

“Major Issues in the Minor Prophets”

4) “The LORD dwelleth in Zion”

Hebrew consonants are also numbers, so Hebrew words possess numerical values. The four words for locust (Joel 1:4) work out like this (vowel points, which were not in the original, have been ignored):

Palmerworm: <i>gazam</i> : Gimel (3), Zain (7), Mem (40) – 50	The Babylonian desolation of Jerusalem & Temple 588 BC to 538 BC – 50 years
Locust: <i>arbeh</i> : Aleph (1), Resh (200), Beth (2), He (5) – 208	Persian domination 538 BC to 330 BC – 208 years
Cankerworm: <i>yelek</i> : Yod (10), Lamed (30), Koph (100) – 140	Seleucid domination 330 BC to 190 BC – 140 years (the Maccabees)
Caterpillar: <i>chesil</i> : Cheth (8), Samech (60), Yod (10), Lamed (30) – 108	Roman domination 38 BC to AD 70 – 108 years

Joel 1:4

- “The locust figure is therefore a composite designation for the ‘kingdoms of men’ (of which Daniel’s image is another) in their oppression of ‘the people of God’.”

(From *Hosea to Zephaniah*, by Brother Fred Pearce, pages 28-29)

“Then will the LORD ... pity his people” (Joel 2:18)

- “The people” (2:16) – unrepentant
- “Thy people” (2:17) – response implicit
- “His people” (2:18)
- “My people” (2:26,27; 3:2,3)

“The former rain and the latter rain” (Joel 2:23)

- “The original of this text is quite remarkable. The Hebrew reads, ‘For he hath given to you the Teacher of Righteousness, and he shall cause to descend for you a rain; a teacher and a latter rain in the first month’. This teacher hath been given in the person of Jesus; and the Father who gave him caused to descend upon the children of Zion, the saints, ‘a rain’ when on Pentecost He poured out His spirit upon the apostles and their brethren.”

“The former rain and the latter rain” (Joel 2:23)

- “This as the substitute for Jesus guided them into all the truth, and showed them things to come. Christ is ‘the Lord the Spirit’, ‘a quickening spirit’; and from him Holy spirit-rain came **in the third month**, or fifty days after the passover and crucifixion. But there is to be ‘a teacher and a latter rain **in the first month**’. That is in the month Nisan, or when the passover shall be fulfilled in the kingdom of God (Ezek. 45:21; Luke 22:15-18).”

(From “Baptism of Spirit in the Resurrection Era” in *The Faith in the Last Days* by Bro. John Thomas, pages 222,223)

“It shall come to pass afterward ...”

- Joel 2: 28-32 – quoted in Acts 2:17-21
- Note: “Afterward” (Joel 2:28) becomes “in the last days” (Acts 2:17)
- Acts 2:21 matches Joel 2:32, but Peter omits, “for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance” – no deliverance from AD 70
- **Note that “the promise” of Acts 2:39 is the promise of Joel 2:32 – deliverance.** The nation would not be saved in AD 70; salvation is possible in Christ alone (Acts 4:12)
- Cp. also Joel 2:26,27 and Rom. 5:3-5
- Cp. Joel 2:25: “I will restore to you ...” and Acts 3:21: “Until the times of restitution (RV, restoration) of all things ...”

“MY PEOPLE ... MY LAND” (JOEL 3:2)

- *Israel and its current boundaries*



“I will gather all nations” (Joel 3) (1)

- “I will make Jerusalem a lifting-stone to all the peoples, all who seek to lift her shall cut themselves in pieces” (Zech. 12:3, Rotherham).
- Zech. 14:1: “divided” swa “parted” in Joel 3:2 – judgement for the partition of Israel.
- “Prepare (AVm. *sanctify*, as in 1:14; 2:15,16) war” – a holy war against the land & people.
- Joel 3:10 – a massive rearmament campaign.

“I will gather all nations” (Joel 3) (2)

- “Mighty ones” (Joel 3:11) – The Lord who judges the nations is accompanied by “mighty ones” – the saints (Zech. 14:5).
- “Multitudes” (Joel 3:14) – Heb. *hamon* – see also Ezekiel 39:11,15,16.
- Sun, moon, stars – Joel 3:15: same language as 2:10, and similar to 2:31.
- Note 2:31: “before” – i.e. “in the face of”, “in the presence of” (same Heb. word also in 2:3,6,10,11,20). It is the “day of the LORD” that causes the crisis. Previously Israel was punished; now Gentile luminaries are abolished.

“I will gather all nations” (Joel 3) (3)



- “The LORD also shall roar out of Zion” (Joel 3:16) – an allusion to Amos’ earlier prophecy (Amos 1:2), “two years before the earthquake” in Uzziah’s reign which foreshadowed the one to come (Zech 14:4,5). This earthquake will accompany the destruction of the invader