

Joel 1:13-20

General Outline:

1. 1:1-2:11 – **Judgment on Jerusalem**
 - a. **Locust Invasion (1:1-20)**
 - b. Northern Army Invasion (2:1-11)
2. 2:12-17 – Repentance
3. 2:18-3:21 – Salvation/Deliverance
 - a. Divine Response to Israel’s Repentance (2:18-19)
 - b. Northern Army Destroyed (2:20)
 - c. Land Restored (2:21-27)
 - d. Spirit Poured Out (2:28-32)
 - e. Judgment on Gentiles (3:1-21)

Chiastic (/ki-as-tic/ or /key-as-tic/) Structures in Joel:

(chiastic means “a reversal in the order of words in two otherwise parallel phrases”)

#1 -

A. Punishment: The Locust (1:2-20)

- B. Punishment: The Northern Army (2:1-11)
 C. TRANSITION: Repentance by people and Response by God (2:12-19)
 B. Forgiveness: Northern Army Defeated ((2:20)
 A. Forgiveness: Land destroyed by Locust is Restored (2:21-27)

#2 -

- A. Judgment: The Northerner Destroyed (2:20)
 B. Grace: Rain on the Land (2:21-27)
 B. Grace: Spirit Poured on all People (2:28-32)
 A. Judgment: All Nations Destroyed (3:1-21)

1:13 – “Put on sackcloth and lament, O priests; wail, O ministers of the altar. Go in, pass the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God! Because grain offering and drink offering are withheld from the house of your God.

3885 [e] lí·nū	935 [e] bō·'ū	4196 [e] miz·bê·ah,	8334 [e] me·šā·re·tê	3213 [e] hê·lî·lū	3548 [e] hak·kō·hā·nîm,	5594 [e] wə·sîp·dū	2296 [e] hîḡ·rū
לִּינוּ	בָּאוּ !	מִזְבֵּחַ	מְשָׁרְתֵי	הִלִּילוּ	הַכֹּהֲנִים	וְסִפְדוּ	חִגְרוּ 13
lie all night	come	the altar	you who minister before	Wail	you priests	and lament	Gird yourselves
V-Qal-Imp-mp	V-Qal-Imp-mp	N-ms	V-Piel-Prtcp1-mpc	V-Hifil-Imp-mp	Art N-mp	Conj-w V-Qal-Imp-mp	V-Qal-Imp-mp

5262 [e] wā·nā·sek.	4503 [e] min·hāh	430 [e] 'ē·lō·hē·kēm	1004 [e] mib·bêt	4513 [e] nim·na'	3588 [e] kî	430 [e] 'ē·lō·hāy;	8334 [e] me·šā·re·tê	8242 [e] baś·śaq·qîm,
וְנִסְדָּךְ	מִנְתָּה	אֱלֹהֵיכֶם	מִבֵּית	נִמְנָע	כִּי	אֱלֹהֵי	מְשָׁרְתֵי	בְּשַׁקְיָם
and the drink offering	the grain offering	of your God	from the house	Are withheld	for	my God	You who minister to	in sackcloth
Conj-w N-ms	N-fs	N-mpc 2mp	Prep-m N-msc	V-Nifal-Perf-3ms	Conj	N-mpc 1cs	V-Piel-Prtcp1-mpc	Prep-b, Art N-mp

1. The dignity of the priesthood is reduce
 - a. No material to sacrifice or worship with
 - b. Priestly garments replaced with sackcloth
 - c. Reduced to wailing and lamenting on their faces before the Lord
2. Joel calls the priests “ministers of my God” indicating:
 - a. The priest served as ministers for the people before the God of the people
 - b. The priest had a responsibility to meet for the people
 - c. The people accessed their Lord through the priesthood
 - d. Joel was not a priest. He could not do this part himself.
3. Joel calls the temple “the house of your God” indicating:
 - a. The priest held a unique responsibility for the temple worship
 - b. The priest stood before God as others could not

1:14 – **“Consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly. Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.**

1004 [e]	776 [e]	3427 [e]	3605 [e]	2205 [e]	622 [e]	6116 [e]	7121 [e]	6885 [e]	6942 [e]
bêṭ	hā-'ā-reṣ,	yō-šə-bê	kōl	zə-qê-nîm,	'is-ṗū	'ā-šā-rāh,	qir-'ū	šō-wm	qad-də-šū-
בֵּית	הָאָרֶץ	יְשֻׁבֵי	כָּל	זְקֵנִים	אִסְפוּ	עֲצֵרָה	קִרְאוּ	צוֹם	קִדְשׁוּ 14
[Into] the house	of the land	the inhabitants	[And] all	the elders	Gather	a sacred assembly	Call	a fast	Consecrate
N-msc	Art N-fs	V-Qal-PrtcpI-mpc	N-msc	Adj-mp	V-Qal-Imp-mp	N-fs	V-Qal-Imp-mp	N-ms	V-Piel-Imp-mp

3068 [e]	413 [e]	2199 [e]	430 [e]	3068 [e]
Yah-weh.	'el-	wə-za-'ā-qū	'ē-lō-hê-ḵem;	Yah-weh
יְהוָה:	אֶל-	וְזָעֲקוּ	אֱלֹהֵיכֶם	יְהוָה
Yahweh	to	and cry out	your God	of Yahweh
N-proper-ms	Prep	Conj-w V-Qal-Imp-mp	N-mpc 2mp	N-proper-ms

1. Four areas of worship:
 - a. Fasting – demonstration of grief and sorrow
 - b. Sacred assembly – community, common sense of grief and remorse
 - c. Gather at the House of the Lord (Temple) to repent before the presence of the Lord
 - d. Cry out to the Lord to be their savior – Calling upon the name of the Lord for salvation and deliverance
2. Who should come?
 - a. The elders
 - b. All the inhabitants
3. “elders and all the inhabitants” closes this section of the oracle that began in 1:2 saying:

“Hear this, you elders; listen, all who live in the land”

 - a. The call was to the elders and all in the land
 - b. The command was to assemble at the Temple in Jerusalem before the priest who would go to God with nothing but fasting, mourning, sackcloth and asking for his salvation.

Here Joel identifies this event as “the Day of the Lord”:

1:15 – **“Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, and as destruction from the Almighty it comes.**

935 [e]	7706 [e]	7701 [e]	3068 [e]	3117 [e]	7138 [e]	3588 [e]	3117 [e]	162 [e]
yā·bō·w.	mi·šad·day	ū·ḵə·šōd	Yah·weh,	yō·wm	qā·rō·wḇ	kî	lay·yō·wm;	'ā·hāh
יָבוֹא׃	מִשָּׁדַי	וּכְשֹׁד	יְהוָה	יוֹם	קָרוֹב	כִּי	לַיּוֹם	אָהָה 15
it shall come	from the Almighty	and as destruction	of Yahweh	the day	[is] at hand	for	for the day	Alas
V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	Prep-m N-proper-ms	Conj-w, Prep-k N-ms	N-proper-ms	N-msc	Adj-ms	Conj	Prep-l, Art N-ms	Interjection

1. “For the Day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty” was already a common phrase in the prophets:
 - a. 700 BC - Isaiah 13:6 – “Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; as destruction from the Almighty it will come!”
 - b. 620 BC - Zephaniah 1:7 – “Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests.”
 - c. 586 BC - Obadiah 15 – “For the day of the Lord is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head.”
2. The Day of the Lord is near:
 - a. In the locust invasion
 - b. In the invading northern army
 - c. In the destruction of the northern army
 - d. In the judgment of all the nations
 - e. In the other prophets speaking to:
 - i. Samaria’s fall (722 BC)
 - ii. Assyria’s fall (612 BC)
 - iii. Judah’s fall (586 BC)
 - iv. Edom’s fall (550-100 BC)
 - v. Babylon’s fall (539 BC)
 - vi. All the nations being judged (eschatological)

1:16 – “**Is not the food cut off before our eyes, joy and gladness from the house of our God?**”

1524 [e]	8057 [e]	430 [e]	1004 [e]	3772 [e]	400 [e]	5869 [e]	5048 [e]	3808 [e]
wā·gīl.	šim·hāh	'ē·lō·hê·nū	mib·bêt	niḵ·rāt;	'ō·ḵel	'ê·nê·nū	ne·gēd	hā·lō·w
וְגִיל׃	שִׂמְחָה	אֵלֹהֵינוּ	מִבֵּית	נִכְרַת	אֶכֶל	עֵינֵינוּ	נִגְדָה	הֲלוֹא 16
and gladness	Joy	of our God	from the house	cut off	the food	our eyes	before	Is not
Conj-w N-ms	N-fs	N-mpc 1cp	Prep-m N-msc	V-Nifal-Perf-3ms	N-ms	N-cdc 1cp	Prep	Adv-NegPrt

1. “Food is cut off” from consumers, the farmers and now the priests...soon it will include the suffering of animals
2. “Joy and gladness” gone from the same above groups...focus on the house of our God. No one is celebrating in the Lord’s presence at this time.

1:17 – “**The seed shrivels under the clods; the storehouses are desolate; the granaries are torn down because the grain has dried up.**”

214 [e]	8074 [e]	4053 [e]	8478 [e]	6507 [e]	5685 [e]
'ō-ṣā-rō-wt,	nā-šam-mū	meḡ-rə-pō-tê-hem,	ta-ḥat	pə-ru-dō-wt,	'ā-bə-šū
אֲצֻרוֹת	נִשְׁמָו	מִגְרָפְתֵיהֶם	תַּחַת	פְּרֻדוֹת	עֲבָשׁוּ 17
Storehouses	are in shambles	the clods	under	the seed	Shrivels
N-mp	V-Nifal-Perf-3cp	N-fpc 3mp	Prep	N-fs	V-Qal-Perf-3cp

1715 [e]	3001 [e]	3588 [e]	4460 [e]	2040 [e]
dā-ḡān.	hō-bīš	kî	mam-mə-ḡu-rō-wt;	ne-her-sū
דָּגָן:	הִבִּישׁ	כִּי	מִמְגָרוֹת	נִהָרְסוּ
the grain	has withered	for	Barns	are broken down
N-ms	V-Hifil-Perf-3ms	Conj	N-fp	V-Nifal-Perf-3cp

1. “The seed shrivels under the clods” is a difficult translation:
 - a. This is from 4 Hebrew words, but only 3 of the 4 are known.
 - b. 3 of the 4 Hebrew words are only used here in the OT
 - c. The Hebrew says “their” not “the”
 - d. *megraphah* means “a shovel”
2. This verse gives the impression there is also a drought along with the locust invasion

1:18 – **“How the beasts groan! The herds of cattle are perplexed because there is no pasture for them; even the flocks of sheep suffer.**

4829 [e]	369 [e]	3588 [e]	1241 [e]	5739 [e]	943 [e]	929 [e]	584 [e]	4100 [e]
mir-'eh	'ên	kî	bā-qār,	'eḏ-rê	nā-bō-ḵū	bə-hê-māh,	ne-'en-ḥāh	mah-
— מִרְעָה	אֵין	כִּי	בְקָר	עֲדָרֵי	נִבְכוּ	בְהֵמָה !	נֶאֱנָחָה	מַה 18
pasture	[there is] no	because	of cattle	the herds	are restless	the animals	groan	How
N-ms	Adv	Conj	N-ms	N-mpc	V-Nifal-Perf-3cp	N-fs	V-Nifal-Perf-3fs	Interrog

816 [e]	6629 [e]	5739 [e]	1571 [e]	1992 [e]
ne'-šā-mū.	haṣ-ṣōn	'eḏ-rê	gam-	lā-hem;
נֶאֱשָׂמוּ:	הַצֹּאן	עֲדָרֵי	גַם-	לָהֶם
suffer punishment	of sheep	the flocks	Even	for them
V-Nifal-Perf-3cp	Art N-cs	N-mpc	Conj	Prep-I Pro-3mp

1:19 – **“To you, O LORD, I call. For fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and flame has burned all the trees of the field.**

4057 [e]	4999 [e]	398 [e]	784 [e]	3588 [e]		7121 [e]	3068 [e]	413 [e]	
mid·bār,	nə·'ō·wt	'ā·kə·lāh	'êš,	kî	—	'eq·rā;	Yah·weh	'ê·le·kā	
מִדְבָּר	נְאוֹת	אָכַלָּהּ	אֵשׁ	כִּי	—	אֶקְרָא	יְהוָה	אֵלֶיךָ	19
open	the pastures	has devoured	fire	for		I cry out	Yahweh	To You	
N-ms	N-fpc	V-Qal-Perf-3fs	N-cs	Conj		V-Qal-Imperf-1cs	N-proper-ms	Prep 2ms	

	7704 [e]	6086 [e]	3605 [e]	3857 [e]	3852 [e]
	haś·śā·deh.	'ā·ṣê	kāl-	li·hă·ṭāh	wə·le·hā·bāh,
	הַשָּׂדֵה:	עֲצֵי	כָּל-	לְהִטָּה	וְלִהְבֶּה
	of the field	the trees	all	has burned	and a flame
	Art N-ms	N-mpc	N-msc	V-Piel-Perf-3fs	Conj-w N-fs

1. Joel is explicitly calling to YHWH, and no one else: “TO YOU, O LORD, I CALL!”
2. “fire” could be:
 - a. Total devastation by locust
 - b. The burning effect of the drought
 - c. Or, literally, a forest fire burning the dry timber

1:20 – “Even the beasts of the field pant for you because the water brooks are dried up, and fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.”

4325 [e]	650 [e]	3001 [e]	3588 [e]	413 [e]	6165 [e]	7704 [e]	929 [e]	1571 [e]	
mā·yim,	'ā·pî·qê	yā·bə·šū	kî	'ê·le·kā;	ta·'ā·rō·wġ	śā·deh	ba·hă·mō·wt	gam-	
מַיִם	אֶפְיָקֵי	יִבְשׁוּ	כִּי	אֵלֶיךָ	תַּעֲרֹג	שָׂדֵה	בְּהֵמוֹת	גַּם-	20
water	the brooks	are dried up	for	to You	cry out	of the field	the beasts	Also	
N-mp	N-mpc	V-Qal-Perf-3cp	Conj	Prep 2ms	V-Qal-Imperf-3fs	N-ms	N-fpc	Conj	

	4057 [e]	4999 [e]	398 [e]	784 [e]
	p̄	ham·mid·bār.	nə·'ō·wt	'ā·kə·lāh
	פ	הַמִּדְבָּר:	נְאוֹת	אָכַלָּהּ
	-	the open	pastures	has devoured
	Punc	Art N-ms	N-fpc	V-Qal-Perf-3fs
				Conj-w N-cs

1. The dry stream beds make it clear there was also a drought along with the locust
2. Another mention of “fire” and it devouring the wilderness seems to suggest literal fire.
3. The last three verses address, not the suffering of the people, but the suffering the people have brought on nature and animal life at this time.