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## The Date of Joel

The purpose of this paper<sup>1</sup> is to classify and evaluate some of the discussions of the date of Joel since the appearance of Kapelrud's *Joel Studies* in 1948.<sup>2</sup> Kapelrud's work is taken as a starting point because he broke new paths by using Ugaritic parallels and by analyzing the liturgical elements of the book. The reason for choosing this subject for the present volume is that J. M. Myers<sup>3</sup> has given a fresh approach to the dating of Joel by citing recently discovered archeological evidence. In 1962, W. Neil<sup>4</sup> summarized the opinions on Joel's date as follows: "Critics have ranged from the ninth century to the second century B.C. in seeking to determine a date for the prophecies, either as a whole or in part. The modern consensus, however, regards them as post-exilic and narrows the range of time to the period ca. 400." Though most of the scholars surveyed below do date Joel about 400 B.C. or soon thereafter, examples will be given of those who maintain earlier or later dates.

### ADVOCATES OF A PRE-EXILIC DATE

#### DURING THE MINORITY OF KING JOASH OF JUDAH, ABOUT 830 B.C.

The basic argument of J. Ridderbos<sup>5</sup> for this early date is the position of Joel in the Hebrew canon as the second of the Minor Prophets. It is not certain, however, that the order of the Minor Prophets in the Hebrew Bible is chronological throughout; for example, Zephaniah certainly prophesied about a century before Nahum and Habbakuk, which precede Zephaniah in order. Furthermore, the LXX lists Joel as the fourth of these prophets. Ridderbos sees the background of 3 [4]: 19 in Shishak's invasion (1 Kings

14: 25) and in Edom's revolt against Joram (2 Kings 8: 20). Since this Egyptian and Edomite hostility to the Israelites could be remembered after the exile and was actually continued after the exile, it is therefore no proof of a pre-exilic date. Ridderbos explains the failure to mention any king in Joel by suggesting that Joash was still a minor and Jehoida was really reigning. In 2 Kings 11: 21 [12: 1]; 12: 1 [2] and 2 Chron 24: 1, the reign of Joash, beginning in his seventh year, is treated like any other reign. The absence of the reigning king's name in the introduction of Joel is still contrary to the analogy of the introductions mentioning the king in most prophetic books during the monarchy Is 1: 1; Jer 1: 1-2; Ezek 1: 2; Hos 1: 1; Amos 1: 1; Mic 1: 1; Zeph 1: 1). Even stronger evidence that Joel prophesied after the monarchy had ceased is the absence of king, princes, nobles, and royal officials from Joel's lists of those classes who mourn the devastation caused by the locusts (1: 5-14; 2: 16). If Joel had prophesied about 830 B.C., a reference to the high priest Jehoiada would also be expected, since the latter would presumably have issued the call to public repentance and since he was even more important than the Joshua mentioned in Hag 1: 1, 12, 14; and Zech 3: 1-8. Ridderbos rightly recognizes that 3 [4]: 2-3 sound like some destruction of Jerusalem. He identifies the attackers as either the Chaldeans or (if it is predictive) the Romans. He suggests that this passage may be predictive (which is certainly not to be expected from the Hebrew perfects) or a later addition. A simpler solution is to understand this passage as referring to the capture of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., which had already taken place when Joel prophesied.

M. Bič<sup>6</sup> uses Ugaritic parallels to support dating Joel in the time of Joash. He interprets Joel's prophecy as a polemic against Baalism. He sees in 1: 8 a reference to the Ugaritic myth of Anat weeping for the dead Baal, and in 2: 9 a reference to the Ugaritic myth of Mot entering the temple of Baal. The context of the first passage lists those who mourn the locust plague, and the context of the second is a description of the coming of the locusts to the city. These contexts hardly prepare for mythological references. If the book is a polemic against Baalism, one would expect clear references to Baal, to idols, to idolatrous altars, to the high places, to idolatrous rites, or to idol priests. These features of idolatry are clearly denounced by pre-exilic prophets (e.g., Hos 2: 8 [11]; 4: 13; 9: 10; Jer 2: 8; 7: 9; 19: 5), and the absence of such denunciations is a probable indication of origin after the exile, when idolatry had practically ceased among the Jews. Bič speaks of parallels to Elijah and Hosea, but closer are the parallels to later prophets, including exilic Ezekiel, Joel 2: 28 [3: 1] = Ezek 39: 29; Joel 3 [4]: 17 = Ezek 36: 11; Joel 3 [4]: 18 = Ezek 47: 1-12) and post-exilic Malachi, Joel 2: 11 = Mal 3: 2; Joel 2: 31 [3: 4] = Mal 4: 5 [3: 23].

E. J. Young<sup>7</sup> recognizes some of the arguments for a post-exilic date but upholds a pre-exilic date under Joash. One of Young's arguments, in addition to those mentioned above, is that the style of Joel is different from that of post-exilic Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. But from the post-exilic standpoint, since Joel borrowed phrases from pre-exilic prophets, it is not surprising that he equals the vivid poetic style of some of them in his description of the locust plague. Young thinks that it was Joel that influenced Amos in the parallels (Joel 3 [4]: 16 = Amos 1: 2; Joel 3 [4]: 18 = Amos 9: 13). Recently H. W. Wolff<sup>8</sup> has given reasons for thinking that Amos influenced Joel. Young recognizes that "Israel" in Joel is a synonym for "Judah," and he maintains, without giving examples, that such a usage is proper before the exile. There are, however, many clear pre-exilic examples where "Israel" definitely means the Northern Kingdom (e.g., 1 Kings 12: 16; 15: 9; Amos 1: 1; 2: 6). The most obvious conclusion from Joel's use of "Israel" is that the Northern Kingdom had ceased to exist. Young says that there was no occasion for Joel to mention the "high places." The call to repentance in 2: 12-13 would have been a suitable occasion to denounce the "high places," if they really existed in Judah in Joel's day. Pre-exilic prophets denounced the "high places," which were associated with idolatry (Jer 7: 31; 19: 5; Ezek 6: 3; Hos 10: 8); but Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi do not mention them after the exile, when they had ceased to be used by the Jews.

D. Deere<sup>9</sup> favors a pre-exilic date under Joash. He rightly points out that the phrase in Joel 3 [4]: 1 translated in KJV, "I shall bring again the captivity," can be correctly interpreted, "I restore the fortunes" (RSV, and similarly JB, NEB, NAB). In this context, however, this meaning could well include return from the exile. About Joel 3 [4]: 4-6, Deere remarks that these verses refer to the events described in Obadiah, who he evidently thinks is pre-exilic. G. H. Livingston,<sup>10</sup> however, writing in the same volume with Deere, concludes that the capture of Jerusalem mentioned by Obadiah is that of 587 B.C. No known capture of Jerusalem before this date produced the scattering of the Jews and the dividing of their land described by Joel 3 [4]: 2. Deere observes that Phoenicia and Philistia were pre-exilic enemies of Judah, but, it should be noted, they were also post-exilic enemies.

R. A. Stewart<sup>11</sup> argued plausibly that a reference to making ploughshares into swords (3 [4]: 10), would probably precede the hope of the reverse process (cf Is 2: 4). In the same year, L. H. Brockington<sup>12</sup> argued that Joel here parodies the earlier expression of Is 2: 4 and Mic 4: 3.

## ABOUT 600 B.C.

A. S. Kapelrud brought fresh elements into Joel studies by using Ugaritic parallels and by arguing for a date of the original prophecy about 600 B.C., then a period of oral transmission, and writing in its present form in the fourth or third century. Kapelrud's strongest argument for a date about 600 B.C. consists in Joel's parallels with Jeremiah. Joel does have such parallels; but it also has, as pointed out above, striking parallels with exilic Ezekiel and post-exilic Malachi. Kapelrud's contention that Joel did not consciously copy other prophets but used common expressions may be right in some cases; but in 2: 32 [3: 5], Joel expressly states that he is quoting, probably from Obad 17, and most scholars consider Obadiah post-exilic. Kapelrud suggests the possibility that Joel 3 [4]: 2, with its reference to the scattering of the Jews and the dividing of their land, may be a post-exilic addition. This verse, however, fits with other features of the capture of the city in 3 [4]: 2-6, 17: the taking and selling of slaves, the plundering of the Temple, and the occupation of Jerusalem by foreigners.

J. Steinmann<sup>13</sup> was influenced by Kapelrud to advocate also a date about 600 B.C. In addition to noting similarities in Joel to Jeremiah, Steinmann points out that Joel's phrase "the day of Yahweh" (1: 15; 2: 1, 11, 31 [3: 4]; 3 [4]: 14) also occurs in pre-exilic Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Advocates of a post-exilic date can point out that the expression also occurs in post-exilic Zech 14: 1, and that "the day" for the time of judgment is often found in Zechariah and Malachi. Steinmann frankly admits that 3 [4]: 1, 3, 7 must come after the fall of Jerusalem, but he thinks that these verses are later additions to an essentially pre-exilic Joel. But it is difficult to take these verses away from their context with vss 2, 6, and 17, which also imply the fall of Jerusalem. It is simpler to leave these verses in place and recognize that the prophecy is post-exilic.

C. A. Keller<sup>14</sup> places the ministry of Joel between 630 and 600 B.C., and he adduces careful and comprehensive arguments. Because no mighty empire is mentioned, Keller places 3 [4]: 1-8 after the decline of Assyria and before the rise of Babylonia and Persia—that is, between 630 and 625 B.C. An advocate of a post-exilic date could point out that the dominant Persian empire is not mentioned in post-exilic Malachi, except by implication in the reference to the governor (Mal 1: 8), and Joel may come from the same period of benevolent Persian administration. Keller associates 3 [4]: 19 with Pharaoh Neco's invasion of Palestine and killing of Josiah in 609 B.C. It may well be that this Egyptian invasion was the attack or one of the attacks referred to by the prophet, but it cannot be assumed that the prophecy was delivered immediately after the attack. The people

of the Near East have long historical memories. Keller interprets 3 [4]: 1-3 as referring to raids by the Philistines and Phoenicians. However, the scattering of the Jews and the dividing of their land imply something more serious than raids. Furthermore, Joel does not accuse the Philistines and the Phoenicians of an attack on Judah, but only of receiving plunder and selling Jewish slaves (3 [4]: 5, 6). Keller rightly maintains that the style of Joel is not like that of post-exilic Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, Esther, and Daniel, but, with the exception of some portions of Ecclesiastes, these are prose works and Joel is mostly poetry. Keller's opinion that a message for the people after the days of Nehemiah would have been in Aramaic is controverted by the composition of Sirach in Hebrew about 190 B.C. Keller gives a careful list of Joel's words and expressions which are also found in prophets of the later seventh and early sixth centuries. This is not surprising in a prophet who has so many parallels to other prophetic books of all periods. One must also consider Joel's words and phrases which are found elsewhere only in post-exilic writings (see below).

W. Rudolph<sup>15</sup> gives justified criticisms of some of the arguments used for a post-exilic dating, and opts for a date soon after the Chaldeans took Jerusalem in 597 B.C. without destroying it. Rudolph is right in using the analogy of Jer 26 and 36 to prove that the gathering of the people in the forecourt of the Temple (Joel 2: 16) does not necessarily mean every single member even of a small community. He considers Joel as one of the prophets of peace rather than of judgment for Jerusalem who are condemned by Jeremiah (Jer 28). It is questionable, however, whether a prophet of peace would have interpreted the locust plague and the drought as God's judgment on Israel calling for repentance. With Rudolph's dating, it is strange that Joel does not specifically mention the Chaldeans, as Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel do. Rudolph argues that Joel would have referred to the destruction of the Temple if this event connected with the capture of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. had already taken place. Joel 3[4]:5 seems to imply that the Temple had been looted and therefore presumably destroyed. Rudolph thinks that Joel 2: 11, 31 [3: 4] precede the parallels in Mal 3: 2; 4: 5 [3: 23], but recently G. F. Wood<sup>16</sup> has argued to the contrary.

## EXILIC DATING

## SOON AFTER 587 B.C.

L. Mariès<sup>17</sup> is strongly influenced by Kapelrud, and places Joel shortly after the fall of Jerusalem to the Chaldeans. He considers Joel a contemporary of Ezekiel, because of the resemblances between the two prophets. For a later date, Joel's parallels to post-exilic Malachi can again be cited. Mariès

envisions Joel as prophesying in Jerusalem to the remaining Jews who had not gone into exile. A difficulty for Mariès's dating is that the Temple was destroyed by the Chaldeans in 587 B.C., but Joel implies an intact, standing Temple in which sacrifice was being offered (1: 9, 13; 2: 17).

#### POST-EXILIC DATING

##### POST-EXILIC, BUT NO SPECIFIC DATES

The first of L. H. Brockington's arguments (cf n. 12) for a post-exilic date is that the Jews have been scattered in exile (3 [4]: 2).

W. T. Smith and J. Mauchline<sup>18</sup> list the main arguments for a post-exilic date: 1) The Northern Kingdom—Israel—is not mentioned. Israel has become a synonym for Judah (2: 27; 3 [4]: 16). 2) There is no mention of royalty or aristocracy. 3) The Temple (1: 9, 13, 14, 16; 2: 17; 3 [4]: 5 and its ritual (1: 9, 13; 2: 14) are regarded as very important elements of religion, in contrast to pre-exilic prophets who criticized ritualism. 4) The call to repentance (2: 12) does not mention the specific sins denounced by pre-exilic prophets: idolatry, formalism, sensuality, and oppression. 5) The foreign peoples mentioned (Phoenicians, Philistines, Egyptians, Edomites, Greeks, and Sabeans) do not include the Assyrians or the Chaldeans, which pre-exilic prophets mention. 6) A national catastrophe has occurred; the people of Yahweh are scattered, and the land of Yahweh has been divided among foreigners (3 [4]: 2). 7) There are at least twenty-seven parallels to other Old Testament writings, and it is likely that in some of these Joel was the borrower. 8) The vocabulary of the prophet is late, including such Aramaisms as *'ly*, "lament" (1: 8), and *swp*, "rear" (2: 20).

O. Eissfeldt<sup>19</sup> places 1: 1–2: 27 in the post-exilic period, but does not further specify the date. He notes the failure to mention the royal court and the Aramaisms in Joel. He also argues that the daily offering in the Temple (1: 9; 2: 14) indicates a post-exilic date. As Kapelrud (on 1: 9) points out, 1 Kings 18: 29 and 2 Kings 3: 20 show that the daily offerings were already practiced in pre-exilic times.

##### ABOUT 520 OR 500 B.C.

J. M. Myers, in his commentary on Joel (1959) and more fully in his article of 1962 (see n. 3) on the dating of Joel, has argued for a date about 520 B.C. One of the important contributions of Myers' study is the use of archeological evidence from the ancient Near East.

Myers has assembled a wealth of archeological evidence for Greek commercial relations with the Near East from the eighth century onward. After Myers' study, it should be unnecessary to say, as did L. H. Brockington

(see n. 12), without the benefit of seeing Myers' evidence, that the selling of Jews to the Greek (3 [4]: 6) was unlikely before the fourth century, "when Greek contact with Palestine began." Myers argues that the prediction of selling Tyrian and Philistine slaves to the Sabeans points to the sixth century rather than to the fifth or fourth century, when the leadership in South Arabia passed to the Mineans. On the other hand, the Sabeans had been known to the Israelites since the time of Solomon, and Sabean royal inscriptions,<sup>20</sup> published since Myers wrote, show that the Sabean kingdom continued in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., and even into the fifth century A.D.

Myers argues that Joel 2: 7, 9, referring to Jerusalem's wall, may be dated before Nehemiah. The book of Nehemiah, however, states that before Nehemiah's repairs the wall of Jerusalem was broken down (1: 3; 2: 13), and so locusts could have come through the breaches (Neh 4: [1] 7) without scaling the wall (Joel 2: 7). Therefore a date after Nehemiah's restoration of the wall in 445 B.C. seems more likely. Haggai and Zechariah make many references to Zerubbabel and Joshua, and it is strange that Joel does not mention these leaders, even in the lists of all the classes who join in the mourning, if he also prophesied about 520 B.C. Also in 520 B.C., the Temple was not yet completed, but Joel implies that the vestibule and the Temple have been standing for some time (1: 13, 14, 16; 2: 17). One reason that Myers prefers a date early in the post-exilic period is that he wants to bring the references to the fall of Jerusalem closer to the time of the event in 587 B.C. The memory of great events like the Exodus and the fall of Jerusalem remained, and still remains, fresh among the Jews. Therefore prophetic comment on such events long after their occurrence is not surprising.

Myers gives a careful analysis of similarities in the religious situation in Joel and in Haggai-Zechariah; these similarities help to establish a post-exilic date for Joel. Attention should be called, however, to some significant differences in the temper of religious life reflected in Haggai-Zechariah and in Joel. Myers rightly says that in Haggai-Zechariah, the priest and prophet joined to reestablish the religious community. In Joel, on the other hand, the religious community is already established, and the priests are in full control of the religious life. Hag 1: 9–11 chides the people for their indifference to the Temple; but in Joel, the people are much concerned with reestablishing regular sacrifices after they have been interrupted by the locusts and the drought (1: 13, 16; 2: 14). Probably between the people's indifference to the cult shown in Haggai and Mal 1: 1–14 and the people's zeal for the cult shown in Joel came the reforming activities of Ezra and Nehemiah and the reestablishment of religious law.

D. R. Jones<sup>21</sup> gives good arguments for a post-exilic dating, and places Joel about or soon after 500 B.C. He puts Joel after the completion of the Temple in 516 B.C. and after Haggai and Zechariah, because Joel shows a concern for the Temple similar to theirs. Joel, he suggests, came before the popular laxity in sacrifice denounced in Mal 1: 1-14. It is more likely that Joel, who reflects popular zeal for proper sacrifices, came after Malachi and after the religious reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah.

#### ABOUT 400-350 B.C.

T. H. Robinson<sup>22</sup> briefly adduces arguments for a post-exilic dating of Joel, and places Joel 1: 1-2: 27 not before the fourth century B.C.

T. Chary<sup>23</sup> votes for a date about 400 B.C. He criticizes some of Kapelrud's use of Ugaritic material, pointing out that some Hebrew cultic terms similar to Ugaritic were used by the Israelites long before any of the dates suggested for Joel. Therefore Joel's use of these terms does not prove a pre-exilic date. Chary thinks that Kapelrud underestimates the force of Joel's parallels to exilic and post-exilic prophets. For example, Joel's "I am the Lord your God and there is none else" (2: 27) is almost certainly a reflection of one of the dominant themes of Deutero-Isaiah (Is 45: 5, 18, 22; 46: 9), and Joel 2: 11, 31 [3: 4] probably derive from Mal 3: 2; 4: 5 [3: 23].

J. A. Thompson<sup>24</sup> adds the following to the items already given as bearing on the date of Joel: 1) The reference to Sidon as yet to be judged (3 [4]: 4) argues for a time before 345 B.C., when Artaxerxes III Ochus destroyed the city and sold its inhabitants into slavery (so Diodorus Siculus, XIV.45). 2) The omission of any mention of Persia, as in Malachi, may indicate a time during the benevolent Persian administration before Artaxerxes III's expedition in 345 B.C. suppressed revolts in Syria. 3) Another late word used by Joel is *šlh*, "weapon" (2: 8, and elsewhere in 2 Chron 23: 10; Neh 4: 17, 23 [4: 11, 17]; Job 33: 18; 36: 12). 4) In a full treatment of Joel's parallels to other prophets, Thompson points out that variations of the expression "and you shall know that I am the Lord your God" occur over fifty times in Ezekiel, and therefore Joel 3 [4]: 17 is probably the borrower and is post-exilic. 5) Since both Obadiah and Malachi, whom Joel seems to quote (see above), come probably from the mid-fifth century, allowing time for Obadiah and Malachi to be accepted would likely place Joel about 400 B.C. at the earliest.

J. Bourke<sup>25</sup> agrees with Chary in dating Joel about 400 B.C. Bourke thinks that Joel's eschatology was influenced by Amos, Jeremiah, Deuteronomy, and also exilic Ezekiel.

J. Trinquet<sup>26</sup> states the main arguments to establish a date for Joel in the period 400 to 350 B.C.

W. Neil (see n. 4) gives an excellent list of reasons for a post-exilic date at the end of the fifth or the beginning of the fourth century.

E. G. H. Kraeling (1966)<sup>27</sup> dates Joel 1: 1-2: 27 late in the Persian period—that is, in the fourth century.

A. Weiser<sup>28</sup> places Joel after Nehemiah, at the earliest about 400 B.C.

G. F. Wood (see n. 16) gives strong and comprehensive reasons for dating Joel between 400 and 350 B.C. He rightly points out that the reference to the Greeks as far away and as buyers of slaves, not conquerors, requires a date before the battle of Issus in 333 B.C., after which Alexander began his conquests of Syria-Palestine.

R. K. Harrison<sup>29</sup> recognizes the difficulties of dating Joel, and tends to favor a post-exilic date, somewhat before 400 B.C. Most scholars would agree with his conclusion for a post-exilic dating, but they would disagree with his concession that no element of Joel's thought is incompatible with a pre-exilic date. Joel's zeal for the cult, his eschatology, and his exclusiveness fit into the religious pattern of the post-exilic rather than of the pre-exilic period.

F. R. Stephenson<sup>30</sup> uses astronomy to support a post-exilic date for Joel. Stephenson assumes that Joel 2: 31 [3: 4] and 3 [4]: 15, mentioning the darkening of the sun, refer to an eclipse that had recently taken place. He finds that between 1130 B.C. and 300 B.C. there were only two total eclipses visible in Jerusalem: on February 29, 357 B.C. and July 4, 336 B.C. The eclipse of 763 B.C., probably referred to in Amos 8: 9, was only partial in Israel, and there was an eclipse in 402 B.C., which was total in Galilee, not Jerusalem. Stephenson is probably right that Joel's references to the darkening of the sun were influenced by eclipses. It should be noted, however, that Joel predicts the darkening of the sun as a future sign of the day of the Lord, and that Isaiah also refers to the darkening of the sun as a sign of God's judgment (Is 13: 10; 24: 23; 50: 3). Therefore we cannot be sure that Joel was directly influenced by an eclipse which he himself saw.

H. W. Wolff (see n. 8) gives careful and logical arguments for dating Joel after Nehemiah's rebuilding of the wall in 445 B.C. (Joel 2: 7, 9) and before Artaxerxes III's destruction of Sidon about 345 B.C. He would place the ministry of Joel in the first half of the fourth century B.C. Wolff suggests that Joel is before Amos in the Hebrew canon, not for chronological reasons but because of the literary parallels: Joel 3 [4]: 16 = Amos 1: 2; Joel 3 [4]: 18 = Amos 9: 13. He also points out that the LXX order making Joel the fourth of the Minor Prophets brings together three prophecies which are not dated in the headings: Joel, Obadiah, and Jonah. To Joel's words with only post-exilic parallels, Wolff adds *šhnh*, "foul smell" (2: 20, elsewhere Sir 11: 12, Heb).

R. A. Cole<sup>31</sup> agrees with a date about 400 B.C.

## LATE FOURTH OR THIRD CENTURIES

T. H. Robinson (see n. 22) dates Joel 2: 28-3: 21 [3: 1-4: 21] in the third century. He suggests that 3 [4]: 2 may reflect the carrying away of Jews into captivity by Artaxerxes III in 344 B.C., but such a date is incompatible with the address to Sidon, 3 [4]: 4, which Artaxerxes' army destroyed in 345 B.C. Robinson is certainly right that this part of Joel precedes the Seleucid control of Palestine (beginning in 198 B.C.), because in 3 [4]: 6 the Greeks are not yet conquerors. The Greek conquests, however, took place in the latter part of the fourth century, and a third century dating of this part of Joel is therefore eliminated.

M. Treves<sup>32</sup> argues for a date soon after 312 B.C. He gives nine of the arguments mentioned above for the general post-exilic dating of Joel. Treves further proposes that 3 [4]: 2, 3, 19 refer to Ptolemy I Soter's capture of Jerusalem in 312 B.C. and the deportation of Jewish captives to Egypt as described by Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities*, XII, ch. 1). Treves associates this capture with Ptolemy's second occupation of Palestine in 312 B.C., but it should be noted that some associate it with his first occupation of Palestine in 320 B.C. (see Kraeling below). There are several difficulties with Treves' dating. In the first place, Joel does not state or even imply that it was Egypt that scattered the Jews and divided their land (3 [4]: 2). Furthermore, as Jones points out (see n. 21), the Greeks in 3 [4]: 6 are far-away people who buy Jewish slaves through the Phoenicians and the Philistines, not present conquerors who take Jewish slaves for themselves directly, as Ptolemy did. With this dating, Alexander had already taken Sidon and Tyre and had killed or enslaved the people of Tyre, and a reference to future punishment for these two cities becomes difficult (3 [4]: 4-8). Egypt's shedding innocent Jewish blood (3 [4]: 19) could refer to Pharaoh Neco's victory over Judah and killing of Josiah in 609 B.C., an event which was still lamented by the Jews in post-exilic times (2 Chron 35: 25).

G. M. Rinaldi<sup>33</sup> suggests that Joel prophesied at the end of the Persian period or, better, at the beginning of the Greek period. As pointed out above, the reference to Sidon (3 [4]: 4) disagrees with such a late dating, and the reference to the faraway Greeks (3 [4]: 6) cannot be squared with a date after Alexander's conquests. Rinaldi gives a valuable critical survey of some recent writers on the date of Joel (Kapelrud, Treves, Chary, Bourke).

O. Eissfeldt (see n. 19) places Joel 2: 28-3: 21 [3: 1-4: 21] in the fourth or third century. Arguments against a late fourth or third century dating are given above.

E. G. H. Kraeling's (see n. 21) dating of Joel 2: 28-3: 21 [3: 1-4: 21] about 300 B.C. is open to the objections given above. Kraeling thinks that

the enslavement of the Jews and the partitioning of their land (3 [4]: 2-6) took place in connection with Ptolemy I Soter's first occupation of Palestine.

After considering the above variety of opinion on the date of Joel, some may be tempted to agree with the medieval Jewish commentator Ibn Ezra, who said that we have no way of knowing Joel's time. Although a few uphold a pre-exilic date, and—at the opposite extreme—a few date Joel in the Greek period, the majority of scholars in the past twenty years place Joel in the post-exilic period. Even those who disagree with Kapelrud's conclusion will agree with his principle: "Only a collective view of the whole, particularly against the religio-historical background, can constitute a foundation for the placing of Joel in history."<sup>34</sup> If one considered the factor of vigorous poetic style alone, one might place Joel in the pre-exilic period. All factors considered—the historical allusions, the religious situation, the vocabulary, and the parallels which probably influenced Joel—have led most recent scholars to date Joel between 400 and 350 B.C.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> I thank my colleague S. L. Morris for some of the items used below. When the book is not cited with the Scripture references, it is the book of Joel. Scripture references are given according to the chapter divisions in the RSV and most English translations, and when the Hebrew chapter or verse differs, then the reference in Hebrew is in square brackets. (In Joel, the difference in chapter divisions is as follows: RSV 2: 28-32 = Heb 3: 1-5; RSV 3: 1-21 = Heb 4: 1-21.)

<sup>2</sup> A. S. Kapelrud, *Joel Studies* (Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift, 1948: 4), Uppsala: A. B. Lundequista Bokhandeln, 1948; on date of Joel, see pp. 181-92.

<sup>3</sup> J. M. Myers, *Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah* (*The Layman's Bible Commentary*, 14), Richmond: John Knox Press, 1959; on date of Joel, see pp. 72-73; "Some Considerations Bearing on the Date of Joel," in *ZAW* 74 (1962), 177-95.

<sup>4</sup> W. Neil, "Joel, Book of," in *IDB*, ed. G. A. Buttrick, Vol. II, New York: Abingdon, 1962, pp. 926-29; on date, see p. 928.

<sup>5</sup> J. Ridderbos, *Hosea, Joel, Amos*, in *De kleine Propheten*, Vol. I (*Korte Verklaring der Heilige Schrift*), Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1952; on date of Joel, see pp. 122-26.

<sup>6</sup> M. Bič, *Das Buch Joel*, Berlin: Evangelische Verlaganstalt, 1960; on date of Joel, see pp. 9, 106-8.

<sup>7</sup> E. J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, rev. ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1960; on date of Joel, see pp. 271-73.

<sup>8</sup> H. W. Wolff, *Dodekapropheten 2 Joel und Amos* (*BKAT*, XIV, 2), Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969; on date of Joel, see pp. 2-4.

<sup>9</sup> D. Deere, "Joel," in *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, eds. C. F. Pfeiffer, E. F. Harrison, Chicago: Moody Press, 1962; on date of Joel, see p. 819.

<sup>10</sup> G. H. Livingston, "Obadiah," in *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, ed. C. F. Pfeiffer, E. F. Harrison, Chicago: Moody Press, 1962, p. 839.

<sup>11</sup> R. A. Stewart, "Joel, Book of," in *The New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas, London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1962, pp. 638-39.

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