
they do not swerve from their paths.

⁸ They do not jostle one another;
each marches in his path;
they burst through the weapons
and are not halted.

⁹ They leap upon the city,
they run upon the walls,
they climb up into the houses,
they enter through the windows like a thief.

¹⁰ The earth quakes before them;
the heavens tremble.
The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withdraw their shining.

¹¹ The Lord utters his voice
before his army,
for his camp is exceedingly great;
he who executes his word is powerful.
For the day of the Lord is great and very awesome;
who can endure it?

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."
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.

¹⁴ Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for the Lord your God?

¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion;
consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly;

¹⁶ gather the people.
Consecrate the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,
even nursing infants.

Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.

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?'"

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.

²¹ "Fear not, O land;
be glad and rejoice,
for the Lord has done great things!

²² Fear not, you beasts of the field,
for the pastures of the wilderness are green;
the tree bears its fruit;
the fig tree and vine give their full yield.

²³ "Be glad, O children of Zion,
and rejoice in the Lord your God,
for he has given the early rain for your vindication;
he has poured down for you abundant rain,
the early and the latter rain, as before.

²⁴ "The threshing floors shall be full of grain;
the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

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.

²⁶ "You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,
and praise the name of the Lord your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you.

And my people shall never again be put to shame.

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.

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. ³² 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.

3:1 “For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the
fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, 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, ³ and have cast lots for my people, and have traded a boy for a
prostitute, and have sold a girl for wine and have drunk it.

⁴ “What are you to me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia?
Are you paying me back for something? If you are paying me back, I will
return your payment on your own head swiftly and speedily. ⁵ For you
have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried my rich treasures into
your temples. ⁶ You have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the

Greeks in order to remove them far from their own border. ⁷ Behold, I will stir them up from the place to which you have sold them, and I will return your payment on your own head. ⁸ I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a nation far away, for the Lord has spoken.”

⁹ Proclaim this among the nations:

Consecrate for war;

 stir 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 a warrior.”

¹¹ Hasten and come,

 all you surrounding nations,

 and gather yourselves there.

Bring down your warriors, O Lord.

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.

¹⁴ Multitudes, multitudes,

 in the valley of decision!

For the day of the Lord is near
in the valley of decision.

¹⁵ The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withdraw their shining.

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.

¹⁷ "So you shall know that I am the Lord your God,
who dwells in Zion, my holy mountain.

And Jerusalem shall be holy,
and strangers shall never again pass through it.

¹⁸ "And in that day
the mountains shall drip sweet wine,
and the hills shall flow with milk,
and all the streambeds of Judah
shall flow with water;
and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the Lord
and water the Valley of Shittim.

¹⁹ "Egypt shall become a desolation
and Edom a desolate wilderness,
for the violence done to the people of Judah,
because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

²⁰ But Judah shall be inhabited forever,
and Jerusalem to all generations.

²¹ I will avenge their blood,
blood I have not avenged,
for the Lord dwells in Zion."

Part 1

Tool Suggestions:

- Repetitive reading
- Begin marking up the text (e.g. repeated words & ideas, transition words).
- Focus: “What does it SAY?” (Comprehension)

Joel as a Whole

Study with Perspective²

Reading with the eyes and ears of the original author and his audience, rather than through the lens of our own culture. Read the introduction to Joel in your Bible to find the answers to these perspective questions (if available).

Who wrote it?

When was it written?

To whom was it written?

In what style was it written?
(Narrative? Poetry? Discourse?)

Why was it written?

Keep going!



² Study method quotes, labels, titles, and concepts throughout have been taken from *Women of the Word* by Jen Wilkin, © 2014. Used by permission of Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, Wheaton, IL 60187, www.crossway.org.

Joel as a Whole continued...

1. Please read through the entire book of Joel. Is this locust plague a random “natural disaster,” or is it an intentional act of the Lord? Include verses where you see evidence for your view.
2. What do you think has motivated God to send this locust plague? If you are able, include the verses where you see evidence for your view.
3. Read Exodus 10:1-15. How is the locust invasion upon Egypt similar to and different from the account found in Joel 1:1-20?

Focusing in: Joel 1:1-3

4. Who is called to hear and tell of this event?
5. In verse 2, Joel asks if “such a thing” has happened in their days or the days of their fathers.
 - a. Why is he asking this question?
 - b. Based on your answer to question 3 above, have they or their fathers ever seen anything like this? Explain.

Focusing in continued...

6. Look at verse 3. Why do you think they are commanded to tell about this event to their children (and their children, and onward)?

7. When discipline from the Lord comes, are you quick to “Hear...” and “give ear”? What are the things that prevent you from giving ear to the Lord’s discipline and instruction?

8. Sometimes we want to cover up and hide the areas where we’ve been disciplined. Why might it benefit others (and yourself) to “tell” about your experiences of discipline?

9. How can you respond? How do these verses change or challenge your thinking, feeling, or behavior? Consider thanking him now for calling you to “hear” and “tell.” Ask him for courage to do both.

Sometimes studying a text brings more questions than answers at first. Were there any questions that came to mind as you studied this section?

Notes

Notes

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Part 2

Tool Suggestions:

- Repetitive reading
- English Dictionary (Look up unfamiliar words or too-familiar words!)
- Keep marking the text.

Joel as a Whole

1. As you read through Joel as a whole, what do you see as the main message to the audience? Another way to think about this is, “What’s the big idea?” or “What’s the point?” Share your summary of the main message of Joel in one to three sentences.
2. Practice paraphrasing! This does not mean writing down whatever the text makes you think of, nor does it mean simply replacing words with synonyms. Rather, paraphrasing means putting the text into your own words. This is challenging, but rewarding! (If you’re struggling, pretend you are explaining these verses to a 10-year-old girl. Now put it into language she can understand.) Here’s one example:

TEXT:

“Hear this, you elders;
give ear, all inhabitants of the
land!”
Joel 1:2a

PARAPHRASE ATTEMPT:

Leaders, listen up! Everyone, listen carefully!

Use the next page to paraphrase Joel 1:1-20.

Joel 1:1-20, Paraphrased

(Overwhelmed? Just try Joel 1:1-10!)
(Really, really overwhelmed? Just try Joel 1:2-4!)

Focusing in: Joel 1:4-20

- Circle or mark all the command words/verbs. (Include verses 1-3 in this exercise.) Many of the imperatives (commands) are followed by a reason why. Write each imperative and its reason, if given. (Hint: Some clue words are "because" or "for," but these are not present in every case.)
- Read Deuteronomy 28:15, 38-40. How does God's promise of discipline from the time of Moses impact your understanding of Joel 1:4-20?
- Joel 1:4 makes it clear that every morsel has been eaten by the locusts. List the effects of the locust invasion from verses 5-20.

Focusing in continued...

6. Practically, what would have been the impact of these losses on the everyday lives of the people of Israel?

7. Based on what was lost during this locust invasion, describe what the community might have been like before this calamity occurred. Here's one to get you started...

They had sweet wine... (verse 5)

8. Look at Joel 1:9, 13, 16. What has been cut off or withheld from the house of God? What would this have meant for the people of Israel?

9. When was a time that you were awakened to the consequence of sin? What was it that caused you to "awake"? What was your response after you became aware of the problem?

Focusing in continued...

10. How can you respond? How do these verses change or challenge your thinking, feeling, or behavior? Consider thanking him now for awakening you to sin, and calling you toward Himself and others.

Sometimes studying a text brings more questions than answers at first. Were there any questions that came to mind as you studied this section?

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Part 3 Lesson Supplement: “The Day of the LORD”

Depending on your past church experience, understanding of Scripture, or exposure to the apocalyptic fiction section of your local bookstore, this phrase may evoke fear, excitement, confusion, or an urgent desire to invest in an underground bunker. It’s a strong theme that is found in various forms throughout the Old Testament prophets. Although it’s only three chapters long, our current study through the book of Joel reveals five explicit references to The Day of the LORD. The Day of the LORD even finds its way into the New Testament (1 & 2 Thessalonians, 2 Peter). Its prevalence indicates that it’s an important idea, but how are we to understand it?

Since this theme shows up so strongly here, and because you’ll encounter it in several other prophetic books as you study, let’s take a moment to consider a framework for how this idea can be understood in Scripture.



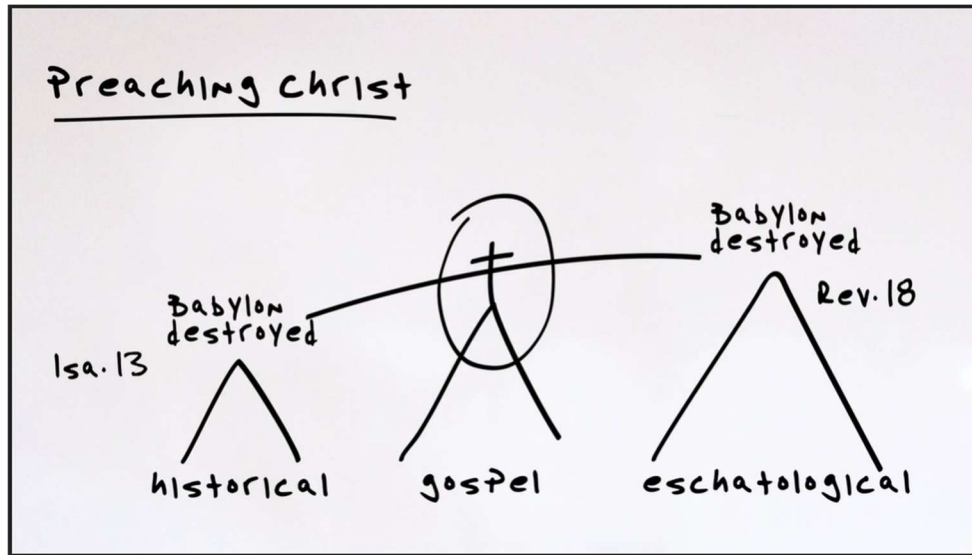
The Day of the LORD³ **“What does it mean for that to be fulfilled?”**

When we read “The Day of the LORD,” we need to keep “three horizons of fulfillment” in mind.

- **Historical horizon :** fulfillment in an actual historical event
- **Gospel horizon :** fulfillment in Christ
- **Eschatological horizon :** fulfillment at the consummation of history (End Times)

Let’s use Isaiah 13 as an example, which talks about the destruction of Babylon. If you skim through that chapter, you’ll see “The Day of the LORD” prophesied for the kingdom of Babylon. Isaiah foresees destruction, the stars, sun, & moon going dark, punishment, devastation, and judgement. If we were studying through Isaiah 13, we would need to keep all three horizons of fulfillment in mind.

³ Explanation and illustration of The Day of the LORD as promise & fulfillment have been adapted and used with permission from Simeon Trust, [Prophetic Literature](#), “Preaching Christ in the Prophets,” taught by Pastor David Camera. More information and courses are available at simeontrust.org.



Let's look at the first horizon. Was there an actual historical event, an historical destruction of Babylon? Yes. Babylon was destroyed. It was **fulfilled historically**.

Let's jump to the third horizon. Is there an eschatological, or end times, destruction of Babylon coming in the future that we see foreshadowed in the events of Isaiah 13? Again, yes. In Revelation 18, Babylon comes to represent all the proud nations in rebellion against God. It's a future event that **will be fulfilled**, and is **predicted** in Isaiah 13.

So then, what would be the gospel horizon fulfillment? It's Jesus at the cross. All those images that come up in Isaiah 13, the darkness, the wailing, the sun & moon falling from the sky, the earth shaking...those things also came to pass at the cross.⁴ Jesus Christ suffers The Day of the LORD on our behalf, so that when it comes for the final time in history (that eschatological horizon) we who believe will not have to experience it.

In our example of Isaiah 13, we can read the prophet's account of the Day of the LORD and see the presence of all three horizons. We know that Isaiah was seeing the first horizon (the real historical event of judgement upon Babylon), he was predicting the eschatological horizon (the end times judgement of "Babylon"), but he was also talking about the fulfillment that would happen at the gospel horizon (judgement poured out on Christ on our behalf). As we read through prophetic writings, all three horizons will be present. When we see a promise of something, like The Day of the LORD, we need to be thinking about all three horizons, or lenses, as we interpret the prophetic Scripture and its fulfillment.

⁴ See Matthew 27:45-54, Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44-45.

Part 3

Tool Suggestions:

- Repetitive reading
- Cross references
- Focus: Comprehension + “What does it MEAN?” (Interpretation)

Joel as a Whole

1. The book of Joel is filled with various repetitions. As you read, begin to mark repeated words, phrases, and ideas. List any that are particularly prevalent. Why do you think these words or ideas came up again and again?
2. Try making an outline of Joel. Don’t get bogged down with detail; rather, observe the larger points or sections you’re seeing in the book. It might help to think of it as though you were making a table of contents for Joel. How would you divide it up? For example, my “table of contents” might start with:

Title & Author...1:1

Call to notice & respond to discipline of locust/drought...1:2-20

...perhaps you will divide up the text differently!

If your Bible already has an outline for Joel, please, try not to peek!

Start yours here:

3. Use the following page to paraphrase Joel 2:1-11.

Joel 2:1-11, Paraphrased

(Need to modify? Just try Joel 2:6-11!)
(Really, really need to modify? Just try Joel 2:10-11!)

Focusing in: Joel 2:1-11

4. Was this horrifying to read? If so, which verses struck you as most terrifying? Why? If not horrifying, how would you describe the tone and impact of this section?
5. In what ways are these verses similar to Chapter 1? How are they different?
6. What is the impact of this invasion on the land?
7. What is the impact of this invasion on the people?
8. How do you think the author wanted his original audience to feel and think as they are listening to these descriptions?
9. Joel 2:11 gives us some understanding of the Lord's role in this event. What can we know about how God relates to this invading "army" from this verse? What do you think about this?

Focusing in continued...

10. This section closes with a climactic question: “For the day of the LORD is great and very awesome; who can endure it?” How do you think the original audience would have answered this question? How would you answer this question?

11. What evidence of God’s mercy and love can you find in Joel 2:1-11?

12. How does God sound the alarm for us today?

13. How can you respond? How do these verses change or challenge your thinking, feeling, or behavior? Consider thanking him now for “sounding an alarm” in advance of judgement.

Sometimes studying a text brings more questions than answers at first. Were there any questions that came to mind as you studied this section?

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Part 4

Tool Suggestions:

- Repetitive reading
- Keep marking up the text (e.g. lists, attributes of God, confusing ideas).
- Compare with another reliable translation (not a paraphrase).

Joel as a Whole

1. The book of Joel is not only filled with repetitions, it's also full of various contrasts and opposites. As you read, begin to mark and connect words, phrases, & ideas that are contrasted. List any that are particularly prevalent. What do you think is being communicated through these contrasts? Here's one example to get you started...

*Joel 1:18-20 beasts/animals groaning, suffering for lack of provision
contrast with*

Joel 2:22 beasts told to "fear not" because of restoration of provision

2. Use the following page to paraphrase Joel 2:12-14.

Joel 2:12-14, Paraphrased

(Crazy week? Just try Joel 2:12-13!)
(Really, really crazy week? Just try Joel 2:14!)

Focusing in: Joel 2:12-14

3. In what ways is this section a major turning point in the book of Joel?
4. What does God invite the people to do?
5. Look back at Joel 1:5, 8, 13-14, where the instruction to weep, mourn, and fast are also present. Are the instructions here in Joel 2:12-14 the same or different from the earlier call to lament? Explain.
6. What does it mean to “rend your hearts and not your garments”? Look up the word “rend” in an English dictionary. How does this definition contribute to your understanding of this verse?
7. What reason does God give in these verses for why the people can and should return to the Lord? (For deeper study, read Exodus 34:6-7, Nehemiah 9:17, Psalm 86:15, 103:8, 145:8, and Jonah 4:2. Meditate on the “why” we can return to Him.)

Focusing in continued...

8. Look at Joel 2:14 in two or three other reliable Bible translations. (Biblegateway.org can give you access to several translations side-by-side.) What reward seems to be possible for those who do return to the Lord? What would this reward mean for the people of Israel?

9. How can you respond? How do these verses change or challenge your thinking, feeling, or behavior? Consider thanking Him now for those precious words, “Yet even now...” Thank Him for being gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

If you have not yet turned to the Lord Jesus Christ in repentance and faith, today you can. The message, “Yet even now...” is an invitation for you! If you become a Christian today, please tell someone so that we can celebrate with you!

Sometimes studying a text brings more questions than answers at first. Were there any questions that came to mind as you studied this section?

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Part 5

Tool Suggestions:

- Repetitive reading
- English Dictionary (Continue looking up unfamiliar or too-familiar words.)
- Revisit your outline. (You can change it as you grow to know the text!)

Joel as a Whole

1. Choose a color and mark all the verse sections throughout the book that are a direct quotation from God. Where does God's direct speech start? Where is the bulk of God's direct speaking? Do you think the positioning of these direct quotations is accidental? If not, why do you think Joel placed them where they are? How might the placement have affected the audience who is hearing this message audibly?
2. Choose another color and mark all the verse sections throughout the book that are a direct quotation from people. What does the amount of their speech, and its position in the text, tell you?
3. Use the following page to paraphrase Joel 2:15-18.

Joel 2:15-18, Paraphrased

(Pressed for time? Just try Joel 2:15-16!)
(Really, really pressed for time? Just try Joel 2:18!)

Focusing in: Joel 2:15-18

4. Similar to the beginnings of chapter 1, Joel now gives series of imperatives (commands).
 - a. What commands are given in Joel 2:15-18? Mark the ones that are repetitions from chapter one.
 - b. What is the mood of the commands/calls?
 - c. Who is to respond to these commands/calls?
5. Look up the word “consecrate” in an English dictionary.
 - a. What does it mean? How does this definition help you understand how the people are to respond?
 - b. Does the idea of being consecrated apply to New Testament believers? If so, what does it mean for us? (Hint: These New Testament verses may help! Romans 6:19, 22; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Ephesians 4:1, 17-24; Colossians 3:5-17; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7.)

Focusing in continued...

6. Look at Joel 2:17.
 - a. What are the people asking God to do?
 - b. On what grounds are they appealing to God to spare them? In other words, what reasons are given or implied for why God should spare them?
 - c. Look up the word “heritage.” How does its definition broaden or shift your view of the people’s appeal to God?
7. All the people have been told to gather in repentance, but notice who is called to speak to God on their behalf.
 - a. Why is a priestly mediator an important element in this interaction between God and the people?
 - b. Is a priestly mediator an element of your interactions with God today? Explain. (Hint: Consider Hebrews 4:14-16, 7:23-8:2.)
8. Look at Joel 2:18 and the beginning of verse 19.
 - a. How does God respond to repentance?
 - b. Notice the three uses of the word “his” in God’s response, describing the land and people. Why does Joel use this repetition in description?
 - c. How might the use of “his” be related to the people’s appeal in Joel 2:17?

Focusing in continued...

9. How does knowing that God has pity on His people encourage us to repent?

10. How can you respond? How do these verses change or challenge your thinking, feeling, or behavior? Consider thanking Him now for calling you toward himself, urging you toward repentance, and responding to you with compassion.

Sometimes studying a text brings more questions than answers at first. Were there any questions that came to mind as you studied this section?

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Part 6

Tool Suggestions:

- Repetitive reading
- Cross references
- Focus: Comprehension + Interpretation + “How should it change me?”
(God-centered application)

Joel as a Whole

1. As you read through the book of Joel, look again for repetitions of words, phrases, and ideas. Are you noticing more than the first time you did this exercise (during Part 3)? List any new repetitions that you've discovered. How does noticing repetition help you understand the message of this book?
2. Use the following page to paraphrase Joel 2:19-32.

Joel 2:19-32, Paraphrased

(Need to slow the pace? Just try Joel 2:24-27!)
(Really, really need to slow the pace? Just try Joel 2:26!)

Focusing in: Joel 2:18-32

3. Read Joel 2:18-23. What does God immediately begin to do for His repentant people? Note the verses where you see this.
4. Who is the “northerner” in verse 20? What does it mean that “he has done great things”? Explain why you think this.
5. Why is God sending grain, wine and oil? What does this provision mean for the people of Israel?
6. Read Joel 2:21-23.
 - a. What responses are possible now that reconciliation and restoration have begun?
 - b. List each command, who it’s given to, and why:

Who:	Command:	Why:

Focusing in continued...

7. Read Joel 2:24-29.
 - a. What repetitions do you see between these verses and Joel 2:19-23?
 - b. What do you notice about the tenses found in these verses (e.g. present tense, future tense) as compared to those in Joel 2:19-23?
 - c. What might the author be communicating through these repetitions and the transition in tense?
8. When a New Testament author quotes and explains an Old Testament text, his interpretation is always the right one. Read Acts 2:1-41.
 - a. Which verses from Joel are quoted by Peter?
 - b. What is Peter explaining to the people by quoting these verses?
 - c. How does Peter's use of these verses help you understand their meaning in Joel?
9. Read Romans 10:12-13.
 - a. How does Paul interpret and understand Joel 2:32?
 - b. How does this strengthen or challenge your understanding of Joel 2:32 (and the surrounding verses)?

Focusing in continued...

10. We know that repentance and faith doesn't mean life suddenly gets easy. In some ways, it can become more challenging! Yet it's important to notice and acknowledge the restorations and provisions that God *does* begin in our new lives with Him. Think back on your life since coming to Christ. What are the areas where God has begun His restoration in you and for you?
11. How can you respond? How do these verses change or challenge your thinking, feeling, or behavior? Consider thanking Him now for sending Christ, on whose name you can call and through whom you can be saved. If you have received Christ, thank Him for beginning His restoration in your life, and for His promise to finish it!

Sometimes studying a text brings more questions than answers at first. Were there any questions that came to mind as you studied this section?

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Part 7

Tool Suggestions:

- Repetitive reading
- Compare to another reliable translation.
- Keep marking the text (e.g. confusing phrases or sections, questions).

Joel as a Whole

1. Please read through the entire book of Joel. Is anything becoming more clear as a result of reading the text multiple times? If so, what? Has staying in one book longer helped you to understand it better? If so, how?

2. Use this page and the following to paraphrase Joel 3:1-16. If you haven't tried before now, give it a shot!

Joel 3:1-16, Paraphrased

Joel 3:1-16, Paraphrase Continued

(Feeling rushed? Just try Joel 3:12-16!)
(Really, really feeling rushed? Just try Joel 3:16!)

Focusing in: Joel 3:1-16

3. Chapter 3 begins to look far into the future to a time of final judgement and final restoration. Are judgement and restoration opposing ideas/events? Why or why not?
4. Read Joel 3:4-8.
 - a. Who is God speaking to?
 - b. What does he charge them with?
 - c. What will their punishment be?
 - d. These nations are unlikely to hear or read these words. Although spoken *to* other nations, the message is *for* Israel's benefit. What does a message of judgement spoken to Tyre, Sidon, & Philistia communicate to God's people?
5. Read Joel 3:9-12. List the ways these verses are similar to and different from Joel 1:14 and Joel 2:15-17.
6. What is the tone of Joel 3:9-16?

Focusing in continued...

7. Read Joel 3:13.
 - a. How is this similar to and different from Joel 2:24?
 - b. Read Revelation 14:14-20. How does this strengthen or shift your understanding of Joel 3:13?
8. Read Joel 3:14-16. How is this similar to and different from Joel 2:10-12?
9. As stated in question 1, this chapter begins to look far into the future to a time of final judgement and final restoration, a time that includes all New Testament believers as “my people.” Considering this section as a whole (Joel 3:1-16), what is being promised to believers? What is being promised to unbelievers?
10. How do these promises to both believers and unbelievers bring hope and assurance?

Focusing in continued...

11. How can you respond? How do these verses change or challenge your thinking, feeling, or behavior? Consider thanking Him now for being a God who promises justice and provides refuge for those who call upon His name.

Sometimes studying a text brings more questions than answers at first. Were there any questions that came to mind as you studied this section?

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Part 8

Tool Suggestions:

- Repetitive reading
- Outside sources (Now you can compare your interpretations to Study Bible notes, reliable commentaries, and paraphrases.)

Joel as a Whole

1. Revisit your answer to Part 2, Question 1. Do you agree with your initial impressions about the main idea or main message of Joel? If not, what has changed? How would you now summarize the message of Joel in one to three sentences?
2. Use the following page to paraphrase Joel 3:17-21.

Joel 3:17-21, Paraphrased

(Last chance! Just try Joel 3:17-21!)
(Really, really! Just try Joel 3:17-21!)

Focusing in: Joel 3:17-21

3. Those who take refuge in the LORD are promised a future home. What is it like? List the verses where you find these descriptions.
4. What seems to be the *defining* attribute of this future home? (Hint: Look at the bookend ideas found in verses 17 and 21.)
5. Look at Joel 3:17.
 - a. What does it mean that “strangers shall never again pass through it”?
 - b. Read Isaiah 52:1, Nahum 1:15, Revelation 21:27 & 22:15. How do these verses strengthen or shift your view of what this phrase means?
6. Look again at verses 17-21. In what ways does this future home contrast with your current experience of home on earth?

Focusing in continued...

7. If you are in Christ, the future home is guaranteed to you. The contrasts between our earthly home and our future home are meant to cause us to long for this coming day. What are the specific contrasts that most strongly draw you to long for the better home?

8. What do you think Egypt and Edom represent in Joel 3:19? How does their fate differ from the descriptions in the surrounding verses?

9. Look up the words “desolate” and “desolation” in an English dictionary. How do these definitions broaden your view of what it means to be outside of God’s kingdom?

10. Read Joel 3:21 in two or three other reliable translations. (Biblegateway.org can give you access to several translations side-by-side.) What does it mean? What is God planning to do? (Encouragement: It’s okay to be uncomfortable and uncertain of a verse’s meaning. Just use all the tools we’ve been practicing, keep it connected to its context, and give it a try!)

Focusing in continued...

11. Revisit Joel 1:2-3, where we are told to “hear,” and to “tell.” As we close our time in Joel, consider the ways in which your life and speech hear and tell the Gospel, which includes both horror and hope. Have there been aspects that you’ve shied away from? Are there ways you could be more truthful or more bold as you “tell” God’s story?

12. How can you respond? How do these verses change or challenge your thinking, feeling, or behavior? Consider thanking Him now for preparing our future home with its lavish provision, eternal peace, and His very presence.

“The LORD is a refuge to his people...” Is He your refuge?

If not, there is still time to repent of sin & put your faith in Christ alone, transforming your future from horror to hope. If you become a Christian today, please tell someone so that we can celebrate with you!

Sometimes studying a text brings more questions than answers at first. Were there any questions that came to mind as you studied this section?

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We want your feedback!

Thank you for studying through *Joel: Horror & Hope* with us! Like you, we are learning, growing, and trying new things, including the creation of future studies and study guides. Your feedback will help us greatly as we strive to be faithful stewards of God's Word and faithful servants to His people. Please take a moment to give us your candid feedback and suggestions. You may submit your responses anonymously if you prefer. Please return this form to RHCF, 23711 Entwhistle Rd. E., Buckley, WA 98321, or email your response to info@rainierhills.org.

Name (optional): _____

1. What did you like most about this Bible study? What parts were most helpful to you?

2. What did you like least about this Bible study? Which parts were confusing or unhelpful to you?

3. What specific suggestions do you have for how we could improve?