

## JOEL

I referred to Joel somewhat in my article "End-Time Kings", but with the "new light" in the April 2020 Study Watchtower let's go over Joel in detail.

The following is a complete quote of the book of Joel. Its text is fully to the left. My comments are indented.

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**1** The word of Jehovah that came to Joel the son of Pe·thu'el:

**(1)** Joel is one prophecy. It begins with the words "*The word of Jehovah that came to Joel,*" and at no time does it say: '*Then Jehovah's word came to Joel again saying...*' or any similar wording often used in the Bible to denote the start of a new prophecy and/or timeline.

**2** "Hear this, you elders,

And pay attention, all you inhabitants of the land.  
Has anything like this happened in your days  
Or in the days of your forefathers?

**(2)** The prophecy is directed at all the "*inhabitants of the land*." That is to say, the inhabitants of Israel. (Joel 2:27, 32; 3:1, 2, 5, 8, 16, 17, 19, 20)

**3** Tell about it to your sons,

And let your sons tell about it to their sons,  
And their sons to the next generation.

**(3)** It would be four generations (you, your sons, their sons, and the next generation) after Jehovah gave His prophecy to Joel, before it began to be fulfilled.

**4** What was left by the devouring locust, the swarming locust has eaten;

And what was left by the swarming locust, the unwinged locust has eaten;  
And what the unwinged locust has left, the voracious locust has eaten.

**(4)** Joel tells of four types of locust that attack. They do not all come at the same time. When each swarm attacks they eat "*what was left*" by the previous swarm. (see also Joel 2:25) The 1984 NWT lists the four as the caterpillar, the locust, the creeping unwinged locust, and the cockroach.

**5** Wake up, you drunkards, and weep!

Wail, all you wine drinkers,  
Because the sweet wine has been taken from your mouths.

**<sup>6</sup> For a nation has come up into my land, mighty and without number.**

Its teeth are the teeth of a lion, and its jaws are those of a lion.

**<sup>7</sup> It has devastated my vine and turned my fig tree into a stump,**

Stripping them completely bare and tossing them aside,

Leaving their twigs white.

**<sup>8</sup> Wail as a virgin wearing sackcloth does**

For the bridegroom of her youth.

**<sup>9</sup> Grain offering and drink offering have ceased from the house of Jehovah;**

The priests, the ministers of Jehovah, are in mourning.

**<sup>10</sup> The field has been devastated, the ground mourns;**

For the grain has been devastated, the new wine has dried up, the oil has failed.

**<sup>11</sup> Farmers are dismayed, vinedressers wail,**

Because of the wheat and the barley;

For the harvest of the field has perished.

**<sup>12</sup> The vine has dried up,**

The fig tree has withered.

The pomegranate, the palm, and the apple,

All the trees of the field have dried up;

For joy has turned to shame among the people.

**<sup>13</sup> Put on sackcloth and mourn, you priests;**

Wail, you ministers of the altar.

Come in and spend the night in sackcloth, you ministers of my God;

For grain offering and drink offering have been withheld from the house of your God.

**<sup>14</sup> Proclaim a fast; call for a solemn assembly.**

Gather the elders together, with all the inhabitants of the land,

To the house of Jehovah your God, and cry to Jehovah for help.

**(5-14) The destruction the attacks cause and the consequences to the people are described.**

**<sup>15</sup> Woe because of **the day!****

For **the day of Jehovah** is near,

And it will come like a destruction from the Almighty!

**(15) What does it all eventually lead up to? "The day of Jehovah."** In the Bible that term always refers to Armageddon. It is used 5 times in Joel. And that "day" is referred to a further 4 times. That's 9 times that Armageddon is identified in Joel's prophecy. **(red text)**

**<sup>16</sup> Has not food been taken from before our very eyes,**

And rejoicing and joy from the house of our God?  
17 The seeds have shriveled under their shovels.  
Storehouses are desolate.  
Granaries have been torn down, for the grain has dried up.  
18 Even the livestock groan!  
The herds of cattle wander in confusion, for they have no pasture!  
And the flocks of sheep bear the punishment.  
19 To you, O Jehovah, I will call;  
For fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness,  
And a flame has consumed all the trees of the field.  
20 Even the wild beasts long for you,  
Because the streams of water have dried up  
And fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness."

**(16-20)** Joel continues to describe the bad conditions in Israel.

2 "Blow a horn in Zion!  
Shout a war cry in my holy mountain.  
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,  
For **the day of Jehovah** is coming! It is near!  
2 It is **a day** of darkness and gloom,  
**A day** of clouds and thick gloom,  
Like light of dawn spreading out on the mountains.

**(1-2a)** Joel again reminds them of what is coming: "*The day of Jehovah.*"

**There is a people numerous and mighty;**  
Never before has there been one like it,  
And never again will there be another  
Through the years of all generations.  
3 Ahead of it a fire devours,  
And behind it a flame consumes.  
The land ahead of it is like the garden of E'den,  
But behind it is a desolate wilderness,  
And nothing can escape.  
4 Its appearance is like the appearance of horses,  
And they run **like warhorses.**

<sup>5</sup> The sound is like that of chariots as they leap on the mountaintops,  
Like the crackling of a blazing fire that consumes stubble.

It is like **a mighty people drawn up in battle formation.**

<sup>6</sup> Because of them, peoples will be in anguish.  
Every face will grow flushed.

<sup>7</sup> They charge like **warriors**,  
They scale a wall like **soldiers**,  
Each keeps to his own course,  
And they do not swerve from their paths.

<sup>8</sup> They do not shove one another;  
Each man advances in his course.

**If the weapons cause some to fall,**  
**The others do not break ranks.**

<sup>9</sup> Into the city they rush, on the wall they run.  
Onto the houses they climb, through the windows they enter like a thief.

**(2b-9)** The **people** that attack Israel are without equal. Note that they are called a "people" and "a nation" (a nationality) and are not named. (Joel 1:6, 2:2) There are, however, five enemies of Israel that are named in Joel: Tyre, Sidon, Philistia (3:4), Egypt, and Edom. (3:19)

<sup>10</sup> Before them the land trembles and the heavens rock.  
Sun and moon have become dark,  
And the stars have lost their brightness.

**(10)** The army is so large that the land trembles from their footsteps. The dust they stir up obscures the sun by day and the moon and stars by night.

<sup>11</sup> Jehovah will raise his voice before his army, for his camp is very numerous.  
For the one carrying out His word is mighty;  
For **the day of Jehovah** is great and very awe-inspiring.  
Who can endure it?"

**(11)** For a third time Joel reminds them that Armageddon is coming.

<sup>12</sup> "Yet even now," declares Jehovah, "**return to me** with all your hearts,  
With fasting and weeping and wailing.

<sup>13</sup> Rip apart your hearts, and not your garments,  
And **return to Jehovah your God**,  
For he is compassionate and merciful,  
slow to anger and abundant in loyal love,  
And he will reconsider the calamity.

<sup>14</sup> Who knows whether he will turn back and reconsider  
And leave behind a blessing,  
A grain offering and a drink offering for Jehovah your God?

<sup>15</sup> Blow a horn in Zion!  
Proclaim a fast; call for a solemn assembly.  
<sup>16</sup> Gather the people; sanctify the congregation.  
Collect the old men; gather the children and nursing infants.  
Let the bridegroom go out from his inner chamber,  
and the bride from her bridal chamber.

<sup>17</sup> Between the porch and the altar  
Let the priests, the ministers of Jehovah, weep and say:  
'Do feel pity, O Jehovah, for your people;  
Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, (Joel 3:2)  
Letting the nations rule over them. (Joel 2:25)  
Why should the peoples say, "Where is their God?"

**(12-17)** Jehovah calls for wayward Israel to return to Him, to petition Him to be merciful. They are His "*inheritance*", His personal possession. (Joel 3:2; De 9:26, 29)

<sup>18</sup> Then Jehovah will be zealous for his land (Zech 1:14; 8:2)  
And show compassion on his people.

<sup>19</sup> Jehovah will answer his people:  
'Here I am sending to you grain and new wine and oil,  
And you will be fully satisfied;  
I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations.

<sup>20</sup> I will drive the northerner far away from you;  
I will disperse him to a dry and desolate wasteland,  
With his vanguard toward the eastern sea  
And his rear guard toward the western sea.  
The foul smell from him will ascend,  
The stench from him will keep ascending;  
For He will do great things.'

**(18-20)** Jehovah will hear the request of His people. Verse 20 mentions the location of the "*northerner*" as being from east to west between two seas. Turkey has the Aegean Sea to its west, and the Caspian Sea across Iran to its east. So that fits with this description, the final attack in Joel's prophecy, and the parallel prophecies, including the prophecy about Gog of Magog in Ezekiel chapter 38.

<sup>21</sup> Do not be afraid, O land.

Be joyful and rejoice, for Jehovah will do great things.

<sup>22</sup> Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field,

For the pastures of the wilderness will become green,

And the trees will bear fruit;

The fig tree and the vine must give their full yield.

<sup>23</sup> You sons of Zion, be joyful and rejoice in Jehovah your God;

For he will give you the autumn rain in the right amount,

And he will send upon you a downpour,

The autumn rain and the spring rain, as before.

<sup>24</sup> The threshing floors will be full of pure grain,

And the presses will overflow with new wine and oil.

<sup>25</sup> And I will make compensation to you for the years

That the swarming locust, the unwinged locust, the voracious locust,

and the devouring locust have eaten,

My great army that I sent among you.

**(21-25)** He will heal the land that had been made desolate by attack after attack from the different locusts over the years. (v25)

<sup>26</sup> You will surely eat to satisfaction,

And you will praise the name of Jehovah your God,

Who has done wonders in your behalf;

My people will never again be put to shame.

<sup>27</sup> And you will have to know that I am in the midst of Israel

And that I am Jehovah your God—there is no other!

My people will never again be put to shame.

**(26-27)** His people (Israel) will flourish once more. "Never again" will they feel the shame of being ruled over by others in their own homeland or scattered among the nations. (Joel 3:2) They will get to know their true God Jehovah and will begin to praise His name.

<sup>28</sup> After that I will pour out my spirit on every sort of flesh,

And your sons and your daughters will prophesy,

Your old men will dream dreams,

And your young men will see visions.

<sup>29</sup> And even on my male slaves and female slaves

I will pour out my spirit in those days.

<sup>30</sup> And I will give wonders in the heavens and on the earth,

Blood and fire and columns of smoke.

<sup>31</sup> The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood

**Before** the coming of the great and awe-inspiring **day of Jehovah.**

**(28-31)** "After that" Jehovah will pour out His spirit on His people. And there will be celestial phenomenon in the days "before" Armageddon. (Mt 24:29; Lu 21:25)

<sup>32</sup> And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved;

For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape,

just as Jehovah has said,

The survivors whom Jehovah calls." (Ac 2:39)

**(32)** Those Israelites who call on the name of Jehovah will survive Armageddon.

**3** "For look! in those days and in that time,

When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem,

**(1)** All the while that the Jews are being brought back to their homeland....

<sup>2</sup> I will also gather together all the nations

And bring them down to the Valley of Je-hosh'a-phat.

I will enter into judgment with them there

In behalf of my people and my inheritance Israel,

For they scattered them among the nations,

And they divided up my land among themselves.

**(1-2)** While Jehovah is bringing back to "Judah and Jerusalem", those that had been dispersed from there, He will also be bringing together those who dispersed them, and those whom they were dispersed among who mistreated them "down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat." As the Insight book points out, the Valley of Jehoshaphat is "evidently a symbolic place, also called the "low plain of the decision." (Joe 3:2, 14) Since it relates to God's execution of judgment, it is appropriately designated as "the low plain of Jehoshaphat," for the name Jehoshaphat means "Jehovah Is Judge." [it-1 p. 1272]

So the Valley of Jehoshaphat is actually referring to the valley of Megiddo since that is where Jehovah will judge the nations. (Re 16:16)

<sup>3</sup> For my people they cast lots;

They would trade a boy to hire a prostitute

And sell a girl for wine to drink.

<sup>4</sup> Also, what do you have against me,

O Tyre and Si'don and all the regions of Phi-lis'ti-a?

Are you repaying me for something?

If you are repaying me,  
I will swiftly, speedily bring your repayment on your heads.

<sup>5</sup> Because you have taken my silver and gold,  
And you have brought my finest treasures into your temples;  
<sup>6</sup> And the people of Judah and Jerusalem you have sold to the Greeks,  
In order to remove them far from their territory;

**(3-6)** The sins of those that attacked Israel are many. Tyre and Sidon were on Israel's northern border in the area today called Lebanon. Philistia was along Israel's coast in the area today called the Gaza Strip. (v4)

<sup>7</sup> Here I am rousing them to come from the place where you sold them,  
And I will bring your repayment on your heads.

<sup>8</sup> I will sell your sons and daughters into the hand of the people of Judah,  
And they will sell them to the men of She'ba, to a nation far away;  
For Jehovah himself has spoken it.

**(7-8)** Jehovah will call the scattered Jews back to their homeland (Joel 3:1) and punish those that scattered them.

<sup>9</sup> Proclaim this among the nations:  
'Prepare for war! Stir up the mighty men!  
Let all the soldiers draw **near**, let them advance!'

<sup>10</sup> Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning shears into spears.  
Let the weak one say: "I am powerful."

<sup>11</sup> Come and help, all you surrounding nations, assemble together!"  
To **that place**, O Jehovah, bring down your powerful ones.

<sup>12</sup> "Let the nations be roused and come up to **the Valley of Je-hosh'a-phat**:  
For **there** I will sit in order to judge **all the surrounding nations**.

**(10-12)** The mighty soldiers will be stirred up. (v9) Even those enemies who are not soldiers, but are farmers and other land workers (v10), are called to attack Israel and be judged.

<sup>13</sup> Thrust in a sickle, for the harvest is ripe.  
Come down and tread, for the winepress is full.  
The vats overflow, for **their badness is abundant**.

**(13)** Their destruction is due. Their badness is overflowing. (Mt 13:39-42; Re 14:15)

<sup>14</sup> Crowds, crowds are **in the valley of the decision**,  
For **the day of Jehovah** is near **in the valley of the decision**.

<sup>15</sup> Sun and moon will become dark,  
And the stars will lose their brightness.

**(14-15)** Yes, Armageddon is upon those gathered in **the valley**.

<sup>16</sup> And Jehovah will roar out of Zion,  
Out of Jerusalem he will raise his voice.  
And heaven and earth will rock;  
But Jehovah will be a refuge for his people,  
A fortress for the people of Israel.

**(16)** Jehovah will protect His people in Israel from the gathering hoard.

<sup>17</sup> And you will have to know that I am Jehovah your God,  
residing in Zion, my holy mountain.  
Jerusalem will become a holy place,  
And strangers will pass through her no more.

**(17)** Jehovah will once again reside in Zion, and Jerusalem "will become" a holy place again.

<sup>18</sup> In **that day** the mountains will drip with sweet wine,  
The hills will flow with milk,  
And the streams of Judah will all flow with water.  
Out of the house of Jehovah a spring will flow,  
And it will irrigate the Valley of the Acacia Trees.

<sup>19</sup> But Egypt will become desolate,  
And E'dom will be a desolate wilderness,  
Because of the violence done to the people of Judah,  
In whose land they shed innocent blood.

<sup>20</sup> But Judah will always be inhabited,  
And Jerusalem to generation after generation.

**(18-20)** Israel will be blessed, and her enemies will be no more.

<sup>21</sup> **I will consider innocent their blood that I had not considered innocent;**  
And Jehovah will reside in Zion."

**(21)** The blood-guilt of the Jews will be wiped away so that Jehovah can once again reside there.

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## History

Joel was written in 820(?) B.C. and its fulfillment began about 100 years, four generations, later. (Joel 1:3) In 722 B.C. the Assyrian Empire invaded and took over the northern half of Israel, and then the southern half about 20 years later. Over the next two thousand years Judea is subjugated again and again as one kingdom after another pushes the preceding one out and takes control of the area. Each treat the Jews in their own way and to varying degrees. Most mistreat the Jews, as Joel's description of the different types of locusts indicates. (Joel 1:4; 2:25)

Finally, in 1948, Israel became a country under its own rule once again. The Jews set about turning what the locusts had turned into desolate barren land, back into fertile land. A good YouTube video that shows this is: "*What is Palestine? Who are the Palestinians?*"

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9ReF4UUa4E>

## Watchtower Article

As the April 2020 Study Watchtower article says on page 2 in paragraph 2: "To understand a prophecy correctly, we generally have to consider its context. If we focus on only one aspect of the prophecy and ignore the rest, we may draw the wrong conclusion."

That is very good advice to follow!

Paragraph 11 on page 5 of that Watchtower says: "A closer look at Joel's prophecy in its context reveals that the prophet was predicting a military attack. (Joel 1:6; 2:1, 8, 11)" Let's look at those referenced scriptures provided for verification of that statement:

**(Joel 1:6)** For a nation has come up into my land, mighty and without number. Its teeth are the teeth of a lion, and its jaws are those of a lion.

Yes, that verse says "a nation", but if you look at the "context" you will see that Joel identifies four different kinds of locusts that will plague Israel over many "years." (Joel 1:4; 2:25) The 1984 NWT lists the four as the caterpillar, the locust, the creeping unwinged locust, and the cockroach. That clearly describes differing attacks by different enemies.

**(Joel 2:1)** "Blow a horn in Zion! Shout a war cry in my holy mountain. Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of Jehovah is coming! It is near!"

That verse is a reminder that "the day of Jehovah", Armageddon, is coming. It is not referring to "a military attack" that occurred at some time in history.

**(Joel 2:8)** They do not shove one another; Each man advances in his course. If the weapons cause some to fall, The others do not break ranks.

That describes the determination of the soldiers that attack Israel, but does not rule out multiple armies filled with suchlike soldiers who attack over the years.

**(Joel 2:11)** Jehovah will raise his voice before his army, for his camp is very numerous. For the one carrying out His word is mighty; For the day of Jehovah is great and very awe-inspiring. Who can endure it?"

That verse is also in regard to the yet future "*day of Jehovah*," and not some attack far in our distant past.

Paragraph 11 in that Watchtower article then says: "*Jehovah said that he would use his "great army" (Babylonian soldiers) to punish the disobedient Israelites. (Joel 2:25)*"

**(Joel 2:25)** And I will make compensation to you for the years That the swarming locust, the unwinged locust, the voracious locust, and the devouring locust have eaten, My great army that I sent among you.

As you can see, that verse does not mention "*Babylonian soldiers*". Nowhere does Joel associate Jehovah's "*great army*" with Babylon. And here, just as in Joel 1:6, Jehovah describes His great army as varying types of invaders, showing that His "*great army*" is a composite one that would attack over many "*years*."

Next, paragraph 11 says: "*The invading army is rightly called "the northerner" because the Babylonians would invade Israel from the north. (Joel 2:20)*"

**(Joel 2:20)** I will drive the northerner far away from you; I will disperse him to a dry and desolate wasteland, With his vanguard toward the eastern sea And his rear guard toward the western sea. The foul smell from him will ascend, The stench from him will keep ascending; For He will do great things.'

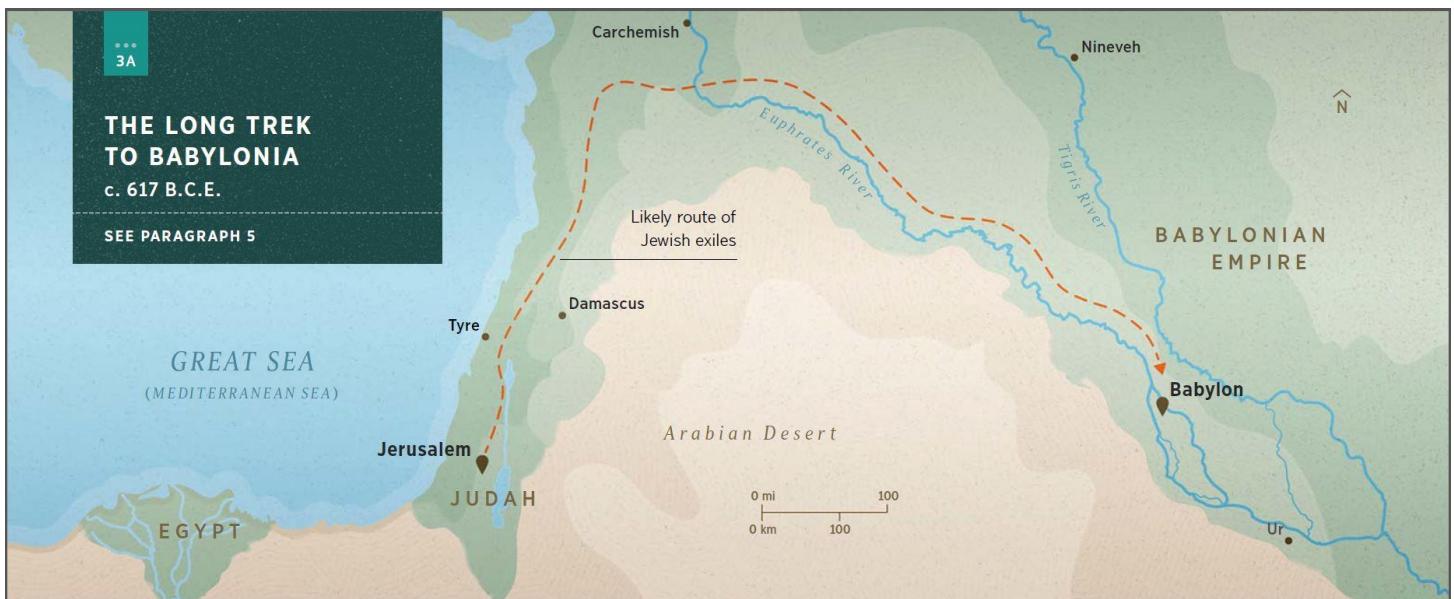
If you look at maps in Watchtower Library you will see that while Babylonia did indeed hold land to Israel's north, greater Babylonia and its capital Babylon were directly to Israel's east. And Babylonia does not have seas to its east and west as Joel 2:20 describes. (Israel is marked with "PROMISED LAND" on the map.)



If you look at a map of Europe today you will see that part of Spain is north of Portugal, but would you refer to Spain as Portugal's northern neighbor when the vast majority of Spain, including its capital Madrid, lies to Portugal's east?



The reason that the Babylonian army attacked Israel from its north is not because that is where it originated, but because a large desert lay between Israel and Babylonia. So when King Nebuchadnezzar left Babylon with his army on his way to attack Israel he went up the Euphrates river valley and around the top of the desert, which brought him to Israel from its north. The same trek that was used by the Babylonians when they took the exiles from Jerusalem back to Babylon in 617 B.C. on their return trip.



And the Babylonians were not driven away to live elsewhere as is described will happen to "*the northerner*" at Joel 2:20.

**(Joel 2:20a)** I will drive the northerner far away from you;

In 539 B.C.E the Babylonian Empire was conquered by the Persian Empire who took all of the land it controlled, including Israel. Babylonia no longer occupied Israel, not because it was driven "far away", but because it no longer existed. Therefore Joel 2:21-27 did not come to fruition at that time as was prophesied to happen when "*the northerner*" will be driven away.

Joel 2:26 says that once the northerner is driven off that "*never again*" would Israel have to suffer such shame. But the occupation of Israel by foreigners continued after Babylon was gone. After the Persians conquered the Babylonians and took their land they in turn were conquered and driven out of Israel by the Macedonians. Then Israel was controlled by the Ptolemaic Dynasty, followed by the Seleucid Dynasty. The Jews eventually kicked them out, but Israel was then conquered by the Romans, who, following a revolt by the Jews, utterly destroyed Jerusalem. Many years later, in the 7th century, Muslim Arabs take Israel from the Romans and various Muslim groups occupy the region until the end of World War 1. At that time the British Empire took control of the area. In 1948 the British withdrew and the state of Israel was born.

The Ottoman Turks had subjugated Israel for about 400 years before the Brits took it over at the end of WW1. They were the last group to conquer and subjugate Israel. The Turks were driven out and relegated to their vastly reduced-in-size nation to the north of Israel, between the Aegean Sea to its west and the Caspian Sea to its east. The place where the Ottoman Turks rose from in the first place. Their homeland. Today called Turkey. Yes, that northerner was driven far away from Israel. (Joel 2:20)

Christ himself even foretells this:

**(Luke 21:24)** And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled.

The trampling of Jerusalem would cease when "*the appointed times of the nations*" ceases. And when did that happen? Here is what the Insight book says:

**[it-1 p. 135]** It is a historical fact worth noting that, on the basis of the points and evidence above presented, the March 1880 edition of the *Watch Tower* magazine identified the year 1914 as the time for the close of "*the appointed times of the nations*" (and the end of the lease of power granted the Gentile rulers).

What happened in 1914? World War I. And by the end of World War I, the trampling of Jerusalem "*by the nations*," the last nation being the Ottoman Turks, ended when they were driven off and the area came under the control of the British empire. The Brits did not trample Israel, but protected it. Then in 1948 the Brits turned Israel over to self rule. So the last group to trample Israel, the Ottoman Turks, were stopped from trampling Israel and were driven back north to their homeland, where they remain to this day. (Joel 2:20)

Since then Israel has been able to prosper. (Joel 2:21-27) Israel has become a powerful world nation with a strong army, and even has nuclear weapons. It has repelled many attacks by the Muslim nations that occupy that entire part of the world surrounding Israel. It has even pushed

them back and taken ground from them. And Israel has the backing of other powerful nations in the world as well. It seems that Israel will "never again" be conquered. (Joel 2:26, 27) Until Gog strikes of course. Israel even has hundreds of vineyards, produces several million bottles of wine a year, and exports wine around the world. (Joel 2:19, 24; 3:18)

After that, paragraph 11 in the Watchtower article says: "*That army is likened to a well-organized swarm of locusts... (Joel 2:8, 9)*" But Joel 1:4 tells us that it is not a single swarm, but four distinct "swarms", which do not attack all at once, but attack separately, each devouring what "was left" by the preceding swarm.

In paragraph 13 Jeremiah 16:16 is said to also describe "*this attack*" on Israel.

**(Jeremiah 16:16)** 'Here I am sending for many fishermen,' declares Jehovah, 'And they will fish for them. After that I will send for many hunters, And they will hunt them down on every mountain and every hill And out of the clefts of the crags.

Even Jeremiah describes two distinct armies attacking the Jews: fisherman and hunters. And the words "after that" show that they would not attack the Jews at the same time. At Jeremiah 16:9 Jeremiah tells us that those words in verse 16 are the words of "*Jehovah of armies*." Jehovah is often called by that title in the Bible because Jehovah controls many armies, both heavenly and earthly. Many times Jehovah has used earthly armies for His own means.

The onslaught of the locusts against Israel was not a single event, but paragraphs 12 and 17 label the invasion by the Babylonians as the only attack on Israel that Joel predicted. The locust's assault was prolonged and ongoing for a long time, for "years" (Joel 2:25), and the description of four types of locusts shows that the aggression was from varying sources. And look at what Joel 2:2 says:

**(Joel 2:2b)** There is a people numerous and mighty; Never before has there been one like it, And never again will there be another Through the years of all generations.

If Joel is talking about the Babylonian army, as the Watchtower article says, then Joel 2:2 is describing that army. Although the Babylonians were a powerful nation that destroyed much of the city of Jerusalem, they would have been no match for the much larger and more powerful Roman Empire that completely destroyed Jerusalem leaving nothing standing but a single retaining wall, today called the wailing wall. (Mt 24:1, 2)

The video in the following link details the attack by the Romans.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KE4hmrvZLlQ>

So if the Roman army was much larger and more powerful than the Babylonian army was, how could Joel 2:2 be referring to the Babylonians? Perhaps Jeremiah was referring to these two particularly ferocious locusts with his description of a fisherman followed by a hunter who not only destroyed Jerusalem, but also conquered the surrounding cities in Judea. (Jer 16:16; Mt 24:16)

If you would like to see a short video about the history of Israel, and the many enemies that Israel had to deal with over the centuries, check out the video in the following link. *"History of the Jews - summary from 750 BC to Israel-Palestine conflict."* It describes the non-stop swarming locust attacks that started not too long after Jehovah gave the prophecy to Joel and how they each treated the Jews.

video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KR9sWRzbdJw>

### Peter

But what about Acts 2:17-21? The Watchtower article, in paragraphs 15 and 16, says that the prophecy of Joel 2:28-31 was fulfilled on that day when Peter quoted that part of the prophecy.

**(Acts 2:17-21)** "And in the last days," God says, "I will pour out some of my spirit on every sort of flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy and your young men will see visions and your old men will dream dreams,<sup>18</sup> and even on my male slaves and on my female slaves I will pour out some of my spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.<sup>19</sup> And I will give wonders in heaven above and signs on earth below—blood and fire and clouds of smoke.<sup>20</sup> The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and illustrious day of Jehovah comes.<sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved."

Well let's look at what Peter said before and after he quoted Joel. In verse 16 Peter said: *"this is what was said through the prophet Joel."* And then after he quotes Joel what does Peter say about that quote? Nothing. That's right, Peter says nothing about his quote of Joel afterwards. He leaves it up to those who heard him to make assumptions.

Why do you think that was? When Jesus quoted scriptural prophecy that was coming true he said so. For instance at Luke 4:21 Jesus said: *"Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled."* But Peter said nothing of the sort. He gave no indication that Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled. He merely quoted Joel, saying: *"this is what was said."* (Ac 2:16)

I think that Peter was doing what Jesus often did, which was make a statement to appease the crowd even though the statement didn't actually apply to the situation at hand. One example is when Jesus was asked about paying taxes. (Mt 22:16-22 compare Mt 17:24-27) Another example is when Jesus was asked about the earthly resurrection. (Lu 20:27-40; Ge 2:18) In both instances Jesus made an ambiguous statement knowing that the crowd would make an assumption and would be satisfied thinking that their questions had been answered.

Here Peter merely quoted a particular part of Joel's prophecy. (Joel 2:28-31) He did not make the claim that it was being fulfilled. He was merely manipulating the opposers in the crowd who were mocking them, with information that did not strictly apply to the situation at hand, as he had witnessed Jesus do. (Mt 17:24-26) And it worked. It stopped the crowds from thinking that those filled with holy spirit were drunk, which was Peter's objective.

Peter knew that Joel's prophecy was not being fulfilled at that time because those amazing and wondrous things (Joel 2:18-27) that would happen before its fulfillment had not happened yet. Yes, these people had holy spirit poured out upon them, but it was not in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.

Also note that Peter changed the wording of Joel's prophecy a bit to words that meant the same thing, but that lacked the given order of events. The original prophecy says "*After that...*" (Joel 2:28), but Peter changed it to "*In the last days...*" Why do you suppose he did that? Well what was Peter attempting to do? To convince those mocking them in the crowd that those with holy spirit were not drunk. Quoting Joel's prophecy got the people to assume that it was being fulfilled at that time. If Peter had properly quoted Joel's prophecy with the words "*After that,*" the people would have realized that the prophecy could not be being fulfilled at that time since all those things that this part of the prophecy was supposed to happen "*after*" had not happened yet.

So apparently Peter was either counting on them not being that familiar with Joel's prophecy, or perhaps that they would not remember it very well. And Peter continued quoting the prophecy beyond the section about holy spirit being poured out and into the next part which is about the amazing wonders and events that will also take place. Why would he mention this part of the prophecy when it had nothing to do with explaining why the people weren't drunk? I think it was to distract the crowd from noticing the change he made to the quote from "*after that*" to "*in the last days.*" And to make sure they were distracted he didn't stop there. He continued quoting Joel into the next part as well which caused those in the crowd to contemplate their own survival. (Ac 2:21)

Next Peter immediately spoke to the crowd about David and Jesus, and finished off with the words "*whom you executed on the stake.*" (Ac 2:29) If that didn't distract them from Peter's change in the original prophecy's wording, nothing would.

Peter was quite good at manipulating the crowd. If you have read the article i have in my Documents folder called "How Truth is Suppressed", you may have noticed some similarities. Peter began with rule 15, then moved on to rule 17, followed by a bit of rule 2. He quoted an alternate but similar situation (Ac 2:17, 18), then he changed the subject (Ac 2:19-35), and ended with the accusation of them killing Jesus. (Ac 2:36) And as verse 37 shows, Peter's tactics worked quite well on them.

So did Peter say that they were living "*in the last days*"? No.

Did he say that any part of Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled at that time? No.

The Watchtower article says that Peter's quoting of Joel 2:28, 29 proves that it was fulfilled that day in 33 A.D., but Joel 2:31 tells us that those things would occur "before the coming of the great and awe-inspiring day of Jehovah." Did Armageddon occur after Pentecost of 33 A.D.? No it did not. So could Joel's prophecy have been fulfilled at that time?

Take a closer look at what those verses in Joel actually say:

**(Joel 2:28, 29)** After that I will pour out my spirit on every sort of flesh, And your sons and your daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, And your young men will see visions.  
<sup>29</sup> And even on my male slaves and female slaves I will pour out my spirit in those days.

Yes, in 33 A.D. holy spirit was poured out on many that day, but the Bible gives no account of anyone prophesying, or dreaming dreams, or seeing visions on that day. The only thing that they did was speak in tongues, something that was not mentioned in Joel's prophecy.

The objective of the holy spirit on Pentecost 33 A.D. was to spread the good news to foreigners with speaking in tongues. But it seems, according to Joel, that the objective of the holy spirit "*in those days*" before Armageddon will be to give notice of what is about to happen, with prophesying, dreams, and visions.

And who will the holy spirit give that notice to? "*Your sons and your daughters... Your old men... And your young men... my male slaves and female slaves.*" And who is the 'you' that Joel is talking to? (Joel 1:2) Those who had abandoned Jehovah. (Joel 2:12) Those who were attacked, killed, subjugated, and scattered among the nations away from their homeland in shame. Those who Jehovah will call back to their homeland. (Joel 3:1) Those who are bloodguilty in Jehovah's eyes. (Joel 3:21) Those who Jehovah will forgive. Those who are His inheritance. Those who are His people. (Joel 3:2) And who does all of that apply to? The Jews.

In 33 C. E. holy spirit was poured out on Christians, not on those of the Jewish faith.

The Jews belong to Jehovah. (Joel 2:17; 3:2; Isa 43:21) And while Jehovah is our God, we Christians belong to Christ. (Mr 9:41; 1Co 3:23) If i had to make a comparison i would say it is like the Jews are God's children, and we are His grandchildren. (Ro 1:6) The Jews are dealt with directly by Jehovah, while we have Christ as our mediator. (He 8:6)

Side note:

Although the 120 were "*filled with holy spirit*", and "*tongues as if of fire*" were visible upon them (Ac 2:3), it does not say that they were "*anointed*" with holy spirit. (Lu 11:13) Were all 120 of them anointed? Perhaps, but the scriptures do not say so. Do the visible tongues of fire mean that they were anointed? Perhaps, but at no other time are tongues of fire used to identify anyone being anointed with holy spirit.

Does the term "*filled with holy spirit*" mean that they were anointed? No, for John the baptizer was also "*filled with holy spirit*" (Lu 1:15) and yet we know that he did not go to heaven. (Mt 11:11) Also Zechariah, John's father, was "*filled with holy spirit*", as was his mother, Elizabeth. (Lu 1:41, 67) Zechariah was so old that he questioned his ability to father a child, (Lu 1:18) and Elizabeth was also "*well along in years*". (Lu 1:7) They most likely did not live another 33 years, till Jesus' death. So they most likely were not among those who would go to heaven and rule with Christ. Which means that their being "*filled with holy spirit*" did not mean that they were anointed.

## The Return

Joel 3:1 tells us that Jehovah will "**bring back** the captives of Judah and Jerusalem." (See also Joel 3:7) How do you suppose He will do that? How do you make a people want to move to a place surrounded by large numbers of enemies who hate them and are plotting their demise? I think the movie "The Hunt for Red October" has the answer: You make them want to leave where they are because the conditions they are living in become too toxic.

Since before Israel even became a country again anti-Semitism was growing across the world. Today, as the numbers of Muslims expand in the European countries, anti-Semitism has been growing more and more violent. It seems to me this would make even the most stubborn Jew contemplate moving to Israel.

Since 1948 many Jews worldwide have returned to Israel. (Joel 3:1; De 30:3; Jer 30:3; Am 9:14; Zep 3:20) The Jews call this mass return to Israel "The Aliyah."

## Joel Timeline

- 1:1-3     Joel is given the prophecy
- 1:4-14    Israel will be put upon by multiple types of enemies (variety of locusts)
- 1:15     **Armageddon is coming**
- 1:16-20   Israel is devastated by all of the attacks
- 2:1-2a    **Armageddon is coming**
- 2:2b-10   Those who attack Israel are many and powerful
- 2:11     **Armageddon is coming**
- 2:12-17   Jehovah calls to Israel to return to Him
- 2:18-20   Jehovah will hear their call and save Israel
- 2:21-27   Israel will be compensated with prosperity for the many years of enemy attacks and desolation
- 2:28-29   Jehovah will pour His holy spirit upon them
- 2:30-31   **Armageddon arrives**
- 2:32     Everyone who calls on Jehovah will be saved
- 3:1-12    During the time that the Jews are brought back to their homeland, the nations that scattered them will also be gathered and their offenses remembered
- 3:13-15   They will be destroyed at Armageddon

3:16 Jehovah saves Israel

3:17-20 Jehovah will reside in Jerusalem and Israel will be blessed

3:21 Jehovah will forgive their bloodguilt

### my thoughts

I think that the locusts of Joel 1:4 and 2:25 well describes the different kingdoms that, over the years, ruled over Judea with different levels of aggression towards the Jews. They dominate Israel one at a time until the last one to persecute and occupy Israel, "*the northerner*", is driven away. Israel is finally freed from domination and becomes its own ruler once again. Then, just before Armageddon, that northerner will again "*do great things*" (Joel 2:20) and will attack Israel with the help of many others. Jehovah will draw him in, along with all the surrounding nations, and that is where he will be buried.—Joel 3:11, 12; Ezekiel 38:4-6, 9; 39:11

**(Joel 3:11, 12)** Come and help, all you surrounding nations, assemble together!" To that place, O Jehovah, bring down your powerful ones. <sup>12</sup> "Let the nations be roused and come up to the Valley of Je-hosh'a-phat; For there I will sit in order to judge all the surrounding nations.

**(Ezekiel 38:4-6)** I will turn you (Gog) around and put hooks in your jaws and bring you out with all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in splendor, a vast assembly with large shields and bucklers, all of them wielding swords; <sup>5</sup> Persia, E-thi-o'pi-a, and Put are with them, all of them with buckler and helmet; <sup>6</sup> Go'mer and all its troops, the house of To·gar'mah from the remotest parts of the north, along with all its troops—many peoples are with you.

**(Ezekiel 38:9)** You (Gog) will come against them like a storm, and you will cover the land like clouds, you and all your troops and many peoples with you." (see also Ez 38:5, 6)

**(Ezekiel 39:11)** "On that day I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel, in the valley of those who travel east of the sea, and it will block the path of those passing through. That is where they will bury Gog and all his hordes, and they will call it the Valley of Hamon-Gog.

Just before the Day of Jehovah Joel, as well as the other parallel prophecies, tells us that Israel is attacked by one main foe (Gog) who is assisted by many others. (see my article "End-Time Kings")

So it seems to me that the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy began shortly after Joel penned it, will not be completed until after Armageddon, and covers all of the time in between. That is one short book with one long prophecy.

What do you think of my study results?

:^)

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