

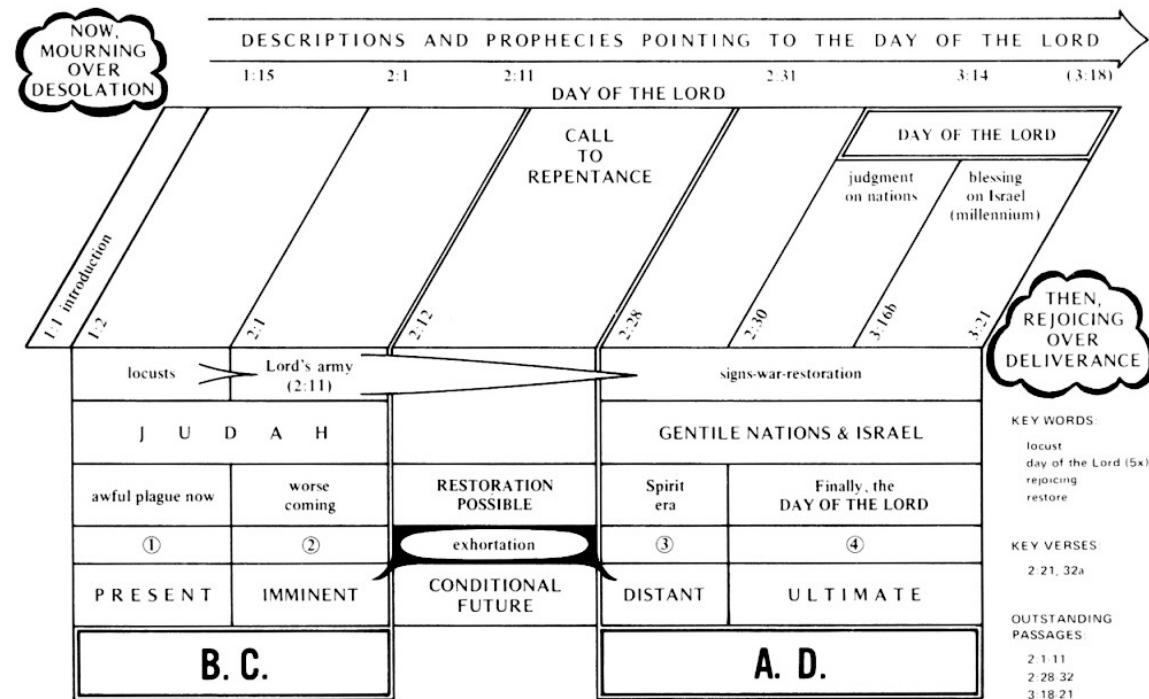
# Joel 3 Commentary

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission

[Joel Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

[Another Joel Chart](#)

- [John MacArthur's Introduction to Book of Joel](#)
- [Chuck Swindoll's Introduction to the Book of Joel](#)

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**AUTHOR:** Joel

**DATE:** 835 B.C.

### OUTLINE OF JOEL

- I. Title Verse: the Author, Joel 1:1
  - II. Desolation, Joel 1:2-Joel 2:17
    - A. The Character of the Desolation, Joel 1:2-12
    - B. The Reactions to the Desolation, Joel 1:13-14
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  - III. Deliverance, Joel 2:18-Joel 3:21
    - A. The Promise of Immediate Deliverance, Joel 2:18-27
    - B. The Promise of Future Deliverance, Joel 2:28-Joel 3:21
      1. Its initiation, Joel 2:28-32
      2. Its judgments, Joel 3:1-17
      3. Its consummation, Joel 3:18-21
- (Ryrie Study Bible)

**Joel 3:1 "For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,**

- **in those days and at that time:** Joel 2:29 Da 12:1 Zep 3:19,20
- **when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem:** Dt 30:3 2Chr 6:37,38 Ps 14:7 85:1 Isa 11:11-16 Jer 16:15 23:3-8 Jer 29:14 30:3,18 Eze 16:53 37:21,22 38:14-18 39:25,28,29 Am 9:14

### IN THOSE DAYS AND AT THAT TIME: RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

Joel 3:1-8 begins with a promise of restoration and then proceeds to a legal scene in which God produces evidence against the nations which will result in their judgment. As you read Joel 3 keep in mind that this climactic judgment scene describes the events that will take place in the "terminal generation," the divine climax which will take place in the last of the last days of this present evil age (Gal 1:4-note) in which we are living and which will bring in the new age in which Messiah reigns from Mt Zion in Jerusalem. As someone has well said "**Israel is God's timepiece.**" In other words, the major events in God's plan for the ages in some way involve the little nation of Israel. It behooves us therefore to keep one eye first on the Scriptures describing God's sovereign plan and another eye on Israel who He will use to work out His perfect plan of redemption. And so fittingly Joel 3 describes the climactic events in world history beginning with God's promise to restore "the apple of His eye" (Dt 32:10KJV), the nation of Israel.

Joel 3 God's Judgment of the Nations

- The timing - When God restores Israel - Joel 3:1
- The place - Valley of Jehoshaphat - Joel 3:2
- The reasons - Mistreatment and Exploitation of Israel - Joel 3:3-6
- The recompense - Joel 3:7-8

**POSB** - When the final, climactic Day of the LORD comes to earth, one of the events will be the terrifying judgment of the nations. But the story of human history does not end with judgment. God promises a glorious, eternal kingdom to His people. Both Jews and Gentiles—all who truly place their faith in the LORD and genuinely follow Him—will inherit the kingdom of God. His kingdom will be established on earth when the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, returns to earth. These are the two great events Joel uses to close his great book. This is, The Final Climactic Day of the LORD: God's Judgment of the Nations and His Promise of a Glorious, Eternal Kingdom, Joel 3:1–21. The present Scripture gives a detailed account of God's coming judgment of the nations:

1. God's judgment of the nations (Joel 3:1–16).
2. God's promise of a glorious, eternal kingdom (Joel 3:17–21). ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible Commentary](#))

**Charles Feinberg** introduces Joel 3 - No prophet of the Old Testament has a more important revelation of the end times than the one now before us in the third chapter. How gracious of God to let us know the exact time of these happenings. They will take place when the Lord Himself returns the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem. The return of Israel to the land will never be fully accomplished until the Lord does it by His omnipotent power. (Note Jer 23:1-8.) At the time of God's regathering of Israel to the land, He will gather all nations into the Valley of Jehoshaphat to judgment. The prophet evidently has in mind the historical narrative in 2 Chronicles 20. Tradition has assigned the judgment to the Kidron Valley; though this tradition is only from Eusebius' time (fourth century AD on), there are those who believe it to be correct. The site indicated must be in or near Jerusalem. The method of God's gathering of the nations to the judgment is set forth in Joel 3:9-12. (Cp. also Zech 12:1-3, 9; Zech 14:2-4; Is 29:1-8.) One of the most important features of the judgment is the basis of it: the nations will be judged for God's people and for His heritage. The great sin of the nations—all will be involved in it in the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer 30:7)—is that against Israel. Little do the nations realize how they incur the wrath of God when they lay violent hands upon His heritage and the plant of His choosing. He will not suffer it always. Joel shows the day of reckoning has come. (The Minor Prophets)

**Gilliland** writes that "Associated with the coming day of the Lord will be an international tribunal. This court will not be a forum for the vindication of human rights. It will be convened to establish divine rights. Under review will be the attitudes and actions of Gentile nations in relation to God's covenant people Israel. This will be the day of reckoning for the enemies of God's people. In a sense this chapter forms the climax of the book. The same God who brought the swarms of locusts in the earlier parts of the book is the God who will bring the Gentile nations together. Just as those locusts devastated the land so will the invasion of the future Gentile hordes have a devastating effect upon it. Similarly, as the Lord supernaturally destroyed the locust plague, so will He judge the nations. After the plague there was the restoration of the years the locusts had eaten, and after this judgment the land will be brought to abundant fruit and prosperity. In this way the two apparently disparate parts of Joel are brought together with the events in one part foreshadowing what will take place at a later date, only on a larger scale. ([What the Bible Teaches – Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah](#))

**Gilliland** has the following outline of Joel 3:1-17 A Day of Retribution

- The Setting of the Judgment (Joel 3:1-2b)
- The Sins requiring Judgment (Joel 3:2c-8)
- The Summons to Judgment (Joel 3:9-12)
- The Sentence of Judgment (Joel 3:13-17).

**For** (because)(Hebrew ki) is a [term of explanation](#). God is explaining how this restoration will come about **in those days and at that time**.

**Keil and Delitzsch** elaborates on this explanation - The description of the judgment-day predicted in Joel 2:31-note commences with an explanatory כִּי. (transliterated as ki') The train of thought is the following: When the [Day of the Lord](#) comes, there will be deliverance upon Zion only for those who call upon the name of the Lord; for then will all the heathen nations that have displayed hostility to Jehovah's inheritance be judged in the valley of Jehoshaphat.

**Pusey on for** - The prophet by the for shows that he is about to explain in detail what he had before spoken of in sum.

**For behold, in those days and at that time**- This double mode of expression, employed to give greater prominence to the period. Joel immediately grabs the reader's attention with **BEHOLD!** What follows is of great import. In fact what follows summarizes the judgment of the world as we know it, so it is worthy reading with utmost attention. In the last days, God will arouse Jews from all around the world to return to the promised land of Israel. In that day, the ancient promise of God will be fulfilled, the promise that He would personally return the Jews to their homeland (Dt. 30:3). Still, after they return, all will not be well. A period of [Great Tribulation](#), a time known as [Time of Jacob's Distress](#), will come upon the earth (Jer 30:7-note; Da. 12:1-note; Am. 5:18–20). **In those days and at that time** will take place in the LAST of **the last days**. The **last days** begin with Jesus' first coming (see Hebrews 1:2-note, cf Acts 2:17, 2Ti 3:1-note, 1Pe 1:20-note)

**Lange's** commentary on **behold** -By the word **behold**, he stirs up our minds for something great, which he is to set before our eyes, and which we should not be prepared to expect or believe.

**Behold** ([02009](#))([hinneh](#)) is an interjection meaning behold, look, now; if. "It is used often and expresses strong feelings, surprise, hope, expectation, certainty, thus giving vividness depending on its surrounding context." (Baker) **Hinneh** generally directs our mind to the text, imploring the reader to give it special attention. In short, the Spirit is trying to arrest our attention! And so **hinneh** is used as an exclamation of vivid immediacy (e.g., read Ge 6:13)!

**Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in

Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

**Hinneh** is translated in the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) with the interjection **idou** (strictly speaking a command in the second person [aorist imperative, middle voice](#)) a demonstrative particle (used 1377 times in the Septuagint and NT) which is found especially in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke "and giving a peculiar vivacity to the style by bidding the reader or hearer to attend to what is said: **"Behold! See! Lo!"** (Thayer) The command is calling for urgent attention. Do this now! Don't delay! It could be loosely paraphrased "Pay attention!" or "Listen up!" to arouse attention and introduce a new and extraordinary fact of considerable importance.

**Keil and Delitzsch on In those days and at that time** - The notice as to the time points back to the "afterward" ("It will come about after this") in Joel 2:28-note: "**in those days,**" viz., the days of the outpouring of the Spirit of God. This time is still further described by the apposition, "**at that time, when I shall turn ("restore") the captivity of Judah,**" as the time of the redemption of the people of God out of their prostrate condition, and out of every kind of distress. שׁוּב אֶת שְׁבוּיֹת is not used here in the sense of "to bring back the prisoners," but, as in Hosea 6:11, in the more comprehensive sense of [restitutio in integrum](#) (Latin = restoration to the original condition), which does indeed include the gathering together of those who were dispersed, and the return of the captives, as one element, though it is not exhausted by this one element, but also embraces their elevation into a new and higher state of glory, transcending their earlier state of grace.

**In those days and at that time** - What time? This is the time that God chooses to restore the spiritual and material fortunes of the nation of Israel. Notice that in light of the great import of the events to be described, God in essence gives them three time references. First, He gives a double time notice **In those days and at that time** which is a rare occurrence (This will ultimately be fulfilled when the Lord returns in Rev 19:11-21-note and then in Rev 20:4-6-note. Note that **in those days** goes back to Joel 2:29-note and so those days include a day of revival (Joel 2:28-32-note), a day of retribution (Joel 3:1-17) and the day of restoration (Joel 3:18-21). God then specifies the "when" of in those days and at that time, stating that it will be **WHEN I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem**. And Joel 3:2 continues the details of the "when" by stating that it is when God gathers all the nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat. So if you are a Jew who is alive in those days and at that time, when you see the nations of the world coming into this valley, you will know that your redemption draweth nigh. More specifically your Redeemer draws nigh, the time when **"THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."** (Ro 11:26-note)

It is interesting to note that each of these sections ends with a reference to Zion and/or Jerusalem (Joel 3:16, 17, 21), for this is clearly the center of all of the momentous events in the Day of the LORD which brings judgment on the godless Gentile nations and deliverance for the redeemed remnant of Israel. In those days, the Day of the LORD will bring about an end of the "day of man," "[the times of the Gentiles](#)." In those days, the age we are living in will come to an abrupt end and the new age of the Kingdom of God will begin in the Millennium. See [Millennium 2](#) for a summary of the events leading up to the millennium, including Great Tribulation and the 70th week of Daniel.

**ESV Study Bible note on in those days** - This generic reference recalls the events of Joel 2:28–32-note and particularly the Day of the LORD (Jer. 33:15; 50:4, 20).

The time phrase **at that time** occurs in other prophecies that speak of the time of the end of this age when God will move mightily on behalf of His Chosen People, the nation of Israel, judging the Gentiles and restoring the Jews! Notice that the first two passages in Jeremiah use the exact same time phrase as Joel.

Jeremiah 33:15-note **'In those days and at that time** I will cause a righteous Branch of David ([MESSIAH WILL RETURN](#)) to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth (cf Rev 19:11-21-note .Rev 20:4-6-note).

Jeremiah 50:4 **"In those days and at that time,"** declares the LORD, "the sons of Israel will come, both they and the sons of Judah as well; they will go along weeping as they go, and it will be the LORD their God they will seek (cf Zech 8:21-23 - describes the attitude of the Jews in the [MILLENNIUM](#)).

Jeremiah 50:20 **'In those days and at that time,'** declares the LORD, 'search will be made for the iniquity of Israel, but there will be none; and for the sins of Judah, but they will not be found; for I will pardon those whom I leave as a remnant (cf Zech 13:1-note).'

Daniel 12:1-note "Now **at that time** (THIS IS [Time of Jacob's Distress, Great Tribulation](#)) Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a **time of distress** such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time (cf Mt 24:21-note); and at that time your people (ADDRESSING THE NATION OF ISRAEL), everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued (SEE

Romans 11:26-27-[note](#)).

Zephaniah 3:19; 20-note “Behold ([hinneh](#)), I am going to deal **at that time** With all your (ISRAEL'S) oppressors (SEE VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT IN Joel 3:2ff), I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will turn their shame into praise (Joel 2:19-note, Joel 2:26-note) and renown In all the earth (cf Zech 8:23, [IN THE MILLENNIUM](#)). 20 “**At that time** I will bring you in, Even **at the time** when I gather you together (ALL OF THESE EVENTS WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE [DAY OF THE LORD](#) - SEE SCHEMATIC FOR RELATIONSHIP TO THE "LAST DAYS" AND THE MILLENNIUM); Indeed, I will give you renown and praise Among all the peoples of the earth, **When I restore your fortunes before your eyes,**” Says the LORD.

Zechariah 8:23 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, **In those days** ten men from all the nations (GENTILES) will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.””

**Ryrie** - Gentiles, too, will seek the blessings and knowledge of God [in the Millennium](#).

**When I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem** - Not "IF" but "WHEN!" This promise from Jehovah to Israel is as certain as the rising of the sun and the going down of the same! Note that this is NOT a promise given to the Church but to the Jews. Passages such as this obliterate the false doctrine of [replacement theology / supersessionism](#) which suggests that the Church has now replaced Israel and that the Church is actually the nation of Israel (see [Israel of God](#))! Absurd to the max and [Anti-Semitic](#) at its core!

The Lord will restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, in fulfillment of His promise through Moses in Deuteronomy 30...

“So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, 2 and you **return** (COMPARE OT VERSION OF "REPENT") to the LORD your God and **obey** Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today (**RETURN AND REND** BOTH COMMANDS IN Joel 2:12-13-note), you and your sons (THIS PROMISE WAS TO BE AVAILABLE TO GENERATION AFTER GENERATION AND FINALLY TO THE "TERMINAL GENERATION", THOSE JEWS ALIVE IN THE [Time of Jacob's Distress](#) - Jer 30:7), 3 then (WHEN THEY REPENT) the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you (cf Joel 2:13-note, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. 4 “If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. 5 “The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed (ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB), and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. 6 “Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants (SEE CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART, cf Joel 2:32-note, Zech 12:10-14-note, Zech 13:1-note, Zech 13:8-9-note, Ro 11:26-27-[note](#)), to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live. 7 “The LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. 8 “And you shall again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments which I command you today. 9 “Then the LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the LORD will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers (cf Joel 2:21-32-note); 10 if you obey the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul. (Dt 30:1-10)

## PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, POLITICAL RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

**Restore** ([07725](#))([shub/sub](#)) means movement back to a place of departure, and figuratively to God restoring Israel's souls (circumcising their hearts) and restoring their land. A reversal of direction. A restoration. The [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) uses [epistrepho](#) meaning to turn back, return, convert.

Here is a summary of Scriptures describing God's **restoration** of Israel **physically, spiritually and politically**:

### Physical characteristics

#### 1. Topography and geography of the earth changed

- Isaiah 2:2-note; Ezek 47:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; Ezekiel 48:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20; Zec 14:4, 8, 10-note

## **2. Wild animals tamed**

- Isaiah 11:6, 7, 8, 9-note; Isaiah 35:9; Ezekiel 34:25

## **3. Crops abundant**

- Isaiah 27:6; 35:1, 2, 6, 7; Amos 9:13; Zechariah 14:8-note

## **4. Human longevity increased**

- Isaiah 65:20, 21, 22, 23

## **Spiritual and religious characteristics and events**

### **1. Satan confined in the abyss**

- Revelation 20:1, 2, 3-note

### **2. Millennial temple built**

- Ezekiel 40:5-43:27 - [See Schematic Diagram of this Temple](#)

### **3. Animal sacrifices offered as memorials to Christ's death**

- Isaiah 56:7; 66:20, 21, 22, 23; Jer. 33:17,18; Ezek 43:18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27; 45:13-46:24; Malachi 3:3, 4-note

### **4. Feasts of the New Year, Passover, and Tabernacles reinstated**

- Ezek 45:18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25; Zechariah 14:16, 17, 19, 19, 20, 21-note
- [Table summarizing all Seven Great Feasts of Israel](#)

### **5. Nations worship in Jerusalem**

- Isaiah 2:2, 3, 4; Mic 4:2-note; Micah 7:12-note; Zechariah 8:20, 21, 22, 23; Zechariah 14:16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21-note

### **6. Worldwide knowledge of God**

- Isaiah 11:9-note; Je 31:34-note; Mic 4:5-note; Hab 2:14-note cf Ps 22:27, 67:1,2, 72:19, 86:9, 98:1, 2, 3 Zec 14:8,9 Rev 11:15-note; Rev 15:4-note

### **7. Unparalleled filling of and empowerment by the Holy Spirit on Israel**

- Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; Ezekiel 36:24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29; 39:29-note; Joel 2:28, 29-note

### **8. New Covenant with Israel fulfilled**

- Jeremiah 31:31, 32, 33, 34; Ezek 11:19, 20; 36:25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32--note

### **9. Righteousness and justice prevails**

- Isaiah 9:7-note; Isaiah 11:4-note; Isaiah 42:1, 2, 3, 4; Jeremiah 23:5

## **Political characteristics and events**

### **1. Israel reunited as a nation**

- Jeremiah 3:18; Ezekiel 37:15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23-note

### **2. Israel at peace in the land**



- Deut. 30:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10-note; Isaiah 32:18; Hosea 14:5, 7; Am 9:15; Mic 4:4-note; Micah 5:4-note, 5a; Zec 3:10; Zech 14:11-note

### 3. Abrahamic Covenant land-grant boundaries established

- Ge 15:18, 19, 20, 21-note; Ezek 47:13-48:8, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27

### 4. Christ in Jerusalem rules over Israel

- Isaiah 40:11; Micah 4:7-note; Micah 5:2b-note

### 5. Davidic Covenant fulfilled with Christ on the throne of David

- 2 Sa 7:11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Jeremiah 33:17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26-note; Am 9:11,12, Lk 1:32, 33-note

### 6. Christ rules over and judges the nations

- Isaiah 11:3, 4, 5-note; Micah 4:2,3a-note; Zec 14:9-note; Revelation 19:15-note

### 7. Resurrected saints reign with Christ

- Mt 19:28; 2 Ti 2:12; Revelation 5:10-note; Revelation 20:4-note

### 8. Universal peace prevails

- Isaiah 2:4-note; Isaiah 32:17,18; 60:18; Ho 2:18; Mic 4:2, 3, 4-note; Micah 5:4-note; Zechariah 9:10

### 9. Jerusalem made the world's capital

- Jeremiah 3:17; Ezekiel 48:30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35; Joel 3:16, 17-note; Mic 4:1, 6, 7, 8-note; Zechariah 8:2, 3

### 10. Israel exalted above the Gentiles

- Isaiah 14:1, 2; 49:22, 23; 60:14, 15, 16, 17; Isaiah 61:5, 6, 7, 8, 9-note

### 11. The world blessed through Israel

- Micah 5:7-note

**Joel 3:2 I will gather all the nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; And they have divided up My land.**

- **I will gather all the nations:** Zep 3:8 Zec 14:2-4 Rev 16:14,16 19:19-21 20:8
- **And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat** Joe 3:12 2Ch 20:26 Eze 39:11 Zec 14:4
- **Then I will enter into judgment with them there On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel** Isa 66:16 Eze 38:22 Am 1:11 Ob 1:10-16 Zec 12:3,4 Rev 11:18 16:6 Rev 18:20,21
- **Whom they have scattered among the nations; And they have divided up My land** Jer 12:14 49:1 Eze 25:8 35:10 Zep 2:8-10

**A DIVINELY INSPIRED GLOBAL  
GATHERING FOR JUDGMENT**

Some day in the future, the LORD God Almighty will summon all the nations of the world to gather for war to fight against Israel. At that time, God will pour out His wrath upon all the nations of the world as alluded to by other OT prophets.

Isaiah 13:9-note Behold, [the day of the LORD](#) is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it.

Zephaniah 1:14-18 Near is [the great day of the LORD](#), Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the [day of the LORD](#)! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. 15 A **day** of wrath is that **day**, A **day** of trouble and distress, A **day** of destruction and desolation, A **day** of darkness and gloom, A **day** of clouds and thick darkness, 16 A **day** of trumpet and battle cry Against the fortified cities And the high corner towers. 17 I will bring distress on men So that they will walk like the blind, (THE REASON FOR THIS DREAD DAY) Because they have sinned against the LORD; And their blood will be poured out like dust And their flesh like dung. 18 Neither their silver nor their gold Will be able to deliver them On the **day of the LORD'S wrath**; And all the earth will be devoured In the fire of His jealousy, For He will make a complete end, Indeed a terrifying one, Of all the inhabitants of the earth.

A small technical note - The **NAS** does not translate the

**I will gather all the nations** - **I will** signifies God is sovereign and in control. This gathering will include all the nations, for all of the nations have to one degree or another been anti-Israel. This the is outworking of God's plan of the ages. History is "His Story." And remember that that all of these events are part of the Day of the LORD. Verses such as this express demonstrate the mysterious relationship between God's sovereignty and Man's responsibility. All the nations will be held responsible for coming against Israel, even though it is God Who gathers them! In short, behind all the international political and and military maneuvering will be the invisible invincible hand of the Almighty God.

**And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat** ("The Lord Judges," "Yahweh judges") - Remember that this is all occurring in the context of **in those days, at that time**. God controls the TIME and the PEOPLE (nations) involved in these terminal events of the present evil age (Gal 1:4-note) in this verse even controls the PLACE.

We see a similar prophecy in Zephaniah...

Zephaniah 3:8 "Therefore wait for Me," declares the LORD, "For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, **My decision is to gather nations**, To assemble kingdoms, To pour out on them My indignation, All My burning anger; For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal.

Other prophecies speak of the judgment of the nations:

Psalms 110:6 **He will judge among the nations**, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.

Isaiah 66:18 "For I know their works and their thoughts; **the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues**. And they shall come and see My glory.

Jeremiah 25:32 Thus says the LORD of hosts, "**Behold, evil is going forth From nation to nation**, And a great storm is being stirred up From the remotest parts of the earth.

Ezekiel 39:21 "And I will set My glory among the nations; and **all the nations will see My judgment which I have executed and My hand which I have laid on them**.

Micah 4:11-12 "And now many nations have been assembled against you Who say, 'Let her be polluted, And let our eyes gloat over Zion.' 12 "But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD, And they do not understand His purpose; For **He has gathered them like sheaves to the threshing floor**.

As Gilliland says "The crimes of the centuries will not be settled in The Hague but in the "valley of Jehoshaphat". [What the Bible Teaches – Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah](#))

Psalms 2 alludes to the gathering of the nations, presenting it as if it THEIR idea

The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!" (Psalm 2:2-3)

**Then I will enter into judgment with them there** (cf Joel 3:12-note, Joel 3:21-note) - Then signifies sequence. After all the nations on in this valley, God will bring His righteous judgment to bear on them.

**Enter into judgment** (08199)(shaphat) is a verb that means to judge or govern and here in the niphal means to execute justice, i.e., obtain justice and rightness to one who has been wronged, in this case the nation of Israel (cf 2 Chr 22:8; Isa 66:16; Jer 2:35; 25:31; Eze 17:20; 20:35, 36; 38:22).



**Isaiah** uses **shaphat** with a meaning similar to Joel 3:2 (and also in the context of the Day of the LORD)...

Isaiah 66:16 For the LORD **will execute judgment** by fire and by His sword on all flesh, And those slain by the LORD will be many.

**John Martin** commenting on Isaiah 66:14-18 - When God restores His people to Jerusalem (Isa 66:10-13) in the Millennium, they will rejoice and prosper, but on His and her enemies He will swoop down in judgment like a fire (cf. 2 Th 1:7-9) and a whirlwind to slay them. This judgment will be fair because of their abominations: worshiping in idolatrous gardens (cf. Isa. 1:29; 65:3) and eating ceremonially unclean animals such as pigs (cf. 65:4; 66:3; Lev. 11:7) and rats (cf. Lev. 11:29). When the Messiah returns, His judgment will be on **all the nations** (cf. Zech. 14:3-note; Rev. 19:17-18) and because of that judgment the world will see His glory. (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

**On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel** - This verse explains why God is judging on the nations. It is because of His people and His inheritance Israel. While God clearly loves His Church, I fear sometimes many in the Church forget that He also loves Israel and that He has a plan for her that will not be frustrated. Passages such as this reflect God's faithfulness to His covenant promises, even to a people who have often times been unfaithful. Joel had given the basis for God's acting on behalf of His people in giving them the offer of forgiveness if they would repent...

And rend your heart and not your garments." Now return to the LORD your God, For (HERE IS WHY HE WILL ACT ON BEHALF OF HIS PEOPLE) **He is gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, And relenting of evil.** Who knows whether He will not turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him, Even a grain offering and a libation For the LORD your God? (Joel 2:13-14-note)

**Whom they have scattered among the nations** - The nations of the world have been part of the scattering of Jews among the nations and for this they will be held accountable by God.

**And they have divided up My land** - We see this even in our day, epitomized by the fact that the Muslims possess the most valuable piece of land in the world in their control of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Their "pay day" will surely come "some day," **in those days and at that time!** The land of Palestine (Israel) belongs to God. He bestowed the right to live on the land to the Jews. This right was given to the Jews by covenant (Ge. 12:7-note; Ge 15:8-21-note, Dt. 3:20; 17:14; 18:9). Therefore, any person or nation who invades, divides, or exploits God's land is bound to face His condemnation in the last days of human history.

Zechariah also gives us some additional details regarding the **Day of the LORD** when King Jesus returns in judgment...

Zechariah 12:1-3-note The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him (CLEARLY HE IS ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT HE IS ABOUT TO DESCRIBE), 2 "Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem (THIS IS THE SAME TIME FRAME OF Joel 3:2), it will also be against Judah. 3 "It will come about **in that day** that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured (THEY WILL TRY TO "LIFT IT" OR DESTROY IT, BUT THEY WILL BE DESTROYED!). And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it (THIS IS THE WORLD'S LAST GASP EFFORT TO ANNIHILATE ISRAEL - WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DO FOR CENTURIES!). 12:9 "And **in that day** I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem (DESCRIBED IN Revelation 19:11-21=[note](#));).

Zechariah 14:2-4-note For **I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle**, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. 3 Then (WHEN? WHEN THINGS LOOK THE MOST HOPELESS FOR THE NATION OF ISRAEL!) the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4 **In that day** His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

The prophet Daniel spoke of this day in highly figurative language in explaining King Nebuchadnezzar's dream to him...

Daniel 2:34-35=[note](#) - "You continued looking until a **Stone** (MESSIAH) was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue (AS DESCRIBED ABOVE IN Revelation 19:11-21) on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. 35"Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Daniel 2:44-45-note "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms (AS DESCRIBED ABOVE IN Revelation 19:11-21), but it will itself endure forever. 45 "Inasmuch as you saw that a Stone (MESSIAH) was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."

Daniel 7 while focusing on primarily on the beast, the Antichrist, who is the head and representative of all the nations, describes his judgment (and in effect their judgment) writing...

"I kept looking, and that horn (LITTLE HORN, THE ANTICHRIST) was waging war with the saints (HE IS SPEAKING PRIMARILY OF ISRAEL) and overpowering them 22 until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One (JOEL 3 DESCRIBES ASPECTS OF THIS FAVORABLE JUDGMENT ON BEHALF OF GOD'S INHERITANCE ISRAEL), and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom (THIS IS THE INCEPTION OF THE MILLENNIUM). 23 "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth (MOST CONSERVATIVE SCHOLARS FEEL THIS IS A "REVIVED ROMAN EMPIRE"), which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it (THESE HORRIBLE EVENTS OCCUR IN [Daniel's Seventieth Week](#)). 24 'As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them (THE LITTLE HORN, THE ANTICHRIST), and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 'He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One , and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they (THE JEWS AND ALL THOSE WHO WILL NOT TAKE THE MARK OF THE BEAST) will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time (THE LAST HALF OF [Daniel's Seventieth Week](#), the [Time of Jacob's Distress](#) Jer 30:7, [Great Tribulation](#) is [synonymous with other time phrases](#) = 1260 days, 42 months, "time, times, and half a time", "[a time of distress](#)" - Da 12:1). 26 'But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. 27 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.' (Daniel 7:21-27-commentary)

## THE VALLEY OF JEHOShAPHAT

**Valley of Jehoshaphat** is found only twice in the Bible - Joel 3:2 and Joel 3:12. There is no record of a valley by this name in Joel's day. While there is not complete consensus, most modern conservative sources feel this valley is the one situated between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, which in modern times was used by the Jews as a burying ground (quite fitting in light of the Gentile carnage that will transpire there!). Beginning in the fourth century A.D, this valley has been identified with the Kidron valley, but to reiterate there is no record that the name the Valley of Jehoshaphat is given to the Kidron Valley.

**J A Thompson** - The valley of Jehoshaphat has been variously identified. Some have thought that Joel had no definite place in mind; e.g. Targum Jonathan translates this name 'the plain of the decision of judgment', and Theodotion renders 'the place of judgment'. Since Joel uses the geographical term 'valley', most students have thought that some location was intended. Ibn Ezra suggests the valley of Berachah S of Bethlehem, where Jehoshaphat's forces gathered after the destruction of enemies (2 Ch. 20:26), but Zc. 14 locates the judgment near Jerusalem, and according to 1 Enoch 53:1 all people gather for judgment in a deep valley near the valley of Hinnom. Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions identify the place of final judgment as the Kidron valley, between Jerusalem and the mount of Olives. Therefore many have been buried there, Muslims especially on the W slope and Jews especially on the E slope of the valley. A Graeco-Roman tomb on the E slope has been called mistakenly the tomb of King Jehoshaphat. As early as the Bordeaux pilgrim (AD 333) and Eusebius' Onomasticon (s.v. Koilas), the name Jehoshaphat was associated with this valley. Some object that Joel uses the word 'emeq, 'broad valley', while the Kidron valley is called nahal, 'ravine' (2 Sa. 15:23). Other identifications are 'the king's dale' (2 Sa. 18:18), which runs into the Kidron valley from the NW (so C. F. Keil, E. G. Kraeling) and the valley of Hinnom, W and S of Jerusalem. (The New Bible Dictionary)

**NET Note** - There is a play on words in Joel 3:2. Jehoshaphat in Hebrew means "the Lord has judged," and the next line in verse 2 further [explicates](#) this thought. The location of this valley is uncertain (cf. Joel 3:12). Many interpreters have understood the Valley of Jehoshaphat to be the Kidron Valley, located on the east side of old Jerusalem. Since this is described as a scene of future messianic activity and judgment, many Jews and Muslims have desired to be buried in the vicinity, a fact attested to in modern times by the presence of many graves in the area. A variation of this view is mentioned by Eusebius, Onomasticon 1:10. According to this

view, the Valley of Jehoshaphat is located in the Hinnom Valley, on the south side of the old city. Yet another view is held by many modern scholars, who understand the reference to this valley to be one of an idealized and non-literal scene of judgment. ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

**POSB** has an interesting suggestion - During the reign of King Jehoshaphat, a number of the surrounding nations attacked Judah with a powerful army. The small nation of Judah stood little chance, so the godly King Jehoshaphat did the only thing he could. He cried out to the LORD for help and deliverance, and the LORD heard his prayer. The LORD miraculously stirred strife among the invaders, and the coalition of enemy nations ended up turning against one another. Not a single sword was used against a soldier of Judah. As a result of this miraculous victory, the fear of God fell on all the surrounding nations. Most likely, the valley where this miraculous victory took place was renamed The Valley of Jehoshaphat. However, we must remember that this is mere speculation, for there is no record where the valley was named after King Jehoshaphat. If it was, the valley was originally known as the Kidron Valley (see 2 Chr. 20:1–30). Other Bible scholars feel that the reference to the valley is symbolic, referring only to the fact that the LORD will judge the nations of the world in some valley surrounding Jerusalem. Still other scholars feel that the Valley of Jehoshaphat is the [Valley of Esdraelon](#) (This is the Greek rendering of the Hebrew word Jezreel) ([map](#) = Jezreel means "God sows"), where they say the last great battle of human history, the [Campaign of Armageddon](#), will be fought (Re. 16:16). ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible Commentary](#))

**Tony Garland** on [Valley of Jehoshaphat](#) - A key passage associated with the Campaign of Armageddon mentions that God will assemble all nations in the "**Valley of Jehoshaphat**" (Joel Joel 3:2, Joel 3:12). Some hold that the Valley of Jehoshaphat ("Yahweh shall judge"<sup>1</sup>) refers to the valley situated between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives to the east.<sup>2</sup> It was in this valley where king Jehoshaphat is thought to have overthrown the enemies of Israel, the "valley of Beracah"(2 Chr. 20:26).<sup>3</sup>

Its identification with the Kidron Valley, which began in the fourth century, is somewhat uncertain since no actual valley of this name is known to pre-Christian antiquity. Eusebius in the Onomasticon (ed. Klostermann, p. 70) located the valley of Jehoshaphat in the Valley of Hinnom, possibly because of the judgments that were associated with that place in connection with the idolatrous kings of Judah (cf. Jer. Jer. 7:31f; Jer 19:5f, where it is called "**the valley of Slaughter**"). Since the time of the Pilgrim of Bordeaux (A.D. 333), however, the Kidron has become increasingly the site popularly accepted.<sup>4</sup>

Others suggest the name is descriptive of what God will accomplish (judgment) at the location rather than any association with an event in the life of King Jehoshaphat. Perhaps it is to be associated with the plain of Esdraelon:

It is clear both from the contexts of Joel Joel 3:2, Joel 3:12 and from the term used twice in Joel Joel 3:14, **the valley of decision**" (cf. Zep. 3:8), that the name is to be interpreted as the scene of judgment, and not taken from the king of the same name. Eze. 39:11 and Rev. 16:16 seem to locate it in the plain of Esdraelon (Armageddon).<sup>5</sup>

#### Notes

1 W. S. Lasor, "Jehoshaphat, Valley Of," in Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed., International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979, 1915), 2:979.

2 "Joel Joel 3:2, Joel 3:13 speaks of events taking place in 'the valley of Jehoshaphat,' which seems to be an extended area east of Jerusalem."—J. Dwight Pentecost, Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 341.

3 Merrill K. Unger, R. Harrison, Frederic F Vos, and Cyril J. Barber, The New Unger's Bible Dictionary (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1988), s.v. "Jehoshaphat, Valley of."

4 Lasor, "Jehoshaphat, Valley Of," 2:979.

5 Ibid.

**Joel 3:3 "They have also cast lots for My people, Traded a boy for a harlot And sold a girl for wine that they may drink**

- 2Ch 28:8,9 Am 2:6 Ob 1:11 Na 3:10 Rev 18:13

## **SINS OF THE NATIONS AGAINST JEHOVAH'S PEOPLE ISRAEL**

Jehovah now gives reasons for His judgment against all of the nations. It is important to note that God's concern was His people Israel, so He listed only the sins that were specifically committed against them (a direct rebuttal of the Anti-Semitic false teaching of

[replacement theology / supersessionism](#)). The list of sins is not all inclusive, but is enough sins to show that every nation stood guilty before Him. If a ruler, leader, or citizen of any nation mistreats God's people, the LORD is bound by His covenant promise to execute judgment against the nation or individual.

**NET Note** - Joel vividly refers to a situation where innocent human life has little value; its only worth is its use in somehow satisfying selfish appetites of wicked people who have control over others (cf. Amos 2:6 and Amos 8:6). ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

**They have also cast lots for My people** - They treated God's Chosen People with contempt and as of no account! As noted above, God's focus is on the nation of Israel which is His personal possession (cf **My people...My inheritance** - Joel 3:2) and the "apple of His eye" (Dt 32:10KJV)! [Casting lots \(note\)](#) for human beings demonstrates how little value the Gentiles placed on the life of the Jews. These passages foreshadow the horrors of the Nazi death camps (cf [Auschwitz Concentration Camp](#)), where the Chosen People were treated by the godless Nazis as if they were worthless dung. Here we see that the nations traded young boys for prostitutes and little girls for wine so they could get drunk.

Obadiah 11 and Nah 3:10 both associate casting lots over refugees with the horrors that accompany capture of a city by a foreign army.

Obadiah 1:11 "On the day that you stood aloof, On the day that strangers carried off his wealth, **And foreigners entered his gate And cast lots for Jerusalem**— You too were as one of them.

Nahum 3:10 Yet she became an exile, She went into captivity; Also her small children were dashed to pieces At the head of every street; **They cast lots for her honorable men**, And all her great men were bound with fetters.

**Lots** (gowral) pebbles, sticks, or pottery shard blindly pulled out of a container for decision making based on what seems like chance

**Duane Garrett** - After the capture of a city, victorious soldiers took boys and girls (older people were killed off) and sold them as slaves. The fact that the price of these slaves only bought a night with a prostitute or a little wine shows how cheaply they were regarded. In contrast to the behavior of these nations, Exod 21:16 forbids kidnapping people to sell them as slaves, and Deut 21:14 prohibits the sale of prisoners of war in Israel. ([New American Commentary - Volume 19A - Hosea-Joel](#))

**Traded a boy for a harlot** - exploitation of the innocent in order to satisfy their sinful lusts.

**POSB** - Imagine the heartache involved with having your child torn away from you and then exchanged to a stranger just so a person could temporarily satisfy his lustful cravings. These persons will face God's terrifying judgment. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible Commentary](#))

**Gilliland** comments that...

Human life was regarded so cheaply that it amounted to little more than a night of immorality or a means of getting drunk. Examples of this type of treatment come to us from Josephus' account of the destruction of Jerusalem in Roman times where we are told that the large numbers of Jewish prisoners of war were disposed of in the following manner as recounted by Josephus in his Book of 9.3.

"He (Titus) chose out the tallest and most beautiful, and reserved them for the triumph; and as for the rest of the multitude that were above seventeen years old, he put them into bonds and sent them to the Egyptian mines. Titus also sent a great number into the provinces, as a present to them, that they might be destroyed upon their theaters, by the sword and by the wild beasts; but those that were under seventeen years of age he sold for slaves."

Though suspected of considerable exaggeration, the statistics given by the historians of these events are quite staggering. At the time of the siege under Titus, Josephus claims Jerusalem to have been a crowded city of 2.7 million persons; his estimate of the captives sent to Egypt is 100,000 and the number of casualties 1,100,000. In the next century the followers of Bar Kochba, in his failed revolt of ad 135, are set by the Roman historian Dio Cassius at 580,000. After these dispersions the markets were glutted by slaves and the price of a Jewish slave was less than the price of a horse..([What the Bible Teaches – Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah](#))

**And sold a girl for wine that they may drink**- Selling of a girl speaks of [sex \(human\) trafficking](#) which is nothing new in our modern era and will be rampant in the last of the last days (Rev 18:11, 13-[note](#)- "merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes...slaves and human lives.). Joel vividly recalls how little value the heathen had placed on the

lives of the Jews. Here their value was sadly equated with whatever could be obtained to pay for their selfish appetites. There are similar statements in Amos

Amos 2:6; Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Israel and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they sell the righteous for money And the needy for a pair of sandals.

Amos 8:6 So as to buy the helpless for money And the needy for a pair of sandals, And that we may sell the refuse of the wheat?"

**Brian Bell** - COURT IS IN SESSION! (1) God's promise, the Jews will be back in the land. Here is God summoning the Gentile nations to court. They'll be judged for the sins committed against His people Israel. This has been long in coming, but it will come.4 Reasons for Judgment: 2.2.1. They, [1] Scattered my people [2] Divided my people [3] Sold my people [4] Robbed my people. ([Sermon on Joel 3:1-21](#))

**Joel 3:4** "Moreover, what are you to Me, O Tyre, Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? Are you rendering Me a recompense? But if you do recompense Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense on your head.

- **Moreover, what are you to Me:** Jdg 11:12 2 Chr 21:16 28:17,18 Acts 9:4
- **O Tyre :** Am 1:6-10,12-14 Zec 9:2-8
- **Are you rendering Me a recompense:** Eze 25:12-17
- **swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense on your head** De 32:35 Isa 34:8 59:18 Jer 51:6 Lu 18:7 2Th 1:6

## THE LAW OF REAPING AND SOWING

**POSB** - To oppose or abuse any of God's people was to oppose the LORD Himself, for the LORD identifies with His people. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible Commentary](#))

In Joel 3:4-8 Jehovah gives examples of Gentile mistreatment of the Jews which are representative of all Israel's enemies because God said He would "judge **ALL** the surrounding nations." (Joel 3:12). And so **Tyre, Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia** function as examples of the type of behavior by all of the nation that stood opposed to God and His people Israel. This passage also indicates that Anti-Semitism has been with us since ancient times.

**Moody Bible Commentary** adds "God's future judgment of Israel's enemies is presented through the impending judgment of Tyre, Sidon and all the regions of Philistia, areas that range from the northern to the southern coastline of Israel. God rhetorically asked these nations, in courtroom style, if they believed they were rendering Him a recompense (i.e., "giving Me what I deserve") by their treatment of Israel."

Gentile hatred of Israel and the Jews will [crescendo](#) until the time when the Antichrist exerts his satanically enabled global dominion for three and one-half years ([synonymous with other time phrases](#) = 1260 days, 42 months, "time, times, and half a time") in the [Great Tribulation](#) (begins in Mt 24:15-note, named in Mt 24:21-note; cf 2 Th 2:3-note; 2 Th 2:4-note) also known as the [Time of Jacob's Distress](#) (Jeremiah 30:7-note) and "[a time of distress](#)" ([Da 12:1-note](#)). This will all transpire in the [Day of the LORD](#), which occurs during the last of the last days preceding the Second Coming of the Lord.

**Moreover** - The Hebrew adverb **gam** ([01571](#)) is frequently used to introduce the just and appropriate response of God to transgression (Judges 2:21; Jeremiah 4:12).

**Gilliland** has an interesting comment - It may seem strange that smaller nations like Phoenicia (Tyre and Sidon) and Philistia are mentioned but that may be the very point. If the sins of these lesser nations are not overlooked in God's court, how much more will the more grievous crimes of larger nations qualify for righteous judgment! ([What the Bible Teaches – Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah](#))

**Phoenicia** - Their civilization was organized in city-states, similar to those of ancient Greece, perhaps the most notable of which were **Tyre, Sidon, Arwad, Berytus, Byblos and Carthage**. Each city-state was a politically independent unit, and it is uncertain to what extent the Phoenicians viewed themselves as a single nationality.

**What are you to Me, O Tyre, Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia** - Of note is that all of these nations were on the coast and had open access to the Mediterranean, which would have enabled them to easily participate in maritime trafficking of human beings



just alluded to in Joel 3:3. They were also longtime adversaries of Israel, especially the Philistines.

**Brian Bell** says this verse reminds him of the Broadway play in 1976-78 entitled "[Your Arms Too Short to Box with God.](#)" ([Sermon on Joel 3:1-21](#))

**Are you rendering Me a recompense?** - (NET = "Are you trying to get even with Me", ESV = "Are you paying me back for something?") Jehovah is asking if He had done them any against them for which they were trying to pay Him back? The idea is "Do they have any justifiable grudge which they are seeking to settle? NLT says "Are you trying to take revenge on me? If you are, then watch out! I will strike swiftly and pay you back for everything you have done."

**Keil and Delitzsch** on **Are you rendering Me a recompense?** - has a negative meaning: "Ye have neither cause to avenge yourselves upon me, i.e., upon My people Israel, nor any occasion to do it harm. But if repayment is the thing in hand, I will, and that very speedily (qal mehērâh, see Isa. 5:26), bring back your doing upon your own head". To explain what is here said, an account is given in Joel 3:5, 6 of what they have done to the Lord and His people,—namely, taken away their gold and silver, and brought their costly treasures into their palaces or temples.

How would they take revenge on God? Certainly they could do nothing to Him directly. But they could attack Israel who was as "the pupil of His eye." (Dt 32:10). There is an analogous situation in the NT when Saul was persecuting the Church of Jesus Christ, Christ saw it as an attack against Himself..

Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, 2 and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; 4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "**Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?**" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "**I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,** (Acts 9:1-5)

Joel 3:4 is an answer to the psalmist's prayer:

A Song, a Psalm of Asaph. **O God, do not remain quiet. Do not be silent and, O God, do not be still.** 2 For behold, Your enemies make an uproar, and those who hate You have exalted themselves. 3 They make shrewd plans against Your people, and conspire together against Your treasured ones (God's enemies are trying to take revenge on Jehovah by taking it out on His treasured ones!). (NOW THE PSALMIST REVEALS THEIR GOAL - ANNIHILATION OF ISRAEL) They have said, "Come, and let us wipe them out as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more." (Ps 83:1-4)

**Recompense** (01576) (**gemul** from gamal = to deal fully or adequately with, deal out to, wean, ripen) is a masculine noun which means recompense, benefits, something deserved, dealings, doings. **Gemul** indicates the dealings with others (Jdg. 9:16). The dealing of a nation or person returns on them (Ps. 28:4; Pr. 12:14; Isa. 3:11; Oba 1:15). **Gemul** refers to a receipt which is deserved whether the recipient accepts it or returns it (Joel 3:4, 7). It speaks of the recompense of the Lord (Ps. 28:4; Isa. 35:4; 66:6). Ps. 103:2 says "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget none of His **benefits** (recompense, reward; Lxx = [antapodosis](#) = reward)

**Gemul** - 19x in 17v - benefit(1), benefits(1), dealings(1), deeds(1), deserved\*(1), good deed(1), recompense(11), recompense\*(1), what he deserves\*(1).

Jdg. 9:16; 2 Chr. 32:25; Ps. 28:4; Ps. 94:2; Ps. 103:2; Ps. 137:8; Prov. 12:14; Prov. 19:17; Isa. 3:11; Isa. 35:4; Isa. 59:18; Isa. 66:6; Jer. 51:6; Lam. 3:64; Joel 3:4; Joel 3:7; Obad. 1:15

**But if you do recompense Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense on your head-** This is a warning from the Almighty God! Be very careful if you attempt to "pay back" God! One might "attempt" to take revenge on God but it is ridiculous because He has done nothing evil. And if they attempt to "get even" with God, He will quickly respond with righteous retribution for their unrighteous action, "For the LORD is a God of recompense, He will fully repay." (Jer 51:56, cf Dt 7:4).

**NET Note** - Heb "quickly, speedily, I will return your recompense on your head." This is an idiom for retributive justice and an equitable reversal of situation. ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

God says He will repay in proportion to how they mistreat Israel. We see this in Obadiah 1:15

"For the [day of the LORD](#) draws near on **all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.**

Ultimately this **recompense** to the nations is reflected in His covenant with the patriarchs...

And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the



earth will be blessed." (Genesis 12:3-note)

This basic principle is seen in Paul's warning to the Galatians

**Do not be deceived** ([present imperative with a negative](#)), God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. (Gal 6:7-note)

**Recompense** ([01580](#))(**gamal**) basically means to render either good or evil to someone. Gamal means to deal fully or adequately with, deal out to, to recompense another, to wean, to bring to completion or ripen. The main idea is [requital](#) in personal relationships and can be in the form of a reward (2 Sa 19:36, 1 Sa 24:17). It means to recompense an evil (Deut 32:6, 2 Chr 20:11, Ps 137:8). Or it can also be in form of unmerited acts of grace by God (Isa 63:7) or by men such as David manifested to Saul (1 Sa 24:17). Evil deeds can be paid back with evil (Pr 3:30). God will requite the enemies of Israel as here in Joel 3:4 or Obadiah 1:15.

**Gamal** can also mean can mean to wean. This meaning appears five times in the Qal stem (1 Sa 1:23-24; Hos. 1:8; 1 Ki. 11:20; Isa. 28:9), and in all three of its Niphal (passive) occurrences, it means "to be weaned" (Ge 21:8; 1 Sa 1:22). The idea of bringing to an end is demonstrated in verses that describe a child who is weaned (Ge 21:8).

**Gamal** - 36x in 32v - bore ripe(1), brought(1), compensate(1), deal bountifully(2), dealt(2), dealt bountifully(2), did(2), does(2), done(1), granted(2), recompense(1), repaid(1), repay(1), rewarded(4), rewarding(1), ripening(1), weaned(12).

Gen. 21:8; Gen. 50:15; Gen. 50:17; Num. 17:8; Deut. 32:6; 1 Sam. 1:22; 1 Sam. 1:23; 1 Sam. 1:24; 1 Sam. 24:17; 2 Sam. 19:36; 2 Sam. 22:21; 1 Ki. 11:20; 2 Chr. 20:11; Ps. 7:4; Ps. 13:6; Ps. 18:20; Ps. 103:10; Ps. 116:7; Ps. 119:17; Ps. 131:2; Ps. 137:8; Ps. 142:7; Prov. 3:30; Prov. 11:17; Prov. 31:12; Isa. 3:9; Isa. 11:8; Isa. 18:5; Isa. 28:9; Isa. 63:7; Hos. 1:8; Joel 3:4

**Gilbrant on Tyre** ([06865](#))(Tzor) -

Tyre was one of the main city-states of Phoenicia in the area of Lebanon. The center of Tyre was located on a rocky isle (as the name denotes), a short distance from the coast. Such a location provided an excellent defense. With a long breakwater, it boasted one of the best harbors along the Palestinian coast. The island is now joined to the mainland by a sandy isthmus built by Alexander the Great during the siege of 322 b.c.

The history paralleled the Hebrew occupation of Canaan. The Phoenicians were excellent merchants of the seas and were traders of purple. They worshiped many gods, and their principal deity, Baal, considerably influenced God's people.

At various periods of history, the Tyrians interacted with Israel commercially and religiously. David made a treaty with Hiram, king of Tyre, who sent the famous cedar trees of Lebanon for the building of the palace (2 Sam. 5:11f). Solomon continued this agreement with King Hiram, who supplied him with lumber and gold needed for building the Temple and his own house (1 Ki. 5:1-18). The two kings engaged in joint ventures searching for exotic goods (1 Ki 10:22).

Later in Israel's history, King Ahab married Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre (1 Ki. 16:31). She was a zealous follower of Baal and sought to kill the prophet Elijah.

The prophets composed many oracles and laments of destruction against Tyre for its arrogant pride over being the greatest merchant of the sea and the handler of the finest and richest goods of the time (Isa. 23; Jer. 25:22; 47:4; Ezek. 26-28).

The city of Tyre was also a center of religious idolatry and sexual immorality. Through Isaiah, God extended the hope of restoration to Tyre. The city's merchandise and hire could have been dedicated to Yahweh, and it would have supplied food and fine clothing to those who dwelt before Him (Isa. 23:17f). Evidently, Tyre rejected the Lord's offer, because Ezekiel's prophecy against the city offers a detailed picture of Tyre, its commercial empire, its sin and its eventual demise (Ezek. 26:1-28:19; Ezek 29:18ff).

Ezekiel's prophecy is significant for several reasons. First, Ezekiel prophesied that Tyre would be destroyed so thoroughly that it would be like "the top of a rock" and "a place for the spreading of nets" (Ezek 26:4f). While this prophecy was initially fulfilled, the final destruction of Tyre did not come for almost 1900 years (a.d. 1291). However, the city was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar for thirteen years (587-574 b.c.) and conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 a.d. after a seven-month siege, during which he built a causeway out to the island. Second, Ezekiel suggests that Nebuchadnezzar's failure to accomplish his objectives in Tyre was one of the reasons God permitted him to successfully attack Egypt (Ezek 29:18ff). Third, the description of Tyre's arrogance has been compared to that of Satan, with Tyre's words, "I am a God. I sit in the seat of God," being the prototypical expression of the Fall (Ezek 28:2). ([Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary](#))

## Related Resources on Tyre:

- [Is the king of Tyre prophecy in Ezekiel 28 referring to Satan?](#)
- [Tyre in Prophecy \(excellent article\)](#) - Excerpt "So accurate were the prophecies made by Ezekiel that skeptics were forced to suggest a later date for his writings. Yet, such a later date cannot be maintained, and the admission of Ezekiel's accuracy stands as irrefutable evidence of the prophet's divine inspiration. With the penetrating gaze that can only be maintained by the Divine, God looked hundreds of years into the future and instructed Ezekiel precisely what to write so that in the centuries following the predictions, the fulfillment of every detail of the prophet's words could be denied by no honest student of history. "When the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the Lord has truly sent" (Jeremiah 28:9). Ezekiel's accurate prophecy adds yet another piece of insurmountable evidence to the fact that "all Scripture is inspired of God" (2 Timothy 3:16).
- [The Fall of Tyre](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Tyre](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Tyre](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Tyre](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Tyre \(2\)](#) [Tyre](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Tyre](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Tyre](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Tyre](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Tyre](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Tyre](#)

**Joel 3:5 "Since you have taken My silver and My gold, brought My precious treasures to your temples,**

- **Since you have taken My silver and My gold:** 2Ki 12:18 2Ki 16:8 2Ki 18:15,16 2Ki 24:13 2Ki 25:13-17 Jer 50:28 Jer 51:11 Da 5:2,3
- **to your temples** 1Sa 5:2-5
- **My precious treasures:** Da 11:38

## THE NATIONS HAVE STOLEN FROM GOD

**Since you have taken My silver and My gold** - God refers to the sins of the nations in Joel 3:4. Don't miss the possessive pronoun "**My**" for God (**My people** = Joel 3:3) is saying these precious metals and treasures belong to Him, so when they took them, they were stealing from God!

**Brought My precious treasures to your temples** - In the ancient world when one defeated a nation, it was taken as a sign that the defeated nations God was defeated and/or not strong enough. So it was not uncommon for the conquering nation to take the religious symbols that represented that nation's God.

Below are passages that record the heathen taking of God's precious things, although they do not obviously relate to Tyre, Sidon or Philistia. Some of these passages refer to the kings giving away God's precious things.

2 Chronicles 21:16-17 Then the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of **the Philistines and the Arabs** who bordered the Ethiopians; 17 and they came against Judah and invaded it, and **carried away all the possessions found in the king's house** together with his sons and his wives, so that no son was left to him except Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

**Comment:** Even though God stirred the enemies, they would be held responsible for their mistreatment of Israel!

2 Kings 12:18 Jehoash king of Judah took all the sacred things that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own sacred things and all the gold that was found among the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent them to Hazael king of Aram. Then he went away from Jerusalem.

2 Kings 16:8 Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria.

2 Kings 18:15; 16 Hezekiah gave him all the silver which was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasuries of the king's house.

(18:16) At that time Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the doorposts which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

2 Kings 24:13 He carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, just as the LORD had said.

2 Kings 25:13-17 Now the bronze pillars which were in the house of the LORD, and the stands and the bronze sea which were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces and carried the bronze to Babylon. 14They took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the spoons, and all the bronze vessels which were used in temple service. 15The captain of the guard also took away the firepans and the basins, what was fine gold and what was fine silver. 16The two pillars, the one sea, and the stands which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD—the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight. 17The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and a bronze capital was on it; the height of the capital was three cubits, with a network and pomegranates on the capital all around, all of bronze. And the second pillar was like these with network.

Jeremiah 50:28 There is a sound of fugitives and refugees from the land of Babylon, To declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, Vengeance for His temple.

Jeremiah 51:11 Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers! The LORD has aroused the spirit of the kings of the Medes, Because His purpose is against Babylon to destroy it; For it is the vengeance of the LORD, vengeance for His temple.

Daniel 5:2; 3 When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. 5:3 Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God which was in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them.

**Joel 3:6 and sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their territory,**

- **sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks**: Joe 3:3,8 De 28:32,68 Eze 27:13

### **ANCIENT VERSION OF "ETHNIC CLEANSING"**

**and sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their territory** They have engaged in a human slave trade and taken the citizens of Jerusalem and Judah and sold them as slaves to the Greeks. Such trade has not only deprived the victims of their liberty but also removed them far from their territory to distant lands from which the possibility of return was markedly decreased This crime would be repaid to them in true "[lex talionis](#)" in Joel 3:7-8.

After their victory over Israel, the Assyrian transferred the 10 northern tribes to Assyria in 722 BC. Babylon took most of Judah to Babylon after Jerusalem fell in 586 BC.

Among the Phoenicians (Tyre, Sidon) slave trade was well known source of "commerce" for these maritime nations. Keil says the Phoenicians role in selling slaves was related to the fact that they purchased from the Philistines Jews who had been taken captive and "and sold them again as slaves to the sons of Javan (the Hebrew name for Greece), i.e., to the [Ionians](#) or Greeks of Asia Minor."

We read of Tyre's slave trade in Ezekiel 27:13

"Javan, Tubal and Meshech, they were your traders; with the lives of men and vessels of bronze they paid for your merchandise.

Amos also referred to the Phoenician and Philistine slave trade

Amos 1:6; 9 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Gaza (Philistines) and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they deported an entire population To deliver it up to Edom. ...9 Thus says the LORD,

"For three transgressions of Tyre and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they delivered up an entire population to Edom and did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.

**Joel 3:7 behold, I am going to arouse them from the place where you have sold them, and return your recompense on your head.**

- **I am going to arouse them from the place where you have sold them:** Isa 11:12 43:5,6 49:12 Jer 23:8 30:10,16 31:8 32:37 Eze 34:12,13 36:24 38:8 Zec 10:6-10
- **and return your recompense on your head:** Joe 3:4 Jud 1:7 1Sa 15:33 Es 7:10 Mt 7:2 2Th 1:6 Jas 2:13 Rev 13:10 Rev 16:6 19:2

## PROPHECY OF PAY BACK

Here is an example of God's just justice!

**Behold** (02009) (See above for discussion of [hinneh](#)) - used to arrest the reader's attention concerning what Jehovah is getting ready to say.

**I am going to arouse them from the place where you have sold them** - Jehovah would provoke the Jews to make "[Aliyah](#)" so that they would make their way back to their homeland.

**and return your recompense on your head** - God orchestrates this "pay day" some day! He does not say when, but just promises their recompense is coming! Basically the Tyre, Sidon and Philistia would "trade places" with the Jews, and suffer righteous retribution for what they did to the Jews. As God declared twice in the NT (quoting Dt 32:35) "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." (Ro 12:19, Heb 10:30).

**Joel 3:8 "Also I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a distant nation," for the LORD has spoken.**

- **I will sell:** De 32:30 Judges 2:14 4:2,9
- **your sons:** Isa 14:1,2 60:14
- **Sabeans:** Job 1:15 Eze 23:42
- **to a distant nation:** Jer 6:20

## LAW OF LEX TALIONIS

**Lex Talionis** means an "eye for an eye" - In Latin, the "law of retaliation" derives from *talionis*, genitive of *talio* = an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Compare "an eye for an eye," Lev 24:19–21-note.

**Also I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah** - Just as they sold Israel into slavery, God would sell them into the power of the Jews. In short the enslaved (Jews) will become the enslavers!

**POSB** comments that "this prophecy (Joel 3:3-6) has been partially fulfilled down through the centuries as nation after nation conquered the area, capturing and enslaving the survivors. But each of these disasters was only a foreshadowing of God's future judgment of the nations. In the last days—the Day of the LORD—when the Messiah returns to set up God's kingdom on earth, all nations will serve under Him. He will establish the seat of His government in Jerusalem and all nations will become subservient to Israel. In that day, Jerusalem will finally receive the honor that was always due the great city of God (Isaiah 41:11–12; Amos 9:12; Ob. 15–21; Micah 7:16–17; Zephaniah 2:6–7)." ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible Commentary](#))

**And they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a distant nation** - The Jews would sell them to the [Sabeans](#) which was in southern Arabia. There is no Biblical record of this transaction.

The Sabeans were very likely the people from which the Queen of Sheba had come to visit Solomon in 1 Kings 10:1–15.

**Holman Bible Dictionary** - A group of people thought to be akin to the Israelites through either Ham (Genesis 10:6-7) or Shem

(Genesis 10:28 ). They settled southwest Arabia (modern Yemen) and became prosperous traders. One of the major caravan routes was in their control. They dealt mainly in rich spices, gold, and precious stones. The Sabeans also were agrarian, developing elaborate irrigation devices to make their region more fertile. The queen of Saba (Sheba) traveled to Jerusalem (about 1,500 miles) during Solomon's reign to strike trade agreements with the thriving Israelites (1 Kings 10:1-10 ). The Sabeans are credited with domesticating the camel so that such journeys could be made. Matthew 12:42 promises the "Queen of the South" will condemn the people of Jesus' day in final judgment, indicating she had more faith than they. Some have tried to identify her homeland as Ethiopia.

**Hubbard** helps understand **sell...to the Sabeans** - "The retribution is exact: the Hebrews, who had no love for the sea, were sold to the sea-peoples; the people of Phoenicia and Philistia, seasoned sea goers, will be sold to the Sabeans, desert dwellers". (TNTC)

**NET Note** - The Sabeans were Arabian merchants who were influential along the ancient caravan routes that traveled through Arabia. See also Job 1:15; Isa 43:3; 45:14; Ps 72:10. ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

**Allen** interprets Antiochus III's enslavement of the people of Sidon in 345 B.C. and Alexander the Great's enslavement of the citizens of Tyre and Gaza in 332 B.C. as a partial fulfillment, assuming Jews were involved in these transactions. But clearly in the context of Joel 3's emphasis on the judgment in the Day of the LORD, the complete fulfillment of God's vengeance of Israel's enemies is yet to come to pass in the future.

**For the LORD has spoken** - God explains why this will come to pass. God says it. That settles it!

**Gilliland** - This poetic justice was inscribed in Israel's early history, where the Pharaoh who ordered the murder of the Hebrews' sons, himself paid the price of the life of his firstborn. Having the children drowned in the waters of the Nile, he himself sank in the waters of the Red Sea. Here that exact equivalence was all the more painful as the children of Judah would become the "middlemen" in selling to the Sabeans those whose fathers had taken them captive. ([What the Bible Teaches – Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah](#))

**Keil and Delitzsch** on possible fulfillment of this verse - This occurred partly on the defeat of the Philistines by Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:6, 7) and Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:8), where Philistian prisoners of war were certainly sold as slaves; but principally after the captivity, when Alexander the Great and his successors set many of the Jewish prisoners of war in their lands at liberty (compare the promise of King Demetrius to Jonathan, "I will send away in freedom such of the Judaeans as have been made prisoners, and reduced to slavery in our land," Josephus, Ant. xiii. 2, 3), and portions of the Philistian and Phoenician lands were for a time under Jewish sway; when Jonathan besieged Ashkelon and Gaza (1 Macc. 10:86; 11:60); when King Alexander (Balas) ceded Ekron and the district of Judah (1 Macc. 10:89); when the Jewish king Alexander Jannaeus conquered Gaza, and destroyed it (Josephus, Ant. xiii. 13, 3; bell. Jud. i. 4, 2); and when, subsequent to the cession of Tyre, which had been conquered by Alexander the Great, to the Seleucidae, Antiochus the younger appointed Simon commander-in-chief from the Ladder of Tyre to the border of Egypt (1 Macc. 1:59).

On the other hand the Moody Bible Commentary writes "Some have suggested that this was literally fulfilled by Artaxerxes III in 345 BC and Alexander the Great in 332 BC who took the children of Tyre and Sidon captive as slaves. This is unlikely, since these nations are mentioned here merely as representatives of all the Gentile nations that will gather against Israel at the end of days. These verses describe the judgment of the nations when the Lord vindicates His people (Gn 12:3; Ps 43 and Ps 54)."

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### **"Who were the Sabeans?"**

The Sabeans were an ancient people group mentioned in the Bible as coming from a nation far away from Israel (Joel 3:8). They were a people of stature (Isaiah 45:14) and a rival nation to Israel (Job 1:15). The Sabeans lived in the land of Sheba, which archeology suggests was a Semitic trading state that existed for 1,000 years in the area that is now Yemen. The capital of Sheba was called Marib (or Ma'rib), and the kingdom existed from 1200 BC to AD 275, trading primarily in spices. The land of the Sabeans was eventually destroyed as a result of civil war. The Sabeans feature in three biblical passages. The first of which, chronologically speaking, is in the book of Job. Job the man was subject to a long list of successive tragedies, of which one was an attack by the Sabeans. These raiders stole Job's oxen and donkeys and struck down his servants with the sword, leaving only one man alive to run back and report the incident to Job (Job 1:13–15). The next two biblical events involving the Sabeans are prophecies by Isaiah and Joel. Isaiah prophesies about Israel's eventual victory over three cultures: the Egyptians, the Cushites, and the Sabeans. The men of Sheba are called "those tall Sabeans" in Isaiah 45:14, meaning they were apparently men of stature and strength. Isaiah prophesies that all three of these groups will eventually be humbled before Israel and admit that Israel's God is the true God: "They will bow down before you / and plead with you, saying, / 'Surely God is with you, and there is no other; / there is no other god'" (Isaiah 45:14). In Joel's prophecy, the Sabeans are mentioned as a distant nation to whom the men of Judah will sell their enemies as slaves, as a sign of God's punishment on Tyre and Sidon, nations who dared to come against God's people (Joel 3:4–8).

The Queen of Sheba, or the Queen of the South, who traveled a long way to hear Solomon's wisdom, was likely a Sabean, and the elaborate riches she gave to Solomon show that the Sabeans were a wealthy people. Centuries after her visit to Jerusalem, two warring clans fought for control of Sheba and eventually weakened the empire, and it was overtaken by the Himyarite Kingdom. At that point the mighty Sabeans ceased to exist as a distinct people. ([From Gotquestions.org](http://FromGotquestions.org) one of the best reference sites on the web)

**Joel 3:9 Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare a war; rouse the mighty men! Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up!**

- **Proclaim this among the nations:** Ps 96:10 Isa 34:1 Jer 31:10 50:2
- **Prepare a war:** Heb sanctify, Eze 21:21,22
- **rouse the mighty men:** Isa 8:9,10 Jer 46:3,4 Eze 38:7

## THE CALL TO ARMS

Verbs in **bold red** are imperatives or commands in the Hebrew.

In this next section Joel 3:9-17 Joel gives us more details concerning the restoration of Israel and the judgment of the nations in Joel 3:1-2-[note](#). And in this verse we see the call is to [muster](#) the armies of all the nations and prepare to bring them into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the Valley of Decision, for God has decided their fate!

**Keil and Delitzsch** add that Joel 3:9–17 describes the "Fulfilment of the judgment upon all the heathen predicted in Joel 3:2. Compare the similar prediction of judgment in Zech. 14:2-4-note. The call is addressed to all nations to equip themselves for battle, and march into the valley of Jehoshaphat to war against the people of God, but in reality to be judged by the Lord through His heavenly heroes, whom He sends down thither."

**Proclaim this among the nations** - This command is addressed not to the armies per se but to those who function as "heralds" who are to convey the divine summons to the heathen nations of the world. This proclamation begins to bring to fruition the gathering of the nations for judgment (Joel 3:2). The question this phrase raises is who is to make this proclamation? There is not a clear answer, except to say that clearly this message is to resound throughout the Gentile world.

**Prepare a war** - This is not just "**A war**," not just any war, but "**THE** war" of all wars, the last battle of human history, the [Campaign of Armageddon](#).

**Prepare** (consecrate, sanctify) ([06942](#)) ([qadash](#)) means to set apart. Or literally "sanctify a war." Keil and Delitzsch explain that "to consecrate a war, i.e., to prepare for war by sacrifices and religious rites of consecration (cf. 1 Sam. 7:8, 9; Jer. 6:4)."

**Gilliland** comments on "**sanctify a war**" noting that "refers to the ancient custom where nations offered sacrifices and performed religious ceremonies prior to going to the battlefield. If ever there was a war which could be described as "holy" it was this engagement. In the earlier Old Testament the purpose of "holy wars" was to destroy the enemies of the Lord and of Israel. This war would fulfill this role in a most significant way. Ironically, these Gentile nations will "sanctify a war" and undertake a military expedition to their own undoing." ([What the Bible Teaches – Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah](#))

**Rouse the mighty men!** - This is the bugle call to get ready for battle. The Gentile forces are mustered. Three times in Joel 3:9-12 we see the call to the [Valley](#) - "come up" (Joel 3:9), "hasten and come" (Joel 3:11), and "come up." (Joel 3:12). While Israel's enemies are called to "come up," heavenly warriors in a prayer are called to "come down" (Joel 3:11).

**Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up!**- The nations are to gather because it is God's will that they gather. (Joel 3:2-[note](#)). The time of "harvest" is ripe! (Joel 3:13-[note](#)).

**Joel 3:10 Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, "I am a mighty man."**

- **Beat your plowshares into swords** Isa 2:4 Mic 4:3 Lu 22:36
- **Let the weak say, "I am a mighty man:** 2 Chr 25:8 Zec 12:8

## PREPARE WEAPONS



## FOR WAR

Verbs in **bold red** are imperatives or commands in the Hebrew.

**Keil and Delitzsch** - The nations are to summon up all their resources and all their strength for this war, because it will be a decisive one. They are to forge the tools of peaceful agriculture into weapons of war (compare Isa. 2:4 and Mic. 4:3, where the Messianic times of peace are depicted as the turning of weapons of war into instruments of agriculture). Even the weak one is to rouse himself up to be a hero, "as is generally the case when a whole nation is seized with warlike enthusiasm" (Hitzig).

**Beat your plowshares into swords, And your pruning hooks into spears**- Preparation for war means arming the armies with every ounce of firepower that can be mustered, including even implements normally used for peacetime plowing and pruning.

**NET Note on plowshares** - Instead of referring to the large plow as a whole, the plowshare is simply the metal tip which actually breaks the earth and cuts the furrow.

**NET Note on pruning hook** - This implement was used to prune the vines, i.e., to cut off extra leaves and young shoots (M. Klingbeil, NIDOTTE 1:1117–18). It was a short knife with a curved hook at the end sharpened on the inside like a sickle. ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

Judgment of the nations of the world must precede peace among the nations of the world. There will be no "peace in the Middle East" until the Prince of peace returns! (Isaiah 9:6, 7-note describing His two advents) When the Messiah returns, then the beating of **plowshares into swords** will be reversed by **swords into plowshares** in a glorious time of peace in the new age.

And He (MESSIAH IN HIS MILLENNIAL KINGDOM) will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will **hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks**. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. (Isaiah 2:4-note; Micah 4:3-note)

**Comment:** See the bronze statue given to the United Nations in 1959 by the then Soviet Union, which depicts a man with a hammer, beating a sword into a plowshare ([picture](#)). On a humorous note there was a button for sale at Chicago's Peace Museum which said, "Beat your enemies into plowshares."

The call to war at the end of this present evil age precedes the coming of worldwide peace when the Prince of peace returns to wage and win this final battle of the ages. See numerous passages that describe this time of peace in Messiah's Millennial Kingdom..

**NET Note** adds that "Isaiah describes a time of kingdom blessing and prosperity, whereas Joel describes a time of eschatological conflict and judgment." ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

**Let the weak say, "I am a mighty man"** - The idea is to stiffen up your courage for the day of battle. In the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) it is a command "The weak ([adunatos](#)) are continually to **say** ([present imperative](#)) "I am strong ([ischuo](#)). The **mighty ones** in this verse are those who are to come into the **Valley of Jehoshaphat** (Decision) and enter into the battle against the **mighty ones** of Jehovah! (Joel 3:11) They will find that they are no match for the army of the LORD!

**NET Note** - The "weak" individual mentioned here is apparently the farmer who has little or no military prowess or prior fighting experience. Under ordinary circumstances such a person would be ill-prepared for assuming the role of a soldier. However, in the scene that Joel is describing here even the most unlikely candidate will become a participant to be reckoned with in this final conflict. ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

Joel 3:11 **Hasten and come**, all you surrounding nations, And gather yourselves there. **Bring down**, O LORD, Your mighty ones.

- **Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations:** Joel 3:2 Eze 38:9-18 Mic 4:12 Zep 3:8 Zec 14:2,3 Rev 16:14-16 19:19,20 Rev 20:8,9
- **Bring down, O LORD, Your mighty ones.** Ps 103:20 Isa 10:34 13:3 37:36 2Th 1:7 Rev 19:14

## THE DIVINE SUMMONS TO ASSEMBLE

Verbs in **bold red** are imperatives or commands in the Hebrew.

**Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations** - Here we have two divine commands which call for assembly of the nations as quickly as possible in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2). Remember that "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes." (Pr 21:1). God is sovereign and in full control of this last great battle (and its inevitable outcome!)

**And gather yourselves there** - The Hebrew is [qabats](#) (used in Joel 2:6, Joel 2:16, Joel 3:2, Joel 3:11) and is translated in the Septuagint in Joel 3:11 with the verb [sunago](#) (gives us "synagogue" a holy gathering of the Jews for worship) which is in the [aorist imperative](#). God is commanding a gathering of unholy Gentiles, not for the purpose of worship, but for His holy wrath! In the [Valley of Jehoshaphat](#), the Valley of Decision, the judgment time for the nations of the world is "ripe!"

## A PRAYER

**Bring down, O LORD, Your mighty ones** - This is a prayer by the righteous (some think this is Joel's prayer). This reminds me of the cry in Revelation 6

When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; 10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "**How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?**" (Rev 6:9-10-[note](#))

**Comment:** Joel 3 (and many other prophetic passages) is in effect God's answer to the saint's cry from beneath the altar. The time has arrived. It is "Decision Time" for the multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Decision. (Joel 3:14-[note](#))

**NET Note** - Some commentators prefer to delete the line "**Bring down, O LORD, your warriors,**" understanding it to be a later addition. But this is unnecessary. Contrary to what some have suggested, a prayer for the LORD's intervention is not out of place here. ([Net Notes Joel 3](#)) (**ED:** IS THIS JOEL'S PRAYER? POSSIBLY, BUT ONE CANNOT BE DOGMATIC. IT COULD BE THE PRAYER OF THE SAINTS ON THE EARTH WHO ARE SUFFERING PERSECUTION AT THE HANDS OF THE ANTICHRIST!)

**Your mighty ones** - Keil refers to the mighty ones as "heavenly heroes." **Mighty** is [gibbor](#) a word used in one of the great names of Christ, [Christ Mighty God - El Gibbor](#), which is a good reminder that they [and we] are **mighty** not in their [our] own strength but in the strength of [El Gibbor](#) (cf a NT "warfare" command to "**be strong** [[present imperative](#)] a command only possible to obey unless we are filled with/controlled by His Spirit - Eph 5:18-note] in the Lord and in the strength of His might" = Eph 6:10-12-note, cf 2 Ti 2:1-note, 2 Cor 12:9-10-[note](#)). This is a prayer asking for God's army to meet the world's armies. While this undoubtedly includes angels, we the saints will be riding on white horses (yes, even those of you who have never ridden a horse before!) following behind our King of kings in His triumphant "equestrian entrance"...

"These (Rev 17:11-13-[note](#)) will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and **those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.**" (Revelation 17:14-[note](#))

**Comment** - In the first advent Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a lowly donkey not as a conqueror of Rome, but the humble Servant (Mk 10:45) Who would conquer the greatest enemy, death (1 Cor 15:26). In His second advent, He returns riding a white horse, just as the triumphant Roman generals would do as they rode ahead of their conquering army (cf 2 Cor 2:14-16).

**Tony Garland on the called and chosen and faithful** - The angels which did not follow Satan in his rebellion (Rev. 12:4) are also said to be "**chosen**": "The elect angels" is *tōn eklektōn angelōn*. But being **called** speaks of a time prior to having come to the faith—something the elect angels do not experience for they have never been lost, but remained continually faithful. **Calling** is unique to those saints who at one time were not saints, that is, human beings rather than angels (Ro 1:6; Ro 8:28-30; 2Ti. 2:9). (Alan F. Johnson, Revelation: The Expositor's Bible Commentary) "These epithets **called, chosen, and faithful**, can only strictly apply to saints [not angels]." (Gregory K. Beale, The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text)

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. 13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 **And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.** (Revelation 19:11-14-[note](#))

**Tony Garland** on the composition of **the armies which are in heaven** - The army is composed of "**saints**" which denotes those who are set apart and dedicated to God. This term includes both angels (e.g., 2Th 1:7+) and men (1Th 3:13+). Joel indicates that God's "mighty ones" will be among them—almost certainly a reference to angels (Joel 3:11). Scripture records rare glimpses into the abilities of these mighty ones. When Hezekiah petitioned the LORD for defense against Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, the LORD sent His angel who killed 185,000 Assyrians in one night (2K. 19:35). When forces came against Elisha and his servant became alarmed, Elisha prayed that the LORD might open his eyes: "And behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (2K. 6:14 cf. Ps. 68:17).....Since [The 70th Week of Daniel](#) is not over until Christ has returned to earth, it seems that the OT saints have not yet been resurrected (Da 12:2-note)(**Ed**: For example, compare Daniel rising at "the end of the age" Da 12:13-note). Therefore, they are not a part of the army which rides forth. If the resurrection of the Tribulation saints (Rev 7:9, 14-[note](#)) occurs at the institution of the Millennial Kingdom ("they lived," Rev. 20:4-[note](#))—and the Tribulation has not yet officially ended—neither will they have been resurrected to participate in the army. This infers that the human element of the army is limited to the previously-raptured Church. ([note](#))

**Henry Morris** on **Your mighty ones** - These "**mighty ones**" must be the armies of the saints with Christ in heaven, as they "come down" with Him to smite and judge the rebellious nations at [Armageddon](#) (Revelation 19:11-21-[note](#)).

**Joel 3:12 Let the nations be aroused And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, For there I will sit to judge All the surrounding nations.**

- **to the valley of Jehoshaphat**,: Joe 3:2,14 2Ch 20:26 Eze 39:11 Zec 14:4
- **For there I will sit to judge All the surrounding nations**: Ps 2:8,9 7:6 76:8,9 96:13 98:9 110:5,6 Isa 2:4 3:13 Eze 30:3 Mic 4:3 Rev 19:11

## **TIME TO WAKE UP! IT'S TIME FOR WAR**

**Let the nations be aroused** (This is a command in the [present imperative](#) in the [Septuagint - Lxx](#)) - An exhortation for **the nations** ([personified](#)) to awaken for war. The Hebrew verb **be aroused** ('ur) is used by Jeremiah to describe Babylon is as stirring, preparing to move against Judah (Jeremiah 6:22; Jeremiah 50:41). In Daniel 11, the king of the north stirs up his power and courage against the king of the south (Daniel 11:2-note, Daniel 11:25-[note](#)). In Israel's struggle against Sisera, Deborah is urged "**Awake, awake**, Deborah; **Awake, awake**, sing a song! Arise, Barak, and take away your captives, O son of Abinoam." (Jdg 5:12-note).

It is time for the nations to "wake up!" It is God's predetermined time for the real [War of the Worlds](#)," the last battle of [the Campaign of Armageddon](#).

**Be aroused** (05782) ('ur) means to stir, to arouse, to awaken and is used of raising something or someone to action, agitating someone, or motivating them. (Jdg. 5:12-note; Ps. 57:8, Zech 9:13). The Lxx translates it with the verb exegeiro mean to wake up (Mk 6:45) and as noted above is in the [present imperative](#).

**And come up** - It is interesting that the Hebrew verb **come up** (alah) means to ascend (as does the Lxx verb used to translate alah = [anabaino](#) = climb up) implying the valley was at a higher elevation.

**To the valley of Jehoshaphat** - See [previous note on the Valley of Jehoshaphat](#).

**Brian Bell** - Valley of Meggido - Armageddon (city); Harmageddon (hill); plain of Esdraelon. Valley of Jehoshaphat – Kidron valley. Edom – Isa 63:1-6 This campaign is pictured as extending from the plain of Meggido, down through Jerusalem, extending down to Edom in the south, which ultimately covers the whole land of Israel...See Rev.14:14-20 (1600 furlongs/stadia=184 miles) ([Sermon on Joel 3:1-21](#))

**For** - [term of explanation](#) - Simply explains why the nations are to come to this valley. Of course they are deceived, thinking that they are coming to once and for all time annihilate God's Chosen People and the nation of Israel. Wrong! As the psalmist records...

Why are the nations in an uproar **and the peoples** (GENTILE NATIONS) **devising a vain thing**? (Heb = riq = worthless; Lxx = kenos = empty, that which does not attain its goal!) (The question is rhetorical = the psalmist expresses his outrage that the nations would even dare to rebel against the Almighty God!) 2 The kings of the

earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed (THE MESSIAH - Heb = [mashiach/masiyah](#); Lxx = [Christos](#)), (THIS PROPHECY WILL BE FULFILLED IN THE [DAY OF THE LORD](#), IN THE CAMPAIGN OF ARMAGEDDON) saying, 3 (THE REBELLIOUS KINGS CONTINUE THEIR DECEPTION) "Let us tear their (GOD'S) fetters apart and cast away their (FATHER AND SON'S) cords from us!" 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. 5 Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury (COMPARE Joel 3:16 - "**the LORD roars from Zion And utters His voice from Jerusalem**"), saying, 6 "But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion ([Tsiyyon](#)), My holy mountain." (cf Isaiah 2:2-[note](#), Zechariah 14:9, 10-note) 7 "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

**There I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations**- This description pictures Jesus as the Judge (John 5:22, cf 2 Ti 4:1-note) Who presides over this gathering of godless Gentiles in the Valley of Decision. His verdict is about to be rendered (Rev 19:15-21)!The purpose of the gathering is judgment at mentioned in Joel 3:2-[note](#).

In the Messianic psalm, Psalm 2, the Father addresses the Son

Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. 9 'You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.'" (Ps 2:8-9)

**Giesler** - PROBLEM: Joel declares that God will "sit to judge all the surrounding nations." But, elsewhere the Bible says God "stands to judge the people" (Isa. 3:13). Which is true? SOLUTION: Both are figures of speech which express literal and compatible truths. God "sits" to hear everyone impartially and decide their guilt or innocence. Then He "stands" to execute the judgment on the case. Each expression describes a different aspect of God's rule as judge. (When Critics Ask)

**Joel 3:13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.**

- **Put in the sickle:** Dt 16:9 Mk 4:29 Rev 14:15,16
- **for the harvest is ripe:** Jer 51:33 Ho 6:11 Mt 13:39
- **for the wine press is full:** Isa 63:3 La 1:15 Rev 14:17-20
- **for their wickedness is great:** Ge 13:13 15:16 18:20

**NET** Rush forth with the sickle, for the harvest is ripe! Come, stomp the grapes, for the winepress is full! The vats overflow. Indeed, their evil is great!

## **TWO METAPHORS: THE HARVEST IS RIPE THE WINE PRESS IS FULL!**

Verbs in **bold red** are imperatives or commands in the Hebrew.

**Keil and Delitzsch** - It is to the last decisive judgment, in which all the single judgments find their end, that the command of Jehovah to His strong heroes refers. The judgment is represented under the double figure of the reaping of the fields and the [grapes as they are tread by stomping feet](#) or crushed by the [wine-press](#). The angels are first of all summoned to reap the ripe corn (Isa. 17:5; Rev. 14:16), and then commanded to tread the wine-presses that are filled with grapes.

Joel now figuratively depicts God's future judgment of the wicked using metaphors of a **winepress** ([Wikipedia on wine press](#)) and a **harvest** ([description of a harvest](#)) both of which would be familiar to his [agrarian](#) readers.

We see a striking contrast in the two metaphors used here with their use in a literal sense in Joel 2:24-note to describe the abundant harvest of wine and grapes in the coming glorious Millennial Kingdom of God, Joel recording that...

The threshing floors will be full of grain, And the vats will overflow with the new wine and oil.

And so in Joel 2:24 we see the effect of the **good hand of the LORD** on the nation of Israel for blessing and in Joel 3:11 we see the effect of the **heavy hand of the LORD** (cf 1 Sa 5:6,9, 7:13) on the nations of the world for judgment.

God's future judgment of the entire world is seen in many OT passages such as

Thus I will punish the world for its evil And the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless. 12 I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold And

mankind than the gold of Ophir. 13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, And the earth will be shaken from its place At the fury of the LORD of hosts In the day of His burning anger. (Isaiah 13:11-13-note)

**Keil and Delitzsch** - The ripeness of the corn is a figurative representation of ripeness for judgment. Just as in the harvest—namely, at the threshing and winnowing connected with the harvest—the grains of corn are separated from the husk, the wheat being gathered into the barns, the husk blown away by the wind, and the straw burned; so will the good be separated from the wicked by the judgment, the former being gathered into the kingdom of God for the enjoyment of eternal life,—the latter, on the other hand, being given up to eternal death. The harvest field is the earth ( γ , Rev. 14:16), i.e., the inhabitants of the earth, the human race.

**Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe** - Joel gives a metaphorical description of the sin of the nations as "ripe" and ready to be harvested. Unlike a normal grain harvest, there will be no separation from wheat and chaff, for these rebels are all chaff and all bound for eternal destruction after experiencing sure and sudden temporal destruction. The irony of this metaphor is that normally harvesting of grapes or grains was a time of joy and celebration of life, but here is a time of gloom and certainty of death to the Gentile forces. The harvest was not one of ripe grain, but ripe sinners!

**Jesus** alludes to this end of the age **harvest** of wicked "wheat" in His parable of the wheat and the tares...

And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, 38 and the field is the world (NOTE IT IS **NOT** THE CHURCH! THIS IS A PICTURE OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD, NOT THE WORLD IN THE CHURCH!); and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom (IN Mt 13:19 SEED WAS THE "WORD" BUT HERE IT IS GOD'S PEOPLE PLANTED IN THE WORLD - EACH WITH A DIVINE ASSIGNMENT-TO SOW THE SEED OF THE GOSPEL!); and the tares are the sons of the evil one (SONS OF SATAN - Jn 8:44, 1 Jn 3:10); 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the **harvest** (**REPRESENTATIVE OF GOD'S JUDGMENT**) is the end of the age (THE AGE WE ARE IN NOW); and the reapers are angels. 40" So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. (Mt 13:37-40)

**John** describes Jesus at His Second Coming to judge the nations...

From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations (cf **harvest is ripe**), and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty (cf **the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great**) (Rev 19:15-note)

**Tony Garland comments** - *He Himself treads* is autos patei : *He, He is presently treading*. As with His rule, His identity as the One Who treads is emphasized. His rule is *future tense* whereas His treading is *present tense*. This indicates He is treading the winepress at His Second Coming before He takes up His rule over the nations. This provides further evidence that His rule upon the throne of David begins *after* His return (Mat. 25:31).

Although the armies of heaven are with Him (Rev. 19:14<sub>±</sub>, Rev 19:19<sub>±</sub>), it appears that He alone does the work of judgment: "I have trodden the winepress **alone**, and from the peoples **no one was with Me**. . . . I looked, but *there was* no one to help, and I wondered that *there was* no one to help, and I wondered that *there was* no one to uphold; therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me" [emphasis added] (Isa. 63:3-5). Isaiah 63:1-6 (commentary) made it clear that although the armies of saints and angels will return with him, they will not participate in the fighting. Messiah will fight this battle by Himself.<sup>49</sup> He is responding to the command recorded by Joel: "Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow—for their wickedness *is* great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision" (Joel 3:13b-14). When John saw Him in His glory, He had feet like fine brass, "as if refined in a furnace" (Rev. 1:15<sub>±</sub>). This glowing hot feet foreshadow His trampling the winepress in judgment which John sees now. See commentary on [Revelation 1:15](#). See [Grapes of Wrath](#).

The **prophet Micah** also speaks of a time of **harvest** a common metaphor used to depict judgment in Scripture. The motive of the nations who are about to be "threshed" and "harvested" is their Satanically inspired desire to annihilate the literal nation of Israel in hopes that they can bring God's plan for the ages to an end!

Writhe and labor to give birth, Daughter of Zion, Like a woman in childbirth; For now you will go out of the city, Dwell in the field, And go to Babylon. There you will be rescued; There the LORD will redeem you From the hand of your enemies. 11 Now also many nations have gathered against you (ISRAEL), who say, "Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion." But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord, nor do they understand His counsel; for **He will gather them like sheaves to the threshing floor**. "Arise and thresh, O daughter of

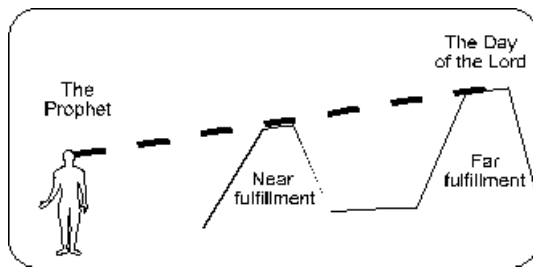


Zion; for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hooves bronze; you shall beat in pieces many peoples; I will consecrate their gain to the Lord, and their substance to the Lord of the whole earth.” (Micah 4:11-13-note)

**Charles Ryrrie** writes "This passage looks further ahead, to the great [Campaign of Armageddon](#) immediately preceding the [Second Coming](#) of Christ and the [Millennial kingdom](#). There the world will be lined up against Israel (ED: cf Joel 3:2, 12-14), but God will give Israel victory, using horn of iron and hoofs of bronze."

**W A Criswell** - In a remarkable prophecy, Micah foresees the Babylonian Exile of the Jews, which took place in the sixth century. He makes it clear that the Exile and return have to take place before the messianic age.

**Henry Morris** - Here Micah leaps over the coming captivity in Babylon (Micah 4:10) and deliverance therefrom, to the great ultimate invasion of Israel in the last days (Revelation 16:13-16). There is a near and far fulfillment as shown below



**Tony Garland** comments on Micah's prophecy - Notice the ignorance of the nations in regard to God's plans concerning Zion: "They do not know the thoughts of the Lord, nor do they understand his counsel." This is evident even in our own day. We study the book of Revelation and these related passages which make it abundantly clear that God has a future plan for the nation Israel and that plan includes her ownership of *His land* with Jerusalem as her eternal capital. Yet, the daily news indicates great confusion on the part of the nations as to the status of Jerusalem and the Promised Land in general. People the world over wonder what the big fuss is about the Jews and Jerusalem, but it is *all so clear* to any student of the Scriptures. Alas, the nations of the world are almost completely ignorant of God's Word concerning the subject—as they will be in the day of their demise seen by Micah. "This prophecy envisioned Nebuchadnezzar's armies that were composed of many nations, but it is to be fulfilled in the armed forces of the nations gathered at Armageddon (Rev 16:13-16+), who will be determined to destroy Israel and do away with God's plan and take over the earth."<sup>43</sup>

Isaiah 27:12-13 describes a **positive** harvest, for while the nations that come against Israel will be threshed, winnowed and discarded as chaff, the [redeemed of Israel](#) will be regathered when the nation is restored to Millennial prominence (cf God's stated purpose in Joel 3:1-note)...

**In that day** ([expressions of time should always prompt a question "When?"](#)) the LORD will start His threshing from the flowing stream of the Euphrates to the brook of Egypt, and you (ISRAEL) will be gathered up one by one, O sons of Israel. 13 It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

**When?** This refers to the end times, to [Time of Jacob's Distress](#) (Jeremiah 30:7-note) during which God first destroys Babylon in the 7th Bowl (Rev 16:17) and then the armies of the world, multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Decision

**Allen Ross** explains that " From beyond the Euphrates and from beyond the Wadi of Egypt (these are the boundaries of the Land), Israelites would be regathered. Never did Israel have the Land of Promise according to the biblical dimensions; and certainly never did a pure Israel possess it. Here God will "thresh" ([hypocatastasis](#)) through the lands of oppression, the [chaff](#) will be discarded, but the good grain regathered into the barn. Paul in Romans 11 carries the theme to its clear statement: "All Israel will be saved." (Ro 11:25-26-note, cf Zech 12:10-14-note, Zech 13:1-note, Zech 13:8-9-note) Ezekiel will explain in his wonderful vision of the dry bones that Israel will be regathered at the end of the age in two steps, first physically regathered (the bones come together), meaning restored to the land as a nation but in unbelief; and then there will be the spiritual quickening (the Spirit breathes life into the bones) in which the



surviving Jewish people will come to faith in massive numbers (Ezekiel 37-note). The second image here is of the trumpet blast. The image, quite possibly the Word of God like a trumpet blast, calls or summons the people to the holy mountain, which he says now, is in Jerusalem. The apostle Paul used the image of the trumpet for the end of the age ingathering (like Israel's festival of Ingathering at Tabernacles) at the coming of the LORD. When the LORD gave Israel victory over Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt when He restored them to their land in 536, that was a great deliverance (see [diagram of near/far fulfillment](#)). But this passage was not fulfilled at that time (although it could have been used to explain the victory); in fact, some of the oracles of these end times were written by the prophets after the return from the exile. Evil still existed, Israel was not pure, and their stay in the land would not last but a few centuries and they would be scattered again. The fulfillment still lies in the future.

**Come, tread, for the wine press is full** - Another metaphor of their sins filled to the brim and overflowing.

What a literal wine-press is to ordinary grapes, the wrath of God is to the "grapes" (nations) referred to here" (Keil). In other words, this is not a fruitful wine-press, for it is **the wine-press of the wrath of God** (Rev 14:19-note), the time of the treading of the grapes of wrath, the final conflagration when God crushes all His enemies at the Second Coming of Christ (Isaiah 34:2-8; Isaiah 63:1-6-note; Joel 3:12-14; Zephaniah 3:8-note; Revelation 19:15-note). See also Garland's discussion of the [Grapes of Wrath](#).

**NET Note** - Heb "go down" or "tread." The Hebrew term כָּדוּ (rédu) may be from יָרַד (yarad, "to go down") or from רָדַח (radah, "have dominion," here in the sense of "to tread"). If it means "go down," the reference would be to entering the vat to squash the grapes. If it means "tread," the verb would refer specifically to the action of those who walk over the grapes to press out their juice. The phrase "the grapes" is supplied in the NET translation for clarity. ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

**The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great** - Vats are pictured as filled with their sins, which are so great that the vat is could not hold them all!

**NET Note** makes an excellent point - The immediacy of judgment upon wickedness is likened to the urgency required for a harvest that has reached its pinnacle of development. **When the harvest is completely ripe, there can be no delay by the reapers in gathering the harvest.** In a similar way, Joel envisions a time when human wickedness will reach such a heightened degree that there can be no further stay of divine judgment (cf. the "fullness of time" language in Gal 4:4). ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

**Isaiah 63:1-6** (see commentary) presents a picture which parallels Joel's description of the final reaping and treading of the earth...

Who (MESSIAH) is this who comes from Edom, with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." 2 Why is Your apparel red, **And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?** 3 **"I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment.** 4 "For the day of vengeance (HIS JUDGMENT IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION) was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come (DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL, RESTORATION OF THE NATION). 5 "I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. 6 **"I trod down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."**

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**We see a similar description of reaping in the last days by the apostle John in Revelation 14...**

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because **the harvest of the earth is ripe**" 16 **Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.** 17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. 18 Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "**Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.**" 19 So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. 20 And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles. (Rev.14:14-20)

## Revelation 14:14-20

### Revelation 14:14

#### a while cloud

Clouds are often associated with God, and particularly the Son of Man (Mt. 24:30; Luke 21:27; Rev. 1:7<sup>+</sup>). See commentary on [Revelation 1:7](#).

#### One like the Son of Man

A clear indication that none other than Jesus is sitting on the cloud (Dan. 7:13; Mt. 26:64). The reason that Son of Man oversees the harvest of wheat is that it is He who sowed the good seed (Mt. 13:37).

#### having on His head a golden crown

*Crown* is [στέφανον](#) [stephanon] . See [Crowns](#).

### Revelation 14:15

#### another angel came out of the temple

When angels come out of the temple on a mission, this is an indication of their divine mandate. The seven angels with the seven last plagues come out of the heavenly temple (Rev. 15:6<sup>+</sup>). It is a voice from the temple which gives them final authority to “pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth” (Rev. 16:1<sup>+</sup>). The harvest of both the faithful and the ungodly are initiated by the Father, from within the temple.

#### for the time has come

The longsuffering and grace of God and His desire that all should have opportunity to repent now finally draws to a close for He knows that no more will come (2Pe. 3:9). His mercy withholds judgment, but his justice and righteousness make it unavoidable (Rev. 16:7<sup>+</sup>).

“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Mark 13:32). This is the end of the age, the long period when both good and evil were allowed to grow side-by-side. Now there will be a separation in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom to follow:

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Mat. 13:47-50)

All who remain alive on the face of the planet must now identify with one or the other of the two criminals crucified with Christ. All the world stands guilty. Those in the first harvest, like the repentant thief on the cross (Luke 23:42), turn in desperation to Christ for cleansing of their sins. They are the wheat. Those in the second harvest (the vintage of wrath) are like the thief who continues to revile Christ (Luke 23:39).

They are the tares which are gathered for destruction.

#### for the harvest of the earth is ripe

The harvest is used throughout the Scriptures to symbolize the final gathering and separation of that which is desirable and productive (wheat) from that which is useless and for the fire (tares, chaff). The judgment attending the harvest is often represented by the threshing floor where the grain is separated from the outer husk (2Sa 24:16; 1Chr. 21:15; Jer. 51:33; Dan. 2:35+; Mic. 4:12).<sup>58</sup>

For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor When it is time to thresh her; yet a little while and the time of her harvest will come.” (Jer. 51:33)

The long age so central to Jesus’ teaching concerning the “kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 13:24, 31, 33, 44-45, 47, 52) has now drawn to a close. (See [The Arrival of God’s Kingdom](#)) It is now the time of the harvest. “But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come” (Mark 4:29).

At the harvest at the end of the age, there are both wheat and tares. The harvest includes a reaping of both and their separation. The wheat is gathered and preserved, the tares are gathered and destroyed.

But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the

owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' (Mt. 13:26-30)

It seems best to understand the two harvests depicted here as two aspects of the final harvest at the end of the age: a harvest of redemption and a harvest of wrath.<sup>59</sup> Those who view both as harvests of judgment have difficulty explaining why there should be two such harvests of wrath and what, if anything, can be said to differ between them? When the two harvests are compared, we see that Jesus is specifically associated with the first harvest—for it was He who sowed the good grain. Unlike the second harvest, there is no hint of wrath associated with the first harvest: no angel from the altar, no power over fire, no grapes, no trampling, no blood. The only possible negative aspect concerning the first harvest is that it is said to be *ripe*, *exēranthē* from *zērainō*, which means *to dry up or wither* and is used to describe plants without good roots (Mark 4:6).<sup>60</sup> However, since the first harvest involves not grapes, but by implication wheat, this could just be a description of what naturally occurs when wheat reaches its maturity. All things considered, it seems best to understand these as two *different* harvests, one to gather faithful wheat and the other to destroy wild grapes. We are in agreement with Alford:

What is the distinction between the two ingatherings? And why do we read of the casting into the wine-press of God's wrath in the second case, and of no corresponding feature in the other? Again, why is the agency so different—the Son of man on the white cloud with a golden crown in the one case, the mere angel in the other? Besides, the two ingatherings seem quite distinct. The former is over before the other begins. On the whole then, though I would not pronounce decidedly, I must incline to think that the harvest is the ingathering of the saints, God's harvest, reaped from the earth: described here thus generally, before the vintage of wrath which follows.<sup>61</sup>

## **Revelation 14:16**

### **He who sat on the cloud**

The Son of Man is the one who reaps the first harvest of the saved. Although He is intimately involved with the first harvest, Scripture reveals that angels carry out the details of both harvests.

### **the earth was reaped**

The reaping which takes place is worldwide. "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Mt. 24:31). One view connects this event with the resurrection of the saved dead prior to the Millennial Kingdom (cf. Rev. 20:4+).

This, then, is our Lord's return at the end of the tribulation to harvest the bodies of the saints who die during the tribulation (Rev. 14:13+) so as to reunite them with their souls, which, up to this point, will have been under the altar before God (Rev. 6:9+). This reaping is the gathering of the harvest into Christ's barn (Mat. 13:30). . . . The living redeemed will still be on earth, but the bodies of all deceased saints will have been resurrected and taken to Heaven. This addresses the state of all the saved during the tribulation.<sup>62</sup>

The saints which remain alive at the end of the Tribulation participate in the Sheep and Goat Judgment and enter the Millennial Kingdom in their natural bodies (Mt. 25:31-34). (See MacArthur's sermons on Sheep and Goat Judgment of the Nations - [sermon 1](#), [sermon 2](#), [sermon 3](#))

## **Revelation 14:17**

### **another angel came out of the temple in heaven**

The authority to issue the command to reap the vintage of wrath is equally dependent upon the authority of God. See commentary on Revelation 14:15. Jesus taught that the angels would be involved in the final harvest:

The enemy who sowed them [the tares] is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who

practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! (Mt. 13:39-43)

The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. . . . So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just. (Mat. 13:41-42, [49](#)).

This second angel initiates the gathering of the tares, the removal of the ungodly who are “taken”:

“Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods *are* in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot’s wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two *men* in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two *women* will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two *men* will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left.” And they answered and said to Him, “Where, Lord?” So He said to them, “Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.” (Luke 17:30-37 cf. Mt. 24:28-note)

As in the days of Noah, those whom are *taken* are taken in judgment (Mt. 24:38-39; Luke 21:26-27-note). The “eagles will be gathered together” to feast on the carrion of the dead (Job 39:30; Rev. 19:17-18+).<sup>63</sup>

## Revelation 14:18

### another angel came out from the altar

The mention of the altar connects the upcoming vintage of wrath with the cry of the souls under the altar at the opening of the fifth seal. “And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ ” (Rev. 6:10+). God had told them that they should rest until the remaining number of their fellow servants would be killed as they were. That time has now come.

### who had power over fire

This may be the same angel who offered the prayers of the saints with incense “upon the golden altar which was before the throne” (Rev. 8:3+). There, after offering the prayers, he filled his censer with fire from the altar and threw it to the earth prefiguring the series of trumpet judgments (Rev. 8:4-6+). Similarly, it was “a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God” which resulted in the release of the four angels bound at the Euphrates bringing the plague of demonic horsemen. This final vintage of wrath is also motivated by mountains of prayer by the saints of all times and ages for righteous judgment and vindication by God.

This is the baptism of fire spoken of by John the Baptist. In his warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees who were coming to his baptism, he indicated that the One following after him would initiate two baptisms. Every person living would receive one or the other.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; **but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.** (Mat. 3:11-12) [emphasis added]

John answered, saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; **but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.**” (Luke 3:16-17-note) [emphasis added]

The term *and with fire* is better translated “or with fire.” The immediate context certainly indicates that to be baptized with fire is the result of judgment (notice the reference to purging and burning in the next verse). Other than the visible tongues (billows) of fire which appeared over the disciples’ heads at Pentecost, references to fire burning up unprofitable chaff refer to judgment rather than cleansing. The threshing fan (Mat. 3:12) refers to a wooden shovel used for tossing grain into the wind in order to blow away the lighter chaff, leaving the good grain to settle in a pile. The chaff would then be swept up and burned, the unquenchable fire refers to the eternal punishment of hell or the lake of fire.<sup>64</sup>

## gather the clusters of the vine of the earth

### Joel foresaw the vintage of wrath associated with the [Day of the Lord](#):

Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow-For their wickedness *is* great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision. (Joel 3:12-14)

The reason that these vines will be trodden is that they are wild grapes. Like His chosen nation Israel, those on the earth had not born the fruit God intended.

For their vine *is* of the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes *are* grapes of gall, their clusters *are* bitter. Their wine *is* the poison of serpents, and the cruel venom of cobras. (Deut 32:32-33)

Now let me sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. He dug it up and cleared out its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, and also made a winepress in it; so He expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? **And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.** (Isa. 5:1-5-note) [emphasis added]

## for her grapes are fully ripe

God allows evil to have its full fruit for several reasons. First, He provides ample opportunity for the godless to repent and seek forgiveness and restoration. Secondly, He allows the depth of sin to have its full development in those who have forever turned their back on redemption. "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete" (Ge 15:16-note). Although His patience and mercy are abundant, He must eventually judge in order to vindicate His character: "The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, so that men will say, 'Surely *there is* a reward for the righteous; surely He is God who judges in the earth' " (Ps. 58:10-11).

## Revelation 14:19

### threw it *into* the great winepress of the wrath of God

This is not a fruitful winepress, for it is the winepress *of the wrath of God*. This is the time of the treading of the grapes of wrath, the final conflagration when God wipes out all His enemies at the second advent of Christ (Isa. 34:2-8; 63:1-6; Joel 3:12-14; Zep. 3:8 (note); Rev. 19:15+). See [Grapes of Wrath](#).

## Revelation 14:20

### outside the city

*The city* is Jerusalem. Like unclean and accursed things, these will be disposed of outside the city.

For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. (Heb. 13:11-13)

The valley of Jehoshaphat was outside Jerusalem and it is there that the fullest vengeance of God shall be poured out, "**the press is full**" (Joel 3:13).<sup>65</sup>

The judgment of the nations in Joel 3:12-14 (which supplies the dual figures of harvest and vintage) takes place in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which traditions links with the Kidron valley lying between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. Zechariah 14:1-4 (note) places the final battle on the outskirts of Jerusalem.<sup>66</sup>

See [Campaign of Armageddon](#).

## and blood came out

The bloodshed associated with the judgment which falls at the [Campaign of Armageddon](#) at the close of the Tribulation period is unprecedented:

The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made overflowing with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. The wild oxen shall come down with them, and the young bulls with the mighty bulls; their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust saturated with fatness. For *it is* the day of the LORD'S vengeance, the year of recompense for the cause of Zion. (Isa. 34:6-8)

It results in the staining of Jesus garments (Isa. 63:1-6-note; Rev. 19:13+). See [Blood Stained Garments](#).

#### up to the horses bridles

Possibly a reference to the armies in heaven who follow after Christ on white horses (Rev. 19:14+). More likely, a reference to the horses of Christ's enemies.

#### one thousand six hundred furlongs

*Furlong* is [σταδίων](#) [stadiōn] , a distance of one-eighth of a mile (185 meters)<sup>67</sup>. The total distance is approximately 200 miles.<sup>68</sup>

The blood stretches for 1,600 furlongs, which is approximately two hundred miles. The two hundred miles may refer to the entire area from the Valley of Armageddon to Bozrah, which is about two hundred miles. Another possible explanation is that it refers to the round trip distance between Jerusalem and Bozrah. The fighting will begin in Jerusalem and move to Bozrah (100 miles), and with the Second Coming, will return back from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (another 100 miles). But the best explanation is based on Jeremiah 49:20-22 . . . In the context (see Jer. 49:13-14), this passage is dealing with the Campaign of Armageddon. The massive blood-letting that begins at Bozrah begins moving south down the Arabah until it empties in the Red Sea at the present-day cities of Eilat and Akaba. The distance from there to Jerusalem is about two hundred miles.<sup>69</sup>

Armageddon is in the north of Palestine [Rev. 16:14-16+], the valley of Jehoshaphat is in the south. Bozrah is named by Isaiah as the place where the Lord treads the winepress [Isa. 63:1-6-note]. And the distance between the farthest points of this "front" is 1600 furlongs.<sup>70</sup>

What is signified is a vast destruction of human life over a circumscribed area. Certainly what is stated of the vast slaughter is beyond anything ever known.<sup>71</sup>

Although it is possible that this description is [hyperbole](#), one must ask why then does Scripture mention this precise distance? Besides implicating the areas that might be involved (above), it would seem to indicate the magnitude of the final slaughter of all the ungodly. Attempts to understand the exact magnitude of the judgment are nearly impossible, but can provide some insight into the immensity of the slaughter:

Let us consider the biblical portrayal of the size of this disaster: this river of blood is 184 miles long, and its depth is the height of a horse's bit. Now, if a horse's bit is four feet high, we can calculate the volume required to fill a blood stream of varying widths, and as we know that the typical quantity of blood in a person is six quarts, we can then calculate how many people it would take to supply the blood. The blood from one billion human beings would make a stream not even twenty yards wide over this length of 184 miles (a trough 4' deep with radiused sides would average 53 feet in width to hold the blood from one billion humans). If these figures are taken literally—and surely, when we recognize the literality of fulfilled prophecy in Daniel, they must be—then it is clear that God portrays the slaying of all unregenerate mankind. Notably, as the width is not given, we cannot determine the population of the earth at this time.<sup>72</sup>

See [Campaign of Armageddon](#).

Child of Adam, hear, and be admonished now while salvation is so freely offered. Be not deceived, for God is not mocked. Those impieties of thine, those guilty sports and gaieties, will yet have to be confronted before the judgment seat. Those gatherings in the gaming-hells and drink-shops of Satan, those sneers and witty jests at sacred things, those fiery lusts burning on the altars of carnal pleasure, are all written down in the account-books of eternity to be brought forth in the great day. . . . Think, O man, O woman, how would you fare were He this night to strike! If not *in the city*, in reconciliation with the King, outside is only death and damnation, and nothing can make it different.<sup>73</sup>



to get your soul stirring for the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to trample wickedness and right wrongs. [Maranatha!](#)  
[Hosanna!](#) [Hallelujah!](#) [Amen!](#)

Mine eyes have seen the glory  
of the coming of the LORD,  
He is trampling out the vintage  
where the grapes of wrath are stored,  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning  
of His terrible swift sword,  
His truth is marching on!

Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah  
Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on

I have seen Him in the watch fires  
of a hundred circling camps,  
They have builded Him an altar  
in the evening dews and damps,  
I can read His righteous sentence  
in the dim and flaring lamps,  
His day is marching on!

Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah  
Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on

In the beauty of the lilies  
Christ was born across the sea,  
With a glory in his bosom  
that transfigures you and me,  
As He died to make men holy  
let us live to make men free,  
His truth is marching on

Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah  
Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on

I have read a fiery Gospel  
writ in burnished rows of steel,  
"As ye deal with My contemners  
so with you My grace shall deal,"  
Let the Hero born of woman  
crush the serpent with His heel,  
Since God is marching on

Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah  
Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on

He has sounded forth the trumpet  
that shall never call retreat,  
He is sifting out the hearts of men  
before His judgment seat,  
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him!  
Be jubilant, my feet,  
Our God is marching on

Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah  
Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on

He is coming like the glory

of the morning on the wave,  
He is wisdom to the mighty  
He is honor to the brave,  
So the world shall be His footstool  
and the soul of wrong His slave,  
Our God is marching on

Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah  
Glory! Glory ! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on

**BACKGROUND TO THE BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC** - Julia Ward Howe wrote the lyrics to "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" after visiting a Union Army Camp on the Potomac River near Washington D.C. in December of 1861. Her ancestors were famous during The American Revolutionary War. While visiting the army camp, she heard a favorite marching song of the Union Army. The song was set to the melody from the parody song "John Brown's Body." The John Brown in the song referred to a Scottish Sergeant in the 12th Massachusetts Regiment, not John Brown the famous abolitionist. The song's melody was made famous before the Civil War by a South Carolinian choirmaster and organist named William Steffe. He is believed to have written the melody in 1856. The song was originally titled "Say Brothers Will You Meet Us." Reverend James Freeman Clark challenged Julia Ward Howe into writing a poem with a more powerful message for the marching song. That same night Julia Ward Howe dreamed the first line and awoke with it on her mind in the middle of the night. She wrote the entire poem by candle light before dawn. She forced herself up from her sleep because she was fearful that if she did not immediately write the poem she would forget it. The Atlantic Monthly paid her five dollars for the poem and published it in 1862, James T. Field of The Atlantic Monthly named the poem "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." The chaplain of the 122nd Ohio Regiment taught it to Union soldiers every where. It is said that President Abraham Lincoln was so moved by the song, he wept when he heard it. ([SOURCE](#))

**Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.**

- **Multitudes, multitudes:** Joe 3:2 Isa 34:2-8 63:1-7 Eze 38:8-23 39:8-20 Rev 16:14-16 19:19-21
- **In the valley of decision:** Php 3:2
- **For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision:** Joe 2:1 Ps 37:13 2Pe 3:7

NET Crowds, great crowds are in the valley of decision, for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision!

NLT Thousands upon thousands are waiting in the valley of decision. There the day of the LORD will soon arrive.

## **GOD'S VERDICT IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION**

**Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision...the valley of decision** (NAS Marginal note = "God's verdict") - The repetition emphasizes the unmistakable certainty that this is judgment day. All the nations are gathered. Clearly **the valley of decision** is a synonym for the [Valley of Jehoshaphat](#) where God will "sit to judge" (Joel 3:12). One could take this passage as the **'decision'** of the nations to come into this Valley, but clearly the context indicates that this Valley will be the place where God renders His righteous decision regarding their guilt for mistreatment of Israel. This description is the fulfillment of Joel 3:2. It is "the valley in which they are to meet their "determined doom." (Jamieson) Indeed this is their "*predetermined*" doom, for God's prophecy is determined in the past and will be perfectly fulfilled in the future at the [Campaign of Armageddon](#).

Another rendering of **valley of decision** is "the Valley of the threshing sledge" ([Gilbrant](#)) or "the valley of deciding judgment." This simply amplifies the name "**the valley of Jehoshaphat**" recalling that this name means "YAHWEH has judged."

**Keil and Delitzsch** translate it "Tumult, tumult in the valley of decision" because the Hebrew words "Hāmōnīm are noisy crowds, whom the prophet sees in the Spirit pouring into the **valley of Jehoshaphat**."

The Septuagint renders **multitudes, multitudes** with the Greek noun **echos** meaning sound or noise and the verb [execheo](#) which means to cause to sound forth, to ring out, to be heard (only in 1 Th 1:8). The Septuagint could be rendered "**noises are sounded forth or ringing out in the valley of punishment**" (or justice, "Dike" being the pagan's "goddess of justice," [see short word study below] which is ironic in the present context which describes justice from the true and living God!

**Decision** (02742) is **charuts** from **charats** meaning to cut and then to decide. It is used only here in NASB. The Hebrew word **charuts** is translated in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** twice ("valley of **decision**" x2) with the Greek noun **dike** (defined below) which speaks of penal justice

**Used only once in the NASB.**

**Used 17v in KJV** - Job 41:30; Ps. 68:13; Prov. 3:14; Prov. 8:10; Prov. 8:19; Prov. 10:4; Prov. 12:24; Prov. 12:27; Prov. 13:4; Prov. 16:16; Prov. 21:5; Isa. 28:27; Isa. 41:15; Dan. 9:25; Joel 3:14; Amos 1:3; Zech. 9:3

**Baker - Word Study Dictionary - ḥārûṣ:**

**I. An adjective meaning sharp, diligent.** The word means industrious, diligent, referring to diligent or industrious persons who therefore succeed (Prov. 10:4; 13:4; 21:5); and even supervise or rule (Prov. 12:24). Diligence is considered a precious or valuable possession (Prov. 12:27). It indicates a sharp threshing sledge or cart (Isa. 28:27; 41:15; Amos 1:3). It is used in a comparison to describe aspects of Leviathan's underside (Job 41:30).

**II. A masculine noun indicating a decision.** It is used in the phrase 'ēmeq heḥārûṣ to refer to "the valley of decision" by the prophet Joel (3:14), where the nations will gather for war and judgment.

**III. A masculine noun indicating a moat.** It refers to a channel of water around a city, especially Jerusalem (Dan. 9:25). It was dug and filled in for defensive purposes.

**IV. A masculine noun denoting gold.** It refers to the golden wings of a dove in a simile (Ps. 68:13[14]). Wisdom is always considered of greater value than gold (Prov. 3:14; 8:19; 16:16); as is knowledge (Prov. 8:10). The pagan city-state of Tyre piled up gold as her treasure (Zech. 9:3). (The - The Complete Word Study Dictionary – Old Testament)

**TWOT** - ḥārûṣ. **Decision, pointed things, sharp, threshing instrument, wall.** The concept of sharpness inherent in the verb is evident in the noun ḥārûṣ when it is used of a threshing sledge (Isaiah 28:27; Isaiah 41:15; Amos 1:3; Job 41:30 [H 22]). Metaphorically the word was used of "sharpness" as an attribute, i.e. diligence (Proverbs 10:4; Proverbs 12:24, 27; Proverbs 13:4; Proverbs 21:5). The concept of "cut" is evident in its reference to a moat (Daniel 9:25). The word is used metaphorically of a strict decision in the sense that something which is cut or incised cannot be altered (Joel 3:14 [H 4:14]) (See **TWOT**)

**Renn** - ḥārûṣ is a noun found in eighteen places with the primary sense of "threshing instrument" in some of these contexts. The literal understanding of ḥārûṣ refers to a "sharp-pointed implement," and it is used literally only in Isa. 28:27.

Metaphorically, ḥārûṣ refers to Israel being fashioned into a "threshing sledge" by Yahweh (Isa. 41:15); and to the "trampling" of a nation (Amos 1:3). (Expository Dictionary of Bible Words)

**Gilbrant** - חָרֹוּץ **chārûts** moat, threshing sledge, cut

This Hebrew noun can refer to a "threshing sledge," a "moat" or a "decision." Only the nuance of "moat" is attested elsewhere in Semitic (Akkadian, Targumic and Middle Hebrew). All the noun's meanings are derived from the verb chārats (HED #2888), "to cut," "to determine." The prime nuance "to cut" underlies the extended meanings attested in the Hebrew Bible.

Isaiah prophesied that the Lord would make Jacob into a threshing sledge (Isa. 41:15). In another passage, Isaiah metaphorically speaks of the appropriateness of the Lord's judgment by comparing it to threshing instruments used on various foods. He writes, "The fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod" (Isa. 28:27). The Lord promised to punish Damascus for threshing Gilead with threshing sledges of iron (Amos 1:3).

In his Book, Daniel uses chārûts to refer to a "moat." Gabriel tells Daniel that Jerusalem will be rebuilt with a moat (Dan. 9:25). In yet another use of chārûts, Joel writes of "the Valley of Decision" (Joel 3:14). "Deciding" is contextually related in Joel's prophecy to the picture of harvesting (v. 13). The great wickedness of the heathen nations will cause the Lord to strike down as the harvester cuts down the grain, deciding what to harvest and what to destroy by burning. (cf. Matt. 13:40). (The Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary – Heth-Yodh)

**Justice** (1349) (**dike**) means penalty or punishment (penal justice) and refers to the sentence of eternal punishment handed down by God to unbelievers on the day of judgment (2 Th 1:9, Jude 1:7+). In pagan belief the name **Dike** referred to the **mythological**

[goddess of justice](#). She was depicted as a young, slender woman carrying a physical balance scale and wearing a laurel wreath (see depiction in a statue) and was the daughter of the mythological Greek god Zeus and goddess Themis. She is represented in the constellation Libra which is named for the Latin name of her symbol (Scales). **Thayer** writes that **dike** in Acts 28:4 is "the goddess Justice, avenging justice."

**Zodhiates** adds that "Originally **dīkē** meant manner, tendency. Gradually it became the designation for the right of established custom or usage. The basic meaning of the word involves the assertion by human society of a certain standard expected by its people which, if not kept, can bring forth ensuing judgment. Thus it can be said that **dīkē** is expected behavior or conformity, not according to one's own standard, but according to an imposed standard with prescribed punishment for nonconformity. It refers to legitimate custom." (Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament)

**Gilbrant** has a lengthy note on **dike** - **Dikē**, which forms the background of the **entire dikaios word group**, was a term of no small significance in classical Greek, particularly in the philosophical systems (e.g., Plato, Aristotle, Hesiod). **Dikē**, ranging in meaning from "custom, law, judgment," to "trial, penalty, punishment," is of disputed etymological origin (see Schrenk, "dikē," Kittel, 2:179f.). However, the association between **dikē** and the goddess of the same name is a basic point of departure for understanding **dikē**. **Dikē** was the Greek goddess of recompense who sat beside the throne of Zeus and watched over the earth to insure that justice was satisfactorily maintained. The term **dikē**, therefore, is the divine principle of law not instituted by man (because it is itself divine); it is a universal law of the world, a universal immanent force (ibid.). From this, **dikē** and its cognates filtered into forensic and ethical language.

As early as Homer, a double meaning could be seen in the term, i.e., "justice" in the legal sense along with the concept of that which was "common practice" or "acceptable behavior." These meanings are reflected in many of **dikē**'s cognate forms. To be "righteous" (**dikaio**s) was to do externally the legal ordinances prescribed by government or dictated by society. The New Testament, in contrast, influenced by the Septuagint, transforms this understanding. **Dikaio**s becomes an inward property indicative of a relationship with God (see comments on **dikaio**sunē, **dikaio**s, **dikaio**ō).

The breadth of definition of **dikē** carries over into the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#). Six Hebrew terms are translated by **dikē**, but verbal and substantival forms of **rîv** ("legal decision, ruling") are most common (cf. **mishpāt**, Psalm 140:12; **dîn**, "judge," Ps 9:4). **Rib** often has legal significance (e.g., Ps 35:23; Ps 43:1; Ps 74:22; Proverbs 22:23; Micah 7:9).

Also in the Old Testament we see a second dominant sense: "punishment" = judgment (Leviticus 26:25; Deuteronomy 32:41; Esther 8:13); nevertheless, this too is woven in with "justice" (Deuteronomy 32:43).

The **New Testament** reflects the classical heritage, but it moves closer to the Septuagintal understanding of **dikē** as "divine retribution or punishment"—usually eschatological. Acts 28:4 reveals the popular personification of **dikē**, "justice," executed by that immanent power (cf. comments above). The inhabitants of Malta believed the snake was carrying out **dikē**, because Paul had, in their estimation, been a murderer who had escaped the "justice" of the sea in the shipwreck. But **dikē** as "punishment," most notably "punishment dispensed by God," the supreme Judge, is also known. At the coming of the Lord the ungodly will suffer "punishment"—the vengeance of the Lord (2 Thessalonians 1:8,9). Jude 7 compares the punishment Sodom and Gomorrah received to the judgment God will soon bring upon the earth. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

Three NT uses of **dike**:

Acts 28:4+ When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another, "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and though he has been saved from the sea, **Justice** has not allowed him to live."

**NET Note** on Acts 28:4 - That is, the goddess Justice has not allowed him to live. BDAG states, "Justice personified as a deity in Acts 28:4"; Louw-Nida has "a goddess who personifies justice in seeking out and punishing the guilty - 'the goddess Justice.' 'the goddess Justice would not let him live' Acts 28:4." Although a number of modern English translations have rendered (**dike**) "justice," preferring to use an abstraction, in the original setting it is almost certainly a reference to a **pagan deity**. In the NET translation, the noun "justice" was capitalized and the reflexive pronoun "herself" was supplied to make the personification clear. This was considered preferable to supplying a word like 'goddess' in connection with **dike**.

2 Th 1:9 These will pay the **penalty** of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

Jude 1:7+ just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the **punishment** of eternal fire.

**Dike** is found 18x in the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#)

Exod. 21:20; Lev. 26:25; Deut. 32:41; Deut. 32:43; Est. 8:12; Job 29:16; Job 33:13; Ps. 9:4; Ps. 35:23; Ps. 43:1; Ps. 74:22; Ps. 140:12; Lam. 3:58; Ezek. 25:12; Hos. 13:14; Joel 3:14; Amos 7:4; Mic. 7:9

The **multitudes** in the **Valley** is a fulfillment of Joel's warning in chapter 1

Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, And it will come as destruction from the Almighty. (Joel 1:15-note)

**For** - [term of explanation](#) - Explains the name of the valley, specifically explaining that the day that the Righteous Judge will decide is **near**.

**The day of the LORD is near** - This is the last mention of this phrase **the day of the LORD** which is found in every chapter (5x - Joel 1:15, Joel 2:1, Joel 2:11, Joel 2:31, Joel 3:14) and which is the theme of the entire book.

**Near** (close, soon) ([07138](#)) see previous **discussion of the use of qarob** in Joel 1:15. Clearly the three uses of **qarob** by Joel (Joel 1:15, Joel 2:1, Joel 3:14) are all in the context of **the Day of the LORD** and signify in this context near in time. It conveys the sense of **Imminent** which is an adjective from the Latin word **imminens** from **imminere** = to hang or project over. Literally, **imminent** means hanging or projecting over. Impending. Imminent is the quality or condition of being about to occur. So in this passage qarob is used in the sense of near in time (see also [near in space](#)).

**Qarob** is used several times to refer to the imminent nature of the **Day of the Lord** (All in **Lxx** are translated with **eggus**). (See discussion of the **doctrine of imminency** - Imminency, Imminent - As related to Christ's Second Coming; Another discussion on imminency)

Clearly the Spirit is using the doctrine of **imminency** to stimulate in all of our hearts a sense of **urgency** so that we might have a Spirit enabled passion to [redeem the time](#) for the days are evil and the Day of the LORD draws near (one day nearer than yesterday!)

Ezek 30:3 "For the day is near, Even the day of the LORD is **near**; It will be a day of clouds, A time of doom for the nations.

Joel 1:15-note Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is **near**, And it will come as destruction from the Almighty.

Joel 2:1-note Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of the LORD is coming; Surely it is **near**,

Joel 3:14-note Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is **near** in the valley of decision.

Oba 1:15 "For the day of the LORD draws **near** on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.

Zeph 1:7 Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is **near**, For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests.

Zeph 1:14 Near is the great day of the LORD, **Near** and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly.\

Hear are some other great uses of **qarob** (All in **Lxx** are translated with **eggus**) in the **Psalms**...here qarob is near in "space."

Ps 34:18 The LORD is **near** to the brokenhearted, And saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Ps 85:9 Surely His salvation is **near** to those who fear Him, That glory may dwell in our land.

Ps 119:151 Thou art **near**, O LORD, And all Thy commandments are truth.

Ps 145:18 The LORD is **near** to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth.

**Brian Bell** on "**Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!**" Have you ever heard this at an evangelistic crusade? Sadly it often miss quoted! (**Ed**: This shows the importance of [Keep Context King](#) in order to not misinterpret or misapply a Biblical text, especially those that are well-known such as Joel 3:14. God not holding an evangelistic crusade but an extermination crusade in

the Valley of Decision!) ([Sermon on Joel 3:1-21](#))

This decisive (pun intended) battle is ultimately the final consummation of the rebellion of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. There the Garden of Eden became a "**valley of decision**" as God's verdict was spiritual death. Praise God that He provided a way of escape, a Goel, a Kinsman-Redeemer, our Mighty Warrior, Christ Jesus, that all who would call on His Name might be delivered (Joel 2:32-note). Only a **decision** for Christ will keep one from the fate of those in the Valley of Decision. But in this final **valley of decision**, the sands of the "hour glass" of the "times of the Gentiles" have run out and God's guilty verdict will stand and justify the punishment of temporal and eternal death for man's last attempt at rebellion against their Creator! John reminds us of the state of their hearts in these last of the last days writing

Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, 11 and **they blasphemed the God of heaven** because of their pains and their sores; and **they did not repent of their deeds**. (Rev 16:10-11-[note](#))

**For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision**- Events associated with the Day of the LORD have already been transpiring on planet earth, but this passage alludes to that great "day" when the Lord Jesus Christ returns as the "Stone" to crush the godless Gentile powers that are seeking to destroy Israel, the apple of His eye.

As noted below in the word study on **charuts/harus**, the Hebrew word translated **decision** has a number of different meanings, several described as either something sharp or as a threshing instrument, both of these nuances being relevant to this **Valley of Decision**, for in this valley God will find a ripe harvest of men filled to the brim with evil intentions toward Israel and Jerusalem and thus ripe to be cut down by a sharp threshing instrument even as the reapers are commanded in Joel 3:13 to "**Put** in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe!"

**Decision** (02742) (**charuts/harus**) is one Strong's number but has more than four distinct meanings outlined below. The basic sense of this word group includes the ideas of "to cut or sharpen" and "to decide."

The **TWOT** summarizes the meanings - The concept of sharpness inherent in the verb is evident in the noun ḥārûṣ when it is used of a threshing sledge (Isaiah 28:27; Isaiah 41:15; Amos 1:3; Job 41:30). Metaphorically the word was used of "sharpness" as an attribute, i.e. diligence (Proverbs 10:4; Proverbs 12:24, 27; Proverbs 13:4; Proverbs 21:5). The concept of "cut" is evident in its reference to a moat (Daniel 9:25). The word is used metaphorically of a strict decision in the sense that something which is cut or incised cannot be altered (Joel 3:14) (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

#### **Meanings of charuts/harus:**

1) As an adjective meaning sharp or diligent

sharp-pointed (Job 41:30 = NAS = threshing sledge) (NAS = 02742a)

threshing instrument (Isa 28:27 = **NAS** = sledge; Amos 1:3 = **NAS** = sharp = 02742a)

sharp, (Isaiah 41:15 - modifies Hebrew word morag = "threshing instrument") (NAS = 02742a)

diligent n m (Pr 10:4, 12:24, 27, 13:4, 16:16, 21:5) (**NAS** = diligent = 02742a)

(2) Masculine noun meaning decision - only in Joel 3:14 (**NAS** = 02742b)

(3) Masculine noun meaning trench, moat, ditch dug and filled with water for defense - only in Da 9:25 (Da 9:25KJV translates it as "wall") (**NAS** = 02742c)

(4) Masculine noun meaning gold (poetical) (Ps 68:13, Prov. 3:14; Pr 8:10; Pr 8:19) - refers to the golden wings of a dove in a simile (Ps. 68:13). Wisdom is considered of greater value than gold (Pr 3:14; 8:19; 16:16). Knowledge is greater than gold (Pr 8:10). The pagan city-state of Tyre piled up gold as her treasure (Zech. 9:3). (**NAS** = 02742d)

**Charuts/harus** - 18x in 17v in the KJV - Job 41:30; Ps. 68:13; Prov. 3:14; Prov. 8:10; Prov. 8:19; Prov. 10:4; Prov. 12:24; Prov. 12:27; Prov. 13:4; Prov. 16:16; Prov. 21:5; Isa. 28:27; Isa. 41:15; Dan. 9:25; Joel 3:14; Amos 1:3; Zech. 9:3

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#### **S. Lewis Johnson (Joel 3:13-21) The Day of the Lord in Verdict Valley (valley of decision; valley of Jehoshaphat)**

2 great themes:

1. Divine judgment – "Vengeance is mine, I will repay; Our God is a consuming fire" - eternal, lasting judgment; in moments of indignation no one is a universalist
2. Divine covenantal grace – never fails; Is. 49:14-15 – God will not forget those who are His (Joel 3:16-20)



## I. (Joel 3:13-14) A New Summons to Battle -- Conditions before the Day of the Lord

Nations of earth pictured as field of wheat ready to be harvested and cut down; grapes trodden upon in the winepress; world ripe for judgment; vast multitude of people; you cannot flaunt your own will against the will of God; he that sows thorns let him not walk barefoot; Why are these nations here? "for their wickedness is great" – their own moral depravity; they are responsible before God; men are not lost because they are non-elect but because of their own moral depravity; very decisive battle; Rev. 14 – many of the same expressions used

## II. (Joel 3:15-17) Cosmic Disturbances and Judah's Preservation-- Conditions during the Day of the Lord

The moment of truth for all of the nations of the world at that time; reference to Zion as the source of the disaster that will fall on the earth; Amos used same expression: "the Lord roared from Zion;" (2:11) -- ultimate fulfillment of what was prefigured by locust invasion in former chapter; the stable elements of this universe are convulsed at the day of the Lord – shows it is a tremendous day of judgment; but preservation for the people of God (the one who keeps the covenant); Refuge rests in this God who made promises to the nation of Israel – important application to Christians today; it is the person of the Lord who is the refuge (not simply the promises); He is the Hope of His people, the Happiness and the Holiness of His people; time is coming when the tares shall be rooted up and no longer mingled with the wheat; bible teaches the perseverance of the saints, not the full holiness of the saints

## III. (Joel 3:18-21) Picture of Fertility (children of Israel) and Desolation (Egypt and Edom)

Conditions after the Day of the Lord - Won't be any dry places left in Israel; Everlasting blessing (vindication of Judah) and vengeance; The doctrine of the distinguishing grace of God should be pleasant

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Joel 3.14 The day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

Once again we have the same burden, but in its final application. The prophet having interpreted the locust plague and foretold a further activity of God in government, was lifted up, and borne along far beyond his own immediate times. That movement began in the previous chapter, at verse 28, with the words, "And it shall come to pass after-ward." That afterward carried his vision forward to the age of the Spirit which commenced on the day of Pentecost. Two verses only deal with that age (28 and 29). He then told of the signs which would indicate the ending of that age, and the ushering in of another which he described as "the great and terrible day of Jehovah." The final movement in his message has to do with that ultimate Day of Jehovah, the day of decision. In that day, Jehovah will restore Judah and Jerusalem, find His lost people Israel, deal with the nations through the processes of war, make Zion the centre of His earthly Kingdom, and Israel as a complete nation the instrument of His government. Thus to Joel was given the plan of the ages. He saw the near, the imminent, and the ultimate; and he saw that the Day of Jehovah was present, persistent, powerful, to the complete realization of Divine purpose. It was a great vision, and our secret of confidence is found in walking in its light. We live in the unmeasured age of the Spirit. It has lasted over nineteen hundred years. We know not when it will end; but we do know that beyond it is "the great and terrible day of Jehovah"; and therefore we are sure of the ultimate realization of all His purposes for men.- G Campbell Morgan

### Joel 3:15 The sun and moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness.

- Joel 2:10,31 Isa 13:10 Mt 24:29 Lu 21:25,26 Rev 6:12,13

## COSMIC CHAOS AT SECOND ADVENT

**The sun and moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness** - Peter's proclamation to the Jews on Pentecost including a reference to these signs, but they were not fulfilled at that time. Clearly, these heavenly signs have not occurred but will accompany the revelation of the Day of the LORD in the last of the last days.

Joel alluded to these cosmic "precursors" of the dread Day of the LORD in chapter 2 writing.

Before them the earth quakes, The heavens tremble, **The sun and the moon grow dark And the stars lose their brightness.** (Joel 2:10-note)

**"The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood** Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes." (Joel 2:31-note)

Jesus describes His Second Coming using terms similar to Joel and associates the cosmic chaos with the return of our Lord Jesus Christ...

"But immediately after the tribulation of those days (WHAT DAYS? IN THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT [ASSUMING JESUS' WORDS ARE TAKEN IN THEIR PLAIN, NORMAL SENSE] CLEARLY JESUS IS REFERRING TO THE [GREAT TRIBULATION](#) HE HAD JUST DESCRIBED - A TIME WHICH BEGINS IN Mt 24:15-[note](#), AND IS SPECIFICALLY NAMED IN PRECEDING PASSAGE Mt 24:21-[note](#)) **THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL** from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 "And then (FROM CONTEXT THIS SEEMS TO DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN THERE IS NO LIGHT IN THE SKY FROM SUN, MOON OR STARS. THE SKY IS DARK WHICH WILL CONTRAST WITH THE GLORY OF THE LORD'S APPEARING) the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. (Matt. 24:29-[note](#), Mt 24:30-[note](#))

Jesus describes this same time period in Luke 21

Luke 21:25-note "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26 men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for **the powers of the heavens will be shaken**

Isaiah describes this day of our Lord's return in similar graphic language...

Isaiah 13:9-10-note Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it. For the **stars of heaven and their constellations Will not flash forth their light; The sun will be dark when it rises And the moon will not shed its light.**

Finally John has a description of awesome cosmic disturbances...

Revelation 6:12-13-[note](#) I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and **the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth**, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.

**Joel 3:16 And the LORD roars from Zion And utters His voice from Jerusalem, And the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people And a stronghold to the sons of Israel.**

- **the LORD roars from Zion:** Joel 2:11 Isa 42:13 Jer 25:30,31 Ho 11:10 Am 1:2 Amos 3:8
- **And the heavens and the earth tremble:** Joe 2:10 Eze 38:19 Hag 2:6 Heb 12:26 Rev 11:13,19 16:18
- **But the LORD is a refuge for His people** Ps 18:2 46:1-11 61:3 91:1,2 Pr 18:10 Isa 33:16,21 51:5,6,16
- **And a stronghold to the sons of Israel** 1 Sa 15:29 Ps 29:11 Zec 10:6,12 12:5-8

## SHAKE OR SHELTER!

**And the LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem-** The Hebrew word for **roars** is shaag which is translated in the Septuagint with the verb [anakrazo](#) which means to cry out with a loud cry or shout. What a picture! The Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Rev 5:5) portrayed as like a hungry lion roars with His thunderous voice (pause and imagine the reaction of the earthdwellers!!!) rushing to leap on its helpless prey (cf Hos 5:14, Amos 3:4).

**Roars** ([07580](#))(**shaag**) means to cry out, as of the roar of lions (which were in ancient times common in Canaan) (Jdg 14:5, Ps 104:21, Amos 3:4). Shaag could describe a roar of victory or a roar of distress. The LORD roars like a lion when He carries out His judgment (Amos 1:2, 3:8, Jer. 25:30; Hos. 11:10; Joel 3:16). The enemies of Israel roared like lions after military triumphs (Jer. 2:15, Ps. 74:4; Isa. 5:29). The Babylonians roared like young lions when they destroyed the Temple and took the citizens of Israel and Judah into exile (Jer. 51:38). The leaders of Judah called "roaring lions" who hoarded wealth and oppressed the citizenry (Ezek 22:25, Zeph 3:3). It was used of the loud cry of demonized or frightened people, like the man in the synagogue when he saw Jesus (Mk 1:23, Lk 4:33, Lk 8:28). Shaag can describe the sound of thunder after lightning (Job 37:4). Finally, shaag can describe groans of human anguish or distress (Ps. 22:13, Ps 38:8).

**Shaag** - 19x in 17v - groan(1), roar(6), roar mightily(1), roared(3), roaring(4), roars(4).

Jdg. 14:5; Job 37:4; Ps. 22:13; Ps. 38:8; Ps. 74:4; Ps. 104:21; Isa. 5:29; Jer. 2:15; Jer. 25:30; Jer. 51:38; Ezek.

22:25; Hos. 11:10; Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2; Amos 3:4; Amos 3:8; Zeph. 3:3

**Jamieson** - the ultimate reference is to the last Antichrist, of whom Antiochus was the type. Jerusalem being the central seat of the theocracy (Ps 132:13 "For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation."), it is from thence that Jehovah defeats in battle the foe (ANTICHRIST).

Earlier **Joel** gave us a similar description and it is in the context of the great and very awesome [Day of the LORD](#)...

**The LORD utters His voice** before His army; Surely His camp is very great, For strong is he who carries out His word. The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, And who can endure it? (Joel 2:11-note)

Jeremiah also describes the Jehovah roaring -- Joel describes His voice **from Jerusalem** and Jeremiah **from Heaven**...

Jeremiah 25:29-33 "For behold, I am beginning to work calamity in this city (FIRST JERUSALEM) which is called by My name, and shall you be completely free from punishment? You will not be free from punishment; for I am summoning a sword **against all the inhabitants of the earth** (THEN THE ENTIRE EARTH)," declares the LORD of hosts.' "Therefore you shall prophesy against them all these words, and you shall say to them, '**The LORD will roar from on high And utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold.** He will shout like those who tread the grapes, **Against all the inhabitants of the earth.** 31 '**A clamor has come to the end of the earth,** Because the LORD has a controversy **with the nations.** He is entering into judgment with all flesh; As for the wicked, He has given them to the sword,' declares the LORD." 32 Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, evil is going forth From nation to nation, And a great storm is being stirred up From the remotest parts of the earth. 33 "Those slain by the LORD on that day (THE DAY OF THE LORD - AT THE END OF [THE GREAT TRIBULATION](#) SPECIFICALLY [The Campaign of Armageddon](#)) will be **from one end of the earth to the other.** They will not be lamented, gathered or buried; they will be like dung on the face of the ground.

**Comment:** Notice the repetition of phrases that signify without a doubt that this prophecy does not describe a regional but a global conflict -- "I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth," "all the inhabitants of the earth", "A clamor has come to the end of the earth," "with the nations," "the remotest parts of the earth," and "from one end of the earth to the other."

**MacArthur** agrees writing that while Jeremiah 25:30–33 speak of "the judgments soon to come to Judah and other nations, this has end-time language ("one end of the earth to the other") and must be ultimately fulfilled in the time of tribulation described in Rev 6–19-[note](#).

**Thomas Constable** - God's work of judgment in Jerusalem was just the beginning of larger scale judgment that would extend to all nations (cf. Amos 3:2; 1 Pet. 4:17). Final fulfillment awaits the return of Jesus Christ when He will destroy all nations that oppose Him (Rev. 16:14–16-[note](#)). Jeremiah was also to announce that God would prepare to judge all the inhabitants of the earth (Jer 25:29). As a lion announces its intent to attack with a roar, so Yahweh would one day announce His attack on earth dwellers (cf. Rev. 6). He would vigorously tread the nations in the wine press of His wrath (cf. Rev. 14:18–20-[note](#); Rev 16:14–16-[note](#)). This anticipates Tribulation judgments (Rev. 6–18). His judgment would cause clamor worldwide. He would judge everyone because He holds them guilty in a lawsuit. The wicked would die violent deaths. Almighty Yahweh also announced that evil was spreading all over the world. As a result, a storm of divine judgment of global proportions was also being stirred up. The Lord would slay people in all parts of the world during this judgment. So many people would die that they would lie on the ground unburied like manure (cf. Rev. 14:20-[note](#)). ([Jeremiah 25 Commentary](#))

Other prophets have similar descriptions of the LORD **roaring like a lion**, one in the context of the future restoration of Israel, but the second in the context of Jehovah's judgment on Israel...

Hosea 11:10 They will walk after the LORD, **He will roar like a lion**; Indeed He will roar And His sons will come trembling from the west.

**MacArthur** - Though the Lord would, as a lion, roar against Israel in judgment (cf. Am 1:2), He would also roar for the purpose of calling, protecting, and blessing (cf. Joel 3:16). from the west. Returns from Assyrian and Babylonian captivities were from the E. This undoubtedly has reference to His return at the Second Advent to set up the millennial kingdom (cf. Is 11:11, 12), when He calls Israel from their worldwide dispersion and reverses the judgment of 9:17. (MacArthur Study Bible)

**Constable** - In the future the Israelites would follow the Lord (cf. vv. 2, 5). He would again announce His intentions like a roaring lion (cf. 5:14; 13:7; Amos 1:2; 3:8). However this time it would not be as a lion

about to devour its prey but as a lion leading its cubs to safety. The Israelites would follow Him trembling from the west (cf. 3:5; Exod. 19:16). Since Assyria lay to Israel's east, it seems that this reference to regathering from the west does not refer to return from Assyrian captivity. Apparently it refers to return from another worldwide dispersion. Presently the Israelites live dispersed all over the world. This verse then probably alludes to a still future restoration from our perspective in history. It may refer to the restoration that Antichrist will encourage (Dan. 9:27), but it probably refers to the streaming of Israel back into the land following Jesus Christ's return to the earth (cf. Isa. 11:11–12). ([Hosea 11 Commentary](#))

**Robert Chisholm** - In the day of national restoration (**ED: COMPARE Joel 3:1 - THIS RESTORATION FOLLOWS THE DEFEAT OF THE GLOBAL ANTI-SEMITIC ARMIES IN [The Campaign of Armageddon](#)**) Israel will follow the LORD, who will lead the people back to their homes. His lion-like roar, often associated with judgment and destruction (cf. Hos 5:14; 13:7; Amos 1:2; 3:8), will become a summons to return from exile. The people will again demonstrate a healthy respect for the LORD; they will come trembling (cf. Hosea 3:5 for a similar idea), as an earlier generation did when God appeared in theophanic might at Mount Sinai (cf. Ex. 19:16, where the same Heb. word is used). ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Amos 1:2 He said, "**The LORD roars from Zion And from Jerusalem He utters His voice**, And the shepherds' pasture grounds mourn, And the summit of Carmel dries up."

**MacArthur** - In Joel 3:16, the Lord "roars" against the nations; here His wrath was directed primarily toward Israel

**Constable** - This verse summarizes the message that Amos received from the Lord. Amos reported that Yahweh roared from Zion, as a lion roars before it devours its prey or as thunder precedes a severe storm (cf. Amos 3:4, 8; Jer. 25:30; Hos. 5:14; 11:10; 13:7). Yahweh was about to judge. "Yahweh" is the first word in the Hebrew sentence—usually a verb comes first—and so is emphatic by position. The Lord spoke from Zion (Jerusalem, also emphatic by position) because that is where He manifested Himself in a localized sense to the Israelites of Amos' day. In Israel, the primary worship centers were Dan and Bethel (1 Kings 12–13). All the land would mourn, from the shepherds' pastures in the lowland to the summit of Mt. Carmel (a merism), because the Lord would dry up the land. This was one of the promises of judgment if God's people proved unfaithful to His covenant with them, the Mosaic Covenant (Deut. 28:20–24; cf. Lev. 26:22; Deut. 32:24). "Yahweh" was God's covenant name, and it connotes holiness and power (cf. Ex 3:5; 19:10–25). However, since oracles announcing judgment on neighbor nations, as well as on Israel, follow, the extent of God's judgment would go beyond Israel's territory and Israel's covenant (cf. Isa. 24:4–6; 26:20–21). The mention of Mt. Carmel, nevertheless, fixes the primary site in Israel. Most of this book records messages of judgment against Israel. So the theme of the book is practical righteousness (cf. James). ([Amos 1 Commentary](#))

Amos 3:8 **A lion has roared!** Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?

**Constable** - Amos drew the final comparison with allusion to his previous illustrations. The message of judgment coming from the Lord that Amos now brought the Israelites was like the roaring of a lion. Who would not fear such a lion as the sovereign Yahweh? Indeed, how could the mouthpiece of the lion not prophesy since Yahweh had spoken? ([Amos 3 Commentary](#))

**And the heavens and the earth tremble** - The [Day of the LORD](#) is great and very awesome (cf Joel 2:10-11). The trembling of the creation will cause men to tremble with great fear in this dreadful day (cf Rev 6:14-17).

We see a similar description in Isaiah 2, where Isaiah 2:10-22 describes the Day of the LORD in the last of the last days....

Men will go into caves of the rocks and into holes of the ground before the terror of the LORD And the splendor of His majesty, **When He arises to make the earth tremble**. In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats Their idols of silver and their idols of gold, Which they made for themselves to worship, 21 In order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs Before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty, **When He arises to make the earth tremble**. (Isaiah 2:19-21-note, see also Isaiah 13:13-note)

**Comment:** Note the repetitive phrase "When He arises to make the earth tremble" where earth speaks of a global or worldwide event. Note also the repetition of the time phrase "in that day" in this section (Isaiah 2:11, 17, 20), referring to the Day of the LORD.

**Haggai** gives a parallel prophecy which parallels that of Joel..

Haggai 2:6-7, 22 "For thus says the LORD of hosts, **Once more in a little while** (SPEAKS OF [IMMINENCY](#)),

**I am going to shake the heavens and the earth,** (AT CHRIST'S SECOND COMING - THIS IS QUOTED IN Hebrews 12:26) the sea also and the dry land. 7 **'I will shake all the nations;** and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' (WHEN? THE TEMPLE IN THE MILLENNIUM WHEN THE GLORIOUS ONE HIMSELF WILL FILL THE TEMPLE!) says the LORD of hosts....'I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations (THIS IS A GLOBAL DESTRUCTION AT THE END OF THE [GREAT TRIBULATION](#) WHEN MESSIAH RETURNS - DESCRIBED BY DANIEL AND BY JOHN - Daniel 2:34-35-[note](#); Daniel 2:44-45-[note](#); Revelation 19:11-21-[note](#)); and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.'

**MacArthur** - The shaking of the cosmic bodies and the nations goes beyond the historical removal of kingdoms and the establishment of others, such as the defeat of Persia by Greece (Daniel 7). Rather, the text looks to the cataclysm in the universe described in Rev 6–19, the subjugation of the nations by the Messiah, and the setting up of His kingdom which will never be destroyed (cf. Da 2:44-[note](#); Da 7:27-[note](#); Zec 14:16–21-[note](#); Mt 25:32; Lk 21:26-[note](#); Heb 12:26-[note](#); Rev 19:19–21-[note](#))....There is no Scripture to indicate that God's glory ever did come to Zerubbabel's temple, as the first temple was filled with the [Shekinah glory](#) (cf. 1 Ki 8:10, 11; 2 Ch 5:13, 14). However, His glory will fill the [millennial](#) temple (Eze 43:5). This glorification cannot refer to Christ's physical presence in Herod's temple, for the events of Hag 2:6–9 cannot be accounted for historically. The context speaks of the establishment of His earthly, Davidic, millennial kingdom and His presence in the temple during that kingdom. (MacArthur adds this comment on the prophetic phrase "**in that day**" in Hag 2:23) The day of Messiah's triumph (cf. Zechariah 12–14-[note](#)).

**Constable** - The basis of their confidence (THOSE REBUILDING THE TEMPLE) and lack of fear was a promise from Almighty Yahweh. He would do again in the future what He had done at the Exodus and at Mt. Sinai (Ex 19:16; Ps. 68:8; 77:16–18). Shaking the heavens and the earth describes an earthquake, which was an evidence of the Lord's supernatural intervention (cf. Isaiah 2:12–21-[note](#); Isaiah 13:13-[note](#); Ezek. 38:20-[note](#); Amos 8:8). This will occur when Christ returns to the earth (Joel 3:16; Matt. 24:29–30-[note](#)). The writer of Hebrews quoted this verse in Hebrews 12:26. He then added that we who are in Christ have an unshakable kingdom that will endure the coming cosmic earthquake (Heb. 12:28–29). Haggai's prophecy still awaits fulfillment. At the same time, Almighty Yahweh would shake all the nations; His return will upset the political and governmental structures in the world (cf. Zech. 14:1–4-[note](#)). The nations would bring their wealth to the Israelites, like the Egyptians gave their treasures to the departing Hebrews at the Exodus (cf. Ex 3:21–22; 11:2–3; 12:35–36). ([Haggai 2 Commentary](#))

**F Duane Lindsey** - This future divine judgment (I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land) is depicted in terms of an earthquake as a symbol of God's supernatural intervention (cf. Isa. 2:12–21; 13:13; Ezek. 38:20; Amos 8:8; Hag. 2:21–22). When Jesus Christ returns to earth, "the earth and the sky will tremble" (Joel 3:16; Matt. 24:29–30). This event will affect not only the natural order (Hag. 2:6) but also people (I will shake all nations, v. 7). This "shaking" of the nations may refer to God's gathering the nations for the [Battle of Armageddon](#) (Zech. 14:1–4). The writer to the Hebrews quoted Haggai 2:6 in Hebrews 12:26 and then added that the kingdom of God, which "cannot be shaken" (Heb. 12:28), will survive all divine judgments. This divine judgment was impending in Haggai's day since the Old Testament prophets did not see the valley of time lying between the First and Second Advents of Jesus Christ (cf. Isa. 61:1–2; Luke 4:18–21). ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Tony Garland** comments on **the heavens and the earth tremble** in a parallel passage in Revelation 6:12-13

The uniquely intense earthquakes which attend the judgments of the Tribulation period provide tangible evidence of God's hand in the events which transpire (Rev. 6:12<sup>+</sup>; Rev 8:5<sup>+</sup>; Rev 11:13<sup>+</sup>; Rev 16:18<sup>+</sup> cf. Mat. 27:54). During the Tribulation, even though men understand the source of the earthquakes, most fail to repent (Rev. 6:16<sup>+</sup>). A rare exception is the case of the great earthquake in Jerusalem, where those who avoid death "gave glory to the God of heaven" (Rev. 11:13<sup>+</sup>).

Jesus said great earthquakes would be one of the signs of "the beginning of sorrows" (Mat. 24:7-8). The OT prophets also predicted a time where God would intensely shake the earth.<sup>81</sup> Haggai 2:6-7 (SEE ABOVE) revealed that global earthquakes and the overthrow of the Gentile kingdoms would precede the return of God's glory to His (millennial) [Temple](#).<sup>82</sup>

**Joel saw earthquakes associated with the mighty judgments of God poured out in the Day of the Lord,**



## judgments which were intended to cause people to turn to God.

The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble; the sun and moon grow dark, and the stars diminish their brightness. The LORD gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong *is the One* who executes His word. For the day of the LORD *is* great and very terrible; who can endure it? "Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." (Joel 2:10-12-note)

The *earthquake* affects more than just the face of the earth. Seismos means "shaking; of a storm on the sea, with waves caused by high winds [Mat. 8:24]."<sup>83</sup> In the [Septuagint](#), it is used in Joel 2:10-note to describe the heavens trembling.<sup>84</sup> This catastrophic event extends beyond the geography of the earth to effect the cosmic realm. ([Revelation Commentary](#))

## THE SHELTER OF JEHOVAH IN THAT DAY

**But the LORD is a Refuge for His people** - Praise God for this [term of contrast](#) (**but**). In the midst of God roaring wrath, He remembers mercy on His Chosen People. And in this time at the end of the [Great Tribulation](#), He will indeed be a Refuge for everyone (Jew and Gentile) who "calls on the Name of the LORD" for they "will be delivered" from destruction. (Joel 2:32-note). Note that Jehovah is not "like" a refuge, but He is a Refuge! But He is a Refuge only for His people, those who have placed their faith in Messiah. When Messiah comes, there will be no second chance to believe in Him. There will be no gap of time where those who see Him can choose to believe in Him. Their failure to make no choice in life prior to His return was in fact their choice to reject His offer of deliverance. Then it will be too late to escape the wrath of God, not only the temporal wrath at the end of the Great Tribulation, but the eternal wrath away from the glory of His presence. So praise God for the BUT which describes His protection for His own people in that dreadful day.

The KJV says "the LORD will be the HOPE (Refuge) of His people and the strength (Stronghold) of the children of Israel."

Nahum 1:7 expresses a similar sentiment declaring that "The LORD is good, a stronghold ([maoz or mauz](#)) in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him." Notice to take refuge in Him involves a personal (volitional) decision to call on the Name of the LORD (AS JOEL DESCRIBED - Joel 2:32-note). This reminds us the great truth in Proverbs 18:10-note that "**The Name of the LORD is a strong tower. The righteous runs into it and is safe** (see this great Hebrew word [sagab](#) - which also means "high" so the idea is one is "lifted up" even though the battle is still going on.)."

**Refuge** ([04268](#))([machaseh](#) from **chasah** = to seek refuge) means literally a place of refuge, shelter from danger, etc (Job 24:8). Most of the uses are figurative and depict God as the our **Refuge** or Shelter, a sure place of safety, protection, security. In a bad sense it describes those who "have made falsehood (their) refuge." (Isa 28:15). The idea is that the place of refuge is where we place our confidence, our trust, our hope (Lxx translates the Hebrew with the Greek noun for hope, not "hope so" but "hope sure" is the inherent sense of Biblical hope, at least in the majority of the NT uses.)

**And a stronghold to the sons of Israel**- All the world comes against little Israel but the big God of Israel protects her from this massive onslaught.

We see the protective hand of Jehovah in this dreadful Day of the LORD in the Book of the Revelation when Satan is cast out of Heaven and immediately comes after Israel to destroy her...

Then the woman (ISRAEL) fled into the wilderness where **she had a place prepared by God**, (A REFUGE AND A STRONGHOLD) so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days (cf 1260 DAYS SAME TIME IN Rev 12:14 - THIS IS THE TIME OF ISRAEL'S [Great Tribulation](#), the [Time of Jacob's Distress](#) Jer 30:7, Daniel 12:1's description of "[a time of distress](#)"). (Rev 12:6-note)

And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman (THE NATION OF ISRAEL) who gave birth to the male child (CHRIST). 14 But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place (cf Rev 12:6 = "**she had a place prepared by God**"), where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time [synonymous with other time phrases](#) = 1260 days, 42 months, "time, times, and half a time"), from the presence of the serpent. 15 And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood (SATAN SEEKS TO ANNIHILATE ISRAEL!). 16 But the earth (GOD) helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. 17 So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the



commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (Rev 12:13-17-[note](#))

**Stronghold** (04581)(**maoz**) means a place or means of safety, protection location (Jdg 6:26), shelter, stronghold or fortress (Ezek 24:25; 30:15; Da. 11:7, 10, 19, 39). Maoz modifies sanctuary - "the sanctuary fortress" (Da 11:31). In Da 11:38 in the phrase "a god of fortresses" (which the Antichrist will honor). God Himself is a fortress or refuge (2 Sa 22:33; Nah. 3:11). In the famous phrase in Neh 8:10 "the joy of the LORD is your **strength** (maoz - your refuge)." God's supernatural joy is like a "**supernatural tonic!**" The idea is that as the Jews considered Jehovah, He would be a Source of supernatural joy and this in turn would serve to strengthen them (in that sense joy functioned like a "refuge" to shield them from "joy stealers"). Lange writes this joy "which springs from right relations to God is an element and sign of spiritual strength."

**Warren Wiersbe** elaborates on the "JOY OF THE LORD IS YOUR STRENGTH" (Nehemiah 8:10)

The Word of God brings conviction and leads to repentance (RECALL THE CONTEXT - Neh 8:1-9 the Jews heard the Word and were convicted by the Word), but it also brings us joy; for the same Word that wounds also heals. "Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and **rejoicing of my heart**; for I am called by Your name" (Jer. 15:16NKJV). "The statutes of the Lord are right, **rejoicing the heart**" (Ps. 19:8). "Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, for they are the **rejoicing of my heart**" (119:111, NKJV). Assisted by the Levites, Nehemiah convinced the people to stop mourning and start celebrating. It is as wrong to mourn when God has forgiven us as it is to rejoice when sin has conquered us. **The sinner has no reason for rejoicing and the forgiven child of God has no reason for mourning** (Matt. 9:9-17). Yes, as God's children we carry burdens and know what it is to weep (Neh. 2:1-2); but we also experience power that transforms sorrow into joy. **The secret of Christian joy is to believe what God says in His Word and act upon it. Faith that isn't based on the Word is not faith at all; it is presumption or superstition.** Joy that isn't the result of faith is not joy at all; it is only a "good feeling" that will soon disappear. Faith based on the Word will produce joy that will weather the storms of life. (**ED: THAT IS THEY FUNCTION LIKE A STRONGHOLD OR REFUGE!**) It isn't enough for us to read the Word or receive the Word as others expound it; **we must also rejoice in the Word.** "I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure" (Ps. 119:162, NKJV). In Bible days, people sometimes hid their wealth in jars buried in the ground (Matt. 13:44; Jer. 41:8). If a farmer plowing his field suddenly discovered a jar filled with gold, he would certainly rejoice. There are great treasures buried in God's Word, and you and I must diligently "dig" for them as we read, meditate, and pray; and when we find these treasures, we should rejoice and give thanks. If we read and study the Word of God only from a sense of duty, then its treasures may never be revealed to us. It is the believer who rejoices in the Word, who delights to read and study it day by day, who will find God's hidden treasures. "Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who finds great delight in his commands" (Ps. 112:1, NIV). "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night" (1:2, NKJV). Do you delight in God's Word? Would you rather have God's Word than food (119:103; Luke 10:38-42), or sleep (Ps. 119:55, 62, 147-148), or wealth? (vv. 14, 72, 137, 162) If you delight in His Word, God will delight in you and share His best blessings with you. (Be Determined)

**Swanson** has four divisions of **maoz**

1. protection, formally, place of refuge, i.e., the means of being safe in a situation of danger as a figurative extension of a fortress (Ne 8:10; Ps 27:1; 28:8; 31:2,4; 37:39; 43:2; 52:7);
2. refuge, stronghold, fortress, place of protection (Isa 17:9);
3. height, i.e., an elevated area of ground (Jdg 6:26);
4. unit: מַצֵּדָה (mā'ôz rō') helmet, formally, head of protection, i.e., an armor piece to protect the head (Ps 60:7; 108:8) (Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains - Hebrew)

**Carl Schultz** - Natural and man made places of safety can be designated by this word such as a mountain (Judges 6:26), harbor (Isaiah 23:4), cities (Isaiah 17:9), and temple (Ezekiel 24:25). These strongholds, in sharp contrast to God, are not invincible but are rather subject to destruction (Isaiah 23:11, 14; Ezekiel 30:15). The noun also possibly appears in Psalm 52:7 [H 9] (however that may be from 'āzaz "be strong") showing the futility of riches as a shelter. This word can also be used figuratively of human protection. A foreign power, such as Egypt, can be viewed as a means of protection (Isaiah 30:2, 3; here the protection of Pharaoh is parallel to the shadow of Egypt). This reliance upon Egypt is a common problem of Israel, bringing down on her the condemnation of the prophets (Jeremiah 42:7-17). Judah was also inclined to view falsely the temple as a symbol of security (Ezekiel 24:25; cf. Amos 6:8; Jeremiah 7:4; Jeremiah 26:4, 5, 6). By far the most common use of this word is the figurative one, designating God as the refuge of his people. Careful distinctions are made here. While the wicked rich refuse his shelter (Psalm 52:7 [H 9]) taking refuge in their wealth, he is the protection of the poor (Isaiah 25:4), of the upright (Proverbs 10:29), and of his people in general (Psalm 28:8;

Joel 3:16 [H 16]). The psalmist refers to God as his refuge (Psalm 31:2, 4 [H 3, 5]; Psalm 43:2). Man is confronted with a decision relative to making God his refuge (Isaiah 27:5) and it is possible, as Israel did, to forget him (Isaiah 17:10). While he is a place of shelter in time of trouble (Psalm 37:39; Jeremiah 16:19; Nahum 1:7), he is also a constant refuge (Psalm 27:1). In the midst of sorrow, the joy of the Lord can be our strength (Neh. 8:10), sustaining us. (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

**Maaz** - 36x in 35v - defense(4), fortress(4), fortresses(3), helmet(2), protection(2), refuge(3), safety(2), strength(5), strong(1), stronghold(9), strongholds(1).

Jdg. 6:26; 2 Sam. 22:33; Neh. 8:10; Ps. 27:1; Ps. 28:8; Ps. 31:2; Ps. 31:4; Ps. 37:39; Ps. 43:2; Ps. 52:7; Ps. 60:7; Ps. 108:8; Prov. 10:29; Isa. 17:9; Isa. 17:10; Isa. 23:4; Isa. 23:11; Isa. 23:14; Isa. 25:4; Isa. 27:5; Isa. 30:2; Isa. 30:3; Jer. 16:19; Ezek. 24:25; Ezek. 30:15; Dan. 11:1; Dan. 11:7; Dan. 11:10; Dan. 11:19; Dan. 11:31; Dan. 11:38; Dan. 11:39; Joel 3:16; Nah. 1:7; Nah. 3:11

**Henry Morris on the LORD roars** - The Lord is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Revelation 5:5 [note](#)), and His powerful coming will be to the nations like the triumphant roar of a mighty lion, shaking the very heavens.

The apostle John fills in some of the details concerning this dreadful day for rebellious mankind ("earth dwellers")

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east. 13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; 14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. 15 ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.") 16 **And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.** ([see picture](#)) 17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done." 18 And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, \*came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague \*was extremely severe. (Revelation 16:12-21-[note](#))

**Brian Bell** - Farmer whose fields of grain caught on fire. Saw the charred body of a hen. He kicked it over, & out ran 5 little chicks from under it. The wrath of God is an all consuming fire! Nevertheless, it need not touch those who are covered by the Lord Jesus Christ. There is refuge in Him ([Sermon on Joel 3:1-21](#))

**Joel 3:17 Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, And strangers will pass through it no more.**

- **Then you will know that I am the LORD your God** Joe 3:21 2:27 Ps 9:11 76:2 Isa 12:6 Eze 48:35 Mic 4:7 Zep 3:14-16
- **Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain:** Da 11:45 Ob 1:16 Zec 8:3
- **So Jerusalem will be holy:** Isa 4:3 Jer 31:23 Eze 43:12 Ob 1:17 Zec 14:20
- **And strangers will pass through it no more:** Isa 35:8 52:1 Na 1:15 Zec 14:21 Rev 21:27

**Then** - When? When the LORD roars from Zion (Joel 3:16) and provides a refuge and stronghold for the Jews and sets up His millennial kingdom. So between Joel 3:16 and Joel 3:17 we see a "summary" of the end of one world order, the times of the Gentiles, and the beginning of the new world order, the times of the Messiah, Who rules and reigns the world from His throne on what today we know as Temple Mount which Joel designates at Zion.

**Keil and Delitzsch** on Joel 3:16-17 - But it is only to His enemies that He is terrible (Joel 3:16a); to His people...He is a refuge and strong tower. From the fact that He only destroys His enemies, and protects His own people, the latter will learn that He is their God, and dwells upon Zion in His sanctuary, i.e., that He there completes His kingdom, that He purifies Jerusalem of all foes, all the ungodly through the medium of the judgment, and makes it a holy place which cannot be trodden any more by strangers, by Gentiles (cf Rev 11:1-2 [note](#)), or by the unclean of either Gentiles or Israelites (Isaiah 35:8 = "A highway will be there, a roadway, And it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, But it will be for him who walks that way, And fools will not wander on it."), but will be inhabited only by the righteous (Isa. 60:21; Zech. 14:21-note)."

**You will know that I am the LORD your God- Know** is **yada** which can speak of intimate knowing (as of a man "knowing" a woman) and in the Septuagint is translated with the verb **epiginosko** meaning to know fully, to know with certainty, to become thoroughly acquainted with. The far off God will be near and dear! In that day when Jehovah restores Judah and Jerusalem, those Jews who have been delivered (Ro 11:26-27) will know beyond a shadow of a doubt that they belong to Jehovah and He belongs to them. **Your God** speaks of the fact that the redeemed remnant of Israel is in the immutable **New Covenant** with Jehovah Jesus. This passage speaks of the oneness and communion of this covenant relationship.

**Jamieson** adds that **you will know** "experimentally by the proofs of favors which I shall vouchsafe to you."

Isaiah 60:16 "You will also suck the milk of nations And suck the breast of kings; Then you will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Hosea 2:16-20 "It will come about in that day," declares the LORD, "That you will call Me Ishi And will no longer call Me Baali. 17 "For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, So that they will be mentioned by their names no more. 18 "In that day I will also make a covenant for them With the beasts of the field, The birds of the sky And the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword and war from the land, And will make them lie down in safety. 19 "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, In lovingkindness and in compassion, 20 And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness. Then (WHEN? WHEN THEY ENTER INTO THE NEW COVENANT) you will know the LORD.

**MacArthur** - What the outward conformity to the Mosaic Covenant could not do, God does through a new, regenerated heart in the New Covenant (Jer 31:31-34; Zec 13:1, 2). This (covenant in Hos 2:18) depicts a millennial scene (cf. Isa 2:4; 11:6-9; Mic 4:3) when God's people become subject to God and creation becomes subject to them. (The MacArthur Study Bible)

**My holy mountain** - Literally, "the mountain of My holiness" and occurs 11 times mostly in the prophets denoting the place on earth distinguished and set apart by the presence of the Lord. Notice the possessive pronoun My. This is God's mountain. This mountain is in Jerusalem and is probably the area we today call Temple Mount ([pix](#)), where Solomon's and Herod's temples once stood.

It is sad to see such esteemed men of old like Augustine interpret this phrase as "the church is the mountain." **Augustine** writes "The church itself is the mountain ... we are going to rise again, and we shall be the holy mountain of God." Needless to say this allegorical interpretation is absurd. God says it is a mountain and that is exactly what it is! Beloved, if the plain sense of a text makes good sense in context, then seek to make no other sense out of it, lest you end up with nonsense!

- **My holy mountain** - Isa. 11:9; Isa. 56:7; Isa. 57:13; Isa. 65:11; Isa. 65:25; Isa. 66:20; Ezekiel 20:40, Joel 2:1; Joel 3:17; Obad. 1:16; Zeph. 3:11. Compare similar phrases
- **My holy hill** - Ps. 2:6; Ps. 3:4; Ps. 15:1; Ps. 43:3; Ps. 99:9.
- **Holy hill** - Jer 31:23
- **the holy mountain of God** - Ezek 28:14, Da 9:20
- **Your holy mountain** - Da 9:16
- **the beautiful Holy Mountain** - Da 11:45

**So Jerusalem will be holy** - This describes the time AFTER the Lord Jesus Christ returns with a "roar" and defeats all of Israel's enemies once and for all. This same time period is described in some detail in Zechariah 14:1-21-note.

**Zechariah** writes that

In that day (THE DAY OF THE LORD - THIS IS THE "GOOD" SIDE OF THAT DAY - WHEN ISRAEL IS RESTORED AND HOLINESS REIGNS SUPREME) there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." And the cooking pots in the LORD'S house will be like the bowls before the altar. 21 Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the LORD of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day. (Zechariah 14:20-21-note)

**Isaiah** speaks of this day when everything cries holy to the Lord...

Isaiah 35:8 A highway will be there, a roadway, And it will be called **the Highway of Holiness**. The **unclean will not travel on it**, But it will be for him who walks that way, And fools will not wander on it.

Isaiah 52:1 Awake, awake, Clothe yourself in your strength, **O Zion**; Clothe yourself in your beautiful garments, **O Jerusalem, the holy city**; For **the uncircumcised and the unclean Will no longer come into you**.

**And strangers will pass through it no more** - This refers in part to foreign armies that had in the past so frequently trampled and defiled the Holy City.. John describes the last days (literally the last 42 months which is the time of the [Great Tribulation](#)) of heathen trampling of God's holy places...

Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the TEMPLE of God and the altar (THE TEMPLE WILL BE REBUILT IN THE [SEVENTIETH WEEK OF DANIEL](#) - see preparations of orthodox Jews of [Temple Mount Faithful](#)), and those who worship in it. "Leave out the court which is outside the TEMPLE and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months. (Rev 11:1-2-[note](#))

While strangers will not pass through Jerusalem, in the Millennial age, Gentiles will be welcomed to come and celebrate, Zechariah recording...

Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations (REFERRING TO THOSE GENTILES WHO WERE NOT KILLED IN THE VALLEY OF DECISION AND WHO ENTER THE MILLENNIUM AS REGENERATE OR BORN AGAIN BELIEVERS - See [Tony Garland's excellent summary](#) of the Judgment of the Sheep and Goats - Mt 25:31-46) that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. (Zec 14:16-note).

**Uses of Zion in the Context of the [Millennial Kingdom of the Messiah](#)** - It is important to note that **Zion** is frequently mentioned in many eschatological passages, most of which describe **Zion** in the Millennial reign of Messiah. While you may not agree with all of these passages (but be sure to check the context before you disagree), all have some elements that are difficult to explain other than ascribing them to a future time when Messiah returns to save Israel (Ro 11:26-28) and establish His Kingdom on earth where He will reign as King of kings for 1000 years -

2 Kings 19:31 Psalm 2:6 Psalm 14:7 Psalm 20:2 Psalm 53:6 Psalm 69:35 Psalm 110:2 Isaiah 1:27 Isaiah 2:3 Isaiah 4:3-5 Isaiah 18:7 Isaiah 24:23 Isaiah 33:5 Isaiah 33:20 Isaiah 34:8 Isaiah 35:10 Isaiah 51:3 Isaiah 51:11 Isaiah 51:16 Isaiah 52:1 Isaiah 52:2, 7, 8 Isaiah 59:20 Isaiah 60:14 Isaiah 61:3 Isaiah 62:1 Isaiah 62:11 Isaiah 64:10 Isaiah 66:8 Jeremiah 30:17 Jeremiah 31:6 Jeremiah 31:12 Jeremiah 50:5 Joel 3:16 Joel 3:17 Joel 3:21 Obadiah 1:17 Obadiah 1:21 Micah 4:2, 7, 8 Zephaniah 3:14 Zephaniah 3:16 Zechariah 1:17 Zechariah 2:10 Zechariah 8:3

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**F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily** - I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain.

This will be the lot of the chosen people in the millennial age. The Holy God will make the city in which He resides a Holy place. But it is true universally. Wherever the Holy God dwells, there you have holiness—for it is the attribute of his nature, as heat is of fire. Holiness is not it, but He. Do you want it? Then you must invite Him to come.

**When God comes into a day, it becomes holy unto Him.** When his presence is revealed in a bush, it is holy ground. When He descends on a mountain, the fences are erected, that unhallowed feet may not draw nigh. When He fills a building like Solomon's Temple, the whole is consecrated, and may not be employed for sacrilegious purposes. Best of all, if He dwell in our hearts, they too are rendered holy to Himself.

**When the apostle prays that the God of Peace should sanctify us wholly, he goes on to ask that spirit, soul, and body, should be as a temple filled with God.** The holy man is he who is God-filled and God-possessed. It is not enough to possess God; we must be possessed by Him. He who has more of God is surely holier than other men; and he is the holiest who has most. Behold, Christ stands at the door and knocks: He longs to come in and abide, never again to depart; He brings with Him the holiness for which He has taught us to yearn.

**"Is it true, Ignatius," said the Roman emperor to the Christian martyr, "that you carry about your God within you?" "It is even so," replied the bishop, "for it is written, I will dwell in thee, and walk in thee." And for that answer they cast him to the wild beasts. But what they deemed blasphemy is literally true of the Holy Spirit.**

## When Will Joel's Prophecy Be Fulfilled?

Refer to the diagram below  
[The Redemption of Zion](#)

As stated, Joel's prophecy has not been fulfilled but awaits a future fulfillment at the end of this age. This fulfillment will take place

when the **Messiah** returns (at His **Second Coming**) as **King of kings and Lord of lords** (Re 19:16-note), which will occur at the end of this age, specifically at the end of **Daniel's Seventieth Week**, the seven year period, which is divided into two 3.5 year segments, the last 3.5 years ([synonymous with other time phrases](#) = 1260 days, 42 months, "time, times, and half a time") known as the **Great Tribulation** (Mt 24:15-note = commences "when you see the Abomination of desolation standing... in the holy place" = Antichrist will enter the rebuilt Jewish temple and declare himself "god" - 2Th 2:3, 4], Da 9:27-note, "He" = Antichrist, "one week" = 7 years, "middle of week" = after 3.5 years which then inaugurates the last 3.5 yr period, the Great Tribulation as Jesus calls it in Mt 24:21-note, which is terminated by the return of the Redeemer, cp Mt 24:22-note, Mt 24:30-note). At the termination of the **Great Tribulation** the city of Jerusalem will be **redeemed** from Gentile dominion. In the introductory comments on this note, I have alluded to why **Zion** is in need of redemption even in our time, and **Jesus** helps us clarify this need in His prophecy that...

Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles **until** ("Until" = an expression of time which in context signifies Gentile dominion of Jerusalem will one day come to an end. Is 1:27 describes in part how that end will be accomplished = "Zion will be redeemed") the **times of the Gentiles** are fulfilled. (Lk 21:24b-note)

The **times of the Gentiles** will come to an end ("be fulfilled") when the **King of kings** returns to redeem Zion! What are the **times of the Gentiles**? The **times of the Gentiles** describes a continuous period of time which began when King **Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon** captured Jerusalem (Zion) in **586 BC**. Since that time, Jerusalem (**Zion**) has continually been under Gentile dominion to one degree or another. In the book of the Revelation we learn some additional facts about the **times of the Gentiles** in the time immediately preceding the return of the Messiah to redeem Zion. In Revelation 11:2 the apostle **John** is instructed to...

(Context = Re 11:1-note) Leave out the court which is outside the **temple** (the Jewish temple - which does not currently exist but which will be rebuilt in the future) and do not measure it, for **it has been given to the nations** (the Gentiles = this occurs during the last 3.5 years of the **times of the Gentiles**); and they (the Gentiles) will tread under foot the holy city (Jerusalem/Zion) for **forty-two months** (Re 11:2-note) (See chart for other synonymous time phrases)

Isaiah speaks of this great hope in the OT and Paul reiterates this truth in the NT...

### OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

And a **Redeemer** (**Ga'al/Goel** = Kinsman-Redeemer [word study]; Septuagint= rhuomai = deliver, Deliverer) will come to Zion, and to those who **turn** (Hebrew = shub [7725] = turn back, repent, turn away from [see use Isa 1:27 = translated "repentant"]) from **transgression** (Hebrew = pasha = fundamental idea of root is breach of relationships, between parties; Lxx = asebeia = ungodliness) in Jacob," declares the LORD. **21** And as for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the LORD: "My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the LORD, "from now and forever." (Isaiah 59:20, 21)

### NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery (mysterion), lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening (porosis) has happened to Israel **until** (see expressions of time in inductive Bible study) the fulness of the Gentiles (this is not identical to the times of the Gentiles for it refers primarily to Gentile salvation, whereas "times of the Gentiles" refers to Gentile dominion over Jerusalem) has come in; and thus all Israel ("all" that believe in the Redeemer. Zec 13:8, 9 state 1/3 of the Jews will believe) will be saved (sozo); just as it is written (Paul quotes Isa 59:20), "THE DELIVERER (rhuomai - refers to the Redeemer, Christ Jesus) WILL COME FROM **ZION**, HE WILL REMOVE (apostrepho = turn away from) **UNGODLINESS** (asebeia) FROM JACOB (synonymous with Israel). (This next section is quoted from Jer 31:31, 32, 33, 34) AND THIS IS MY COVENANT (diatheke) WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY (aphaireo) THEIR SINS." (Ro 11:25, 26, 27-see in depth discussion of this important NT passage to help understand God's plan for the Jews)

THE REDEMPTION OF ZION			
	<b>Saints Raptured</b> V	<b>Messiah Returns</b> <b>Second Coming</b> V	



After 69th Week		Daniel's 70th Week = 7 Years Da 9:27-note	Zion in the Millennium
The Cross	This Present Evil Age Galatians 1:4-note	Last 3.5 yr = <u>Great Tribulation</u> Mt 24:21-note	Jehovah Shammah Messiah Reigns 1000 Years The City of Righteousness A Faithful City Ezekiel 48:25
		3.5yr 3.5yr	1000 YEARS

At the end of Ezekiel's prophecy (Ezek 48:35), the Lord gives a promise that He will return to Jerusalem and gives the city a new name **Jehovah Shammah - The LORD is There**.

**Zion** was originally associated with the hill Ophel, the fortified area just to the south of the field King David purchased from Ornan (eventual site of the Temple Mount), lying between the Kidron Valley on the East and the Tyropoeon Valley to the West.

### Joel 3:17 F B Meyer Our Daily Homily

This will be the lot of the chosen people in the millennial age (Notice this older writer believed in the Millennium! - Born April 1847 – Died March 1929).. The Holy God will make the city in which He resides a Holy place. But it is true universally. Wherever the Holy God dwells, there you have holiness—for it is the attribute of his nature, as heat is of fire. Holiness is not It, but He. Do you want it? Then you must invite Him to come.

When God comes into a day, it becomes holy unto Him. When his presence is revealed in a bush, it is holy ground. When He descends on a mountain, the fences are erected, that unhallowed feet may not draw nigh. When He fills a building like Solomon's Temple, the whole is consecrated, and may not be employed for sacrilegious purposes. Best of all, if He dwell in our hearts, they too are rendered holy to Himself.

When the apostle prays that the God of Peace should sanctify us wholly, he goes on to ask that spirit, soul, and body, should be as a temple filled with God. The holy man is he who is God-filled and God-possessed. It is not enough to possess God; we must be possessed by Him. He who has more of God is surely holier than other men; and he is the holiest who has most. Behold, Christ stands at the door and knocks: He longs to come in and abide, never again to depart; He brings with Him the holiness for which He has taught us to yearn.

"Is it true, Ignatius," said the Roman emperor to the Christian martyr, "that you carry about your God within you?" "It is even so," replied the bishop, "for it is written, I will dwell in thee, and walk in thee." And for that answer they cast him to the wild beasts. But what they deemed blasphemy is literally true of the Holy Spirit.

**Joel 3:18 And it will come about in that day That the mountains will drip with sweet wine, And the hills will flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD, To water the valley of Shittim.**

- **That the mountains will drip with sweet wine:** Job 29:6 Isa 55:12,13 Am 9:13,14
- **And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water:** Isa 30:25 35:6 41:17,18
- **And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD** Ps 46:4 Eze 47:1-12 Zec 14:8
- **To water the valley of Shittim:** Nu 25:1 Mic 6:5

## THE BLESSINGS OF THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

See [summary of blessings in the Millennium](#).

**And it will come about in that day** - What "day?" This is the same time referred to in Joel 3:1 [note](#) "in those days and at that time." The [Day of the LORD](#) is still in play, but as noted above, this verse refers to the "good side" of that day, after the day of



destruction of the Antichrist, the False Prophet and the godless Gentile armies seeking to destroy Israel. Now Joel presents a picture of the glorious time that follows the Lord's return and His establishment of the [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Don't be confused here because the Day of the LORD will extend to the end of the Millennium - cf 2 Peter 3:10-[note](#) - see schematic representation). I realize some like John MacArthur feel the Day of the Lord at the end of the Millennium as described by Peter is another "day" and that the Millennium is not part of the Day of the Lord. While that is possible, I think it is difficult to exclude that the millennial blessing described here in Joel 3:18 are part of the Day of the Lord. See further discussion of this interpretation below.

[Charles Simeon](#) who lived from 1759-1836 was an excellent, conservative expositor who generally interpreted the text literally and thus he still interpreted the 1000 years of Revelation 20 as the Millennium! Commenting on Joel's description on Joel 3:18 he writes

"THE return of the Jews to their own land at some future period **seems to be predicted so plainly** (Ed: What a contrast with many modern commentators who seem to find this interpretation enigmatic and confusing, primarily because they have replaced Israel with the Church!) **and so frequently, that no reasonable doubt can be entertained respecting it.** (Amen and Amen!) As for their (Israel's) future conversion to the faith of Christ, that is absolutely certain. But previous to their final settlement in their own land, there will be a violent contest with them in Palestine: but their enemies will be defeated with great slaughter: and after that will the long-wished-for period arrive, when all, both Jews and Gentiles, shall turn unto the Lord, and all "become one fold, under one Shepherd." (Excerpt from his Sermon on Joel 3:18 "The Millennium") (See Related Resource: Israel of God, [replacement theology / supersessionism](#))

**NET Note** - The language used here is a [hyperbolic](#) way of describing both a bountiful grape harvest ("the mountains will drip with juice") and an abundance of cattle ("the hills will flow with milk"). In addition to being hyperbolic, the language is also [metonymical](#) (effect for cause). ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

**That the mountains will drip with sweet wine** - Joel uses rich figures of speech to express the abundance of the fruit of the vine. Contrast this with Joel's prophecy opening with devastation of the lands by locusts (Joel 1)! In the coming golden age when the King of kings reigns on earth.

**Constable** - The mountains of Israel would be so full of grapevines that they could be described as dripping with **wine**. There will be so many milk-yielding animals feeding on the luxuriant hills that the hills could be said to flow with milk. Instead of the wadis that have water in them only a few days each year, the steams of Judah would flow with abundant, life-giving water. All these descriptions recall conditions in paradise (cf. Joel 1:5, 18, 20).

**Keil and Delitzsch** - "In that day," viz., the period following the final judgment upon the heathen, the mountains and hills of Judah, i.e., the least fruitful portions of the Old Testament kingdom of God in the time of the prophet, will overflow with new wine and milk, and all the brooks of water be filled, i.e., no more dry up in the hot season of the year (Joel 1:20). Thus will the fruitfulness of Canaan, the land of the Lord, flowing with milk and honey, come forth in all its potency. Even the unfruitful acacia valley will be watered by a spring issuing from the house of Jehovah, and turned into a fruitful land. The valley of Shittim is the barren valley of the Jordan, above the Dead Sea. The name Shittim, acacia, is taken from the last encampment of the Israelites in the steppes of Moab, before their entrance into Canaan (Num. 25:1; Josh. 3:1), and was chosen by the prophet to denote a very dry valley, as the acacia grows in a dry soil (cf. Celsii, Hierob. i. p. 500ff.).

**Amos** describes this fantastic future fertility

"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the plowman will overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; When the mountains will drip sweet wine And all the hills will be dissolved. (Amos 9:13)

**And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD**- Zechariah describes this same geographical transformation.

Zechariah 14:8-note And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

**To water the valley of Shittim** - Valley of Acacias. [Click for map](#) showing probable location in the valley north of the Dead Sea.

**MacArthur** on **valley of Shittim** - Known for its acacia trees, the valley was situated on the northern shores of the Dead Sea and served as the final stopover for Israel prior to her entrance into the Promised Land (Nu 25:1; Jos 2:1; 3:1). This valley is also the place to which the millennial river will flow (Ezek 47:1-12; Zec 14:8).

**Constable** - on **valley of Shittim** - A spring will flow out from the millennial temple that will water the **valley of acacia trees**, evidently between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea ([Click map](#)) (cf. Ezek. 47:1-12; Zech. 14:8). This will also be a visual reminder that

Yahweh is the source of all provisions and fruitfulness.

**Michael Bentley** - The valley of acacias is also sometimes translated 'the valley of Shittim'. This is a 'deep and rocky portion of the Kidron Valley or wadi that begins northwest of Jerusalem, bends around east of the city, and then continues through a deep gorge southeast toward the Dead Sea'. The Dead Sea is a very barren area which is made up of about 25 per cent salt. Nothing lives in its waters, nor does any vegetation grow there, but amazingly acacias grew in abundance in the dry valley of Shittim during biblical times. To illustrate the great change which would come about on '**that day**', Joel spoke of this dry valley as being deluged with water flowing from the Lord's house. (Opening Up Joel)

**Jamieson** - The blessings, temporal and spiritual, issuing from Jehovah's house at Jerusalem, shall extend even to Shittim, on the border between Moab and Israel, beyond Jordan (Nu 25:1; 33:49; Josh 2:1; Mic 6:5-note). "Shittim" means "acacias," which grow only in arid regions: implying that even the arid desert shall be fertilized by the blessing from Jerusalem. So Ezekiel 47:1-12 describes the waters issuing from the threshold of the house as flowing into the Dead Sea, and purifying it. Also in Zec 14:8-note the waters flow on one side into the Mediterranean, on the other side into the Dead Sea, near which latter Shittim was situated (compare Ps 46:4).

**NET Note** on the "valley of Shittim." - The exact location of the Valley of Acacia Trees is uncertain. The Hebrew word שִׁטִּים (shittim) refers to a place where the acacia trees grow, which would be a very arid and dry place. The acacia tree can survive in such locations, whereas most other trees require more advantageous conditions. Joel's point is that the stream that has been mentioned will proceed to the most dry and barren of locations in the vicinity of Jerusalem. ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

## THE DAY OF THE LORD A TIME OF GLOOM BUT ALSO A TIME OF GLORY

**Comment** - It should be noted that some writers feel the Day of the Lord described by Peter is a second stage of the Day and that the Day of the Lord does not include the Millennial reign of Christ. In other words they see the Day of the Lord as ONLY a time of doom and gloom. Even one writer, [Richard Mayhue](#), who interprets the day of the Lord as 2 stages (Tribulation time and End of Millennium), seems to contradict his own interpretation in writing the following description regarding the **Day of the Lord "Most passages speak of God's judgments, but some are tied closely to God's blessing** (Zech 14:1-21)." It seems that the glorious truths in Zechariah 14 forces Mayhue to admit that there is a positive aspect to the Day of the Lord. And what does Zechariah 14 describe? Among other things Zechariah 14:20 says "**In that DAY** there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD."" It describes the blessed time of the Millennium, which would support the premise that the Day of the Lord is a prolonged period which includes the Millennium and ends with the final Day of the Lord in 2 Peter 3:10. The following discussion has numerous quotes that would also support the premise that the Day of the Lord includes the time of the Millennium.

Here is an excerpt from the note by [Gotquestions](#) on **What is the Day of the Lord?** - One key to understanding these phrases is to note that they always identify **a span of time during which God personally intervenes in history, directly or indirectly, to accomplish some specific aspect of His plan**. Most people associate the day of the Lord with a period of time or a special day that will occur when God's will and purpose for His world and for mankind will be fulfilled. Some scholars believe that the day of the Lord will be a longer period of time than a single day—a period of time when Christ will reign throughout the world before He cleanses heaven and earth in preparation for the eternal state of all mankind. Other scholars believe the day of the Lord will be an instantaneous event when Christ returns to earth to redeem His faithful believers and send unbelievers to eternal damnation....**Besides being a time of judgment, it will also be a time of salvation** as God will deliver the remnant of Israel, fulfilling His promise that "all of Israel will be saved" (Romans 11:26), forgiving their sins and restoring His chosen people to the land He promised to Abraham (Isaiah 10:27; Jeremiah 30:19-31, 40; Micah 4; Zechariah 13). The final outcome of the day of the Lord will be that "the arrogance of man will be brought low and the pride of men humbled; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day" (Isaiah 2:17). **The ultimate or final fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the day of the Lord will come at the end of history when God, with wondrous power, will punish evil and fulfill all His promises.**

**John MacArthur** commenting on 2 Peter 3:10 says "In Scripture the day of the Lord signifies the extraordinary, miraculous interventions of God in human history for the purpose of judgment, culminating in His final judgment of the wicked on earth and the destruction of the present universe." However this description is not entirely accurate because this day also has a glorious side to it as described below (and to which even MacArthur seems to agree as noted in the quote below).

**John MacArthur** in his sermon on Zechariah 14 seems to contradict his own belief that the Millennium is not part of the Day of the

Lord writing (specifically regarding Zech 14:8) "And I think it's a picture, too, of how  **blessing is going to flow**. Jerusalem will become the center of the world and  **blessing will just flow in all directions. What an incredible time. So we see the coming of the DAY OF THE LORD**. (ED: THIS DOES NOT SOUND LIKE THIS DAY IS SOLELY A DAY OF DOOM AND GLOOM!) Now very rapidly the rest of the chapter will flow. Are you ready?...Zech 14:9 begins the crowning of the Lord as King. We've seen the coming of the day of the Lord, now the crowning of the Lord as King. The first thing that happens when He arrives, He's going to have a coronation. Verse 9, "And the LORD shall be King over all the earth.  **IN THAT DAY** shall there be one LORD and His name one." Listen, the Lord is not only going to be the King in heaven, but  **IN THAT DAY** He's going to be the King on earth. He will not be King de jure, that is by right, but He will be King de facto, that is in fact. This is a promised reality. The King is coming. And He is going to be King. And  **IN THAT DAY**, it says, He'll be King – now watch this – "And there will be one LORD and His name one." Do you know how many religions there will be in the world in the kingdom? One – that's all. Just one. Anybody who begins to start another one will be dealt with by the rod of iron with which Christ rules, read Revelation 19. The worldwide monotheism, one religion, all of the systems of Satan are over. And the absolutely unique and incomparable one God, the only wise God and our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, Him and Him alone will the world worship. And so  **IN THAT DAY** there will be one Lord and His name will be one."

So in his sermon comment **MacArthur** certainly sounds like he sees the **Day of the Lord** as not just doom and gloom but blessing and glory.

Again **John MacArthur** alludes to a time of blessing associated with the Day of the Lord in his sermon "The Invisible Kingdom of God, Part 2" - Joel begins at the very outset of his prophecy with identifying this event, Joel 1:15, "Alas for the day, for the **day of the Lord** is near and it will come as destruction from the Almighty." The coming of the King was the **day of the Lord**. The **day of the Lord** is always associated with judgment, maximum judgment, a final kind of judgment. There are days of the Lord in the Old Testament, days when God stepped in with great judgment, **BUT** there is a culminating eschatological final day of the Lord which Joel has in view here. This will be destruction from the Almighty. He will come to destroy His enemies and the ungodly. At the same time, it will be a time of salvation, **it will be a time of blessing for the righteous**. If you go to the end of his prophecy, Joel 3:18, **it will come about in that day ... that day of the Lord ... the mountains will drip with sweet wine and the hills will flow with milk and all the brooks of Judah will flow with water and a spring will go out from the house of the Lord to water the valley of Shittim.** In other words, **it's going to be a time of immense blessing**.

**COMMENT:** SO THE QUESTION I WOULD ASK DR MACARTHUR IS "WHEN DID YOU SAY THAT TIME OF BLESSING WOULD OCCUR?" AND IF I AM INTERPRETING HIM CORRECTLY, HE STATES THAT IT IS  **IN THAT DAY...THE DAY OF THE LORD!** WHEN IS THIS BLESSING REALIZED? THE OBVIOUS ANSWER IS DURING THE MILLENNIUM. IT WOULD SEEM TO FOLLOW THAT THE TIME OF THE MILLENNIUM ONE COMPONENT OF THE DAY OF THE LORD, THE TIME OF GLORY FOLLOWING THE TIME OF GLOOM.

And look at Isaiah's description of the **Day of the Lord**. Isaiah 13:9 begins with doom and gloom writing "Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it." The description continues and seems at first to be divided by a chapter break (which we know is not inspired) with the description in Isaiah 14:1 describing the time "When the LORD will have compassion on Jacob, and again choose Israel, and settle them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob." When is that? Clearly that is the Millennium. So again we see the pattern of doom and gloom progressing to blessing and glory.

We see a similar pattern of doom and gloom morphing (so to speak) to blessing and glory in Joel. And so in Joel 3:14-18 we read "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For **the day of the LORD** is near in the valley of decision. 15 The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness. 16 The LORD roars from Zion And utters His voice from Jerusalem, And the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel. 17 Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, And strangers will pass through it no more. 18 And **in that day** The mountains will drip with sweet wine, And the hills will flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD To water the valley of Shittim." Notice Joel 3:18 says "**in that day**" which begs the question what "**day**?" In context, Joel has been describing the **Day of the LORD**, first the doom and gloom aspect of that **DAY**, but then the blessing and glory of that **DAY**. This passage would support the premise that the **Day of the LORD** includes the time of the Millennium when water flows from the house of the LORD.

***The Day of Yahweh is not only a day of judgment on the unrighteous but is also a day of deliverance and blessing on the righteous.***

**Irwin Busenitz** (who is associated with John MacArthur) on Joel 3:18 - The temporal phrase **in that day** introduces the final section of the prophecy, linking it with the preceding verses. **The Day of Yahweh** is not only a **day** of judgment on the unrighteous but is also a **day** of deliverance and blessing on the righteous. Both aspects of this theme are reiterated in these final verses. After the emphatic and universal judgment has been executed upon the heathen, the prophet summarizes the blessings which will flow from

the throne of God and which will overflow the land of Israel (cf. Isa 4:2). (Mentor Commentary on Joel and Obadiah - recommended)

Robert Thomas (also associated with John MacArthur) writes "From the broad perspective of Scripture, **the day of the Lord** will be a time when God's wrath puts extended pressure on His enemies (Isa. 3:16–24; 13:9–11; Jer. 30:7; Ezek. 38–39; Amos 5:18, 19; Zeph. 1:14–18). By using terminology descriptive of **the day of the Lord**, Jesus identified part of that day with the **Great Tribulation in particular** and the whole of Daniel's seventieth week in general (cp. Matt. 24:21 with Jer. 30:7; Dan. 12:1; Joel 2:2). **ED COMMENT: ACTUALLY THAT IS NOT COMPLETELY CORRECT. Mt 24:21 DESCRIBES THE GREAT TRIBULATION AS A 3.5 YEAR PERIOD, NOT THE ENTIRE 7 YEARS OF DANIEL'S 70TH WEEK. AND PAUL TEACHES THE DAY OF THE LORD BEGINS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION - 2Th 2:3-4).** At the outset of **the day of the Lord**, human trials will be prolonged and comparable to a woman's labor before giving birth to a child (Isa. 13:8; 26:17–19; 66:7–9; Jer. 30:6–8; Mic. 4:9, 10; cf. Matt. 24:8; 1 Thess. 5:3).<sup>126</sup> This phase of growing human agony will be climaxed by the Messiah's personal return to earth to terminate the period of turmoil through direct judgment. Armageddon (Rev. 16:16; 19:11–21) and the series of Tribulation visitations that precede it are inseparable parts of **the day of the Lord**. God's eschatological wrath is a unit. **This does not end the day of the Lord, however. Following Christ's personal intervention will come an extended time of blessing and prosperity for those who remain to populate the earth.** (Revelation 1-7: Exegetical Commentary)

**J Vernon McGee** agrees writing "And it shall come to pass **in that day**" -- **that is, the Day of the Lord** "The mountains shall drop down new wine" -- this is in the time of the Kingdom." That sounds like the blessing and glory component of the Day of the LORD.

**Thomas Constable** commenting on Joel 3:18 writes "Joel continued to describe the future day of the Lord, but now he passed from the judgments of the Tribulation to the **blessings of the Millennium.**"

**Holman Study Bible: NKJV Edition** on Joel 3:18-21 comments that "Joel summarized **the result of the day of the Lord** The land of Israel will have miraculous fertility and fruitfulness. Traditional enemies will be punished. Yahweh will dwell with His people, and they will receive pardon for their sins."

**ESV Study Bible** on Joel 3:18 says "**in that day**. I.e., the day of the Lord." (**ED:** So clearly the implication is that the ESV note sees the description that follows in Joel 3:18 to be a component of the Day of the Lord.)

**Michael Vlach** - Joel 3:20 indicates that **as a result of the day of the Lord** (Joel 3:18) "Judah will be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation" (HCSB). In Zephaniah 3:20 God promises again to "restore" the "fortunes" of Israel (HCSB). (**ED:** THAT HARDLY SOUNDS LIKE JUST DOOM AND GLOOM WHICH IS THE PRIMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE DAY OF THE LORD OF A NUMBER OF WRITERS!) When examining these and other restoration texts in the Bible, certain truths emerge: (1) the restoration of Israel involves both spiritual salvation and physical blessings including possession of the land of promise; (2) the promise of restoration is not based on Israel's greatness but on God's choice and God's character; and (3) the promise for restoration takes place after the period of Israel's disobedience. As the passages above and many others indicate, the restoration of Israel is a major theme in the Old Testament. It is an explicit doctrine. (Christ's Prophetic Plans)

**Warren Wiersbe** writes on Joel 3:18-21 - As Joel preached, the people could see the dry fields, the starving cattle, and the empty barns. They could see and hear the locusts as they ravaged the country. But Joel is picturing a time when wine, milk, and water shall flow in ceaseless measure in the land. **This is, of course, the kingdom age when Jesus Christ shall sit on David's throne in Jerusalem, and when the land shall be healed and the blessing of God restored.** The nation will be cleansed, and God shall dwell in Zion. This reminds us of Ezekiel's final words: "And the name of the city from that day shall be, THE LORD IS THERE." (Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament.)

**Michael Bentley** on Joel 3:18 - This verse starts with the phrase '**In that day**'. This is the same period of time that we find at Joel 3:1—'**In those days and at that time**'. **The prophet continued to outline the blessings of being restored to the Lord's favour.** Just as two lovers may suddenly experience a rekindling of the joy of their first love (but see Rev. 2:4), so God's people would know the return of all past favour—except that, this time, these gifts would be 'pressed down ... and running over' (see Luke 6:38). '**In that day**', **bountiful harvests would again be given; in fact, on the great day of the Lord there will be a triumphal time of harvest.** We have already seen in 3:13 that the harvest of the wicked will be all-encompassing so that no one will escape. (Opening Up Joel)

**Trent Butler** on Joel 3:18 - When this promise of the final **Day of the Lord** reaches fulfillment, the entire situation will be turned on its heels. **The Day of the Lord will be a day of total reversal.** No more complaints about locusts and droughts and armies destroying the crops. Vineyards on the mountainsides will drip new wine (Joel 1:10). Animals threatened with extinction by the drought and lack of pastures (Joel 1:18) will now produce so much milk that it will literally flow down the hills. Dried-up streams (cp. Joel 1:20, where the same word is used as ravines in Joel 3:18) will now run with water. (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah)

**Thomas J Finley** on Joel 3:18 - The Hebrew prophets used the phrase וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם הַהוּא (wəhāyâ bayyôm hahû', "and it will happen in that day") to mark off a new section, as here in v. 18. As is so often the case in predictive portions of the OT, **"that day"** refers to **the general events surrounding the day of the Lord. Judgment of the nations and deliverance for Israel do not exhaust God's purposes. He has planned a new blessing for the land that will be unsurpassed, even beyond the splendor of the kingdom of David and Solomon.** (Joel, Amos, Obadiah Commentary)

**Hans Wolff** on Joel 3:18 - The conception of the **Day of Yahweh** as a day of judgment on the nations and a day of deliverance for Israel (4:1–3\*, 9–17\*) is **thus supplemented by the paradisaical motif.** (Joel and Amos: A Commentary)

**Leander Keck** - The **day of the Lord** will bring not only the destruction of God's enemies and the rescue of repentant Jerusalem and Judah, but **it will also usher in a paradisaical existence for the faithful.** Borrowing partially on the thought of Amos 9:13, Joel picks up themes from the first chapter of his book and portrays their reversal. Once the sweet wine was cut off (Joel 1:5); now the mountains with their vineyards will yield wine in abundance (Joel 3:18). Previously there was no milk from the cattle, because they had no pasture (Joel 1:18); now the rich grasslands on the hills will furnish an ample supply. During the drought, there was no water anywhere (Joel 1:17–20); in God's future, the rivers and wadis of Judah will flow full all year round. Once again, borrowing an earlier prophetic theme, a fountain will flow forth from the Temple and water even the Valley of Shittim (Ezek 47:1–12; cf. Ps 46:4; Zech 14:8; Rev 22:1–2)—a symbol of the life-giving power of God's presence (cf. Ps 36:8; Isa 33:21). (New Interpreter's Bible)

**Walter Kaiser** in a discussion entitled **God's Blessing as the Day of the Lord Climaxes—Joel 3:18–21** - The **day of the Lord** in this section is also called **"in that day"** (Joel 3:18). This is not unusual, for the Hebrew prophets often used the expression **in that day** instead of the full title **"the day of the Lord."** In fact, this shortened form appeared so frequently, that no other modifiers were needed for the prophet's audience, for the pointing to a particular day meant a time when God would act in **judgment and blessing**, depending on the state of the receiver. Just as there were four reasons for divine judgment on the nations in the previous section, so this final section of the prophet Joel describes four blessings God is to pour out on the covenant people (Joel 3:18–21). These are the blessings: 1. the healing of the land of Israel (3:18), 2. the punishment of all of Israel's enemies (3:19), 3. the designation of the land to Israel for all times to come (3:20), and 4. the pardon of Israel and the dwelling of God in the land (3:21). (Preaching and Teaching the Last Things)

**Cornerstone Bible Commentary** on Joel 3:18 **in that day** - This is a familiar prophetic formula used to introduce details relative to the eschatological future (e.g., Isa 24:21; 26:1; 27:1; Jer 30:8; Amos 9:11; Mic 4:6; Zeph 3:16; Zech 14:4).....Joel ends his prophecy on a high note. He predicts that the environment where God's future people will live will be marked by superabundant fertility. All that had been lost in the locust plague will, as God promised (2:18–27), be restored in effusive quantity. The landscape will flourish again; the streams and even the dry wadis will flow freely, bringing life and health to the land and all its inhabitants. Jerusalem's underground water sources will also gush forth, bringing refreshing vitality to ground that has long been parched with aridity. Even the Dead Sea will come alive and be rejuvenated by the fresh waters of Jerusalem's Temple Mount (see note on 3:18).

**Duane Garrett** writes on Joel 3:18 - **"In that day"** refers to **the day of the Lord** (cf. Hos 2:16,18,21; Amos 8:9,13; 9:11). As in 1:5 "new wine" symbolizes not mere sufficiency but abundance. The promise that all the ravines would flow with water no doubt gave hope to a people who had seen their land parched with drought (Joel 1:12,17). (The New American Commentary)

[See the discussion](#) by Dr Tony Garland who also favors the Day of the Lord as including the time of the millennial reign of Christ.

I could quote other conservative sources which make similar comments. The upshot is that while one might say there are 2 stages of the Day of the Lord (Tribulation and End of Millennium), it is just as reasonable and Scripturally supportable to say that the **Day of the Lord** is a prolonged period when God intervenes in human history and this includes His establishment of His glorious Millennial Kingdom.

## CONDITIONS EXISTING WITHIN THE MILLENNIUM Dwight Pentecost

- See also Summary of Scriptures describing conditions during the Millennium.

Much Scripture is devoted to stating the untold blessing and glory poured out upon earth through the beneficence of the Lord Jesus Christ in the kingdom. Many of these have been alluded to previously, but an outline of the conditions on the earth will show the "greatness of the kingdom" (Dan. 7:27).

#### **A. Peace.**

The cessation of war through the unification of the kingdoms of the world under the reign of Christ, together with the resultant economic prosperity, since nations need not devote vast proportions of their expenditure on munitions, is a major theme of the prophets. National and individual peace is the fruit of Messiah's reign (Isa. 2:4; 9:4-7; 11:6-9; 32:17-18; 33:5-6; 54:13; 55:12; 60:18; 65:25; 66:12; Ezek. 28:26; 34:25, 28; Hos. 2:18; Mic. 4:2-3; Zech. 9:10).

#### **B. Joy.**

The fulness of joy will be a distinctive mark of the age (Isa. 9:3-4; 12:3-6; 14:7-8; 25:8-9; 30:29; 42:1, 10-12; 52:9; 60:15; 61:7, 10; 65:18-19; 66:10-14; Jer. 30:18-19; 31:13-14; Zeph. 3:14-17; Zech. 8:18-19; 10:6-7).

#### **C. Holiness.**

The theocratic kingdom will be a holy kingdom, in which holiness is manifested through the King and the King's subjects. The land will be holy, the city holy, the temple holy, and the subjects holy unto the Lord (Isa. 1:26-27; 4:3-4; 29:18-23; 31:6-7; 35:8-9; 52:1; 60:21; 61:10; Jer. 31:23; Ezek. 36:24-31; 37:23-24; 43:7-12; 45:1; Joel 3:21; Zeph. 3:11, 13; Zech. 8:3; 13:1-2; 14:20-21).

#### **D. Glory.**

The kingdom will be a glorious kingdom, in which the glory of God will find full manifestation (Isa. 24:23; 4:2; 35:2; 40:5; 60:1-9).

#### **E. Comfort.**

The King will personally minister to every need, so that there will be the fulness of comfort in that day (Isa. 12:1-2; 29:22-23; 30:26; 40:1-2; 49:13; 51:3; 61:3-7; 66:13-14; Jer. 31:23-25; Zeph. 3:18-20; Zech. 9:11-12; Rev. 21:4).

#### **F. Justice.**

There will be the administration of perfect justice to every individual (Isa. 9:7; 11:5; 32:16; 42:1-4; 65:21-23; Jer. 23:5; 31:23; 31:29-30).

#### **G. Full knowledge.**

The ministry of the King will bring the subjects of His kingdom into full knowledge. Doubtless there will be an unparalleled teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. (Isa. 11:1-2, 9; 41:19-20; 54:13; Hab. 2:14).

#### **H. Instruction.**

This knowledge will come about through the instruction that issues from the King (Isa. 2:2-3; 12:3-6; 25:9; 29:17-24; 30:20-21; 32:3-4; 49:10; 52:8; Jer. 3:14-15; 23:1-4; Mic. 4:2).

#### **I. The removal of the curse.**

The original curse placed upon creation (Gen. 3:17-19) will be removed, so that there will be abundant productivity to the earth. Animal creation will be changed so as to lose its venom and ferocity. (Isa. 11:6-9; 35:9; 65:25).

#### **J. Sickness removed.**

The ministry of the King as a healer will be seen throughout the age, so that sickness and even death, except as a penal measure in dealing with overt sin, will be removed (Isa. 33:24; Jer. 30:17; Ezek. 34:16).

#### **K. Healing of the deformed.**

Accompanying this ministry will be the healing of all deformity at the inception of the millennium (Isa. 29:17-19; 35:3-6; 61:1-2; Jer. 31:8; Mic. 4:6-7; Zeph. 3:19).

#### **L. Protection.**

There will be a supernatural work of preservation of life in the millennial age through the King (Isa. 41:8-14; 62:8-9; Jer. 32:27; 23:6; Ezek. 34:27; Joel 3:16-17; Amos 9:15; Zech. 8:14-15; 9:8; 14:10-11).

#### **M. Freedom from oppression.**

There will be no social, political or religious oppression in that day (Isa. 14:3-6; 42:6-7; 49:8-9; Zech. 9:11-12).



#### **N. No immaturity.**

The suggestion seems to be that there will not be the tragedies of feeble-mindedness nor of dwarfed bodies in that day (Isa. 65:20). Longevity will be restored.

#### **O. Reproduction by the living peoples.**

The living saints who go into the millennium in their natural bodies will beget children throughout the age. The earth's population will soar. These born in the age will not be born without a sin nature, so salvation will be required (Jer. 30:20; 31:29; Ezek. 47:22; Zech. 10:8).

#### **P. Labor.**

The period will not be characterized by idleness, but there will be a perfect economic system, in which the needs of men are abundantly provided for by labor in that system, under the guidance of the King. There will be a fully developed industrialized society, providing for the needs of the King's subjects (Isa 62:8-9; 65:21-23; Jer. 31:5; Ezek. 48:18-19). Agriculture as well as manufacturing will provide employment.

#### **Q. Economic prosperity.**

The perfect labor situation will produce economic abundance, so that there will be no want (Isa. 4:1; 35:1-2, 7; 30:23-25; 62:8-9; 65:21-23; Jer. 31:5, 12; Ezek. 34:26; Mic. 4:1, 4; Zech. 8:11-12; 9:16-17; Ezek. 36:29-30; Joel 2:21-27; Amos 9:13-14).

#### **R. Increase of light.**

There will be an increase of solar and lunar light in the age. This increased light probably is a major cause in the increased productivity of the earth (Isa. 4:5; 30:26; 60:19-20; Zech. 2:5).

#### **S. Unified language.**

The language barriers will be removed so that there can be free social intercourse (Zeph. 3:9).

#### **T. Unified Worship.**

All the world will unite in the worship of God and God's Messiah (Isa. 45:23; 52:1, 7-10; 66:17-23; Zech. 13:2; 14:16; 8:23; 9:7; Zeph. 3:9; Mal. 1:11; Rev. 5:9-14).

#### **U. The manifest presence of God.**

God's presence will be fully recognized and fellowship with God will be experienced to an unprecedented degree (Ezek. 37:27-28; Zech. 2:2, 10-13; Rev. 21:3).

#### **V. The fulness of the Spirit.**

Divine presence and enablement will be the experience of all who are in subjection to the authority of the King (Isa. 32:13-15; 41:1; 44:3; 59:19, 21; 61:1; Ezek. 36:26-27; 37:14; 39:29; Joel 2:28-29; Ezek. 11:19-20).

#### **W. The perpetuity of the millennial state.**

That which characterizes the millennial age is not viewed as temporary, but eternal (Joel 3:20; Amos 9:15; Ezek. 37:26-28; Isa. 51:6-8; 55:3, 13; 56:5; 60:19-20; 61:8; Jer. 32:40; Ezek. 16:60; 43:7-9; Dan. 9:24; Hos. 2:19-23).

The wide diversity of the realms in which the blessings of the King's presence is felt is thus clearly seen. ([Things to Come: A Study of Biblical Eschatology](#))

## **THE MILLENNIUM**

### **Charles Simeon**

**COMMENT** - Charles Simeon could hardly be depicted as a dispensationalist and yet he clearly holds to a literal millennium, which is a reflection of the fact that he interpreted the Scriptures literally, which is always the safest approach to take! [It has been stated](#) that only half of the churches in America (2024) are millennial with over 30% amillennial and 11% post-millennial which probably explains why many churches tend to avoid preaching messages on prophetic passages in the Bible!

Joel 3:18. It shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall

flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the House of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim.

THE return of the Jews to their own land at some future period seems to be predicted so plainly and so frequently, that no reasonable doubt can be entertained respecting it. As for their future conversion to the faith of Christ, that is absolutely certain. But previous to their final settlement in their own land, there will be a violent contest with them in Palestine: but their enemies will be defeated with great slaughter: and after that will the long-wished-for period arrive, when all, both Jews and Gentiles, shall turn unto the Lord, and all “become one fold, under one Shepherd.”

Had the metaphorical expressions “of the mountains dropping with new wine, and the hills flowing with milk” been used alone, we might have supposed that the prediction related only to temporal prosperity, and the restoration of Canaan to that measure of fertility which it possessed in the days of old: but “the fountain coming forth from the House of the Lord” must have a spiritual import; and consequently the whole passage must be understood as designating and describing the Millennial period.

From this sublime passage we shall take occasion to consider,

I. The blessings of that day—

The terms under which these blessings are set forth, will lead us to notice,

1. Their richness and variety—

[There are no terms whatever that can give us a sublimer idea of the Gospel than these: its blessings are here represented as most reviving and comforting, most salubrious and nutritious, suited to every age, and every condition of the human race.

Let us contemplate them a moment. Reconciliation with God through the blood of the cross, is the first that obtrudes itself upon our notice: and O! who can tell how refreshing this is to a weary heavy-laden soul? With this, peace is introduced into the conscience, even that “peace of God which passeth all understanding.” Friendship being thus cemented between God and man, the person who was till lately an enemy to his God, and an object of his everlasting indignation, is now adopted into his family, and enabled to look up with a spirit of adoption, crying Abba, Father! To the Lord Jesus Christ he now looks as his friend and his beloved; and to the Father he draws nigh with confidence, saying “O God, thou art my God!” Now he has access to God at all times, with a liberty to pour out his heart before him, and an assurance that “whatever he shall ask shall be done unto him.” Now also he enjoys an union with the Lord Jesus Christ, even such an union as a branch has with the vine, or a member with the head: and, by means of that union, he receives constant communications from the fulness that has been treasured up for him in that living Fountain of all good. The Holy Spirit is now poured out upon him as a Comforter, and is imparted in all his sanctifying operations, to mortify all his corruptions, and to transform him into the Divine image. Assured prospects of glory are now opened to him, so that he has both the earnest and foretaste of his heavenly inheritance. But where shall we end, if we attempt to enumerate one hundredth part of the blessings which the Gospel makes over to us, and which are here characterized as “hills flowing with milk, and mountains dropping down new wine?” Suffice it to say, that all the blessings of the everlasting covenant, all that Christ has purchased by his blood, and all that are made over to us in the exceeding great and precious promises, all are ours, if we are Christ’s——But to declare fully their richness and variety exceeds the powers of any finite intelligence.]

2. Their universality and abundance—

[These blessings will not be so limited as they now are, either in the measure of their communication, or the objects on whom they are bestowed: they will “flow” in all the abundance of the most majestic “rivers,” and that even “to the valley of Shittim;” which being situated on the borders of Moab, and the shores of the Dead Sea, may well be considered as characterizing the most distant and barren places of the earth. There shall not be a human being to whom its blessings do not extend: for “all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” The high and the low, the rich and the poor, shall equally be partakers of them; for “all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest.” “Kings will be the nursing-fathers of the Church, and queens her nursing-mothers:” and with “the lofty firs and pines shall be united the humble box, to glorify the house of God’s glory, and to make the place of his feet gloriousb.” So universal shall be the reign of Christ on earth, that “holiness to the Lord shall be written upon the bells of the horses” which the peasants use in agriculture: the smallest vessel in the sanctuary shall be as highly sanctified as the largest; and “there shall no more be the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hostsc.” “All in that day will be righteous;” and so righteous as to need no addition to their happiness from any creature-comforts: “The sun shall be no more their light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto them; but the Lord shall be unto them an everlasting light, and their God their gloryd.” It is not in respect of universality only that “the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea,” but of depth also; for “the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven-fold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wounde.”

O glorious period! “May the Lord hasten it, in His time!”]

Whilst we behold such a period predicted, it becomes us to consider,

II. Our duty in the prospect of it—  
This is doubtless,

1. To help it forward by all possible means—

[God works by means: and, however fixed the times and the seasons may be in the Divine mind, it is by the use of means that he will accomplish these most glorious events. The first advent of Christ was proclaimed by his Forerunner, John the Baptist, who by his ministrations “made ready a people prepared for the Lord.” And we in like manner are to act as heralds and harbingers of the Messiah’s second advent. As pioneers, we are to prepare his way. By us must his path be levelled, to facilitate his march: we must go before him, to “prepare his way, to make strait in the desert a highway for our God.” Through the instrumentality of men “shall every valley be exalted, and every mountain and hill be made low; and the crooked be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord be revealed, and all flesh see it together:” yes, “by a voice crying in the wilderness shall all this be done: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

Is it asked then, What shall we do to advance this glorious work? I answer, God has already gone out before us, and shewn us what to do. The Societies which, by his gracious providence, have already been established, shew in what line we may direct our efforts to the best advantage. The Bible is now translating into the different languages of men, and circulating to the ends of the earth: that is obviously the first and most important method of diffusing the knowledge of of salvation through the world. Mission Societies also are in full activity, sending forth pious men to preach the everlasting Gospel, and to explain to the benighted nations of the earth the glorious mysteries which are there revealed. At last, too, attention begins to be paid to that “people, wonderful from their beginning hitherto,” the lost sheep of the House of Israel. They are the people spoken of more especially by the prophet, in the preceding context; and they are the people whom God will make use of for the bringing in the period described in our text: “the fulness of the Jews will be the riches of the world;” and “the receiving of the Jews will be to the whole world as life from the deadg.” To aid these Societies, therefore, and to unite our efforts with them, and especially by prayer to bring down the Divine blessing upon them, is the most effectual way we can take to accelerate the arrival of that glorious day. And, if we should not live to see the temple raised ourselves, we shall at least have the satisfaction of having provided materials for it, and contributed towards it to the utmost of our power.]

2. To seek the foretaste of it in our own souls—

[All these blessings are to be enjoyed now, as well as at the period before referred to. They are all promised to us under the very same images: “Ho! every one that thirsteth, come to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price!” This invitation is given to all without exception: “Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.” Nor is it in small measure only that these blessings may be now possessed: for our Divine Master says, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink; and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waterk.” Let those who desire these blessings be in as unfavourable a state as “the vale of Shittim,” they have no need to be discouraged on that account: for “God will open for them rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: he will make the wilderness a pool of water, and dry land springs of water!” What hinders then, but that we should partake of all those mercies ourselves? If we really believe, as all profess to do, that the enjoyment of them will exalt man so highly in the latter ages of the world, and bring down, as it were, a heaven upon earth, surely we should now aspire after a foretaste of that heavenly feast; and “not give rest unto our Godm,” till he “bring us to his banquetin-house, and till his banner over us be loven.” To entertain an idea of the Millennium being a state of inconceivable felicity, and not to seek those graces and consolations which constitute its happiness, is a grievous inconsistency. Let all then be consistent: and now take their portion at that glorious feast which is spread for them in the Gospel, even “the feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refinedo———]

ADDRESS—

1. To those who think of religion as a source of melancholy—

[Does it wear that aspect in the passage before us? or can language be found to depict it in more lovely colours? Verily, if the transformation of a wilderness into the garden of the Lord be a joyful change, then is religion a source of unmingled joy and blessedness. But it may be said, that repentance and mortification of sin are painful works. True; but whence do they proceed? not from religion, but from sin, which must be repented of, and must be mortified. We are diseased, and must be cured, before we can enjoy health in our souls. If we were diseased in body, and needed a painful course of medicine, or the amputation of a limb, would any one ascribe our pains to health? Health would supersede the necessity of such a process: and when the soul is brought to the enjoyment of God’s presence, and the possession of his image, it shall “have beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness”———Let this erroneous notion then be put away; and let religion be regarded in its true light, as an anticipation and foretaste of the heavenly bliss.]

2. To those who profess to regard religion as a source of joy—

[You are correct in your sentiments on this momentous subject; but you must remember, that religion is a source of joy to those only who live nigh to God, and devote themselves unreservedly to his service. To those who give to God only a divided heart, it can administer no solid comfort. Indeed they are less happy than the ignorant ungodly world; for, whilst their profession keeps them from enjoying the vanities of the world, their distance from God prevents them from having any delight in him: so that there is nothing but an aching void, or a corroding anguish, in their hearts. O ye professors of godliness, either follow not the Lord at all, or "follow him fully." Live nigh to him, and walk with him, as Enoch did, and you shall never be disappointed of your hope: you shall never find that "he is a wilderness to you;" but you shall have the light of his countenance lifted up upon you, and "your mouth shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, whilst you are praising him with joyful lips."

But we trust that many do really experience all the blessedness of true piety: and they will need no exhortation to diffuse the blessings which they themselves enjoy. The wine and milk which they find so nutritious and comforting to their own souls, they will gladly impart to others. Combine then, brethren, your energies for that purpose. The whole world, except a small inclosure, is at this hour a wilderness. The Jewish people, with all their advantages, have reduced themselves almost to a level with the Gentile world: for whilst the Gentiles are "without God," the Jews are "without Christ, and therefore without hope" of ultimate acceptance before God. They believe not that Jesus is their Messiah; and therefore, as Jesus has said, "they die in their sins." O! rise ye as one man, and hold out to them the cup of salvation; and labour by all possible means to lead them to the "living Fountain of waters," that they may drink thereof, and live for ever.]

**Joel 3:19 Egypt will become a waste, And Edom will become a desolate wilderness, Because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, In whose land they have shed innocent blood.**

- **Egypt will become a waste:** Isa 11:15 19:1-15 Zec 10:10 14:18,19
- **And Edom will become a desolate wilderness:** Isa 34:1-17 63:1-6 Jer 49:17 La 4:21 Eze 25:1-17 35:1-15 Am 1:11,12 Ob 1:1,10-14 Mal 1:3,4
- **Because of the violence done to the sons of Judah:** Ps 137:7 Jer 51:35 Ob 1:10-16 2Th 1:6

### **EGYPT AND EDMOM RECEIVE THEIR JUST DESERTS!**

**Egypt will become a waste and Edom will become a desolate wilderness** - The Egyptians and the Edomites were two peoples who constantly troubled the Jews. While we cannot be dogmatic these two nations are most likely representative all of the enemies of Israel (for she had far more than just these two nations!).

**Keil and Delitzsch on Egypt and Edom** - These nations and lands had both thereby become types of the power of the world in its hostility to God.

**Bentley** - While the **Egyptians** experienced floods of water containing the rich nutrients of the Nile, all that the Israelites experienced was a harsh drought. However, Joel explains that 'in that day' the tables would be turned. Egypt would end up as a 'desolate' place, while God's people would revel in an abundance of good things. **Edom** also had behaved very badly towards Judah. The people of Edom were descended from Esau, the greedy brother of Jacob, but had refused to let the children of Israel pass through their territory when they journeyed from Egypt. Instead they made these weary pilgrims go all the way round their land before they could enter the Promised Land (Nu 20:20). Later, the people of Edom had watched and mocked while Judah's enemies had carried the Judeans away into captivity. Obadiah tells us that they had proudly 'looked down' on their brother nation and did nothing to help them (see Obad 1:8-12). But on the day of the Lord, Edom, which had once boasted of its great wealth which was 'safely' hidden away in its caves, would become a 'desert waste, because of violence done to the people of Judah'.(Opening Up Joel)

**Because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, In whose land they have shed innocent blood**- Obviously this passage refers to divine payback for the injustices committed by Egypt and Edom (and presumably other nations) against the Jews, not violence that the Jews had committed against others.

**Obadiah's** theme is Edom stands judged and her doom is certain, because of her pride in rejoicing over the misfortunes that befell Jerusalem.

**Ryrie** writes that "The Edomites descendants of Esau, Jacob's twin, were in constant conflict with Israel, the descendants of Jacob. They rejected Moses' request to pass through their land (Nu 20:14-20), they opposed King Saul (1 Sa 14:47), they fought against David (1 Ki 11:14-17), opposed Solomon (1 Ki 11:14-25) and Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:22), and rebelled against Jehoram (2

Chr 21:8). From the thirteenth to the sixth centuries B.C. they settled in Mount Seir, a mountainous region S of the Dead Sea, of which Sela (Petra) was the capital. So rugged is the terrain that the valley in which Petra is located can be reached only through a narrow canyon guarded by towering mountain walls 200-250 ft (61-76 m) high (see Obad 1:3-4). During the fifth century B.C., the Nabataeans dislodged the Edomites from their territory, causing them to withdraw to Idumea in southern Palestine. Herod the Great was an Edomite. (Ryrie Study Bible)

The prophet Obadiah pronounces judgment on Edom

"Because of violence to your brother Jacob, You will be covered with shame, And you will be cut off forever. 11"On the day that you stood aloof, On the day that strangers carried off his wealth, And foreigners entered his gate And cast lots for Jerusalem— You too were as one of them. 12"Do not gloat over your brother's day, The day of his misfortune. And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah In the day of their destruction; Yes, do not boast In the day of their distress. 13"Do not enter the gate of My people In the day of their disaster. Yes, you, do not gloat over their calamity In the day of their disaster. And do not loot their wealth In the day of their disaster. 14"Do not stand at the fork of the road To cut down their fugitives; And do not imprison their survivors In the day of their distress. 15"For the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head. 16 "Because just as you drank on My holy mountain, All the nations will drink continually. They will drink and swallow And become as if they had never existed. 17 "But on **Mount Zion there will be those who escape** (cf almost the exact phrase in Joel 2:32-note = THE REDEEMED REMNANT OF ISRAEL) **and it will be holy.** (Joel 3:17) **And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions.** (cf Joel 3:20) 18 "Then the house of Jacob will be a fire And the house of Joseph a flame; But **the house of Esau will be as stubble.** And they will set them on fire and consume them, So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau," For the LORD has spoken. (Ob 1:10-19)

**Henry Morris** on **possess their possessions** (Obad 1:17) - possess their possessions. The children of Esau, as well as those of Ishmael, Lot, and others, have thus far kept "the house of Jacob" from obtaining their divine inheritance, as promised by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as well as David. Eventually, however, God's Word will be vindicated, and Israel will "possess their possessions" in the coming age of Christ's kingdom. (Defender's Study Bible)

**Chuck Swindoll** writes that the Edomites "had thought themselves greater than they actually were; great enough to mock, steal from, and even harm God's chosen people. But the "Lord GOD," a name Obadiah used to stress God's sovereign power over the nations, will not stand idly by and let His people suffer forever (Oba 1:1). Through Obadiah, God reminded Edom of their poor treatment of His people (Oba 1:12–14) and promised redemption, not to the Edomites but to the people of Judah (Obad 1:17–18). The nation of Edom, which eventually disappeared into history, remains one of the prime examples of the truth found in [Proverbs 16:18](#): "Pride goes before destruction, / And a haughty spirit before stumbling." Obadiah's prophecy focuses on the destructive power of pride. It reminds us of the consequences of living in a self-serving manner, of following through on our own feelings and desires without considering their impact on those around us. Do you struggle to set aside your own wants and desires for those of God and others? Though such pride has been part of the lives of fallen human beings since the tragedy of the fall in Eden, Obadiah offers us a stark reminder to place ourselves under God's authority, to subject our appetites to His purposes, and to find our hope in being His people when the restoration of all things comes. ([Book of Obadiah](#))

The payback to Edom is even an answer to prayers such as the prayer of the psalmist to "Remember, O LORD, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. They said, "Tear it down, tear it down (literally "lay bare, lay bare"), right to its (speaking of Jerusalem) very foundation!" (Psalm 137:7NET, cf Jer 51:35)

Paul sums up this section well (writing to NT saints but applicable to the nation of Israel) "it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you." (2 Th 1:6).

## Caveats Regarding Some Older Commentaries

[Caveat emptor](#): Beware that many (most) of the older commentaries (prior to 1900) do not always interpret prophetic texts literally/

While Keil and Delitzsch generally (in my opinion) interpret the text literally, unfortunately they also occasionally spiritualize the text as attested by their comments on Joel 3:17, 18, 19...

"this passage does not teach the earthly glorification of Palestine, and desolation of Egypt and Idumaea, but

that Judah and Jerusalem are types (Ed: see discussion of typology) of the kingdom of God, whilst Egypt and Edom are types of the world-powers that are at enmity against God; in other words, that this description is not to be understood literally, but spiritually." ([Joel 3 Commentary](#))

Note also the non-literal interpretations of Joel 3:17 by the respected commentators **Matthew Henry** and **John Gill**. It is noteworthy that Matthew Henry, John Gill and Keil & Delitzsch each end up with different interpretations of Joel 3:17 -- Henry and Gill differ from Keil in stating that Jerusalem is actually the church, which is a perfect illustration of why one must assiduously avoid allegorizing or spiritualizing the Scriptures! (See discussion of the [Rise of Allegorical Interpretation](#))

John Gill interprets "**Jerusalem will be holy**" (Joel 3:17) as "**not Jerusalem literally...but rather the church of God everywhere consisting of holy persons**". Yet there is absolutely nothing in the context that allows for the such free spiritualizing of the name of the city, Jerusalem. The interpretation as a literal city is very clear from the context. Comments of this ilk can be very misleading and cause one to completely miss God's intended meaning of the passage being studied! **John Calvin, Matthew Henry and Adam Clarke** are among a number of older commentators who exhibit a similar propensity to identify OT references to the literal nation of Israel as references to the New Testament church (see [replacement theology / supersessionism](#)). **Jamieson, Fausset and Brown's** commentary is generally more literal (see his [notes on 3:17](#)) In sum, the older commentaries have some good material (e.g., Gill does occasionally inject interesting comments by Jewish writers) but clearly must be approached with a Berean mindset (Acts 17:11-note). The best rule to apply in the interpretation of the OT (especially the prophetic) passages is to remember the maxim that if the plain sense of the text (the literal sense) makes good sense in context, seek to make no other sense lest it turn out to be nonsense! As a defense of this simple maxim, think of how absurd it would be to spiritualize the over 300 Messianic prophecies rather than interpret them literally which Henry, Gill, Calvin, et al do. And yet they morph to spiritualizing the hundreds of prophetic texts which of the fate of the nation of Israel! If you are one who spiritualizes Israel, can you see how this is not a consistent [hermeneutic](#) (interpretative) approach when compared to the passages that speak of the first and second comings of the Messiah? Just a thought to ponder.

Matthew Henry's comments on the OT like John Gill's (and Adam Clarke and John Calvin) are not always literal. For example, his interpretation of "Jerusalem will be holy" (Joel 3:17) is that "The saints are the Israel of God; they are his people; the church is his Jerusalem". This genre of interpretation totally jettison's a literal reading of the text and borders on being absurd (see [Israel of God](#)). It is as if Henry totally disregards this is a Jewish prophet writing to Jewish people! To make the beloved literal holy city of God "the church" is nonsense and makes the text almost impossible to comprehend (See Tony Garland's article - [Rise of Allegorical Interpretation](#)). On the other hand, Matthew Henry often has very practical, poignant devotional thoughts and/or pithy points of application.

In addition one needs to be a Berean (Acts 17:11-note) should when reading John Calvin's comments, for he often interprets passages that in context clearly relate to the literal nation of Israel as if they spoke of the Church. Furthermore, he makes no mention of a future Millennial Reign of Messiah as described in passages like Joel 3:17, 18. Commenting on Joel 3:18, Chisholm says that "At that time (in that day, when Messiah will reign over His people in the Millennium) the land will be a virtual paradise, enabling the Lord's people to enjoy His agricultural blessings to the fullest. [[Bible Knowledge Commentary](#)].

Now back to Joel 3:17-19. To the contrary, there is nothing in the text or context of Joel 3:17-19 which warrants spiritualization or typological interpretation because the plain (normative) reading of the name Jerusalem (Zion) dictates that it is most logically, normally interpreted as a literal city and it is this literal city which will be the future dwelling place of the LORD (Joel 3:17). To be sure, the "hills will drip with sweet wine" is figurative language (see [Guidelines for Figuring our Figurative Language](#)), but remember that **even figurative language has a literal meaning** and in this context this description speaks of the extreme fertility of the land that will follow the Lord's return (Joel 3:16). **When one begins to spiritualize God's Word, the range of interpretations is limitless** as illustrated in the previous paragraph. **Literal interpretation is always the safest road to accurate interpretation**. However, remember that commentaries (even those that are conservative and literal, including the one you are reading at present!) should be secondary resources. It is always best to first make your own observations of the Scriptures and arrive at your own [interpretation](#) (see Inductive Bible Study) before consulting the commentaries. In so doing, you will be better prepared to "*comment on the commentaries*"! (See Consult Conservative Commentaries)

**Arno Gaebelein** (who wrote in the early 1900's) is an excellent expositor of the prophetic books because he assiduously adheres to the literal approach to interpretation. Compare his comments on the same passage (Joel 3:17, 18, 19)...

It is the **literal Zion** and **not something spiritual**. (Ed: The exact opposite of Keil and Delitzsch!) Even good expositors of the Bible have missed the mark. One good commentator says: "For **Zion** or **Jerusalem** is of course **not the Jerusalem of the earthly Palestine**, but the sanctified and glorified city of the living God, in which the Lord will be eternally united with His redeemed, sanctified and glorified church." Such exposition emanates from ignorance of God's purposes with His earthly people and in not dividing the Word of Truth rightly. ([see his commentary which is recommended](#))



**James Rosscup** writes that Keil and Delitzsch "is the best older, overall treatment of a critical nature on the Old Testament Hebrew text verse by verse and is a good standard work to buy. The student can buy parts or the whole of this series. Sometimes it is **evangelical**, at other times **liberal** ideas enter." ([Commentaries for Biblical Expositors: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works](#))

**Joel 3:20 But Judah will be inhabited forever, And Jerusalem for all generations.**

- **Judah:** Isa 33:20 Eze 37:25 Am 9:15

NET But Judah will reside securely forever, and Jerusalem will be secure from one generation to the next.

NLT "But Judah will be filled with people forever, and Jerusalem will endure through all generations.

## **JUDAH AND JERUSALEM RESTORED**

**But** - [term of contrast](#). The waste and desolate wilderness of Israel's longtime adversaries is contrasted with Judah and Jerusalem being inhabited forever.

**Judah will be inhabited forever**, (But Judah will reside securely forever = NET) This was God's goal of Joel 3:1 [note](#) to "**restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem**." What God [purposes](#), God "[polishes off!](#)"

**NET Note** adds that "The phrase "**will be secure**" does not appear in the Hebrew, but are supplied in the translation for the sake of smoothness." ([Net Notes Joel 3](#))

**And Jerusalem for all generations** - This promise is echoed by other OT prophets

Isaiah 33:20 Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts; Your eyes will see Jerusalem, an undisturbed habitation, A tent which will not be folded; Its stakes will never be pulled up, Nor any of its cords be torn apart.

Ezekiel 37:25-note "They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince forever.

Amos 9:15 "I will also plant them on their land, And they will not again be rooted out from their land Which I have given them," Says the LORD your God.

**Henry Morris** on **will be inhabited forever** - God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David will surely be fulfilled, as they were unconditional and eternal. (Defender's Study Bible) (See [Covenant: Abrahamic vs Old vs New](#); [New Covenant in the Old Testament](#))

**Joel 3:21 And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged, For the LORD dwells in Zion.**

- **And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged** Isa 4:4 Eze 36:25,29 Mt 27:25
- **For the LORD dwells in Zion**, Joe 3:17 Eze 48:35 Rev 21:3

## **ISRAEL'S SINS PURGED AND PARDONED**

**And** - The description of the blessings of [the Millennium](#) continue.

Some commentaries interpret the avenging of the blood that had not been avenged as relating to the enemies of Israel who had shed innocent blood. Others (including translations like the NIV, CSB, and NLT) favor that the LORD is saying He will purge away the bloodguiltiness of Judah whose hands were "covered with blood" (cf Isa 1:15). Assuming this latter is the correct interpretation the avenging of Judah's blood of course is only by their repenting and believing in the Messiah who shed His blood to cover their (and our) bloodguiltiness. Daniel 12:10 has a similar prophecy declaring that "Many (JEWS) will be purged, purified and refined." Zechariah also speaks of this purging writing

"It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it. "And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name (cf Joel 2:32-note), And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'" (Zech 13:8-9-note, cf Zech 12:10-14-note and Zech 13:1-note)

**I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged**- Who is "their"? This is not Israel's Gentile enemies, for they have been destroyed in the valley of decision. No, this refers to the [redeemed remnant of Israel](#) who by grace through faith have come into the Kingdom of God ruled by Messiah. The NIV and CSB both read "**Their bloodguilt, which I have not pardoned, I will pardon.**" The LORD dwells in Zion!" The NLT has "**I will pardon My people's crimes, which I have not yet pardoned** and I, the LORD, will make my home in Jerusalem with my people."

**Isaiah** gives a parallel promise

In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel. It will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem. **When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning,** (Isaiah 4:2-4-note).

**Zechariah** speaks of this future day of cleansing of the Jewish remnant

"In that day (the Millennium) a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, **for sin and for impurity.** 2 "It will come about in that day," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. (Zechariah 13:1-2-note)

**Ezekiel** adds that in that day...

"Then (WHEN THE REMNANT IS SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH) I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean (COMPARE "FOUNTAIN" IN Zech 13:1); I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols....29 "Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not bring a famine on you (COMPARE THE PENALTY FOR SIN IN Joel 1:7, 9-12-note). (Ezekiel 36:25; 29-note)

**Jamieson** explains that God is promising "I will purge away from Judah the extreme guilt (represented by "blood," the shedding of which was the climax of her sin, Isaiah 1:15-note = "Your hands are covered with blood.") which was for long not purged away, but visited with judgments (Isaiah 4:4). Messiah saves from guilt, in order to save from punishment (Mt 1:21)."

**Avenge** (05352)(**naqah**) to be free, to be clean, to be empty, to be pure. In most occurrences, nāqāh refers to freedom from regulations (Ex 21:19).

**Keil** says **naqah** "means to wipe away or expunge blood-guiltiness by punishment."

The idea in Joel 3:21 is to **avenge** and the Septuagint uses **ekdikeyo** which means helping someone secure justice, which would support the interpretation that God will redeem a remnant of Jews.

**Baker** - Originally, this verb meant to be emptied; therefore, its most basic sentiment is to be poured out and can have a negative or positive connotation. In the negative sense, it refers to a city which has been deserted, emptied of people (Isa. 3:26). In the positive sense, it is used to connote freedom from the obligations of an oath (Ge 24:8, 41); from guilt (Nu 5:31; Jdg. 15:3; Jer. 2:35); and from punishment (Ex 21:19; Nu 5:28; 1 Sa. 26:9). Regardless of whether the connotation is positive or negative, most occurrences of this verb have a moral or ethical implication. Aside from the passive or stative form, this verb also has a factitive form. (The factitive concept is to make something a certain state, in this instance, to make something clean or pure.) The factitive form has two aspects: (1) acquittal, the declaration of someone as innocent (Job 9:28; 10:14; Ps. 19:12[13]); (2) leaving someone unpunished (Ex. 20:7; 34:7; Jer. 30:11). (Complete Word Study Dictionary – Old Testament)

**Naqah** - 42x in 33v - acquit(3), acquitted(2), avenge(1), avenged(1), blameless(1), by means clear(1), completely acquitted(1), completely free(1), completely free from punishment(1), deserted(1), free(4), free from punishment(1), go unpunished(8), immune(1), innocent(1), leave unpunished(2), means leave(4), by means leave unpunished(2), by means leave unpunished(2), purged(2), unpunished(1), without guilt(1).

Gen. 24:8; Gen. 24:41; Exod. 20:7; Exod. 21:19; Exod. 34:7; Num. 5:19; Num. 5:28; Num. 5:31; Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:11; Jdg. 15:3; 1 Sam. 26:9; 1 Ki. 2:9; Job 9:28; Job 10:14; Ps. 19:12; Ps. 19:13; Prov. 6:29; Prov.

11:21; Prov. 16:5; Prov. 17:5; Prov. 19:5; Prov. 19:9; Prov. 28:20; Isa. 3:26; Jer. 2:35; Jer. 25:29; Jer. 30:11; Jer. 46:28; Jer. 49:12; Joel 3:21; Nah. 1:3; Zech. 5:3

**For the LORD dwells in Zion** - The glorified Lord Jesus Christ will dwell in Zion, reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16). So certain was this event to occur that the Psalmist quoting God speaks of it in the past tense even though it is yet to be fulfilled in the future

“But as for Me, **I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.**” (Psalm 2:6)

In **Ezekiel's** prophetic description of Jerusalem in the Millennium we read...

“The city shall be 18,000 cubits round about; and the name of the city from that day shall be, **The LORD is there.**” (Ezekiel 48:35)

**Comment:** See study of this great Name of God - [Jehovah Shammah - The LORD is There](#)

**Isaiah** speaks of this glorious day

How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, **and says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"** (Isaiah 52:7)

**Comment:** Play the spiritual song [Our God Reigns](#).

**Spurgeon** - “I will pardon their bloodguilt, which I have not pardoned, for the Lord dwells in Zion.” A great truth of God lies at the foundation of the gospel system, that the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s dear Son, cleanses us from all sin. When someone is washed in the sacred laver that is filled with the blood of the atonement, he is not partially cleansed; he is thoroughly cleansed.

**Joel 3:21a Acquit – pardon, clear** (“I will avenge their blood”) - King Frederick II, an eighteenth-century king of Prussia, was visiting a prison in Berlin, the inmates tried to prove to him how they had been unjustly imprisoned. All except one. That one sat quietly in a corner, while all the rest protested their innocence. Seeing him sitting there oblivious to the commotion, the king asked him what he was there for. “Armed robbery, Your Honor.” The king asked, “Were you guilty?” “Yes, Sir,” he answered. “I entirely deserve my punishment.” The king then gave an order to the guard: “Release this guilty man. I don’t want him corrupting all these innocent people.” ([Brian Bell's Sermon on Joel 3:1-21](#))

**Philip Yancey** (in His Image) said, “No cell lies more than a hair’s breath from a blood capillary...” Therefore, your blood is quick to cleanse any & every cell. Christ’s blood is even quicker to cleanse & drive out any & every sin. ([Brian Bell's Sermon on Joel 3:1-21](#))

**Brian Bell** - What’s the Lord’s main message here? It is the same exact message He gives in 3 parables in the gospels (See Matthew 25:1-46)! The 10 virgins; the talents; and the sheep and goat judgment. In each there is a sudden appearance of the master that catches people involved by surprise! In each there is a separation: {5 wise/5 foolish; the one’s that used their masters talents wisely/the one’s that didn’t; the sheep/the goats} Utter surprise by those who received the punishment: {5 foolish/ surprised why He wouldn’t admit them? – The wicked steward/surprised His master isn’t satisfied w/his lack of performance? – The goats asked Jesus/“Lord, when did we see hungry, thirsty, stranger, needing clothes, sick, or imprison?”} ([Sermon on Joel 3:1-21](#))

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