

Yoel Introduction

Yoel is the second of the Trey Asar prophets.

When Yoel ben Pesuel lived is of great debate.

According to the **Bamidbar Rabba 10:5**, as brought by Rashi in the beginning of Sefer Yoel, Yoel was actually one of the sons of Shmuel Hanavi, and is called the son of Pesuel, because he was *Pita L'el Bi'tefilaso* - his prayer was successful before Hashem. Note: **Sefer Shmuel Perek 8**, discussing Shmuel Hanavi's two children, Yoel and Aviya, relates that both Yoel and Aviya committed sins. The **Gemara in Shabbos** explains that Yoel and Aviya didn't travel throughout Yisrael to judge the nation the way their father Shmuel did, and therefore it's considered as if they sinned.

This is an amazing lesson! Yoel, the son Shmuel Hanavi, who the pasuk says sinned and did teshuva later in his life, became the great Yoel Hanavi, to be remembered for all generations! So, too, can we also do teshuva, no matter what we may have done in our lives.

Seder Hadoros brings that Yoel lived during the time of Yehoram ben Achav, which was approximately three hundred years prior to the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash.

The Living Nach explains that Yoel's prophecy about locust swarming the land came true and corresponds to what is said in Melachim II 8:1 that Elisha Hanavi prophesied that there would be a famine in Eretz Yisrael for seven years. Four consecutive years different species of locusts ravaged the land, which was followed by a drought the next three years. The prophecies contained in Yoel are the details of the famine at that time.

Taanis 5A explains that during the plague of locust the food supply in Yisrael was diminished and famine struck the land until the residents of Yisrael were reduced to eating their own children in the sixth year and actually eating their own flesh in the seventh year of the famine.

The Seder Olam brings that Yoel lived during the times of the evil king Menashe, the son of Chizkiya, which was fifty years prior to the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash, and Yoel would have been a student of Micha Hanavi. This would have made Yoel a contemporary of the great prophets Nachum and Chabakuk. **Radak** explains that the reason the evil King Menashe is not mentioned here is that he was so bad, the navi didn't want to even mention him unnecessarily.

Overview:

The first three perakim in Yoel discuss and warn the nation about the storm of locusts that will come and create a devastating famine throughout the land of Eretz Yisrael. The nation needs to do teshuva and come close to Hashem by pouring out their hearts to God and keeping Hashem's Torah.

The fourth and last perek in Yoel is about the amazing times of the final redemption when Hashem will gather His nation from all corners of the earth, start to return them to Eretz Yisrael, and rebuild Yerushalayim. Thank you Hashem, that after two thousand years of being off their land, Jews from all over the world have begun to return to Eretz Yisrael, as the beginning of the fulfillment of the words of the great prophets, including Yoel Hanavi!

A word on the greatness of Yoel Hanavi: Taanis 5A relates a story that at the end of the seventh year of the famine, when there was absolutely no food left, a little bit of rain fell in the month of Nissan, which was considered the end of the rain season. Yoel had instructed Yisrael to go out and plant their last bit of grain. This obviously did not make any sense because it was already the end of the rain season. The nation replied to Yoel that there isn't enough grain left to both eat to remain alive and to plant. Yoel reiterated his words to plant the last morsels of grain.

A miracle happened and the nation found tons of grain buried in the cracks of their walls and in holes in the ground. Then miraculously a massive amount of rain came down from the heaven and the crops grew to their full height in just eleven days!

On this Dovid Hamelech says in Tehllim 126:

הֲלֹוֹךְ יֵלֵךְ | וּבִבְהֵ נִשָּׂא מִשָּׂךְ הָרָע בָּא יָבוֹא בְרִנָּה נִשָּׂא אֶלְמִתָּיו

"The one who went out weeping, carrying his sack of seed, will return home with songs of delight, carrying his sheaves."

As Yoel deals with locusts who destroyed Eretz Yisrael, let's have in mind the return to, and rebuilding of, Eretz Yisrael, when Mashaich ben Dovid will reveal himself to the entire world, when the *nation of Am Yisrael that was cast aside will return to Eretz Yisrael with singing and dancing*, when the *one who went out weeping, carrying his sack of seed through the pain and suffering of exile will return home with songs of delight, carrying his sheaves*, with the return of the entire Am Yisrael to their Eretz Yisrael.

We will be starting perek aleph in the next shiur.

Thank you for listening.