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## Joel

The Book of Joel is a prophetic book found in the Old Testament of the Christian Bible. It is the second of the twelve minor prophets in the Hebrew Bible. The book is attributed to a prophet named Joel, although little is known about him.

The Book of Joel is divided into three chapters. The first chapter begins with a description of a locust plague that has devastated the land of Judah. Joel uses this natural disaster as a metaphor for a larger spiritual crisis facing the nation. He calls on the people to repent and turn back to God, warning them of a coming judgment if they do not.

In the second chapter, Joel prophesies about a future day of the Lord, when God will judge the nations and restore Israel. He describes a great army that will invade the land, but promises that God will intervene and save his people. Joel encourages the people to fast and pray in preparation for this coming day.

The third and final chapter of Joel is a hymn of praise to God for his mercy and compassion. Joel describes the restoration of Judah and the punishment of their enemies. He ends with a promise of blessing for those who call on the name of the Lord.

Overall, the Book of Joel is a message of warning and hope. It calls on the people to repent and turn back to God, while also offering a vision of a future redemption and restoration.

Brief description of each chapter of the Book of Joel in the Christian Bible:

Chapter 1: The first chapter of Joel describes a devastating locust plague that has struck the land of Judah, leaving it desolate and barren. Joel uses this natural disaster as a metaphor for a spiritual crisis facing the nation, and calls on the people to repent and turn back to God.

Chapter 2: In the second chapter, Joel prophesies about a future day of the Lord, when God will judge the nations and restore Israel. He describes a great army that will invade the land, but promises that God will intervene and save his people. Joel encourages the people to fast and pray in preparation for this coming day.

Chapter 3: The third and final chapter of Joel is a hymn of praise to God for his mercy and compassion. Joel describes the restoration of Judah and the punishment of their enemies. He ends with a promise of blessing for those who call on the name of the Lord.

Chapter 1 of the Book of Joel begins with a description of a devastating locust plague that has struck the land of Judah. The locusts have eaten everything in their path, leaving the land desolate and barren. The chapter opens with Joel addressing the people of Judah, calling them to pay attention to what has happened and to mourn for their losses.

Joel describes the impact of the locust plague in detail, using vivid imagery to convey the severity of the situation. He notes that the wine and grain offerings, which were an important part of the religious practices of the time, can no longer be made due to the destruction of the crops. The locusts have also damaged the trees, making it impossible to produce oil and other necessary products.

As Joel continues to describe the impact of the locust plague, he uses it as a metaphor for a larger spiritual crisis facing the nation. He tells the people that they must repent and turn back to God, or face the consequences of their sin. He warns them that if they do not repent, more disasters will come upon them.

The chapter ends with a call to action. Joel tells the people to fast and mourn, and to gather together in the house of God to pray for mercy. He promises that if they do this, God will hear their prayers and send rain to restore the land.

Overall, chapter 1 of the Book of Joel serves as a warning to the people of Judah to repent and turn back to God in the face of a natural disaster. It highlights the importance of spiritual renewal and the consequences of ignoring God's commands.

Here are some important verses from chapter 1 of the Book of Joel, along with brief explanations and their locations in the chapter:

1. Verse 4 - "What the locust swarm has left the great locusts have eaten; what the great locusts have left the young locusts have eaten; what the young locusts have left other locusts have eaten." This verse describes the devastation caused by a swarm of locusts in Judah, which is a metaphor for the coming judgment of God.
2. Verse 7 - "It has invaded my land, a mighty army without number; it has the teeth of a lion, the fangs of a lioness." This verse continues the metaphor of the locusts as an invading army, using imagery to convey their power and destructiveness.
3. Verse 13 - "Put on sackcloth, you priests, and mourn; wail, you who minister before the altar. Come, spend the night in sackcloth, you who minister before my God; for the grain offerings and drink offerings are withheld from the house of your God." This verse is a call to repentance for the priests and ministers of Judah, who are called to mourn the loss of the grain and drink offerings in the temple.
4. Verse 15 - "Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty." This verse highlights the imminent judgment of God, which will come upon the people of Judah like a destructive force.
5. Verse 19 - "To you, Lord, I call, for fire has devoured the pastures in the wilderness and flames have burned up all the trees of the field." This verse is a

plea for help from the Lord in the face of the devastating effects of the locusts and the coming judgment.

Chapter 2 of the Book of Joel begins with a call to arms. Joel prophesies about a future day of the Lord, when a great army will invade the land of Judah. He describes the army in vivid detail, using images of fire, smoke, and darkness to convey their destructive power.

Despite the apparent hopelessness of the situation, Joel promises that God will intervene to save his people. He tells them that they must gather together and call upon the name of the Lord for deliverance. If they do this, God will hear their prayers and respond with mercy.

Joel then goes on to describe the aftermath of the invasion. He tells the people that the land will be restored, and the trees and crops will once again flourish. The people of Judah will be filled with joy and gratitude for God's deliverance.

In the second half of the chapter, Joel urges the people of Judah to prepare themselves for the coming day of the Lord. He tells them to fast and pray, and to purify themselves in preparation for the great event. He promises that if they do this, God will respond with blessings and forgiveness.

Overall, chapter 2 of the Book of Joel describes a future day of the Lord when God will judge the nations and restore Israel. It emphasizes the importance of faith and trust in God in the face of seemingly overwhelming challenges. The chapter ends with a call to action, urging the people of Judah to prepare themselves for the coming day of the Lord.

Here are some important verses from chapter 2 of the Book of Joel, along with brief explanations and their locations in the chapter:

1. Verse 1 - "Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand."  
This verse is a call to alarm and repentance in the face of the impending judgment of God.
2. Verse 11 - "The Lord thunders at the head of his army; his forces are beyond number, and mighty is the army that obeys his command. The day of the Lord is great; it is dreadful. Who can endure it?" This verse describes the power and might of God's army, which will bring about the judgment of the nations.
3. Verse 13 - "Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity." This verse is a call to true repentance and turning back to God, emphasizing his character of mercy and compassion.
4. Verse 28 - "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions." This verse speaks of a future time when God will pour out his Spirit upon all people, resulting in miraculous signs and wonders.
5. Verse 32 - "And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls." This verse promises salvation to all

who call upon the name of the Lord, and emphasizes the importance of faith and obedience.

These verses can be found in chapter 2 of the Book of Joel in the Christian Bible.

Chapter 3 of the Book of Joel begins with a prophecy about the future judgment of the nations. Joel describes how God will gather all the nations to the Valley of Jehoshaphat and judge them for their sins against Israel. The chapter suggests that this judgment will take place at the end of time, and that God will restore Israel and judge its enemies. Joel then goes on to describe how God will bless Israel in the aftermath of this judgment. He promises that the land will once again be fruitful, and that God will dwell among his people. Joel also describes how God will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, resulting in miraculous signs and wonders.

In the final verses of the chapter, Joel speaks of a future day when the nations will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. He describes how God will bring peace to the nations and that all people will come to worship him in Jerusalem. Overall, chapter 3 of the Book of Joel contains a prophecy about the future judgment of the nations and the restoration of Israel. The chapter emphasizes the ultimate victory of God over his enemies and his faithfulness to his people. It ends with a vision of a future day of peace and worship in which all nations will come to know and serve the Lord.

Here are some important verses from chapter 3 of the Book of Joel, along with brief explanations and their locations in the chapter:

1. Verse 1 - "In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem." This verse refers to a time of restoration for the people of Judah and Jerusalem after the judgment of God has passed.
2. Verse 14 - "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." This verse speaks of a final judgment when the people will have to choose whether to follow God or not.
3. Verse 16 - "The Lord will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the heavens will tremble. But the Lord will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel." This verse describes the power and might of God, and emphasizes his protection and refuge for those who trust in him.
4. Verse 17 - "Then you will know that I, the Lord your God, dwell in Zion, my holy hill. Jerusalem will be holy; never again will foreigners invade her." This verse speaks of a future time when God's presence will be known in Zion, and Jerusalem will be a holy and secure city.
5. Verse 21 - "Shall I leave their innocent blood unavenged? No, I will not." This verse emphasizes God's justice and righteousness, and his commitment to holding the guilty accountable for their actions.

Notes:

The book of Joel does not contain any specific "hard to solve" or difficult questions like some other books in the Bible. However, there are some interpretive questions that scholars and readers may have when studying the book of Joel.

One such question concerns the historical context of the book. While the book of Joel mentions an invasion of locusts, a drought, and other natural disasters, it is not entirely clear when these events took place or if they are symbolic of other events. Additionally, the identity of the invading army in Joel 2:20 is not clear, and scholars have suggested various possibilities, including the Assyrians or the Babylonians.

Another interpretive question concerns the symbolic nature of the book. Some scholars believe that the locust invasion and other disasters in the book of Joel are symbolic of spiritual decline and sin among the people of Israel. Others take a more literal interpretation and see the events described in the book as actual historical events.

Finally, there is some debate over the literary structure of the book of Joel. Some scholars see the book as a unified whole, while others believe that it is made up of different sections or sources that were combined at a later time. These questions and debates are not unique to the book of Joel and are common in the study of ancient texts.