

Bible Commentary on Joel

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Bible Commentary on Joel

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The dates before each chapter reflect the date it was written, and the dates it was edited or expanded.

Introduction

This is not your typical commentary, so I'd like to give a few words of explanation before you begin. As a child I was taught to read the Word of God on a daily basis. Our goal as a family was to read through the Bible once a year, and that is what we did. When I became an adult I kept reading the Bible from cover to cover.

One day, however, I realized that I wanted something more. Reading the Bible was good, but I wanted to actually *study* it. Could I explain what each verse meant? Did I really understand what each chapter was saying? I decided to start writing daily commentary instead of just reading the Word.

This commentary was put together to help me study the Bible. I have no plans to release it, for there are far better commentaries out there that were written by much wiser men. This document is simply a tool to help me understand what the Word of God has to say.

Jon Cooper
4/14/2019

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Introduction to Joel

This book doesn't contain any information that we can use to definitively date it. There's a wide range of opinions regarding when it might have been written, but since the text doesn't give us many clues there's no way to know for sure.

8/16/2018, 7/15/2019

Joel 1

"1 The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel." (Joel 1)

There isn't a lot of context to go on here, is there? No mention of Joel's background or what kings were in charge during the days of his ministry. That could be because the main content of his message wasn't aimed at the past, but at the future. We will see in this chapter a mention of the Day of the Lord, which is the time of the tribulation – the seven-year period when God will pour out His wrath upon the world, and use His judgments to put an end to Israel's sin and save them (Daniel 9:24). This book describes a terrible, awful series of judgments, which fits in well with what we know about the tribulation.

I realize that ancient Israel went through similar times of judgment, famine, and war and so forth. But since the Day of the Lord always refers to the tribulation period, the fulfillment of this book lies in the future and not in the past.

"2 Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your

days, or even in the days of your fathers? 3 Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation." (Joel 1)

This echoes Christ's language in the New Testament when He said the tribulation was the worst time of judgment that has ever been seen, and nothing like it will ever happen again (Matthew 24:21-22). This isn't like other judgments. It is so astounding that people will pass the story down from generation to generation. God is making it clear that what's happening is something new and uniquely horrifying. This judgment is on a whole different level.

"4 That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten." (Joel 1)

The first disaster that has come upon the land is a terrible famine. The famine came in three different waves of insects, one after the other, which made sure no crops were left at all. This is also what we find in the beginning of the tribulation – the black horse of famine in Revelation 6:5-6.

"5 Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth." (Joel 1)

If all the plants have been destroyed then the grapes have been destroyed as well. That would damage the supply of new

wine pretty severely.

"6 For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion." (Joel 1)

This is also something we find in Revelation 6:2 – the white horse of the antichrist. A terrible army is coming upon the land – an army that is immensely strong, and literally powered by the devil himself. Israel has been invaded before, but never like this.

"7 He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white." (Joel 1)

When the vine and fig tree are used symbolically (which is what we see here), they are always symbolic of Israel. This terrible army is invading Israel and destroying her. By the time the antichrist's army is done invading there is very little left of the nation. This also fits in with the time of the tribulation.

"8 Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth." (Joel 1)

It's quite possible that the word "virgin" here means "young woman", since it would be odd for a virgin to be lamenting the death of her husband! Still, the verse doesn't say "wife" so maybe they were just engaged and not yet married? At

any rate the point is still clear: the food is gone, the wine is gone, the land is destroyed, and the people that you loved were killed. It is a terrible, terrible time. It is time to weep and mourn and cry out to God because you've lost a great deal and are in a lot of trouble. This is the time to seek the Lord so that you might be saved. (That is, in fact, one of the purposes of the tribulation – to bring Israel back to God.)

"9 The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the Lord; the priests, the Lord's ministers, mourn." (Joel 1)

This is something else that happens during the tribulation: the antichrist will enter into the temple and declare himself to be God (Matthew 24:15), and will put an end to the offerings that were being made (Daniel 9:27). This will cut off the offerings from the temple. I'm sure that when this happens the priests will mourn; their temple has been desecrated and turned into a house of worship to a false god.

"10 The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. 11 Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. 12 The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men." (Joel 1)

Everything is gone: the corn, the wine, the oil, the wheat, the barley, the figs, the fruits – everything. They aren't left with

any food at all! This is what Israel is like during the tribulation period. This isn't a time of joy; it's a time of bitter wailing and tremendous sorrow.

Notice that being deprived of wine is considered to be a curse! That strongly implies that wine is a blessing, and losing access to wine is a reason to "howl". This is very different from the way that many churches depict wine, but it's something that's consistently taught throughout the Bible. It's wrong to abuse wine and get drunk, but wine itself isn't evil. (For more information on this topic see Appendix 1, "Wine Is A Blessing.")

"13 Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God." (Joel 1)

When the antichrist stops the sacrifices it will be a uniquely terrible moment in history (Matthew 24:16-21). It will mean that the second half of the tribulation has begun and things are about to get a whole lot worse (even though they were already very bad).

"14 Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord," (Joel 1)

It's worth noting that the Lord Jesus specifically said He will not return and save them until they do this (Matthew 23:38-39) – until they gather together and repent of their sins and mourn for their Messiah (Zechariah 12:10-14). They will only be

saved when they ask the Lord Jesus Christ to return and save them. They must repent first, but the Bible tells us Israel will wait until the very end of the tribulation to do so.

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

This is how we know this book is primarily talking about the end times – about the coming tribulation. The phrase "day of the Lord" is the key. This isn't talking about something that was fulfilled long ago; it's talking about something that has yet to take place. The Day of the Lord is coming and it is going to be terrible – specifically, it is going to be terrible for Israel. The Jews are going to suffer greatly during this time. It will not be a time of triumph for them; instead it will be a time of tremendous suffering and loss and pain. God is warning them of this long in advance.

"16 Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?" (Joel 1)

When the temple is rebuilt (which will come to pass), I'm sure there will be great rejoicing among some of those who are in Israel. When it is desecrated and the sacrifices stopped that will have a huge impact on the nation. That will put an end to their joy and gladness. They are going to lose a great deal in a short amount of time – and God will use all these things to draw them back to Him and save them.

"17 The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. 18 How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. 19 O Lord, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. 20 The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness." (Joel 1)

Not only have the crops been destroyed, but the animals are impacted as well. They have no food to eat because the trees and pastures have been burned down. (Those are all judgments that we find in the book of Revelation, which take place during the tribulation period – for example, see Revelation 8:7.) The water supply is gone. The pastures are gone. The trees are gone. This is a really, really terrible time! There's nothing left to eat or drink, and an enemy has invaded the land and destroyed them. That is what the Day of the Lord (the Tribulation) is going to be like for Israel. (It will also be really awful for the rest of the world as well, but Joel's focus is its impact on Israel.)

8/17/2018, 7/16/2019

Joel 2

"1 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; 2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds

and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations." (Joel 2)

That is exactly how Jesus described the tribulation period in the New Testament (Matthew 24:21). This is not a coincidence! This book isn't talking about the Babylonian exile or some past judgment upon Israel; it is talking about the coming period of great tribulation. (Whenever the Bible speaks of the "Day of the Lord" it is *always* talking about the tribulation.) As Jesus said, this is a unique time that's unlike anything that's ever happened before, and nothing like it will ever happen again. This is dealing with end-times prophecy.

Notice the mention of "a great people and a strong". This chapter will go into more detail about them. They don't sound human at all, and that's because they aren't! Revelation 9:14-19 also describes this army and tells us that this end-times invasion is actually an army of demons from the abyss. They are terrifying and pose an overwhelming threat – and they cannot be defeated by mankind.

"3 A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them." (Joel 2)

This mysterious army is devastating and has the power of fire (which we also see in Revelation 9:17-18). Apparently there is fire in front of them and fire behind them. They are going upon a beautiful land and utterly destroying it. This sounds very much

like an invasion of the modern land of Israel, which took the dead wilderness desert of the promised land and turned it into the modern, rich agricultural area it is today.

In chapter 1 we were told about all the disasters that came upon the land of Israel to destroy its food and water supply. Here we see something that's even worse: this invading army of demons is burning everything it comes across and leaving nothing behind at all. This army is said to be unstoppable, which is what you would expect from an army of demons.

"4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run."
(Joel 2)

Apparently this army looks like horses (which we also see in Revelation 9:17). They move very quickly! Unlike real horses they have a lot of fire associated with them (just like Revelation 9:18 says). These aren't natural creatures; they are demons from the pit.

"5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array." (Joel 2)

It seems that, like horses, these demons can jump. They have a lot of power, speed, and mobility.

"6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness." (Joel 2)

No one wants to see this army of demons coming because it is unstoppable and brings terror and death. (How could any man possibly fight an army of demons? It's not like you can just mow them down with bullets!) Revelation 9:16 tells us that there are *two hundred million* of these demons and Revelation 9:15 tells us that they will slaughter a third of mankind.

"7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:" (Joel 2)

These demons look like horses, they're fast, they jump, they climb walls, and they never break rank. They are incredibly mobile and without fear. This army is sounding less and less human, isn't it?

"8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded."
(Joel 2)

The army of demons cannot be distracted or turned away from its destination. Every one of these creatures is going to go exactly where it intends, and since they're demons they cannot be wounded. God is making it clear Israel is going to face an enemy she cannot defeat. Her military might is not going to help her when this army descends upon the land.

"9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they

shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief." (Joel 2)

These demons have the ability to climb up walls and enter windows. They are definitely not human beings! They are incredibly advanced, very mobile, and unbelievably powerful. This is an invincible army. Anyone who had control of this army (which the antichrist does during the tribulation) would be unstoppable.

I think that's the whole point: God is sending against Israel an army that they cannot possibly defeat. He is telling Israel that their only hope is the Lord, so they need to repent and cry out to Him. Putting their faith in anyone else is *not* going to do them any good.

"10 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:" (Joel 2)

This is language straight from Revelation, isn't it? (See Revelation 8:12 or 9:2 or 16:10, for instance.) Once again we see that this book is set during the time of great tribulation. Apparently the ground quakes before this demonic army and they bring darkness with them as well. They are completely terrifying. I am so glad the church will be in Heaven when this takes place and we will not have to endure this invasion on Earth.

"11 And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord

is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"
(Joel 2)

God is the one who raised up this demonic army and sent it against Israel – just as God raised up Babylon and sent Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem to judge them for their sins. God is sending a message that the seven-year tribulation period is exceedingly horrific and is *not* something that you can endure or survive! The threats people will face during that period are overwhelming and far beyond your abilities. You need to turn to the Lord because He is your only hope! You *must* repent and be saved and have faith in God. This is a unique time in history. You are going to need the Lord *desperately*.

It would be far, far better to be saved now and be removed from this world during the rapture, so you never have to go through the tribulation period.

"12 Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: 13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. 14 Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God?" (Joel 2)

Each time God pronounces judgment upon Israel He always gives them a way to escape. The Jews always have the option of choosing to repent and being saved. If they repent – if they cry out for mercy – then God would forgive them and send a blessing instead of His judgment. If they turned to Him with all

their heart then that would have changed everything. God warned Israel how terrible that time would be and told them exactly what to do to escape it.

But they did not repent (with the exception of a few Jews who believe in Jesus, who will be raptured and therefore escape this terrible time). The problem is that Israel loved outward shows of religion. They liked to offer sacrifices and make a big show of things (like tearing their garments), but their heart wasn't in it. It was all a show – an outward display meant to make other people think they were righteous. God wasn't impressed with this at all! The Lord desired sincere faith and genuine repentance *from the heart* – not play acting. If people genuinely seek the Lord with all their heart then they will be found of Him (Jeremiah 29:13).

One of the things we see in verse 12 is a genuine sorrow for sin. God wants Israel to mourn over what they have done and weep over the Messiah they rejected. He wants their sin to bother them. One of the odd things about the modern church is that so few people seem ashamed of their sins; instead I keep hearing people boast about them, as if those were the good old days. Where is the sorrow over sin? Where is the shame over the wicked things we've done? Where is the desire to walk in God's ways and do what's right? If your sins don't bother you then you have not been given a new heart. If you still love your sin then you don't love the Lord, and you are lost and unforgiven.

"15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: 16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. 17 Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep

between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" (Joel 2)

I think this is talking about the great repentance at the end of the tribulation, when Israel will do all of these things (Zechariah 12:10-14). When the antichrist comes down on them at the end of the tribulation and the Jews are on the verge of being wiped out once and for all, Israel will gather together and cry out to God. They will repent of everything they've done and will seek their Messiah. That is when they will be saved.

"18 Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people." (Joel 2)

Once this repentance happens the Lord Jesus will return from Heaven and defeat Israel's enemies (Revelation 19:11-21). He will save them from death and establish His kingdom in this world (Revelation 20:1-6). Then everything will change.

"19 Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen:" (Joel 2)

Israel's food supply was utterly destroyed during the tribulation. During the Millennium God will restore it abundantly! For the past few thousand years all nations have hated Israel, but in the Millennium all nations will hold Israel in

high esteem.

"20 But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things." (Joel 2)

God once used the waters of the Red Sea to destroy Egypt's army, and Pharaoh as well (Exodus 14:27-28). When the Lord returns He will do that again.

So who is the northern army? Well, the army of the antichrist will be slaughtered in Megiddo and the death toll will be horrific (Revelation 14:19-20). I think the northern army is the army this chapter has been talking about – the demonic army from the abyss. God is going to drown them in the sea, just as He once cast demons into pigs and drowned them into the sea (Matthew 8:30-32).

"21 Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. 22 Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength." (Joel 2)

God will destroy the land of Israel during the tribulation, and during the Millennium He will heal it. It's possible that God will use the healing, living waters from the Millennial Temple (which are mentioned in Ezekiel 47:8-9) to do this. The curses of chapter 1 are being reversed.

"23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month." (Joel 2)

This is talking about literal rain. It is *not* symbolic of some new age of prophets and apostles! God is saying that He's going to heal the land of Israel and bring food again, and will send rain in its due season.

"24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil." (Joel 2)

In chapter 1 there was no food to be found, which is what the tribulation period will be like. During the Millennium (which is what we're now talking about) there will be an abundance of food. The world will be greatly blessed.

"25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you." (Joel 2)

This verse has been taken out of context in ridiculous ways. In chapter 1 God sent specific insects against Israel during the tribulation to punish them for their wickedness. Here God is saying that during the Millennium God will richly bless Israel and will give them the food that was eaten during the judgments of the tribulation. So, during the Tribulation Israel is punished;

during the Millennium Israel is blessed. That is the context of this verse.

This verse has absolutely nothing to do with individual people! God is *not* saying "If you repent and turn to me then I will give you Earthly riches to make up for whatever you lost during the sin portion of your life." That is how people interpret it, and they are very wrong! This verse is *not about you*. God is *not* making you a promise here. God is *not* saying that you can go out and sin as much as you want for as long as you want, and if you just repent at some point in your life then God will "make it all up to you". No! This is specifically talking about Israel and the Millennium.

What Jesus actually promised was that if you come to Christ and are saved, you will experience suffering and persecution and you may be imprisoned and killed (John 16:33, Luke 12:51-53). Christ had no earthly wealth in this life (Matthew 8:20); instead He was hated and murdered. You can expect the same kind of treatment, for the servant is not greater than his master (John 15:20). Yes, the Lord is with us and will give us peace, but He never promised us worldly prosperity during the church age.

"26 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed." (Joel 2)

The Millennium will be a time of tremendous wealth. I have no doubt that Jerusalem will exceed the wealth of the days of Solomon. It will be amazing to behold – *and we will be there in person to behold it*, and to rejoice with great joy.

During the Millennium God's people will never be ashamed! We won't be persecuted any more, nor will the Lord

ever allow the wicked to triumph over the righteous again. Jesus Christ will rule over the nations with a rod of iron (Psalm 2:9-10), and the resurrected ones will reign with Him (Revelation 2:26-27).

"27 And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed." (Joel 2)

God will literally be in the midst of Israel because Jesus reign over all the world from Jerusalem. He will be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and all kingdoms and peoples will serve Him – and His kingdom will never end and will never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44).

"28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit." (Joel 2)

Here we are taking a step back in time. Peter told us in Acts 2:16-18 that this portion of Joel had been fulfilled. This took place at the very beginning of the church age.

"30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the

great and terrible day of the Lord come." (Joel 2)

This part has not yet been fulfilled; when Peter quoted Joel he stopped at these two verses. There has been a lot of speculation about how these verses will be fulfilled and what events will fulfill them. Is verse 31 speaking of an eclipse? Is it talking about some sort of supernatural sign? We really don't have a lot of detail so it's hard to say. What we do know is that there will be certain specific heavenly signs before the tribulation period begins. It won't just come out of nowhere; there will be signs first.

Since God hasn't given us the day or the hour that the rapture will take place, all we can do is watch and wait and live each day for the Lord. As you can see, we do have many things to be watching for! When we see the pre-tribulation signs come to pass we know that the time is drawing nearer.

What I find interesting is that it's possible to make the case that these two verses have already been fulfilled. Now, it may be that the real fulfillment is still in the future and may even occur after the rapture, but the point is the hour is so late that the rapture could happen at any moment. We are living on borrowed time and could run out of that time sooner than we think. Since it's plausible that the rapture could be at hand, it would be wise to serve the Lord each day and treat each day as if it were our last.

"32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." (Joel 2)

Those who call upon the name of the Lord before the rapture will be saved and delivered from that terrible period of time altogether! Those who call upon His name during the tribulation will be martyred for their faith (with very few exceptions), but God will resurrect them at the beginning of the Millennium and they will live and reign with Jesus (Revelation 20:5). When Israel calls upon His name at the end of the tribulation the Lord Jesus will return and defeat her enemies and usher in a glorious new era that will never end. Those who call upon the name of the Lord will not be ashamed, and will find salvation! There is deliverance in Jesus – but there is no deliverance anywhere else.

8/18/2018, 7/17/2019

Joel 3

"1 For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem," (Joel 3)

In this book we've been talking about events that take place before and during the tribulation period, and that is still our focus. Notice that in the end times Israel has become a nation again. That is something which has already been fulfilled: Israel was without a nation for many days (Hosea 3:4), and then she became a nation again in a single day (Isaiah 66:8). This isn't talking about the return from the Babylonian captivity; this is a reference to the second time they are returned to the land.

Do you see how this passage mentions both Judah and Jerusalem? Both of these prophecies have been fulfilled: the modern nation of Israel exists once again, and the Jews have regained control over Jerusalem. Those are major end-times prophecies that are now behind us, which means the tribulation

is that much closer!

"2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." (Joel 3)

God becomes very angry when people take land away from Israel! The Lord considers that land to be His, and when other nations steal it He considers them to be stealing from Him. I've already done a study elsewhere showing the connection between people forcing Israel to give up her land, and natural disasters suffered by other countries. This is a hard-and-fast rule: *God punishes those who take away Israel's land*. God gave it to Israel as an everlasting possession (Genesis 17:8, 48:4) *and that will never change*. The land belongs to Israel and it will always belong to Israel. (For more information on this see Appendix V, "God Curses Those Who Curse Israel".)

At the very end of the tribulation period God will gather the nations that have oppressed Israel and taken her land, and will punish them for what they have done. This event is known as the Second Coming. When the Lord Jesus returns the very first thing He will do is punish the nations for scattering the Jews and taking their land. (You can read more about the way Jesus will slaughter the antichrist and his armies for oppressing Israel in Revelation 19:11-21.)

"3 And they have cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink." (Joel 3)

During the tribulation period slavery will return to the world in a big way, and people will buy and sell the Jews as slaves (Revelation 18:13). This will anger God tremendously and He will destroy the nations that participated in this terrible practice.

"4 Yea, and what have ye to do with me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? will ye render me a recompence? and if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompence upon your own head;" (Joel 3)

When nations attack Israel they are really attacking God – and God will punish them for this and will destroy them. The nations who think they can defeat Israel must realize that they cannot defeat the God who protects and loves Israel. God will avenge His people.

"5 Because ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly pleasant things:" (Joel 3)

When the nations invade Israel during the tribulation and take away her silver and gold, God will consider them to be robbing Him personally – so God will punish them for what they've done. Notice how God says that it is "my silver" and "my gold" and "my land". Do not rob God, for God will come against you for your sins and you have no ability to resist God!

"6 The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border. 7

Behold, I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompence upon your own head: 8 And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off: for the Lord hath spoken it." (Joel 3)

Since the nations sold the Jews into slavery, God will turn the tables on them. As punishment for this terrible sin, the Jews will enslave the Gentile nations and sell their children into slavery. God will do to them what they did to the Jews.

One thing we need to remember is that in the Mosaic Law, justice was balance. If you robbed someone then you had to make good on what you stole (Exodus 22:1). If you injured someone then you had to be injured in the same way (Exodus 21:23-25). If you killed someone then you had to be put to death (Exodus 21:12). Here we see that God's view of justice has not changed: since they sold Jewish into slavery, their own children would be taken from them and sold into slavery. God would do to them what they had done to others. God blesses those who bless Israel and curses those who curse Israel (Genesis 12:3).

"9 Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: 10 Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." (Joel 3)

Do you remember that famous old hymn that says "let the weak say I am strong"? This is where that lyric comes from. If you read the words in their original context it becomes baffling that anyone would think this was a great idea for a hymn of

encouragement! God isn't being encouraging here; instead is actually *mocking people*. He is telling the Gentiles of the tribulation period to go ahead and do their best – to take up arms against God and fight against their Maker. When He says "let the weak say I am strong", God is mocking them for being incredibly weak. God is saying that they are fooling themselves! They think they're strong but actually they are weak. They have no strength at all to fight against the mighty and everlasting God. This isn't a verse of encouragement; it is a verse where God is mocking the Gentiles who support the antichrist and are daring to make war against the Holy One of Israel.

"11 Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. 12 Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about." (Joel 3)

God is calling all of the nations that are enemies of Israel (the nations that have robbed her and taken her land, her riches, and her people) to come to the valley and fight against Him. He calls them to send their mightiest soldiers and do their very best, because against God their best is nothing at all. They have no hope of winning! God is going to judge them for their sins and it is going to be brutal (Revelation 19:18-20).

"13 Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great." (Joel 3)

We find this same language in Revelation 14:18. Notice the flow of the book of Joel: first, Israel is greatly punished. Next, Israel repents. Finally, God gathers the nations that have harmed Israel and judges them. (In fact, He actually slaughters them in huge numbers.)

Taking away Israel's land is such a terrible sin that one day Jesus will return *in person* in order to kill everyone who is guilty of this. When Jesus returns from Heaven *in person* in order to judge you for your sin, you know you're in a lot of trouble! When Jesus is finished with His judgment *there will be no survivors* among the wicked (Luke 19:27). Every last one of them will be dead.

You do *not* take away Israel's land because it is God's land – and you cannot rob God and win.

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

The amount of blood that will be shed on that day will be staggering. Revelation 14:20 tells us that the blood will be as high as a horse's bridle. This is bloodshed on a truly shocking scale. All of this will take place during the tribulation period. That day isn't here yet, but it's coming.

God calls it the valley of decision, which makes sense because that's when God pronounces His judgment upon them (deciding their fate) and puts their wickedness to an end.

"15 The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." (Joel 3)

The Bible tells us that the sun and moon will be darkened both *before* the tribulation (Joel 2:31) and *during* the tribulation (Revelation 16:10). Unfortunately we aren't given a lot of detail about how verse 15 will be fulfilled. Will this be a supernatural darkness, as we saw in ancient Egypt during the plagues (Exodus 10:22-23)? Will it be some sort of eclipse or atmospheric dust storm (such as the aftermath of a volcanic eruption or nuclear war)? There's no way to know in advance. All we know is that this sign happens twice: it occurs before the tribulation as a warning that terrible time is approaching, and it happens during the tribulation as well.

"16 The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." (Joel 3)

When Jesus returns He will slay the antichrist with a Word from His mouth (2 Thessalonians 2:8, Isaiah 11:4). This seems to be saying the same thing: the Lord will roar, and the nations and enemies of God will fall. Revelation 16:18-20 tells us that there will be a tremendous earthquake at the end of the tribulation period that will radically change the topography of the world. The word will tremble and die – but Israel will be saved because they (at last) trusted in the Lord and looked to the Messiah for salvation. Israel will not save themselves; instead their Messiah will return and save them.

The book of Revelation is not a weird, one-off book! Much of what it says can also be found in the Old Testament. What Revelation gives us is a framework to put the Old Testament prophecies together into one cohesive timeline. There is some new material in Revelation, but much of it actually

references other prophetic books. If you're struggling to understand Revelation then take a look at the Old Testament. Use the Bible to interpret the Bible! The Word of God explains the symbolism it uses.

"17 So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." (Joel 3)

Jesus will literally reign over all the world from Jerusalem. He will reign over all nations (Daniel 2:44, Psalm 2:8-12), which means that from the beginning of the Millennium God will dwell with His people forever. Jerusalem will be a holy place and will never be conquered again. This is all very literal! God will *literally* dwell in Zion. We will live to see this come to pass.

"18 And 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 out of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." (Joel 3)

Ezekiel 47:1-9 also speaks of this fountain that will come out of the house of the Lord, which is a literal fountain that will heal the world and make it habitable again after the terrible judgments of the tribulation. The blessings that are described here are the blessings of the Millennium. That will be a time of great peace and prosperity! The meek will inherit the world just as Jesus promised (Matthew 5:5), and the knowledge of God will cover the world as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9). All of

these things will come to pass because the Lord always keeps His promises.

None of these promises are conditional. God did not say "I will do these things if Israel does these other things". God has said He will do these things and so they will come to pass! It must be pointed out that every single fulfilled prophecy was fulfilled *literally*. There has never been a symbolic fulfillment of prophecy and there never will be! These chapters in Joel are no different. All of these events will come to pass in the end times exactly as it is written.

Don't miss the fact that one of these blessings is an abundance of wine. The Bible teaches that drunkenness is a sin, but wine is a blessing. (For more information on this topic see Appendix 1, "Wine Is A Blessing.")

"19 Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land." (Joel 3)

This makes me wonder if perhaps the 40 year desolation of Egypt (Ezekiel 29:12) is something that will take place at the end of the tribulation and will continue on into the first part of the Millennium. After all, according to these verses the context of Egypt's desolation is the Millennium. God is specifically judging Egypt for her terrible treatment of Israel. Perhaps that's why once Egypt's punishment is over, her people are gathered together again but remain a base nation forever (Ezekiel 29:13-15).

Why does God punish Egypt? Because of the wicked things she did to Israel. The Egyptians murdered innocent Jews, so God is going to destroy their nation and make them a base kingdom *forever*. God blesses those who bless Israel and curses

those who curse Israel. This is a hard-and-fast rule.

During the Millennium much of the world will be a garden paradise, but not all of it. As we can see from this verse, Egypt will spend some time as a desolation. We are also told that Babylon (the end-times city of the antichrist) will never be rebuilt but will be a home to unclean spirits forever, as a testament against it (Isaiah 13:19-20, Revelation 18:2).

"20 But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. 21 For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the Lord dwelleth in Zion." (Joel 3)

Jerusalem and Israel will continue to be blessed forever after the tribulation. Even though this world will one day be brought to an end, Revelation tells us that the Lord will create a new Heaven and Earth and we will live there with Him forever (Revelation 21:1-4). Israel will continue to enjoy her promised land for all of eternity, and God will continue to dwell with His people forever.

Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Appendix V: God Curses Those Who Curse Israel

In the book of Genesis the Lord promised to give the entire land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants. Now, if God had only mentioned that promise once and never spoke of it again, that would still have been enough to make His will clear. God never goes back on His word; whatever He promises will come to pass. In this case, though, the Lord actually *repeated* this promise on numerous occasions. God wanted to make it absolutely clear, beyond any possibility of doubt, that He was giving the land of Canaan to the Jews.

The first time God made this promise was when Abraham first arrived in Canaan:

Genesis 12:5: "And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him."

As we can see in verse 7, the Lord promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendents. After God made this promise, a famine arose and Abraham left Canaan and traveled to Egypt. When Abraham left Egypt and returned to Canaan the Lord repeated the promise:

Genesis 13:14: “And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.”

As He had done before, the Lord promised to give all of the land of Canaan – including all of the land that Abraham could see – to Abraham and to his descendents *forever*. No conditions were placed on this promise; Abraham did not have to do anything in order to keep the land. It was an unconditional promise. God was going to give the land to him *and* to his descendents, and it would belong to them forever. This promise could not be annulled or forfeited.

Some time later, after Abraham defeated the kings that had kidnapped his nephew Lot, the Lord once again repeated this promise:

Genesis 15:18: “In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:”

This is the third time that God said He was giving the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendents. However, that is not the last time. Shortly before Isaac was born, God promised the land to Abraham yet again:

Genesis 17:4: “As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called

Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

As you can see, God told Abraham *four times* that He was going to give the land of Canaan to his descendents. The Lord told him on two separate occasions that the land would be theirs **forever**: once in Genesis 13:14, where He said that the land would be theirs “for ever”, and again in Genesis 17:8, where He said the land would be their “everlasting possession”. No conditions were placed on this promise; the Israelites did not have to do anything in order to keep the land. The Lord was giving it to them freely and they could never lose their right to it. It was a permanent, irrevocable gift.

Now, it's true that during the time of Moses the Lord said that if the Israelites disobeyed Him He would evict them from the land:

Deuteronomy 29:24: “Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?

25 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he

brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:

26 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them:

27 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

28 And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.”

As you can see, the Lord made it clear that if the Israelites forsook Him He would curse them and root them out of the land. However, the loss of the land would not be permanent. If they repented He would bring them back:

Deuteronomy 30:1: “And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee,

2 And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

3 That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.

4 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:

5 And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.”

While disobedience could get them removed from the land, even *that* would not cause them to lose the land forever. The land still belonged to them, and the Lord would never break His covenant with them or cast them away. We find this in the book of Leviticus:

Leviticus 26:42: "Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

43 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.

44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.

45 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD."

The phrase “covenant of their ancestors” is very important. It does *not* refer to the Mosaic Law, since the Lord was currently in the process of giving that Law to Israel. The

covenant God is talking about is the covenant He made with their ancestor Abraham – the promise to bless Israel and give them the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. No matter what Israel did, the Lord would never utterly cast them away. He would never abandon them. The Jews would always be His people, just as surely as the sun shines by day and the stars shine by night:

Jeremiah 31:35: “Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.”

I want to be absolutely clear on this point. God gave the land of Canaan to the nation of Israel, and it is theirs and theirs alone. He gave it to them with no conditions attached; it was to be theirs forever as an everlasting possession. If Israel abandoned God then He would evict them from the land, but that eviction would not be permanent. God would remember His covenant with Abraham and would bring them back. No matter what, though, the land was theirs and it would always be theirs.

Some might argue that God placed the condition of circumcision on the covenant that He made with Abraham. It is true that He said this:

Genesis 17:11: “And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you.”

However, note that circumcision was a *token*, or sign of the covenant. Those who did not do this were “cut off” (as it says in verse 14), but it did *not* abrogate the covenant as a whole because *the covenant was unconditional*. No matter what happened, no matter what the Israelites did, “all the land of Canaan” was theirs “for an everlasting possession”.

The reason I am emphasizing this is because many Christians have no idea that Israel has any special significance to God. They think that when the Roman Empire destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD that God was finished with the Jews, and from that point on the Church became God's only special people. (This school of thought is called “replacement theology” and gets its name from the idea that the Church has “replaced” Israel.) They see no significance in the modern nation of Israel and do not believe that Israel has a right to any land in the Middle East. They incorrectly think that God has abandoned Israel forever and that the Jews are no longer God's chosen people.

This is a very great error. As we saw in Jeremiah 31, God has made it clear that there is *nothing* Israel can do to get Him to abandon them. Since His covenant with Abraham was unconditional, they will always be His people.

It is true that after the Romans destroyed Jerusalem the nation of Israel was exiled for a long time, but that long exile actually fulfills an Old Testament prophecy. In fact, not only does the Bible predict a long exile, but it even foretells the date when Israel would become a nation again. We can find all of this in Ezekiel 4:

Ezekiel 4:1: “Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and portray upon it

the city, even Jerusalem:

2 And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about.

3 Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.

4 Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity.

5 For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.

6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.

7 Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm shall be uncovered, and thou shalt prophesy against it.

...

13 And the Lord said, Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them."

Here we find that God is using Ezekiel as an object lesson. The Lord was going to punish Israel for 430 years (390 years + 40 years), and to illustrate this God commanded Ezekiel to lie on his side for 430 days. This was done as a sign to the house of Israel, but the Israelites paid no attention to the warning. Instead of

repenting they hardened their hearts, and God's judgment came upon them – exactly as Moses had forewarned in the book of Deuteronomy. Since Israel abandoned God, He removed them from the land. They were carried into captivity by the Babylonians and spent the next 70 years in exile.

Back in Deuteronomy God said that if He exiled the Israelites *and they repented* then He would regather them to the land. After the 70 years were over God kept His promise and returned Israel to the land. However, Israel still refused to repent. Because of this the Lord allowed only a small remnant of the Jews to return to Israel in 536 BC. The rest of the nation remained scattered abroad, as the Lord had threatened in verse 13.

When the Jews returned home only 70 of the appointed 430 years had taken place, which still left 360 years of punishment. However, the fact that the Israelites did not learn their lesson during the first 70 years activated this provision of the Mosaic Law:

Leviticus 26:23: “And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;

24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.”

This says that if God punished the Israelites and they refused to repent, God would multiply their punishment by seven. $360 \text{ years} \times 7 = 2520 \text{ years}$. Since the Bible uses 360-year days in its prophecies, that would equal 2,483.8 of our calendar years. (The math: $2520 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days} = 907,200 \text{ days}$. $907,200 \text{ days} / 365.25 \text{ days per year} = 2,484 \text{ years}$.) So, if you add 2,484 years to the spring of 536 BC (keeping into account there was no year 0, only 1 BC and then 1 AD), you get 1948. (Math: $1948 + 536 = 2484$.)

When did Israel become a nation again? On May 14, 1948. This time, however, more than just a small remnant returned to the land; there are now millions of Jews living in Israel, and more continue to move there as time goes on. This process will only accelerate as the time of Christ's return draws near. The Lord is calling His people back to their promised land.

On top of this, Israel became a nation in a *single day*, just as the Lord foretold through Isaiah:

Isaiah 66:7: “Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

8 Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? Saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? Saith thy God.”

It seemed very unlikely that Israel would become a nation again in a single day, but that is exactly what happened. The modern regathering of the Jews to Israel is not a random historical event; it is the fulfillment of prophecy. In fact, when God said that He would disperse the Jews He also said that He would regather them a *second time*:

Isaiah 11:11: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.”

The Israelites have been dispersed twice: once when they were deported to Babylon and once when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. The first time they were regathered was in 536 BC, after spending 70 years in Babylon; the second time was in the modern era. The modern nation of Israel, therefore, represents the *second time* God has regathered them. God promised to bring His people back to the land and He has done so.

The Bible goes on to say that the nation of Israel will never be destroyed again:

Amos 9:15: “I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.”

The reason God has regathered them is to save them and turn their hearts to Him, and He will accomplish exactly that:

Hosea 3:4: “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim:
5 Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.”

Do you see what this is saying? Israel did “abide many days” without a king, or sacrifice, or even a country. Now they have returned “in the latter days”. The phrase “David their king” refers to the Messiah. The passage is saying that when Israel is regathered they will seek the Lord, and ultimately the Messiah as well.

What I want to focus on is that the land of Israel belongs to the Israelites. It does *not* belong to anyone else. God made that promise to Abraham and He later confirmed that promise to Jacob – thus making it clear that the land was being given to *the Jews*:

Genesis 35:11: “And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;
12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.”

God was very specific when it came to the ownership of the land. The Arabs are the descendents of Abraham's son Ishmael, but the land was not given to them. The Palestinians are the descendents of Isaac's son Esau, but the land was not given to them. The land was given only to Jacob's offspring, the Jews. Even the city of Jerusalem was given to the Jews:

Zechariah 8:7-8: “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.”

There is one other point that needs to be brought out. The land promise was not the only promise that God made to Abraham; there was something else as well. We can find it in Genesis 12:

Genesis 12:3: “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in

thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

As Christians we know that Jesus is the descendant of Abraham that God used to bless the entire world. In Him all the families of the world are blessed indeed! However, we often overlook the rest of the verse. God was not just talking about Abraham here; He promised to bless those who blessed the Jews *and to curse those who cursed them*. God has some very harsh words for those who would try to harm Israel:

Zechariah 2:8: “For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.”

Later in Zechariah God elaborates on this theme. He makes it clear that He is going to destroy all nations that seek to harm Israel:

Zechariah 12:9: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

These verses are describing a time when Israel (the “house of David”) will finally realize that Jesus is the Messiah and will repent as a nation. It says they will “look upon me whom they have pierced”, which is a reference to Jesus. We know this day is drawing near because verse 10 says that when this

happens the Israelites will possess the city of Jerusalem, and the Jews regained control over Jerusalem in 1967. (The Jews will actually repent at the very end of the Tribulation, but that is a topic for another time.)

The key point that I want to emphasize here is verse 9, where God says that He will seek to destroy “all the nations that come against Jerusalem”. God takes attacks on Israel *personally*.

God makes this even more clear in the book of Joel:

Joel 3:1: “For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,
2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.”

Here God says that when He has returned Israel to their land and has given Jerusalem back to her, that He would gather all nations and judge them. The reason God is angry with the nations is because they have scattered the Jews and have “parted my land”. In other words, God is angry with the world because they have *taken land away from Israel*. Taking land away from Israel *really* upsets God.

The fulfillment of these verses is not far off. In recent history God did indeed “bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem”. On top of that, over the past few decades the nations of the world have tried very hard to divide Israel (especially Jerusalem!) and take away her land. Things that God foretold centuries *before* the birth of Christ are happening in our lifetime.

Zechariah expounds on this a little further and points out something very important:

Zechariah 14:2: “For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”

In verse 2 we see the same language as in Joel 3:2. However, a very important detail is added: on the day that the Lord gathers all nations to Jerusalem so He can judge them, the Lord will fight against them *in person*. Verse 4 says that “his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives”. This event is quite famous; people usually call it the Second Coming. When Jesus Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation, the nations of the world will have gathered around Jerusalem and attacked it. In response Jesus will come back to Earth, destroy those nations, and put an end to all those who threatened Israel. To put it another way, at the Second Coming Jesus returns *to defend Jerusalem on Israel's behalf*. He comes back so He can (among other things) *personally* kill all those who have dared to come against Israel and take what God has given to her.

God makes one point very clear: the land of Israel belongs to the Jews, and God gets *very upset* when people try to take that land away from her. The Lord said “He that toucheth you

toucheth the apple of his eye”, and He meant it. In fact, the day will come when God will get so upset at what people are doing to Israel that He will return *in person* with the armies of Heaven in order to destroy all those that have come against her. (You *know* a nation has crossed the line in a big way when God leaves Heaven so He can *personally* destroy it!)

The point I'm trying to make is that taking land away from Israel is a *really big deal* in God's sight. He hates it. He gave that land to Israel and it belongs to them. Those who try to take it away from her do so at their peril.

This peril is not merely theoretical. I believe that God has actively pursued what He said in Genesis 12:3 throughout history. Those nations that have blessed Israel have been blessed, and those nations that have cursed Israel (or have tried to take away her land) have been cursed.

For example:

October 30, 1991: President Bush announced a new Middle East peace plan, in which Israel would be forced to surrender parts of its land in return for peace – including parts of Jerusalem.

October 30, 1991: A powerful storm suddenly developed off the coast of Nova Scotia, which quickly reached hurricane strength. The next day the storm (which by now was hundreds of miles wide) smashed into New England, then traveled down the East Coast into the Carolinas. It caused millions of dollars in damage and was nicknamed “The Perfect Storm”. (The storm was so significant that a book and a movie were written about it, both named *The Perfect Storm*.)

President Bush owned a home in Kennebunkport, Maine, that was heavily damaged in the storm. The storm hit his home on the same day that the President initiated the Madrid Peace Conference, in which Israel was pressured to give up land.

August 24, 1992: The Madrid Peace Conference was moved to Washington, D.C., making it the first time that conference was held on American soil. Not only was Israel going to be pressured into giving up more land, but the Palestinians were going to be governing the land that Israel would have to give up.

August 24, 1992: Hurricane Andrew hit Florida and became the worst natural disaster ever hit to America (up to that time). \$30 billion in damage was done. The hurricane struck just a few hours before the Madrid peace conference began.

September 13, 1993: In Washington, DC Israel signed an agreement with Yasser Arafat, surrendering Gaza, Jericho, and the West Bank to Palestinians.

September 13, 1993: Hurricane Emily hit North Carolina, doing \$1 billion in damage.

January 16, 1994: President Clinton met with Syria's dictator, President Hafez Assad. They talk about making peace with Israel, and the agreement they came up with included Israel surrendering the Golan Heights to Syria.

January 17, 1994: A 6.8 magnitude earthquake hit Los Angeles, causing \$25 billion in damage. This happened less than 24 hours after President Clinton pressured Israel to give up more land.

September 27, 1998: Secretary of State Madeline Albright met with Arafat in New York City, to finalize an agreement in which Israel would surrender 13% of its land in exchange for peace.

September 27, 1998: Hurricane Georges hit the Gulf Coast, doing extensive damage to Mississippi and Florida. The hurricane then stalled, causing severe flooding. The total damage came to \$5.9 billion.

There are many more examples I could give, but in the interest of time I'll limit it to one more. In April 2005 President Bush met with Israeli Prime Minister Sharon in order to set a timetable for Israel's withdrawal from 25 Jewish settlements. The process was started on August 16 and was completed on **August 23, 2005**. Approximately ten thousand Jews were forcibly evicted from their land. The reason this happened is because President Bush put enormous pressure on Israel to evict them and give that land to the Palestinians. In fact, the United States offered to give Israel \$1.2 billion in order to relocate the settlers. (In other words, the United States was actually *paying the bill* to make this happen.) This was the first step in evicting all Jews from Gaza in order to further Bush's plan to establish a Palestinian state.

The eviction of these settlers was not a minor task. Thousands of people lived there. The area was a major agricultural center of Israel and produced about 15% of Israel's vegetables. It took 40,000 troops to force the settlers to leave. After they were evicted the army demolished their homes and destroyed their settlements. The last settler was removed on August 23, and on that date President Bush praised Prime Minister Sharon for his "courageous decision to withdraw from Gaza and parts of the West Bank."

One might ask: what else happened on **August 23, 2005**? A tropical depression formed over the Bahamas, which grew into Hurricane Katrina. I don't think I have to tell you what happened when Hurricane Katrina hit the United States. The total damages from that storm came to a staggering \$81 billion.

Some might say that it's just a coincidence that every time America forces Israel to give up her land, something terrible happens. If so, it's really an amazing string of coincidences! This phenomenon doesn't just apply to the United States; it can also be seen in other countries. For example:

March 9, 2011: Japan announces that they are sending the Palestinians millions of dollars so that they can create a state with Jerusalem as its capitol. (To do this, of course, Jerusalem will have to be taken away from the Jews.)

March 11, 2011: Japan is hit by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake – the worst it has ever experienced in its history. The damage from that earthquake was estimated to be *\$300 billion*.

July 21, 2011: Norway's prime minister goes to an island that is home to a youth camp. He announces that Norway is going to support a Palestinian state and will help the Palestinians take land away from Israel. The youth in the camp are excited about this and shout that they, too, want to help destroy Israel.

July 22, 2011: Anders Breivik just happens to travel to that very same island in Norway and just happens to open fire on those very same young people. 69 people are killed and 110 are injured. It was the deadliest attack in Norway since World War II. 25% of Norwegians knew someone who was affected by the attacks.

If all of this is just a just a coincidence then it's the most amazing set of coincidences in history. These things happen like clockwork: whenever a nation decides that it's going to try to take away Israel's land, something bad happens to them. You don't have to take my word for it, though: just wait until the next

time the President tries to force Israel to give away her land to her enemies, and see what happens.

I believe that God is fulfilling His promise to trouble those who trouble Israel, and I think this phenomenon will continue to occur. As America and other nations continue to force Israel to give up her land, you can expect even more breathtaking disasters. God is not a respecter of persons.

Now, I am *not* saying that every natural disaster that happens is God's punishment. There are many things that happen simply because we live in a fallen world. However, God has been known to judge nations that have transgressed His laws (remember Sodom and Gomorrah?), and I believe He continues to do so today. After all, *God does not change*. I think it is incredibly foolish to say "Sure, God used to judge nations and destroy them because of their sin, but God's gotten over that. He now gives nations a free pass to do whatever they want. There's no reason to be concerned about judgment or any of that nonsense. God would never punish a nation."

The final judgment, though, is still ahead of us. One day the nations of the world will gather against Jerusalem in order to destroy her and her people. They will think they have won, but Jesus will suddenly return in person and destroy them all. He will put a final end to all those who seek to trouble His people.

Appendix 1: Wine Is A Blessing

Every church that I've ever attended has condemned the consumption of alcohol. Some of those churches even had church covenants posted in the foyer that explicitly required all members to "abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drink as a beverage". In other words, if you drank alcohol then you weren't welcome. Each church has consistently depicted alcohol as an evil thing that should *never* be consumed by Christians under any circumstances. That's why whenever those churches serve communion it's always with grape juice and never with wine.

I think it would be a good idea to take some time and explore what the Bible says about alcohol. After studying the Bible I've become convinced that what it teaches is very different from what Christians have been told. I suspect that many Christians would be shocked to find out that Isaiah 65:8 actually calls wine a *blessing* – but we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Drunkenness Is Prohibited

The first point I want to make is that the Bible strongly and repeatedly condemns drunkenness. For example, consider this passage:

Proverbs 23:29-35: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it

moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yeah, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."

This person is so drunk that other people are literally *beating him* and he doesn't feel it! He has no idea what's going on or what he's doing. He is heavily addicted to alcohol to such a degree that it's utterly ruined his life. This sort of drunkenness is *strongly* condemned.

Here's another verse that speaks against drunkenness:

Proverbs 20:1: "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

This verse tells us that those who are "deceived" by strong drink (meaning, those who get drunk) are not wise. Getting drunk is a terrible thing. In fact, the book of Proverbs says that kings shouldn't drink wine because of what might happen if they get drunk:

Proverbs 31:4-6: "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more."

The kings of the ancient world had absolute power. For that reason it was critical for them to be sober at all times. If they were drunk then they might use their power to do something terrible. That's why it was better to give wine to those who were poor. To them wine would be comforting because it would temporarily cause them to forget their poverty and misery. (How much wine do you think you have to drink before you forget something like that?)

I've never heard a pastor mention the second half of this passage, and I'm pretty sure I never will. Yet it's there in the Bible! Since poverty is harsh and miserable, it's actually a good thing for the poor to drink wine so they can forget their suffering for a while and achieve some level of happiness. I realize this is a shocking thing to say. You can go back and read the text if you want, but that's really what it says.

This is our first clue that the Bible's stance on wine is more complicated than "no one should ever drink wine under any circumstances, period".

Christ Drank Wine

The next point is a critical one. The Bible establishes beyond a doubt that Christ drank wine. Anyone who tells you otherwise is being dishonest with the text. For example:

Matthew 11:18-19: "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children."

Jesus pointed out that the Pharisees condemned John the Baptist for *not* drinking wine, and they condemned Jesus *for* drinking wine. That's the only possible interpretation of this passage. John the Baptist didn't drink alcohol but Jesus did. Since Jesus never sinned, that means drinking alcohol can't be a sin. The sin is *getting drunk*.

We know for a fact that Jesus drank wine because that's what He served at the last supper when he celebrated communion with His disciples. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 11:21 the apostle Paul once condemned the way the Corinthians were celebrating communion because some people were getting drunk! I've never seen anyone get drunk on grape juice. The fact that people were getting drunk means the church was serving wine.

I find it interesting that when Paul confronted the Corinthian church, he didn't tell them that it was wrong to serve wine and they ought to be using grape juice instead. Instead he told them to treat communion in a holy manner and stop getting drunk. Paul could easily have told them to start serving grape juice but he didn't. Paul also didn't say "Since some people in the congregation are tempted by wine, it's best to not use wine at all." Every church that I've ever attended has used that excuse, but Paul didn't. Even though some people in the Corinthian church were literally *getting drunk during the service*, Paul *still* didn't use that excuse!

There's also the fact that in Christ's first miracle He turned water into wine. In fact, the wine that Christ made was of an exceptionally high quality:

John 2:9-10: "When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast

called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now."

Why do people set out the good wine first? Because after the guests have been drinking for days (which is what happened at wedding feasts) the quality of the wine stopped mattering. Jesus literally gave more wine to people who were already pretty inebriated! I can't think of any church that would bring more wine to a group that had been drinking for days, but that's what Jesus did.

As an aside, let's not pretend that Jesus made grape juice. There is a perfectly good word for grape juice and it's not used in any of these passages. Claiming that Jesus supplied the wedding guests with grape juice is dishonest. That's not what the text says.

Turning Tithes Into Wine

But that's not all. In the book of Deuteronomy there's a very interesting passage that tells the Israelites what to do if they're too far away from the tabernacle to bring their tithes there. What it says is very relevant to this topic:

Deuteronomy 14:24-26: "And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee, which the Lord thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the Lord thy God hath blessed thee: Then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the

money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose: and thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household,"

Under the Mosaic law the tithe was to be paid in crops and livestock. However, if you lived far away then it might not be practical to transport your animals to the tabernacle. In that case you were allowed to turn your tithe into money and use it to throw a big feast for your household. The passage specifically says that you can spend it on *wine or strong drink*.

If it was a sin to drink wine then I'm pretty sure the Mosaic Law wouldn't have told people to use their tithe money to buy "strong drink" for their household! God clearly thought that it was fine so long as people didn't abuse wine and get drunk.

You may be thinking that perhaps this wine had been heavily watered down. The reason we know that's not the case is because the book of Isaiah says that mixing water with wine actually *pollutes* it and makes it worse:

Isaiah 1:21: "How is the faithful city become an harlot! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water: thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them."

Remember, when Jesus turned water into wine the lord of the feast said that the water that Christ had made was the best wine that had been served so far. That rules out wine that had been watered down!

Wine Is A Blessing

There are a number of times in the Bible where God says that wine is actually a blessing that He gives to people. For example:

Proverbs 3:10: "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

Isaiah 65:8: "Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all."

As you can see, God said that wine was a blessing. There are also times when God curses people by *withholding* wine:

Joel 1:10: "The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth."

Isaiah 24:7: "The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh."

God even promised that one of the blessings of life in the

millennial kingdom will be an abundance of wine:

Joel 3:18: "And 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 out of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim."

Why would God do this? Because wine is a blessing as long as it's not abused:

Psalm 4:7: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased."

Psalm 104:15: "And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."

Zechariah 9:17: "For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids."

Once again, there's a perfectly good word for grape juice that could have been used if that's what these passages were talking about. However, that word wasn't used. These passages mean exactly what they say.

What's Going On?

In order to understand what's going on I think it's best to

compare it to sex. The Bible *strongly* condemns having sex outside of marriage. In fact, under the Mosaic Law adultery was punished by death. That's how serious it was! The New Testament tells us that fornicators will not inherit the kingdom of God. Abusing sex by having it outside of marriage is a terrible sin.

However, there's nothing wrong with having sex *within* marriage. Hebrews 13:4 says "marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." In fact, in 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 the apostle Paul said that if one person in a marriage denies sex to the other then that person is committing the sin of fraud. He went on to say that couples should limit the time they spend fasting and praying so that they can have time for sex (so they don't become tempted to have sex *outside* of marriage). There are many passages in Proverbs that condemn having sex outside of marriage. There's also the Song of Solomon, which talks about what a blessing it is to have sex *within* marriage.

In other words, sex can either be a blessing or a terrible sin depending on how it's used. If it's used within the boundaries that God has set then it's a great thing. If it's used wickedly then it can damage your health (through disease), destroy your life (in many ways), and even drag your soul down to Hell (if you never repent). It may seem like the safest thing to do is just forbid everyone from ever having sex. However, those who forbid marriage and say that everyone must be celibate are teaching heresy. 1 Timothy 4:1 calls that a doctrine of devils! Yet those who have no interest in marriage and would rather pursue a different path aren't doing anything wrong. The choice about whether to pursue marriage is left up to each individual.

Wine works the same way. It's a terrible sin to abuse wine, just as it's a terrible sin to abuse sex. However, if wine is used within the limits that God has set (meaning, don't get drunk) then the Bible calls it a blessing. It's something God has given to gladden the heart of mankind. Condemning all use of

alcohol on the grounds that some people might abuse it is no different from demanding lifelong celibacy from everyone because some people are fornicators and adulterers. That's going way too far.

There are some people who aren't interested in getting married, and willingly choose a path of celibacy because that's what they prefer. There's nothing wrong with that. Likewise, there are some people who don't drink wine because they have no interest in it. That's fine as well. However, it's *not* fine when people who are celibate stand up and condemn those who chose to get married. That's a doctrine of devils. Likewise, it's not fine when those who don't drink condemn those who drink responsibly. It's a sin to engage in drunkenness *but not to drink*. Likewise, it's a sin to commit adultery but not to have sex with your wife. Churches should condemn only what the Bible condemns, and not go any further.

I've seen many churches that have church covenants on their wall which condemns those who drink wine or distribute it to others. Those covenants horrify me because they actually exclude Jesus from the church. After all, He both drank wine and distributed it to others! Under the terms of that covenant the Lord Jesus Christ would not be welcome, would He?

Resource 1: Chapter Summary

Joel

Joel 1

- THE LOCUST ATE WHAT THE PALMERWORM LEFT, THE CANKERWORM ATE WHAT THE LOCUST LEFT, THE CATERPILLAR ATE WHAT THE CANKERWORM LEFT
- THE LAND MOURNS; THE HARVEST IS PERISHED
- THE DAY OF THE LORD IS AT HAND
- THE RIVERS ARE DRIED UP AND FIRE HAS DEVoured THE WILDERNESS

Joel 2

- SOUND THE ALARM, FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD COMES
- IT IS A DAY OF DARKNESS; THERE HAS NEVER BEEN THE LIKE, NOR SHALL IT EVER HAPPEN AGAIN
- THEY DEVOUR THE LAND LIKE FIRE; NOTHING SHALL ESCAPE THEM
- THEY SHALL RUN LIKE MIGHTY MEN; WHEN THEY FALL UPON THE SWORD THEY WILL NOT BE WOUNDED
- THE DAY OF THE LORD IS GREAT AND TERRIBLE; WHO CAN ABIDE IT?
- THEREFORE TURN TO ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART
- GATHER THE PEOPLE AND LET THE PRIESTS INTERCEDE; THEN THE LORD WILL PITY HIS PEOPLE
- I WILL RESTORE TO YOU THE YEARS THE LOCUST HAS EATEN; YOU WILL EAT IN PLENTY AND BE SATISFIED
- I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH

Joel 3

- IN THOSE DAYS I WILL GATHER ALL NATIONS TO THE VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT AND JUDGE THEM FOR HOW THEY TREATED ISRAEL
- THE LORD SHALL ROAR OUT OF ZION
- JERUSALEM SHALL BE HOLY, AND NO STRANGERS SHALL PASS THROUGH HER ANYMORE
- EGYPT WILL BE A DESOLATION, BUT JUDAH SHALL DWELL FOREVER
- THE LORD DWELLS IN ZION

Resource 3: The Teachings Of The Bible

Joel 1

- This book contains the prophecies of Joel (v1)
- The words in this book came from the Lord; they are words that God gave to Joel (v1)
- Joel was a prophet (v1)
- Joel was a male (v1)
- Joel was the son of Pethuel (v1)
- The words in this book are the words of God, not the words of men (v1)
- This portion of the book is addressed to old men (v2)
- This portion of the book is also addressed to all the inhabitants of the land of Israel (v2)
- God wants the old men of Israel to listen to what He has to say (v2)
- God wants the inhabitants of Israel to listen to His words (v2)
- God addressed this to old men because they had lived a long time, and remembered the former things; they had lived long enough to know that this terrible disaster was unlike anything that had happened before (v2)

- Nothing like this disaster had happened during the lives of the old men of Israel (v2)
- Nothing like this disaster had happened during the lives of the ancestors of the Israelites (v2)
- This disaster was unique; it was worse than anything that had happened before (v2)
- God is addressing the generation that witnessed these things; He is telling them about something that had already happened to them, not something that would happen in the future; for that reason God seems to be addressing a future generation (one that witnessed the day of the Lord) (v2)
- This disaster was so severe that God wanted people to tell the story to their children (who don't seem to have witnessed it themselves) (v3)
- This disaster was so severe that God wanted the children who were told the story to tell it to their own children and grandchildren (v3)
- God wanted the story of this disaster to be passed down to each subsequent generation (v3)
- Some people would survive this disaster and have children (v3)
- This disaster would not wipe out the people of Israel; the survivors would have children and grandchildren (v3)
- God wanted the Israelites to forever remember this disaster (v3)
- In this disaster, the palmerworm ate plants (v4)
- After the palmerworm ate plants, the locust came and

ate whatever was left (v4)

- After the locust ate plants, the cankerworm came and ate whatever was left (v4)
- After the cankerworm ate plants, the caterpillar came and ate whatever was left (v4)
- This disaster involved four separate waves of insects, and each wave devastated the crops of Israel (v4)
- In this disaster God used four separate waves of insects to wipe out the crops of Israel (v4)
- There are times when God uses insects to carry out His will (v4)
- There are times when God uses insects to punish nations (v4)
- When this disaster happened to Israel, there were drunkards in the land (v5)
- God told the drunkards of Israel to weep because their supply of new wine was destroyed (v5)
- This disaster destroyed the supply of wine in Israel (v5)
- Not only did this disaster involve four waves of insects, but it also included a terrible army that invaded the land of Israel (v6)
- This army is said to come upon God's land (the land of Israel) (v6)
- The nation that invades Israel is very strong (v6)
- The army that comes against Israel is very large; it is said to be "without number" (v6)

- The army that comes against Israel is very terrible; it is said to have teeth like those of a lion (v6)
- God considers the land of Israel to belong to Him; any army that invades that land is invading His land (v6)
- God says that a single individual has laid His vine waste (v7)
- God compares Israel to a vine and says that it belongs to Him (v7)
- God singles out a specific individual and says that this person is waging war against His people; (this seems to be a reference to the antichrist) (v7)
- God compares Israel to a fig tree that belongs to Him (v7)
- This individual who invaded Israel destroyed the country; God said that He made the fig tree (Israel) bare and cast it away (v7)
- At the time this prophecy is fulfilled, the Jews are in the land of Israel (v7)
- God told this generation to lament these terrible losses the way that a woman would lament the loss of her husband (v8)
- In ancient times people lamented the death of a loved one with sackcloth (v8)
- God wanted the generation that experienced these things to mourn (v8)
- This verse says to lament like a virgin who was mourning the loss of her husband; either the word "virgin" should have been translated "young woman" (because Hebrew doesn't have a word that only means virgin), or this

person was only betrothed and had not yet gotten married (v8)

- God expects a widow to mourn the death of her husband, especially if the death happens while she is still young (v8)
- There is nothing wrong with mourning and weeping when terrible disasters come (v8)
- When this disaster happens, the temple of the Lord exists in Jerusalem (v9)
- When this disaster happens, the temple is functioning; sacrifices are being offered (meat and drink offerings) (v9)
- When this disaster happens, there are priests in Israel (v9)
- This disaster causes the sacrifices of the temple to cease (v9)
- When the temple sacrifices are stopped, the priests mourn (v9)
- God says that the priests are His ministers (v9)
- This disaster causes the fields of Israel to be destroyed (v10)
- This disaster destroys Israel's corn (v10)
- This disaster destroys Israel's wine (v10)
- This disaster destroys Israel's oil (v10)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing crops (v10)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing corn

(v10)

- When this disaster happens, Israel will have a wine industry (v10)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will have an (olive) oil industry (v10)
- When this disaster happens, the land will mourn (v10)
- This disaster destroys Israel's food supply (v10)
- This disaster destroys Israel's wheat (v11)
- This disaster destroys Israel's barley (v11)
- This disaster destroys Israel's harvests (v11)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing wheat (v11)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing barley (v11)
- God tells the husbandmen to be ashamed, because their crops are destroyed (v11)
- God tells the vinedressers to howl, because their crops are destroyed (v11)
- This disaster is a time of intense mourning (v11)
- This disaster is a time of terrible devastation (v11)
- This disaster destroys Israel's vines (v12)
- This disaster destroys Israel's fig trees (v12)
- This disaster destroys Israel's pomegranate trees (v12)
- This disaster destroys Israel's palm trees (v12)

- This disaster destroys Israel's apple trees (v12)
- This disaster destroys all of Israel's trees of the field (v12)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing (grape) vines (v12)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing fig trees (v12)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing pomegranate trees (v12)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing palm trees (v12)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will be growing apple trees (v12)
- This disaster destroys Israel's crops of the field, and Israel's trees; it is far ranging (v12)
- When this disaster happens, joy is taken away from mankind (v12)
- The passage does not say that plants die; instead it says that plants wither; God does not call the destruction of plants a "death"; this indicates that the loss of a plant is not the same thing as the death of a person or animal (v12)
- The crops of the field bring joy to mankind (v12)
- The fruits of trees bring joy to mankind (v12)
- The fruit of the vine brings joy to mankind (v12)
- It is reasonable to mourn the loss of crops, and to weep over it (v12)

- God commands the priests to lament when this terrible disaster happens (v13)
- The reason the priests are commanded to lament is because they are no longer able to offer meat and drink offerings (v13)
- The temple that exists in those days is called the temple of God (v13)
- The priests are told to show their grief by lying all night in sackcloth (v13)
- The priests are described as the ministers of God; this indicates that the Lord sanctioned the (third) temple that will exist in those days (the days of the tribulation), and sanctioned the sacrifices, and sanctioned what the priests are doing; they are said to be ministering to Him and offering sacrifices to Him; there is no indication that this (third) temple, or what the priests were doing, was evil or rejected by God (v13)
- When this disaster happens, God tells the Jews to fast before Him (v14)
- When this disaster happens, God tells the Jews to call a solemn assembly (v14)
- When this disaster happens, God tells the Jews to gather all the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the temple (v14)
- The (third) temple is described as the house of the Lord; it is clearly a sanctioned and holy temple (v14)
- When this disaster happens, God tells the Jews to cry out to Him at His temple (v14)

- When this disaster happens, there will be Jews in Israel (v14)
- When this disaster happens, there will be elders in Israel (v14)
- The events in Joel are connected to the day of the Lord; that means they are end times events, and connected to the seven-year tribulation (v15)
- The day of the Lord is said to be a day of destruction (v15)
- The destruction that happens in the day of the Lord is the God's doing; it is the wrath of God, not the wrath of men (v15)
- God is called the Almighty (v15)
- All these disasters that fell upon Israel during the day of the Lord are God's doing; although He will work through insects and enemy nations, it is still His wrath (v15)
- During the day of the Lord, the temple will exist (v16)
- During the day of the Lord, the temple is called God's temple; this means the third temple (which will exist during the tribulation period) will be a legitimate, sanctioned, holy temple (v16)
- Before this terrible disaster, there was joy and gladness in God's temple (v16)
- This disaster brought an end to the joy and gladness in God's temple (v16)
- This disaster cut off the supply of meat for the sacrifices that were being offered in the temple (v16)
- This disaster made it impossible to continue to offer

sacrifices because the supply of meat was gone (v16)

- The fact that sacrifices could no longer be offered at the temple turned joy into grief (v16)
- God does not condemn the Jews for building the third temple (v16)
- God does not condemn the priests for offering sacrifices in the third temple (v16)
- God does not call the third temple evil, or reject the sacrifices that were offered there (v16)
- This disaster causes the seed to rot in the ground (v17)
- This disaster causes the garners to be empty and devoid of food (v17)
- This disaster causes the barns to be broken (v17)
- This disaster causes the corn to wither (v17)
- Corn is said to wither, not die; this indicates that the death of an animal is entirely different (in a fundamental way) from the loss of a plant (v17)
- This disaster causes animals to suffer and groan (v18)
- Because of this disaster, cattle have no pasture to graze (v18)
- Because of this disaster, the sheep die for lack of food (v18)
- This disaster destroys Israel's supply of plants and animals; the crops are gone and the animals die as well (v18)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will have cattle (v18)

- When this disaster happens, Israel will have flocks of sheep (v18)
- When this disaster happens, Israel will have pasture (v18)
- During this disaster, a terrible fire will burn down the pastures (v19)
- During this disaster, a terrible fire will consume the wilderness (v19)
- During this disaster, a terrible fire will burn down all the trees of the field; none will be spared (v19)
- In the day of the Lord (the tribulation), both pasture and trees will be burned to the ground (v19)
- The people will cry out to the Lord because of the fire that will rage in Israel (v19)
- Because of this disaster, the animals will cry out to God (v20)
- The reason the animals will cry out to God is because they have no food to eat or water to drink (v20)
- It is possible for animals to cry out to God (v20)
- There are times when animals cry out to God (v20)
- It seems that animals look to God to give them food and water (v20)
- During this disaster, the rivers in Israel will dry up (v20)
- During this disaster, fire will devour the pastures of the wilderness (v20)
- This disaster will destroy Israel's food supply and water supply, leaving both people and animals with nothing

(v20)

- Animals know that God exists, and they cry out to Him in times of distress (v20)

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Joel 2

- The day of the Lord (the seven-year tribulation) is coming; it is near at hand (v1)
- The prophecies in this book seem to be related to the seven-year tribulation period (v1)
- Since the day of the Lord is at hand, the trumpet should be sounded in Zion (v1)
- Since the day of the Lord is at hand, the alarm should be sounded in God's holy mountain (v1)
- Since the day of the Lord is at hand, the inhabitants of the land of Israel should tremble (v1)
- The day of the Lord is a terrible and dreadful thing (v1)
- The day of the Lord is a day of great trouble for the inhabitants of Israel (v1)
- In ancient times, trumpets were used in Israel to sound the alarm that a disaster was at hand (v1)
- The day of the Lord is a day of thick darkness (v2)
- The day of the Lord is a day of gloominess (v2)
- The day of the Lord is a day of clouds (v2)

- In the day of the Lord, a great and strong people will come against Israel (v2)
- The day of the Lord is the worst time that there has ever been, or ever will be (v2)
- The day of the Lord will not be the end of the human race; there will be more generations after it (v2)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, a fire will devour everything that is ahead of them (v3)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, a flame will burn everything behind them (v3)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, the land that it crosses over will be turned into a desolate wilderness (v3)
- At the time of the day of the Lord, the land of Israel will be like the garden of Eden (v3)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, nothing shall escape them (v3)
- The garden of Eden was a real place that actually existed (v3)
- This terrible army does not appear to be human (v3)
- The soldiers in this army do not look like men; instead they have the appearance of horses (v4)
- The soldiers in this army do not look like men; instead they run as horses do (v4)
- The soldiers in this army are extremely swift (v4)
- The soldiers in this terrible army make a noise like chariots (v5)

- The soldiers in this terrible army are very agile, and can make great leaps (v5)
- The soldiers in this terrible army make a noise like fire burning stubble (v5)
- The soldiers in this terrible army are very strong (v5)
- The soldiers in this terrible army are in a battle formation (v5)
- The people who see this army coming will be filled with pain (v6)
- The people who are attacked by this army will be blackened; (perhaps because they are burned with fire) (v6)
- This terrible army will bring great distress and pain upon the people that it attacks (v6)
- The soldiers in this terrible army are called mighty men (v7)
- The soldiers in this terrible army can run with great speed (v7)
- The soldiers in this terrible army can climb walls (v7)
- The soldiers in this terrible army will march along on their path, and will not turn away from it (v7)
- The soldiers in this terrible army will not break their ranks (v7)
- The soldiers in this terrible army are strong, agile, and very disciplined; they act in superhuman ways (v7)
- The soldiers in this terrible army will not fight against each other (v8)

- The soldiers in this terrible army will each walk on its own path (v8)
- The soldiers in this terrible army cannot be wounded by being pierced with a sword (v8)
- The soldiers in this terrible army will run throughout the city (of Jerusalem) (v9)
- The soldiers in this terrible army will run upon the wall of the city (v9)
- The soldiers in this terrible army will climb up the houses (v9)
- The soldiers in this terrible army will enter into the windows of houses (v9)
- When the day of the Lord takes place, the city of Jerusalem will be surrounded by a wall (v9)
- When the day of the Lord takes place, the city of Jerusalem will have houses (v9)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, the ground will quake before them (v10)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, the heavens shall tremble (v10)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, the sun will be dark (v10)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, the moon will be dark (v10)
- When this terrible army comes against Israel, the stars will be dark (v10)
- The Lord says that this terrible army belongs to Him; it is

His army (v11)

- In the day of the Lord, He will utter His voice before His army (v11)
- The army of the Lord is very great (v11)
- The Lord is strong (v11)
- In the day of the Lord, He will execute His word (v11)
- The day of the Lord is great and very terrible (v11)
- It will be very difficult to survive the day of the Lord; it will be an extremely difficult time (v11)
- Because the day of the Lord is very terrible, the people should turn to God now with all their hearts (v12)
- Because the day of the Lord is very terrible, the people should turn to God with fasting (v12)
- Because the day of the Lord is very terrible, the people should turn to God with weeping (v12)
- Because the day of the Lord is very terrible, the people should turn to God with mourning (v12)
- Fasting is a sign of true repentance (v12)
- Weeping is a sign of true repentance (v12)
- Mourning is a sign of true repentance (v12)
- God wants us to rend our heart, not our garments (v13)
- God seeks a change in the inward parts, not an empty outward expression of grief (v13)
- God commands us to turn to Him (v13)
- The Lord is our God (v13)

- God is gracious (v13)
- God is merciful (v13)
- God is slow to anger (v13)
- God is very kind (v13)
- When people repent, there are times when God does not send His judgment (v13)
- If God says that He will send His judgment upon a nation, and it repents, then He may not send His judgment after all (v14)
- This prophecy is saying that if Israel repents then it is possible that these terrible things might not happen to them (v14)
- The only way to potentially escape all of these terrible things is through repentance (v14)
- If Israel repents then God may send a blessing instead of a curse (v14)
- If Israel repents then God may leave them supplies to offer a meat offering and a drink offering to Him (v14)
- In the day of the Lord, God calls Israel to repent (v14)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands the people to blow the trumpet in Zion (v15)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands the people to sanctify a fast (v15)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands the people to call a solemn assembly (v15)
- In ancient times a trumpet was used to call a solemn

assembly (v15)

- In the day of the Lord there will be people in Zion (v15)
- God's focus in the day of the Lord seems to be centered on Israel, and calling them to repent; although the entire world will be affected by the events of the tribulation, God's focus is very much on Israel; the church is not mentioned at all, which is more evidence that the church will not be in this world at that time (v15)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands His people to gather (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands His congregation to sanctify themselves (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands the elders of Israel to be gathered together (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands the children to be included in this gathering (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands even infants and newborns to be included in this gathering (v16)
- In the times throughout the Bible when God gathered His people together, the newborns and infants were included; God never had them sent off to children's church or the nursery; instead God kept families together (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, God commanded the bridegrooms to attend (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, God commanded the brides to attend (v16)
- In ancient times, a bridegroom resided in his chamber

(v16)

- In ancient times, a bride resided in her closet (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, there will be bridegrooms in Israel (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, there will be brides in Israel (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, people will still be getting married (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, people will still be having children; there will be newborns and infants during those days (v16)
- In the day of the Lord, a temple will exist in Jerusalem; (this is a reference to the third temple) (v17)
- In the day of the Lord, God's altar will exist in Jerusalem (v17)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands His priests to go to His temple and weep; specifically, they are commanded to weep between the porch of the temple and the altar (v17)
- In the day of the Lord, God calls His priests "the ministers of the Lord"; God does not consider their priesthood or service to be illegitimate (v17)
- In the day of the Lord, God does not consider the temple that exists at that time to be illegitimate; instead He commands His priests to go there and seek Him (v17)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands His priests to intercede on behalf of the people (v17)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands His priests to go to

the temple and pray that God would spare His people (v17)

- In the day of the Lord, God commands His priests to pray that He would not bring reproach upon His heritage (v17)
- God calls the people of Israel His heritage (v17)
- In the day of the Lord, God commands His priests to pray that He would not allow the heathen to rule over them, lest people should reproach the name of God by asking why their God didn't save them (v17)
- In the day of the Lord, pagans will be trying to conquer Israel and rule over the Jews (v17)
- After the priests go to the temple and pray, God will be jealous for the land of Israel (v18)
- God calls the land of Israel His land; it belongs to Him (v18)
- After the priests go to the temple and pray, God will pity His people (v18)
- God calls the people of Israel His people (v18)
- God is a jealous God (v18)
- God is jealous for His people, the Israelites (v18)
- God will answer the prayers of the priests (v19)
- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will give corn to the Israelites (v19)
- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will give wine to the Israelites (v19)
- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will satisfy

the Israelites with food (v19)

- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will save the Israelites; they will never again be made a reproach among the heathen (v19)
- In the past, God had made the Israelites a reproach among the heathen (v19)
- In the day of the Lord, the northern army will come against Israel (v20)
- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will drive the northern army out of Israel and will remove it far off (v20)
- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will drive the northern army into a land that is barren and desolate (v20)
- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will drive the northern army away into a distant and barren land; the face of the army will be toward the eastern sea, and the rear of the army will be toward the utmost sea (v20)
- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will drive the northern army away and make them stink (v20)
- In response to the prayers of the priests, God will drive the northern army away and punish them because of the terrible things that they had done (v20)
- God has the power to defeat the powerful northern army (v20)
- God is going to defeat the powerful northern army (v20)
- God tells the people of Israel to not be afraid (v21)

- God tells the people of Israel to be glad (v21)
- God tells the people of Israel to rejoice (v21)
- The reason the people of Israel should not be afraid, but should rejoice, is because God will do great things (v21)
- It is good to be glad and rejoice when God does great things (v21)
- Since God will do great things, we do not need to be afraid (v21)
- The day of the Lord will be very terrible, but it will end in rejoicing because God will save His people (v21)
- God tells the animals of the field to not be afraid (v22)
- The reason the animals should not be afraid is because the pastures will return and the trees will bear fruit again (v22)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, there will be beasts of the field in this world (v22)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, the pastures will return (v22)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, the wilderness will come to life (v22)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, there will be trees again (v22)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, the trees will bear fruit again (v22)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, the fig tree will bear fruit again (v22)

- After the day of the Lord has ended, the vine will yield fruit again (v22)
- After Israel repents and the priests cry out to God, the Lord will bless their land; the plants and trees will return and there will be food again (v22)
- The reason life will return to this world after the tribulation is because Israel repented (v22)
- God has the power to bring the wilderness to life (v22)
- God has the power to cause trees to grow and bear fruit (v22)
- There are times when God blesses a nation by causing plants to grow and trees to bear fruit (v22)
- God has the power to bless a nation with food (v22)
- God has the power to take away, and to give (v22)
- There are times when animals are afraid (v22)
- God tells the Israelites to be glad (v23)
- God calls the Israelites the children of Zion (v23)
- God tells the Israelites to rejoice in Him, because of the good things that He will give them (v23)
- It is good to rejoice in the promises of God, even if we haven't received them yet (v23)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, God will give His people the former rain (v23)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, God will give His people the latter rain (v23)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, God will send rain

upon Israel in the first month of their calendar (v23)

- God has the power to send rain upon a nation (v23)
- God is the one who gives rain (v23)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, there will be rain in this world (v23)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, God will give the Israelites an abundance of wheat, and will fill their (threshing) floors (v24)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, God will give the Israelites abundant crops and will overflow their vats with wine (v24)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, there will still be wheat in this world (v24)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, there will still be grapes in this world (v24)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, people will still make wine (v24)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, there will still be olives (v24)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, God will give the Israelites an abundance of (olive) oil (v24)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, God will give the Israelites an abundance of food (v24)
- Wine is a blessing, and is something that God will give Israel in abundance after the day of the Lord (v24)
- During the seven-year tribulation, the locust ate Israel's crops; God will restore what was eaten after the

tribulation ends (v25)

- During the seven-year tribulation, the cankerworm ate Israel's crops; God will restore what was eaten after the tribulation ends (v25)
- During the seven-year tribulation, the caterpillar ate Israel's crops; God will restore what was eaten after the tribulation ends (v25)
- During the seven-year tribulation, the palmerworm ate Israel's crops; God will restore what was eaten after the tribulation ends (v25)
- During the seven-year tribulation, the terrible army destroyed Israel's crops; God will restore what was destroyed after the tribulation ends (v25)
- God says that the terrible army that will come against Israel during the tribulation is His army (v25)
- God says that the terrible army that will come against Israel during the tribulation will be sent by Him (v25)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, the Israelites will have plenty of food to eat (v26)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, the Israelites will eat and be satisfied (v26)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, the Israelites will praise the name of the Lord their God (v26)
- The reason the Israelites will praise the Lord is because of the wonderful things that He did for them (v26)
- After the day of the Lord has ended, the Israelites will never be ashamed again; this implies that Israel will never rebel again, or become pagan again, or be judged by God

again, but instead will remain steadfast and faithful forever (v26)

- The purpose of the tribulation is not to destroy the Israelites; instead it will drive them to repentance, and then God will greatly bless them and give them a new heart so they never rebel again (v26)
- It is a great blessing to have plenty to eat, and to eat until we are satisfied (v26)
- It is good to praise God when He does wonderful things for us (v26)
- It is good to praise God for the food that He gives us to eat (v26)
- After the day of the Lord, the Israelites will know that God is in their midst (v27)
- After the day of the Lord, God will be in the midst of the Israelites (v27)
- After the day of the Lord, the Israelites will know that the Lord is their God (v27)
- After the day of the Lord, the Israelites will know that there is no other god except for the God of Israel (v27)
- After the day of the Lord, the Israelites will never be ashamed again (v27)
- The focus of the day of the Lord is on Israel and their repentance; there is no mention of the church at all (v27)
- After the day of the Lord, God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh (v28)
- After the day of the Lord, the Holy Spirit will be in this

world in a mighty way (v28)

- After the day of the Lord, the sons of the Israelites will prophesy (v28)
- After the day of the Lord, the daughters of the Israelites will prophesy (v28)
- The gift of prophecy does not exist during the church age, but it will exist again after the day of the Lord; there will be true prophets once more (v28)
- After the day of the Lord, the Israelites will bear children (both sons and daughters) (v28)
- After the day of the Lord, God will speak to people through prophets (v28)
- After the day of the Lord, God will speak to the old men of Israel through dreams (v28)
- In this present age God does not speak to people through dreams, but He will do that again after the day of the Lord (v28)
- After the day of the Lord, people will still grow old; there will be old men (v28)
- After the day of the Lord, God will speak to the young men of Israel through visions (v28)
- In this present age God does not speak to people through visions, but He will do that again after the day of the Lord (v28)
- After the day of the Lord, God will give new revelation to mankind; this will come through prophets, and dreams, and visions (v28)

- After the day of the Lord, God will pour out His Spirit even upon servants and handmaids (v29)
- After the day of the Lord, there will be servants (v29)
- After the day of the Lord, there will be handmaids (v29)
- Before the day of the Lord begins, God will show wonders in the heavens (the sky) (v30)
- Before the day of the Lord begins, God will show wonders in the earth (the ground) (v30)
- God uses wonders in the heavens (the sky) to warn people that the day of the Lord is approaching; this means that God uses heavenly objects as signs, to communicate with mankind (v30)
- Before the day of the Lord begins, God will use wonders of blood to warn that the tribulation is near (v30)
- Before the day of the Lord begins, God will use wonders of fire to warn that the tribulation is near (v30)
- Before the day of the Lord begins, God will use pillars of smoke to warn that the tribulation is near (v30)
- Before the day of the Lord begins, God will use a multitude of miraculous signs in both the sky and in the ground to warn people that the day of the Lord is at hand; it will not come without warning (v30)
- Before the day of the Lord begins, the sun will be turned into darkness (v31)
- Before the day of the Lord begins, the moon will be turned into blood (v31)
- God will use signs of the sun and moon to warn people

that the day of the Lord is near; this means that He uses heavenly objects as signs (v31)

- The day of the Lord is great and terrible (v31)
- God tells people in advance what the signs of the tribulation are, so that people can watch for them (v31)
- Whoever shall call on the name of the Lord will be delivered (v32)
- There will be deliverance in mount Zion (v32)
- There will be deliverance in Jerusalem (v32)
- God will deliver the remnant of the Jews if they call upon His name (v32)
- In the day of the Lord, the city of Jerusalem will still exist (v32)
- The reason a remnant of the Jews will exist is because the Lord will call them; God is going to create the remnant (v32)

[Last updated 9/22/2022]

Joel 3

- This chapter is talking about end times events that happen in relation to the day of the Lord (the seven-year tribulation) (v1)
- In the day of the Lord, God will rescue the Jews from captivity and return them to the land (v1)
- In the day of the Lord, both Judah and Jerusalem will be

in captivity; God will rescue them and provide deliverance (v1)

- God is the one who will rescue Judah and Jerusalem from their end-times captivity (v1)
- In the day of the Lord, God will gather all nations and bring them to the valley of Jehoshaphat (v2)
- The reason all nations will gather together in the valley of Jehoshaphat is because God has brought them there; their gathering was His doing (v2)
- The reason God is going to gather all nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat is to judge them for scattering the Jews among the nations, and for taking away land that God had given to the Jews (v2)
- God becomes angry when nations scatter the Jews (v2)
- God considers the Jews to be His people (v2)
- God considers the land of Israel to be His land (v2)
- God becomes angry when nations take land away from Israel (v2)
- Scattering the Jews from their land brings God's judgment upon nations (v2)
- Taking land away from Israel brings God's judgment upon nations (v2)
- God calls Israel His people and His heritage (v2)
- When nations attack Israel and the Jews, God takes it personally (v2)
- The nations have scattered the Jews and taken Israel's land, and God is going to punish them for it (v2)

- In the end times, God is angry with all nations for scattering His people the Jews (v2)
- In the end times, God is angry with all nations for taking land away from Israel (v2)
- God is going to punish all nations for the evil things they have done to the Jews (v2)
- In the end times, the nations will scatter the Jews (v2)
- In the end times, the nations will take land away from Israel (v2)
- In the end times, God is angry with the nations for selling the Jews into slavery (v3)
- In the end times, the nations will sell the Jews into slavery (v3)
- In the end times, slavery will exist (v3)
- In the end times, people will sell the Jews into slavery and spend the money on harlots (v3)
- In the end times, prostitution will exist (v3)
- In the end times, people will sell the Jews into slavery and spend the money on wine (v3)
- God becomes angry when people sell the Jews into slavery (v3)
- God is going to punish the nations for selling the Jews into slavery (v3)
- In the end times, the nations of the world will be immoral; they will sell people into slavery in order to hire prostitutes (v3)

- God considers the Jews who were sold into slavery to belong to Him; He calls them His people (v3)
- In the end times, God is angry with Tyre (v4)
- In the end times, God is angry with Zidon (v4)
- In the end times, God is angry with the coasts of Palestine (v4)
- In the end times, Tyre exists (v4)
- In the end times, Zidon exists (v4)
- In the end times, people dwell along the coasts of Palestine (v4)
- God warned Tyre, Zidon, and those who live along the coasts of Palestine that if they came against Him then He would speedily fight back against them (v4)
- In the end times, Tyre and Zidon and those who live along the coasts of Palestine will take silver and gold that belongs to God, and will take other valuable possessions that belong to Him as well; (this most likely means looting Israel, or the temple in Jerusalem) (v5)
- God is angry with Tyre and Zidon and those who live along the coasts of Palestine for robbing Him (v5)
- In the end times, Tyre, Zidon, and those who live along the coasts of Palestine will rob God and carry His belongings into their temples (v5)
- In the end times, Tyre, Zidon, and those who live along the coasts of Palestine will have pagan temples (v5)
- God becomes angry when people steal from Him (v5)
- God becomes angry when people take His possessions

and put them into pagan temples (v5)

- In the end times, God is angry with Tyre, Zidon, and those who live along the coasts of Palestine for selling the Jews to the Greeks as slaves (v6)
- In the end times, Tyre, Zidon, and those who live along the coasts of Palestine will sell the Jews into slavery to the Greeks in order to remove the Jews far from their homeland; it will be a deliberate act of oppression against the Jews (v6)
- God believes in national borders, and becomes angry when nations violate them (v6)
- In the end times, the Greeks will exist (v6)
- In the end times, Israel will be defeated and the Jews will be sold into slavery (v6)
- In the end times, the Greeks will be involved in the slave trade and will buy slaves (v6)
- In the end times, slavery will not be illegal (v6)
- In the end times, God will rescue the Jews that were sold into slavery and will bring them home (v7)
- In the end times, God will punish the nations that sold the Jews into slavery (v7)
- In the end times, God will punish the nations that sold the Jews into slavery by selling them as slaves to the Jews, who will then sell them to the distant Sabeans; God will do to them what they did to the Jews (v8)
- In the end times, the Sabeans will be involved in the slave trade (v8)

- In the end times, the Sabeans will exist (v8)
- In the end times, the Jews will sell their enemies into slavery (v8)
- In the end times, the Sabeans will live far away from the Greeks (v8)
- In the end times, God challenges the Gentiles to go to war against Him (v9)
- In the end times, God challenges the Gentiles to send their mighty men into battle (v9)
- In the end times, God challenges the Gentiles to send all their men of war into battle (v9)
- God is mocking the Gentiles who are going to go to war against Him; they think they are strong, but in reality they are weak (v10)
- God tells the Gentiles to turn their farming instruments into weapons of war, and bring those to the battle (where they will be utterly useless) (v10)
- The phrase "let the weak say, I am strong" is actually mocking Gentile nations that are going to go to war against God Himself; it is something God is saying to mock His enemies (v10)
- It seems that this major end-times battle will be fought with old-fashioned weapons (swords and spears) (v10)
- Those who fight against God may think that they are strong, but in reality they are weak (v10)
- There are times when God mocks His enemies (v10)
- God commands the Gentile nations to assemble

themselves together and come to the battle (v11)

- In the end times, the Gentile nations are heathen (pagans) (v11)
- God calls the Gentiles to send their mightiest soldiers to the battle (v11)
- God is not afraid of the combined might of all the end-times Gentile nations (v11)
- God has the power to call nations to the battlefield (v11)
- God calls the end-times Gentile nations to the valley of Jehoshaphat (v12)
- An important end-times battle will be fought in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and all Gentile nations will send soldiers there (v12)
- In the end times, God will judge the Gentile nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat (v12)
- God is going to judge the end-times Gentile nations (v12)
- God is calling the nations to gather so that He can judge them; they are being called to judgment (v12)
- When the Gentile nations gather in the valley of Jehoshaphat, they will be utterly slaughtered; God compares it to a ripe harvest that will be reaped with a sickle (v13)
- The wickedness of the end-times Gentile nations is great (v13)
- God compares the valley of Jehoshaphat (where the Gentile nations will gather) to a press that is full, and vats that are overflowing; it is a mighty harvest that He will

reap (v13)

- God will punish the end-times Gentile nations for their sins (v13)
- Great multitudes of Gentile soldiers will gather in the valley of Jehoshaphat in the end times (v14)
- God calls the valley of Jehoshaphat the valley of decision (because that is where He will judge the Gentiles) (v14)
- This battle will take place in the day of the Lord (the end times) (v14)
- When this battle takes place in the end times, the sun will be darkened (v15)
- When this battle takes place in the end times, the moon will be darkened (v15)
- When this battle takes place in the end times, the stars will be darkened (v15)
- This end-times battle will be accompanied by signs in the heavens; this is yet another case where an important end-times event is signified by some sort of visible heavenly sign that includes the sun, moon, and stars (v15)
- Sometimes God uses the sun, moon, and stars as signs (v15)
- In the end times, the Lord will roar out of Zion (v16)
- In the end times, the Lord will speak from Jerusalem (v16)
- In the end times, God will be in Israel (v16)
- In the end times, the heavens will shake (v16)
- In the end times, the earth will shake (v16)

- In the end times, the Lord will be the hope of the Israelites (v16)
- In the end times, the Lord will be the strength of the Israelites (v16)
- The Israelites will still exist in the end times; they will not be wiped out (v16)
- God calls the Israelites His people (v16)
- God cares about the Israelites (v16)
- God is going to save the Israelites (v16)
- God cares about Jerusalem (v16)
- In the end times, Israel will know that the Lord is their God (v17)
- In the end times, God will dwell in Zion (v17)
- Zion is God's holy mountain (v17)
- God says that mount Zion belongs to Him (v17)
- In the end times, Jerusalem will be holy (v17)
- The reason that Jerusalem will be holy in the end times is because God will dwell in Zion (v17)
- In the end times, no strangers will pass through Jerusalem any more (v17)
- God is going to save Jerusalem (v17)
- In the end times, the mountains will bring forth much new wine (v18)
- God considers wine to be a blessing (v18)
- In the end times, God will bless Israel with an abundance

of new wine (v18)

- In the end times, the hills will bring forth an abundance of milk (v18)
- In the end times, cattle will still exist (v18)
- In the end times, grapes will still exist (v18)
- God considers milk to be a blessing (v18)
- In the end times, God will bless Israel with an abundance of milk (v18)
- In the end times, the rivers of Judah will be full of water; they will not be barren or dry (v18)
- In the end times, a fountain will flow forth out of the house of the Lord (v18)
- In the end times, a temple of God will exist; (this is a reference to the millennial temple) (v18)
- In the end times, the fountain that flows out of the temple will water the valley of Shittim (v18)
- In the end times, Egypt will be a desolation (v19)
- In the end times, Edom will be a desolate wilderness (v19)
- The reason Egypt will be a desolation is because of their sins against the Jews (v19)
- The reason Edom will be a desolation is because of their sins against the Jews (v19)
- The reason Egypt will be a desolation is because they shed innocent blood in their land (v19)
- The reason Edom will be a desolation is because they

shed innocent blood in their land (v19)

- God is angry with nations that sin against the Jews (v19)
- God is angry with nations that shed innocent blood (v19)
- God punishes nations that sin against the Jews (v19)
- God punishes nations that shed innocent blood (v19)
- In the end times, Egypt will sin against the Jews (v19)
- In the end times, Edom will sin against the Jews (v19)
- In the end times, Egypt will shed innocent blood in their land (v19)
- In the end times, Edom will shed innocent blood in their land (v19)
- In the millennium, some parts of the world will be a desolate wilderness (v19)
- In the end times, the nation of Judah will dwell forever; it will never be destroyed or pass away (v20)
- In the end times, the city of Jerusalem will dwell forever; it will never be destroyed or pass away (v20)
- More generations of people will be born after the seven-year tribulation (v20)
- God is not going to destroy the Israelites; instead He is going to save them and greatly bless them, and will preserve them forever (v20)
- In the end times, God is going to cleanse the Israelites (v21)
- Up to this point God has not cleansed the Israelites, but that will change in the end times (v21)

- In the end times, God will dwell in Zion (v21)
- The reason God will cleanse the Israelites of their sins is because He will dwell among them (v21)

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