EDIFIED EDITION

Joel

A modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures

3	73	Old	29
chapters	verses	Testament	book of 66

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Edified Edition (EDE): a modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, in everyday British English. www.edifiededition.com

Numbered notes follow each chapter.

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Chapter 1

Joel 1 calls the elders and all the people to hear of a disaster unknown to their fathers: swarm after swarm of locusts has devoured the land. Drunkards are to weep, for the new wine is cut off; a nation of locusts with lion's teeth has stripped the vines and fig trees bare. The land mourns like a young woman grieving for the husband of her youth, grain and drink offerings are cut off from the LORD's house, the fields are ruined and the farmers and vinedressers wail. The priests are to put on sackcloth, proclaim a fast and call a solemn assembly to cry out to the LORD, for the day of the LORD is near. The grain withers, the barns are torn down, the cattle groan for pasture, and the prophet cries to the LORD, for fire has devoured the pastures.

[1]This is the word of the LORD that came to Joel, Pethuel's son.[1]

[2]Hear this, you elders; listen, all who live in the land! Has anything like this ever happened in your days or in the days of your fathers?

[3]Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation.

[4]What 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.[2]

[5]Wake up, you drunkards, and weep! Wail, all you wine drinkers, because of the new wine, for it has been snatched from your lips.

[6]For a nation has invaded My land, mighty and without number; its teeth are the teeth of a lion, and it has the fangs of a lioness.

[7]It has laid waste My vines and splintered My fig trees. It has stripped off their bark and thrown it away; their branches are left white.

[8]Lament like a bride in sackcloth, mourning the young man she was to marry.

[9]Grain offerings and drink offerings are cut off from the house of the LORD. The priests, who minister before the LORD, are in mourning.

[10]The fields are ruined; the ground mourns, for the grain is destroyed, the new wine dries up and the olive oil fails.

11 Be dismayed, you farmers; wail, you
vinedressers, over the wheat and the barley,
because the harvest of the field is lost.

12 The vine is dried up and the fig tree withers; the
pomegranate, the palm and the apple tree, all the
trees of the field, are dried up. Surely the joy of
mankind has withered away.

13 Put on sackcloth and lament, you priests; wail,
you who minister at the altar. Come, spend the
night in sackcloth, you who minister before my
God, for grain offerings and drink offerings are
withheld from the house of your God.

14 Consecrate a fast; proclaim a solemn assembly.
Gather the elders and all who live in 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; it will come like destruction from the
Almighty.[3]

16 Has our food not vanished before our eyes, and
gladness and celebration from our God's house?

17 The seeds shrivel beneath the clods; the
storehouses are desolate and the granaries torn
down, for the grain has dried up.[4]

18 How the animals groan! The herds of cattle
wander in confusion because they have no
pasture; even the flocks of sheep are suffering.

19 To You, LORD, I call, for fire has devoured the
pastures of the wilderness, and flames have
burned up all the trees of the field.

20 Even the beasts of the field long for You, for the
streams of water have dried up, and fire has
devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

1 Joel gives no date. Many place him after the exile, about 500–400 BC; others place him earlier.

2 Four Hebrew words for locusts, perhaps stages of their growth or successive swarms.

3 In Hebrew 'destruction' (shod) and 'the Almighty' (Shaddai) sound alike.

4 The meaning of several words in this verse is uncertain.

Chapter 2

Joel 2 sounds the alarm in Zion, for the day of the LORD is coming, a day of darkness and gloom. A great and mighty army advances like dawn spreading over the mountains: the land is like Eden before it and a desert behind; they look like horses, charge like warriors, scale walls and enter houses like thieves, while the earth quakes and the sun and moon grow dark. Yet even now the LORD calls the people to return to Him with all their heart, with fasting, weeping and mourning; to tear their hearts and not their garments, for He is gracious and compassionate. The trumpet is to summon a sacred assembly, and the priests are to weep, "Spare Your people, LORD." Then the LORD is jealous for His land and promises grain, new wine and oil, the removal of the northern army, and the restoration of the years the locusts have eaten. Afterwards He will pour out His Spirit on all flesh, show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, and everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.

1 Blow the ram's horn in Zion; sound the alarm on
My holy mountain! Let all who live in 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 dawn spreading over the
mountains comes a great and mighty people, such
as has never been from of old and never will be
again for generations to come.

3 Before them fire devours, and behind them a
flame blazes. Before them the land is like the
garden of Eden, and behind them a desolate
wilderness; nothing escapes them.

4 They look like horses, and they gallop like war
horses.

5 With a noise like chariots they leap over the
mountaintops, like the crackling of fire devouring
stubble, like a mighty army drawn up for battle.

6 At the sight of them nations writhe in anguish;
every face turns pale.

7 They charge like warriors; they scale the wall
like soldiers. Each marches in line, and they do
not swerve from their course.

8 They do not jostle one another; each keeps to his
own path. They plunge through the defences
without breaking ranks.

9 They rush upon the city; they run along the wall.
They climb into the houses; they enter through the
windows like thieves.

10 Before them the earth quakes and the heavens
tremble; the sun and the moon grow dark, and the
stars withdraw their shining.

11 The LORD thunders at the head of His army, for
His forces are beyond number, and mighty are
those who carry out His word. The day of the
LORD is great and very terrible; who can endure
it?

12 Yet even now, declares the LORD, return to Me
with all your heart, with fasting, weeping and
mourning.

13 Tear your hearts and not your garments, and
return to the LORD your God. For He is gracious
and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding
in loyal kindness, and He relents from sending
disaster.[1]

14 Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave a
blessing behind Him, a grain offering and a drink
offering for the LORD your God.

15 Blow the ram's horn in Zion; consecrate a fast;
proclaim a solemn assembly.

16 Gather the people; consecrate the congregation.
Bring together the elders; gather the children,
even the infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom
leave his room and the bride her chamber.

17 Let the priests, who minister before the LORD,
weep between the porch and the altar. Let them
say, "Spare Your people, LORD. Do not make Your
inheritance a reproach, a byword among the
nations. Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'"

18 Then the LORD was jealous for His land and
took pity on His people.

19 The LORD answered His people: "I am sending
you grain, new wine and olive oil, and you will be
fully satisfied with them. I will never again make
you a reproach among the nations.

20 I will drive the northern army far from you,
pushing it into a parched and desolate land, its
front into the eastern sea and its rear into the
western sea. Its stench will rise and its stink go
up, for it has done great things."[2]

21 Do not be afraid, O land; be glad and rejoice, for
the LORD has done great things!

22 Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field, for the
pastures of the wilderness are turning green. The
trees bear their fruit; the fig tree and the vine
yield their abundance.

23 Be glad, people of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD
your God, for He has given you the autumn rain in
righteousness. He sends down showers for you,
the autumn and spring rains, as before.[3]

24 The threshing floors will be heaped with grain;
the vats will brim over with new wine and oil.

25 I will repay you for the years the swarming
locust has eaten, the hopping locust, the
destroying locust and the cutting locust, My great
army that I sent among you.

26 You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied, and
you will praise the name of the LORD your God,
who has worked wonders for you. My people will
never again be put to shame.

27 Then you will know that I am in the midst of
Israel, that I am the LORD your God and there is
no other. My people will never again be put to
shame.

28 And afterwards I will pour out My Spirit on all
flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams, and your young
men will see visions.[4]

29 Even on My servants, both men and women, I
will pour out My Spirit in those days.

30 I will show wonders in the heavens and on the
earth: blood and fire and columns of smoke.

31 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon
to blood before the great and awesome day of the
LORD comes.

32 And whoever calls on the name of the LORD
shall be saved, for on Mount Zion and in
Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD
has said, among the survivors whom the LORD
calls.[5]

1 Compare Exodus 34:6 and Jonah 4:2.

2 The eastern sea is the Dead Sea, and the western sea the Mediterranean.

3 Or 'He has given you a teacher for righteousness'; the Hebrew word can mean 'early rain' or 'teacher'.

4 In Hebrew 2:28–32 are numbered 3:1–5, and 3:1–21 are numbered 4:1–21. Peter quotes 2:28–32 at Pentecost (Acts 2:17–21), beginning 'In the last days'.

5 Quoted also in Romans 10:13.

Chapter 3

Joel 3 announces that when the LORD restores the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, He will gather all nations into the Valley of Jehoshaphat and judge them for scattering His people, dividing His land and selling boys and girls for prostitutes and wine. Tyre, Sidon and Philistia, who plundered His treasures and sold Judah's people to the Greeks, will be repaid. The nations are summoned to war: beat ploughshares into swords and pruning hooks into spears, and come to the valley of decision, where the LORD sits to judge, for the harvest is ripe and the winepress full. The LORD roars from Zion, and the heavens and the earth tremble, but He is a refuge for His people. Jerusalem will be holy; the mountains will drip with new wine, a fountain will flow from the LORD's house, Egypt and Edom will be desolate, and Judah will be inhabited for ever, for the LORD dwells in Zion.

[1]For in those days, at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem and restore their fortunes,

[2]I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will enter into judgement with them on behalf of My people, My inheritance Israel, whom they scattered among the nations, and because they divided up My land.[1]

[3]They cast lots for My people, traded a boy for a prostitute and sold a girl for wine to drink.

[4]Now what are you to Me, Tyre and Sidon and all the regions of Philistia? Are you repaying Me for something? If you are paying Me back, I will swiftly and speedily return your deeds on your own heads.

[5]For you took My silver and My gold and carried My finest treasures into your temples.

[6]You sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks, to send them far from their own territory.

[7]Look, I am going to rouse them from the places to which you sold them, and I will return your deeds on your own heads.

[8]I will sell your sons and daughters into the hands of the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, a nation far away. The LORD has spoken.

[9]Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men draw near and attack!

[10]Beat your ploughshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weakling say, "I am a warrior!"[2]

[11]Come quickly, all you nations from every side, and assemble there. Bring down Your warriors, LORD!

[12]Let the nations be roused and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the nations on every side.

[13]Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow, so great is their wickedness.[3]

[14]Crowds upon crowds in the valley of decision! For the LORD's day is close at hand in the valley of decision.

[15]The sun and the moon grow dark, and the stars withdraw their shining.

[16]The LORD roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem; the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.

[17]Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who dwells in Zion, My holy mountain. Jerusalem will be holy, and foreigners will never again pass through her.

[18]On that day the mountains will drip with new wine and the hills flow with milk; all the streambeds of Judah will run with water. A fountain will flow from the house of the LORD and water the Valley of Acacias.[4]

[19]But Egypt will become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, because of the violence done to the people of Judah, in whose land they shed innocent blood.

[20]Judah will be inhabited for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.

[21]I will avenge their blood, which I have not yet avenged. The LORD dwells in Zion![5]

1 ‘Jehoshaphat’ means ‘the LORD judges’; compare ‘the valley of decision’ in 3:14.

2 The reverse of Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3.

3 Compare Revelation 14:14–20.

4 Compare Ezekiel 47:1–12 and Zechariah 14:8.

5 The Hebrew of the first sentence is uncertain; it may read ‘I will declare innocent their blood that I had not declared innocent’.