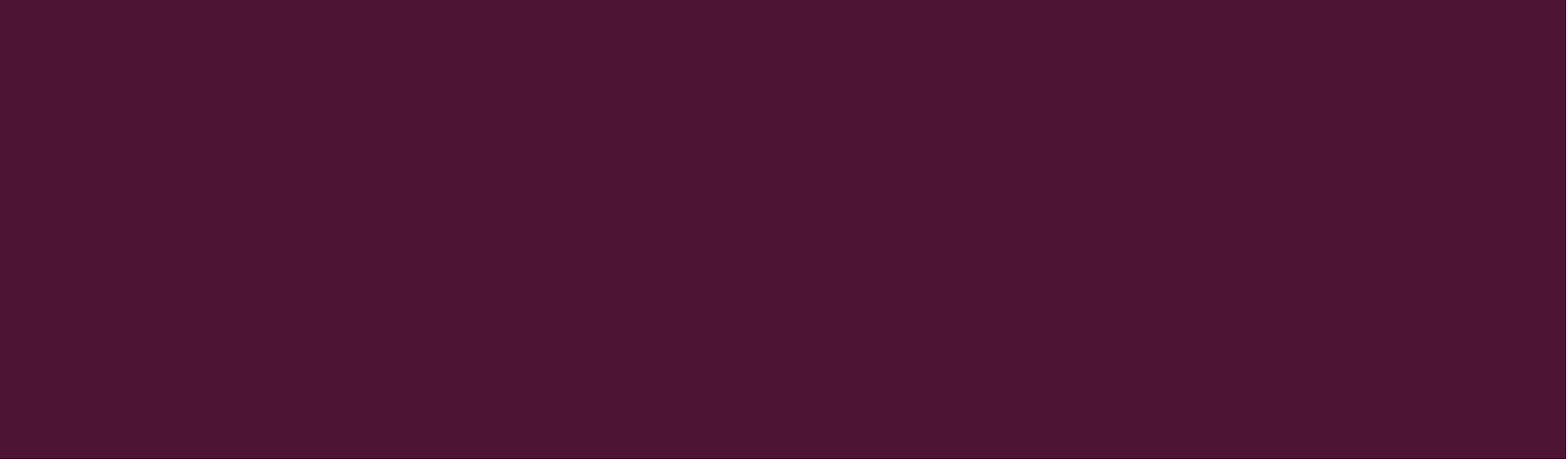




A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

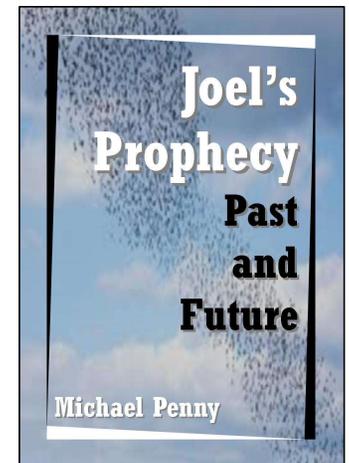
WITH MICHAEL PENNY



A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

2

- In this relatively short commentary the author seeks to expound the exact meaning of the words and messages of Joel rather than dwell on devotional issues. In the process Mr Penny displays considerable learning and his work makes interesting reading. The author's particular concern is with the significance of Joel 2:28-29 and accompanying verses quoted by Peter on the Day of Pentecost. He concluded, "The Acts period is not a 'fulfilment' of Joel's prophecy, but a foretaste of it." (Reviewed in the *British Church Newspaper*)
- This is a verse by verse exposition of the book of Joel, followed by a study of its application in Acts chapter 2. In his usual racy style, the author rejects the interpretation commonly held by Pentecostals and charismatics, arguing that a correct understanding can only be gained by carefully considering the original text. Helpful maps, diagrams and indexes make this book excellent value for money." (Reviewed in *The Methodist Recorder, UK*)



A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

3

■ Miles Coverdale



It shall greatly help you to understand Scripture,
If you mark

not only what is spoken, or written,
but of whom,
and to whom,
with what words,
at what time,
where,
to what intent,
with what circumstance,
considering what goes before,
and what follows.

Two main variables which
are often ignored are ...

WHO
and
WHEN.

That is:

THE PEOPLE
And
THE TIME

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

4

- Joel 2:28-29
- “And it shall come to pass **afterwards**, 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.
²⁹ Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.”

In Acts 2:16-21:

When ... in the last days ... before ...
Who ... all flesh
What ... shall prophesy

Acts 2:16-21

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

- ¹⁷ “And **in the last days** it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on **all flesh**, and your sons and your daughters **shall prophesy**, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;
¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they **shall prophesy**.
¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke;
²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, **before** the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.
²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

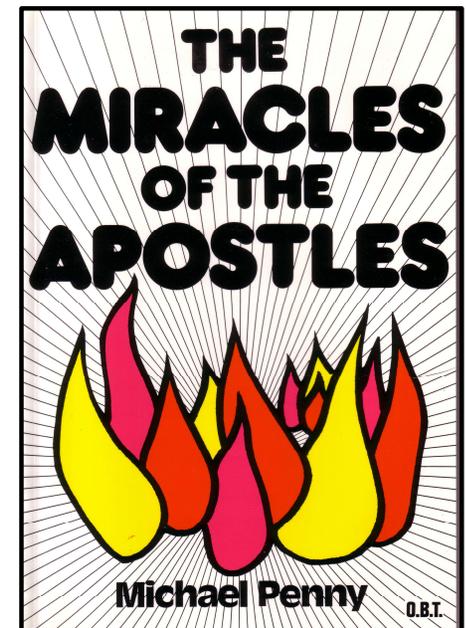
5

- **Spirit on all flesh**
- WHO?
- **your** sons and **your** daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and **your** young men shall see visions.
²⁹ Even on the male and female servants
in those days I will pour out my Spirit
- **Your:** i.e. Israel's
- **NOTE:** This has nothing to do with Gentiles!
- **Question:** So what would be the significance of this to Israel?

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

6

- First, we must remind ourselves that those who listened to Joel knew their Scriptures, much of our Old Testament. In those books there are many references to the work of the Holy Spirit. He had come upon people to strengthen them (Judges 14:5-6) and to enable them to do all manner of skillful work (Exodus 28:1-5; 31:1-5). He had given them the ability to prophesy (Numbers 11:24-30), to administer with wisdom (Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25), and many other talents and skills that they had required.
- However, He did not abide with them continually. Neither did he indwell them permanently. When their task was over, when their work was completed, He departed and they lost their skills and abilities. He would also leave if there was extreme disobedience, as in the case of Saul.
- (*The Miracles of the Apostles*)



A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

7

- Also, not every Israelite during those O.T. times experienced the enabling of the Holy Spirit. **However, Joel testified that a time was to come when the Spirit would be poured out upon all** (Joel 2:28), but nowhere in that passage is it ever suggested that the Holy Spirit was to indwell continually and be a permanent possession.
- (*The Miracles of the Apostles*)

However, Joel testified that a time was to come when the Spirit would be poured out upon all of Israel. (Joel 2:28)

Question: Did that happen on the Day of Pentecost?
Acts 2:1: When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were **all** together in one place.

Question: Who are the 'all'?
Acts 1:15: In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120).

Note: This is hardly 'all flesh' i.e. 'all Israel'.

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

8

- **An important aside**
- Those people of Israel who heard John prophesy that the Lord Jesus was to baptise them with the Holy Spirit heard something very new. Instead of the Holy Spirit staying and enabling for just short periods of time, He was to remain within, “with the primary idea of rest and continuance ... *en* denotes continuance in time.” (Bauer, in his *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*,) This was made very clear by Christ Himself.
- “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” (John 14:16-17)
- This baptism, then, would result in the Holy Spirit being permanently within those who underwent it.
- (*The Miracles of the Apostles*)

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

- Joel 2:28-29
- “And it shall come to pass afterwards, 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.
²⁹ Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.”

Acts 2:16-21

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

- ¹⁷ ““And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters **shall prophesy**, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;
¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they **shall prophesy**.
¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke;
²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.
²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

10

- **Shall Prophecy**
- Two points
- (1) A Prophet: a mouthpiece for God who may speak of:
 - Things past
 - Things present
 - Things future
- (2) They were filled with the Holy Spirit and ... what did they do?

Acts 2:4: **filled** with the Holy Spirit and began to speak ...
Acts 4:8: Peter, **filled** with the Holy Spirit, said ...
Acts 4:31: They were all **filled** with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.
Acts 13:9: Paul, **filled** with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said ...

Note: A message for us:
Ephesians 5:18-19: be filled with the Spirit
And do what?
Addressing one another in psalms and hymns.

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

- **Note:** “I will pour out my Spirit on **all flesh**; your sons and your daughters” did not happen on the Day of Pentecost, nor at any time during the Acts of the Apostles and it has never happened.
- **Question:** So **when** will it happen?
- **Answer:** Jeremiah 31:31-34
- **Question:** That's when they will all prophesy but for what purpose?
- **Answer:** To enable them to fulfil their role as a Kingdom of Priests to the other nations during the millennium.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbour and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD’, for **they shall all know me**, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

12

- **Problem?**
- Peter states this is to happen 'in the last days'.
- But what does the expression 'the last days' mean?

Acts 2:16-21

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:
17 "And **in the last days** it shall be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.



The last days = days to come
It can refer to any future period of time.
“In days to come” – some translations.
The context need to be considered
to find out as to when
that future period of time will be.

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

13

Acts 2:16-17

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:
17 “**And in the last days** it shall be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams;

- Joel 2:28-29
- “And it shall come to pass **afterwards**,
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.
29 Even on the male and female servants
in those days I will pour out my Spirit.”

Question: After what?

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

14

- **Question:After what?**
- Joel 2:12 begins a section headed, in many Bibles, with the words 'The Return of the Lord'.
- Joel 2:28 comes **after** Joel 2:20.
- Joel 2:20: "I will drive the northern army far from you, pushing it into a parched and barren land, with its front columns going into the eastern sea and those in the rear into the western sea. And its stench will go up; its smell will rise." Surely he has done great things.
- This refers to the destruction of the King of the North which takes place when Christ returns.
- Thus the Spirit is to be poured out on all Israel after the Lord returns to the Mount of Olives.

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

15

- Joel 2:28-29
- ²⁸ “And it shall come to pass afterwards, 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.
²⁹ Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.
- ³⁰ “And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, **before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.** ³² And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

Acts 2:16-21

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

- ¹⁷ “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;
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²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

16

- So the prophetic scenario is:
- A seven years covenant is made between Israel and the Antichrist
- A period of peace follows for 3 ½ years and then it is broken by the Antichrist.
- The next 3 ½ years is called 'The Great Tribulation' (Matthew 24:21).
- Christ returns to 'physically' save Israel and they look on Him who they have pierced.

Acts 2:19-20:

And I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke;

²⁰ **the sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,**

before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day

Matthew 24:29

Immediately after the tribulation of those days **the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,** and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man.

**The Day of
the Lord!
When?**



Michael Penny

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

17

- So, back to the prophetic scenario:
- A seven years covenant is made between Israel and the Antichrist
- A period of peace follows for 3 ½ years and then it is broken by the Antichrist.
- The next 3 ½ years is called 'The Great Tribulation' (Matthew 24:21).
- Christ returns to 'physically' save Israel and they look on Him who they have pierced.
- All Israel is saved 'spiritually' and His law is written in their hearts and minds.
- The Spirit is poured out on all Israel and they prophesy (speak about the Lord).
- They shall fulfil their role as a Kingdom of Priests.

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

18

- **So the problem is ...**
- Why does Peter say, “this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:16)?
- “this is [like] that which was uttered through the prophet Joel.”

Matthew 2:15: [Jesus] was there [in Egypt] until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, ‘Out of Egypt have I called my son.’
Hosea 11:1: When Israel *was* a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

Herod killed the baby boys

Matthew 2:17-18: Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. (Jeremiah 31:15)

“The use of the quotation by Matthew does not seem to agree with its original context: the passage in Jeremiah introduces a prophecy of hope; lamentation could give place to joy, because Rachel’s children will return.” (David Hill, *The New Century Bible Commentary*)

The quotation from Jeremiah 31:15 follows neither the Hebrew nor the LXX. Is Matthew quoting from memory? And drawing on a similarity? Was Peter doing the same?

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

19

- **So was Peter doing the same?**
- Was Peter saying that the events on that Day of Pentecost was “[like] that which was uttered through the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:16) but that they did not fulfil that prophecy?
- **What do you think?**

A LOOK AT JOEL'S PROPHECY

20