

Jersey Shore Baptist Church

January 25, 2015; October 2, 2011

Where Is Their God?

Text – Psalm 79 (text verse 10); Joel 2:15 – 17 (text verse 17)

Introduction

Psalm 79 Context

This Psalm is attributed to Asaph who was a contemporary of David. However the events in this Psalm seem to depict the destruction of Judah by the Babylonians several hundred years after the time of Asaph and David. This must have been another Asaph, or it is possibly one of his descendants.

The main idea here is the Psalmist is pleading to God to bring victory to the people of God over their enemies.

Joel Context – not much known – believed to be written around 835 BC. The book deals in chapter one with a severe drought, and a literal invasion of locusts – many believe that v. 4 actually speaks of 4 different varieties of locusts that infested the land one right after the other.

In chapter 2, however the book seems to use the actual, literal locust invasion to picture a prophetic invading army. This is long before the time of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Romans. It is possible that this is a reference to a still yet future army that will threaten Israel. (i.e. the King of the North – Ezekiel 38:15; Daniel 11:40)

There are frequent references to “the day of the Lord in this book:

"Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come." - (Joel 1:15)

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;" - (Joel 2:1)

"And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" - (Joel 2:11)

"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come." - (Joel 2:31)

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision." - (Joel 3:14)

The day of the Lord is used throughout the Bible to represent the Millennium, including the Great Tribulation Period, and the Second Coming of Christ.

One thing is for sure – Joel is calling Israel to a national repentance. (Joel 2:12 – 14)

Transition

Just as Israel and Judah could make the world around them doubt the existence of their God, I believe that Christians today have the ability to either show people the reality of an omnipotent God in their life; or demonstrate that God doesn't exist at all.

Three Ways That We Can Show The Reality Of God In Our Lives:

I By Living Victoriously According to His Principles

1 Walk with Him

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" - (Micah 6:8)

2 Work for Him

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." - (1 Corinthians 15:57-58)

3 Weed Out the World's Influence

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you," - (2 Corinthians 6:17)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." - (1 John 2:15-17)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." - (Romans 12:1-2)

II By Loving Sacrificially His People

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." - (John 13:34 & 35)

Agape love is not a natural love – it is supernatural

Illustrate – Jon Ankerberg Show – Anton Levay’s daughter – The world, and even Satanist have a natural love.

Illustrate – Stephen

1 we are also commanded to love our enemies

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" - (Matthew 5:44)

"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." - (Luke 6:35)

2 we are also commanded to love the people of the world by giving them the gospel.

III By Lasting Finally Until He Is Present (through your death or until the rapture)

Many people that make a profession of faith in Christ don't last very long. They fizzle out after a while.

The Christian who was once zealous for the Lord – if he were to turn back – he sends a message to everyone he knows that “it” wasn't real.

Paul finished his course.

Jesus set his face like a flint and stayed the course.

Moses stayed faithful until the Lord took him.

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:" - (Acts 13:36)

Matthew 13 – The Parable of the Sower

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." - (Luke 9:62)

"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia." - (2 Timothy 4:10)

Illustrate – My brother George said that many “Born-Again” Christians are “fad – people”