

How We See God Acting Today

June 21, 2020 | Joel 1:1-20



This week, we begin a three-week series on the book of Joel. The prophet Joel calls the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem to lament and return to the Lord during a time of national adversity. What happened to them and how did they respond? We'll look at how the prophet Joel helped them see the world (and God) in a fresh way.

A Time of National Adversity

Read Joel 1:1-20.

[Q] What is happening? What are the effects of the locusts, drought and fire on the crops, offerings, food, and animals?

[Q] What does our current adversity look and feel like for you?

[Q] In Joel 1, who is Joel specifically addressing and what is he calling them to do?

Verses:	Who?	Do what?
v. 2-3		
v. 5-8		
v. 11		
v. 13-14		

Respond - Call to the Lord

- Tell God about the “plagues” around us today.
- Read Psalm 86, a psalm of lament, for words to use as you talk to God.

The Day of the Lord – God is Acting

One of the themes in the book of Joel is “the day of the Lord”. (Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14)
Sometimes it is referred to as “the day” or “that day” or “those days.” (Joel 2:2; 3:1, 18)

In Joel 1:15, he said the current disaster had become the “day of the Lord.” In the Bible, the “day of the Lord” always identifies a span of time during which God personally intervenes in history, directly or indirectly, to accomplish some specific aspect of His plan. (gotquestions.org)

God uses these time periods to get people’s attention.

... Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.”
John 5:17 (NIV)

[Q] In the world or close to home, how have you seen God at work lately?

Here’s a report on what God has been doing in the Middle East from a Valley World Outreach partner who uses social media to share the gospel:

There’s been a crazy increase in online interactions over last year (all tallies are from January-May of each year):

- 4200 online forms requesting information in 2020, vs. 1700 in 2019
- 16400 live interactions (phone conversations, chats, in-person meets) in 2020, vs. 9000 in 2019

That’s almost double the number of contacts in a 5-month span!

[Q] Read Philippians 1:12–14. How did Paul see God at work in his imprisonment?

[Q] How can you gain more confidence in God than in temporary things?

Respond to God Using the Lord’s Prayer.

Read Matthew 6:9-13.

- Ask God for deliverance from evil.
- Thank Him for being faithful to us at all times.
- Praise Him that He is acting in the world right now.

Times of trial serve as examples and forerunners to the great and final “Day of the Lord” at the end of time when Jesus returns in judgment (2 Thessalonians 2:2). We will look at this further as we progress in Joel.

Next week: Joel 2:1-27 and one of the greatest promises of hope in the Old Testament.

Watch: The Bible Project overview of the book of Joel: youtu.be/zQLazbgz90c

Read: more on the Day of the Lord: gotquestions.org/day-of-the-Lord