

Minor Prophets Summer 2025 - Lesson 9

Outpouring of the Spirit - Joel 2:18-3:21

Theme Verse: "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. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit." (Joel 2:13 - ESV).

This section of Joel is significant because Peter quotes it on Pentecost (Acts 2:17-21). Here we find the great promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, the Lord revealed Himself in dreams and visions through the gift of the Holy Spirit. After Jesus' resurrection and ascension, He fulfilled His promise to send a Comforter by sending the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

Restoration

Read **Joel 2:20-24**. After God called off the locusts, who consumed everything, God rescued His people. Now, Joel presents a psalm of thanksgiving (vv. 21-24). Notice how all is restored. The vines bear fruit, the rains have returned, and the land is green again. The Lord provides rain of divine mercy. This is a great reversal.

1. What other dramatic reversals do you recall from reading the Bible?

Read **Joel 2:25-27**.

2. What does the Lord's super-abundant restoration say about our future, given His promises?

Outpouring of the Spirit

3. Read **Joel 2:28-32** & **John 7:39**. God promises to pour out His Spirit. How is this outpouring connected to Jesus' death and resurrection?
4. Before Pentecost, people looked for signs and wonders to confirm that what the prophet said was true and was from God. How is it that, after Pentecost, people are taught by God as **Isaiah 54:13** says?
5. The sun is darkened and the moon turns to blood (Joel 2:31). How does the Holy Spirit preserve us during these latter days?

The Lord Gathers the Nations

Read Joel 3:1-8. Many scholars think this section describes the final judgment. However, Martin Luther applied this passage to the kingdom of Christ (which includes the final judgment).

This has happened and does happen daily from the time when the Holy Spirit, about whom he spoke earlier in chapter 2, was sent from heaven so that the nations which were summoned to judgment might recognize their sin and pray for forgiveness.

6. Joel indeed prophesied about the Israelites entering into captivity; and those nations that took Israel captive eventually were destroyed by other nations. Understanding Joel 3:1-3 as referring to the kingdom of Christ, from what captivity does He deliver His people?
7. Read **Joel 3:17-21**. This section provides great hope and promise. Through the Gospel, the Lord refreshes both the strong and the weak - hence the image of both wine and milk.
8. Read **Psalms 125:1**. Who are the people in Joel 3:20 that will dwell in Judah forever?

God's Word for Today

This text provided immediate hope to Judah, but also it pointed forward to Pentecost. It will find its ultimate fulfillment when Jesus returns in His glory on the Last Day. Until that Day, we are blessed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

9. Read **1 Peter 1:10-12**. What is the job of the Holy Spirit?

In Closing

- Remember your Baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit you received in it.
- Read Amos 1-2 for next week.

Prayer: Almighty and ever-living God, You fulfilled Your promise by sending the gift of the Holy Spirit to unite disciples of all nations in the cross and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ. By the preaching of the Gospel spread this gift to the ends of the earth; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

This study is based on:

“God’s Word for Today: Hosea, Joel, and Amos - Faithfulness amidst Unfaithfulness.”