

Equip: Resources on the Book of Joel

July 14, 2025

Joel is a small book of deep theological reflection. It takes up themes particular to the prophetic books and general to Scripture. Some of the themes include the day of YHWH, repentance, and God's sovereignty, compassion and justice.

Though Joel can be a formative book anytime in the church year, it is particularly instructive during Lent with the themes of repentance and God's grace.

Though there may be numerous ways to outline Joel, I find the simplest is the most effective for teaching. The book begins with a call for the community to repent (1:1-2:17) and ends with God making several promises (2:18-3:21). God promises he will turn from judgment if Israel repents, and he will judge the nations who harm Israel.

Though there is some debate among scholars on the dating of the book, it seems it is set during the Restoration Period—the era of the Jewish people's return from exile. This is due to the presence of a functional temple and because God is promising to judge those nations who sent Israel and Judah into exile.

***Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary:
The Book of the Twelve: Hosea-Jonah***

by James D. Nogalski

This two-part series on all the Minor Prophets has been the most helpful resource for me in studying the Minor Prophets.

This commentary is mostly technical but provides theological reflection along the way helpful for pastors and preachers.

Nogalski is one of the most respected scholars on the topic of the Minor Prophets, especially his way of describing how the Book of the Twelve has its own narrative arc. He explains how Joel fits into that arc in this insightful, rich commentary.

***Understanding the Bible Commentary Series: Minor Prophets I* by Elizabeth Achtemeier**

Anytime I find Elizabeth Achtemeier has written a commentary on a book of the Old Testament I am preaching from, I find a way to purchase or borrow a copy.

Achtemeier's understanding of the literary genres and historical and social settings of the Old Testament books always helps me to understand the passages I am studying better.

Though another more technical commentary, it is also accessible for preachers and pastors studying to teach Joel to their congregations.

The Lost Letters to the Twelve

***Prophets: Imagining the Minor Prophets' World* by John Goldingay**

This book is more imaginative than the first two but no less biblically and theologically astute. Goldingay imagines the other side of the conversation we read the prophet having: the voice of the congregation.

Goldingay introduces each chapter with an introduction to the prophet and then, in the form of a letter, he imagines questions the congregations may have had in response to the prophet preaching to them. His response to those questions summarizes the main message of that respective prophetic book.

Maddie Rosenblad is the pastor of Meadow Oaks Baptist Church in Temple. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Studies from the [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#), a Master of Divinity from Baylor University's [Truett Theological Seminary](#), and a Master of Theology by Research from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. The views expressed in this resource article are those of the author.