

JOEL: THE JUDGMENTS OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

V: God's End-Time Judgments In Israel's Behalf

(Joel 3:1-17)

I. Introduction

- A. "The Day of the Lord," a term used of the time when God administers judgment on sin and delivers His people can be applied to an event in Israel's past as well as to end-time events.
- B. In the concluding section of Joel's prophecy, God promised a glorious future for the upright remnant in Israel, and Joel 3:1-17 tells of God's end-time judgments in Israel's behalf. We view the passage for our insight:

II. God's End-Time Judgments In Israel's Behalf, Joel 3:1-17.

- A. In accord with Deuteronomy 30:1-3 of the Mosaic Covenant and based on Israel's repentance as signified in Joel 2:12-17, God will restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, Joel 3:1.
- B. Joel 3:2-8 then announces God's judgment on the Gentile nations who have wronged His people:
 - 1. The Lord will gather all the Gentile nations and bring them down to the "Valley of Jehoshaphat," a place mentioned only in Joel 3:2a and 3:12. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1421) Some believe this is a future valley that will be created by the splitting of the Mount of Olives east and west with the movement of the northern part away from the southern part of that mount to form a valley of escape for Jerusalem's remnant and a valley of judgment of the antichrist and his armies, *Ibid.*; Zechariah 14:4-5. Whether or not this is a literal valley, its name means "the Lord judges," and God will then judge the Gentile nations.
 - 2. This judgment will punish the Gentiles for their mistreatment of God's people for scattering them, selling them as slaves and dividing up the Land of Israel that really belongs to God Himself, Joel 3:2b-3.
 - 3. In Joel 3:4-6, God specifically mentioned the Phoenicians (represented in the cities of Tyre and Sidon) and the Philistines, people groups that financially profited from Judah's fall, and God will identify with His people, claiming these Gentiles had no justification for doing what they had done to **Him**, Joel 3:4-6.
 - 4. God's punishment of the Phoenicians and Philistines would involve having His people sell the sons and daughters of these Gentile peoples as slaves to the Sabeans, Arabs known for their commercial activities, *Ibid.*, p. 1422; Joel 3:7-8. This prophecy was likely partially fulfilled in the fourth century B. C. when the Sidonians were sold into slavery by Israel's Greek ruler Antiochus III in 345 B. C. and the people of Tyre and Gaza were also enslaved by Alexander the Great in 332 B. C., *Ibid.*
 - 5. However, that prophecy also carries an end-time application where Phoenicia and Philistia represent all of Israel's enemies in history when God will punish all of Judah's Gentile afflictors, *Ibid.*
- C. God's judgment on Israel's Gentile oppressors is then described in Joel 3:9-16 (as follows):
 - 1. Messengers are directed to call the Gentiles to wage war by gathering and beating their plowshares of peacetime into swords and their pruning hooks of peacetime into spears and that even the weak be motivated to say they were warriors prepared for battle, Joel 3:9-10.
 - 2. God's prophet Joel called for the surrounding Gentile nations to hurry and come and for the Lord to bring down His warriors, too, and God urged the nations to stir themselves up for war and come down to the "Valley of Jehoshaphat" that God might sit to judge all the surrounding Gentile nations, Joel 3:11-12.
 - 3. Predicting the coming battle of Armageddon, the call is for God to put in the sickle for the harvest of the wicked is ripe, that God might go in and tread the winepress of the wrath of God that is full. The vats are full, and their evil is great, ripe for the expression of God's wrath, Joel 3:13 with Rev. 19:15-16; *Ibid.*
 - 4. Multitudes of Gentiles will enter this "valley of decision," that is, the "Valley of Jehoshaphat," for the Day of the Lord will be near when the sun and moon are darkened and the stars stop shining, Joel 3:14-15; *Ibid.*
 - 5. God will then figuratively roar like a lion from Mount Zion, the heavens and earth will quake, but these events will signify the Lord is a refuge and a stronghold for His people Israel, Joel 3:16.
- D. In that day, God's people who dwell in Zion will know that He is the Lord their God, that His holy hill and Jerusalem will be separated from sinners, with wicked foreigners never again invading it, Joel 3:17; *Ibid.*

Lesson: *When Israel repents of sin in the Great Tribulation Period, God will restore Israel's fortunes and gather the Gentile nations who have wronged her, bringing them into judgment to express His wrath against them. Israel will learn that God is separate from sin, and no longer will wicked foreigners invade His Holy Land.*

Application: *(1) May we treat God's people well to avoid His punishment! (2) If we believers have been wronged, may we leave the wrong with the Lord to handle, looking to Him as our Refuge and Stronghold from oppressors.*