

**“VOICES – THE MINOR PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT”**  
**JOEL: GOD IS JUST & JUSTIFIER**                      **SEPTEMBER 2, 2018**

**Biblically, prophets were MESSENGERS of God**

*“The Bible asserts that God prepared his prophets for a very specific ministry. They brought the divine word to people who desperately needed to hear it.”* Bill T. Arnold

**The Essence of Their Message**

- A call to **REPENTANCE** = change, turn around, move away from sin
- A promise of **SALVATION** = restored relationship with God, made right with God, for those who would turn back to him

*“The Lord gave this message to Joel son of Pethuel.”* (1:1)

**A Call to ATTENTION** = Listen up!

*“Hear this, you leaders of the people. Listen, all who live in the land.”* (1:2)

*“Wake up, you drunkards...”* (1:5)

**A Call to LAMENT** = Express great sorrow, regret, or grief

*“Weep like a bride dressed in black... Weep, because the wheat and barley... are ruined... Dress yourselves in burlap and weep you priests!”* (1:8-13)

**A Call to PRAYER** = Cry out to God!

*“Announce a time of fasting, call the people together for a solemn meeting. Bring the leaders and all the people of the land into the Temple of the Lord your God, and cry out to him there.”* (1:14)

*“Lord, help us!”* (1:19)

**The Epic Locust Plague – Joel Chapter 1**

1. The catastrophic plague was **HISTORICAL**
2. And it was **METAPHORICAL** [Illustrative]
3. To remind us that we’re all **ACCOUNTABLE**
  - Sin **MATTERS**
  - God takes our choices **SERIOUSLY** and He responds

**ACCORDINGLY**

[All Scripture references from the New Living Translation unless otherwise noted]

**Joel Sounds the Alarm!**

*“The day of the Lord is near.”* (1:15)

*“The day of the Lord is upon us.”* (2:1)

*“The day of the Lord is an awesome, terrible thing.”* (2:11)

- The “Day of the Lord” was **FAMILIAR** in Israel’s tradition
- Frequently portrayed as a day of God’s **WRATH**
- Where God’s **JUDGMENT** will be executed

**A Call to Repentance**

*“Turn to me now, while there is time! Give me your hearts.”* (2:12)

- God is **JUST**  
*“Return to the Lord your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish.”* (2:13)

- God is **JUSTIFIER**  
*“I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locust. It was I who sent this great destroying army against you.”* (2:25)

**God Uses the “Locust” Times To**

1. **CORRECT** our ways
2. To **REFINE** and **PURIFY** us
3. To **LEAD US** to a deeper relationship with Him
4. To **EQUIP** us to serve others

**The Book of Joel is a Book About Decisions**

1. Our decisions **MATTER** = to God and us
  - They affect our **DIRECTION** & our **DESTINATION**
  - They affect **US** & they affect **OTHERS**
2. God **MAKES** decisions about our decisions.

*“He [Lord] is eager to relent and not punish.”* (2:13)

*“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* (2:32)

*“I will pardon my people’s crimes”* (3:21)