

The Prophecy of Joel

By A. S. Copley

PREFACE

REFERENCES USED IN THIS PUBLICATION

- **American Standard Version** (ASV or AV) is a version of the Bible that was released in 1901. It soon came to have other names, such as the American Revised Version, the American Standard Revision, the American Standard Revised Bible, and the American Standard Edition. By the time its copyright was renewed in 1929, it had come to be known by its present name, the American Standard Version.
- **Diaglott** is a two-language polyglot translation, of the New Testament by Benjamin Wilson, first published in 1864. It is an interlinear translation with the original Greek text and a word-for-word English translation in the left column, and a full English translation in the right column.
- **King James Version** (KJV) references are used throughout this publication unless otherwise noted.
- **Revised Version** (RV) (or English Revised Version) of the Bible is a late 19th-century British revision of the King James Version of 1611. It was the first and remains the only officially authorized and recognized revision of the King James Bible.
- **Wuest:** Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1893–1962) was a noted New Testament Greek (Κοινή) scholar of the mid-20th century...produced his own English translation of the New Testament (the Wuest Expanded Translation – abbreviated WET) based on Nestle's critical text.

Note: *Definitions of references pulled from Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, January 2013.*

DISCLAIMER

This document has been formatted, proofed, and its verbiage modernized so as to save it into an easily read and/or printed electronic format.

INTRODUCTORY

"The Word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel." [Joe.1:1]

Joel is the 2nd of the minor Old Testament prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel are termed the major prophets because their messages are much larger than the other 12 (Hosea to Malachi). However, their size does not determine their value. Each one has an important and distinct place. Some claim that Joel gave his message about 800 years before Christ, probably half a century before Isaiah. But it is said that the Hebrew canon places it between Hosea and Amos, as our Bible has it, which is a little later. Israel was already losing out; for less than a 100 years later, they were carried captive into Assyria by Shalmaneser [2Ki.18:9-11]. The name **Joel** means, "*Jehovah is God, or might.*" **Pethuel** means, "*Be persuaded, be enlarged of God.*" These names inspire reverence, faith, courage, and hope. They express the attitude which Israel should have held toward the Lord God.

A 3-FOLD OUTLINE

The following bird's-eye scheme will simplify our study of the book, which tells of the devastation and restoration of Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Devastation Declared—Due to Backsliding | Joe.1 |
| Devastation Described | Joe.2:1-11 |
| Devastation Reversed—Followed by Prosperity | Joe.2:12-3:21 |

DEVASTATION DECLARED—DUE TO BACKSLIDING [JOE. 1]

Attention!

"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?" [Joe.1:2]

Today, the custom is to address the young men, but Joel spoke to the elders. If the Jewish fathers had obeyed the voice of God, Israel would not have fared as ill as they did. Had the elders and rulers received Christ as the Messiah, the present blindness would never have come; neither would the advertised calamities of the future. Proverbs 22:6 promises, saying, "*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*" God holds the fathers responsible for giving their offspring the light and then holds the children responsible to walk in it.

What the prophet was about to say had not yet come. It was still future, and indeed extended into the far distant future. The background of the dark picture was already painted by the unbelief and rebellion of these to whom he spoke. His sudden and exclamatory utterance, "*Hear this,*" indicates terrible forebodings.

PROCLAMATION

*"Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation."
[Joe.1:3]*

These words express the importance of spreading the news. All Israel should hear of what was coming. They also show that the serious message of the prophet would cover many generations. Oh, how much is couched in a few words which God speaks. It is exceedingly profitable to us, therefore, to read slowly, and read the same portion again and again, lest we miss much of His thought.

ALARM!

"That which the palmer worm 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." [Joe.1:4]

There is scarcely a more comprehensive verse, or more prolific picture in the Bible than this. It is simply unique; be not misled. These 4 insects, in their devouring raid, do not represent the Pentecostal movement, as one foolishly wrote some years ago. They picture the 4 World Empires in their successive devastations of Israel's land. In Joel 1:6 God says,

"A nation is come upon my land, strong and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion..."

Note too that in Joel 2:25, He calls those insects, *"My great Army, which I sent among you."* Observe their exact photograph in Joel 2:2-11, and compare it with the horde of locusts in Revelation 9:3-11. The final onslaught of that destructive host is still future. God will use them to chastise the Jews during the indescribable tribulation [Mat.24:21], and then severely punish them for it, as stated in Joel 3. The *"Lion and great lion"* of Joel 2:6 figure Babylon [Dan.7:4].

The following, from Fausset's Bible Encyclopedia, is both interesting and instructive:

"Each of the 4 species of locusts in Hebrew letters represents the exact number of years that each empire oppressed, until they had deprived the Jews of all their glory—(J.C.Reichart). Gazam, the palmerworm, represents the 50 years of Babylon's oppression, from the temple's destruction by Nebuchadnezzar (588 B.C.) to Babylon's overthrow by Cyrus (538 B.C.). Arbeh, the locust, represents Persia's 208 year's sway over the Jews, from 438 to 330 B.C, when Persia fell before Alexander the Great. Yelequ, the cankerworm, represents 140 years of the Greco-Macedonian oppression, from 330 to 190 B.C. when Antiochus, the Jew's great enemy, was defeated by the Roman, Lucius Scipio. Chasil, the caterpillar, represents the 108 years of the Roman oppression, beginning with their minion, Herod the Great, an Idumean stranger (38 B.C.) and ending 70 A.D. with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The whole period thus comprises that between the destruction of the 1st and the 2nd temple; and the calamities which befell the Jews by the 4 World Empires in that period are those precisely which produced the ruin under which they are still groaning, and form the theme of their Kinoth, or songs of lamentation."

EXTENT OF DEVASTATION

"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." [Joe.1:7]

The “vine” speaks of the 10 tribes and the “fig tree” of the Jews (see Isa.5:1-8 and Luk.13:6-7). God here speaks of the carrying away of the 10 tribes in 720 B.C. [2Ki.18] and of the 70 years captivity of the Jews from 606 to 536 B.C. [2Ki.24], as if already accomplished, because He knew that they would come to pass.

Joel 1:17-20 describes, in detail, the widespread desolation wrought by the treaders-down, the unproductiveness of the land, and the sad results. How dreadful are the consequences of unbelief and disobedience toward the Lord. Deserved and unavoidable chastisement is sure to ensue. Let us profit by Israel’s folly.

DEVASTATION DUE TO BACKSLIDING [JOE. 1:8-20]

EXHORTATION

“Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.” [Joe.1:8]

Joel 1:5 calls the drinkers of wine to awake from their intoxication, and “weep and howl” because of their worldliness. The people became engrossed with business and intoxicated with pleasure, which wine drinking figures. Paul wrote, “*Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.*” Joel here in 4 verses, portrays the deplorable condition in Palestine. Joel 1:12 is a summing up, and with Joel 1:16, gives the cause thereof:

- “*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*” [Joe.1:12].
- “*Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?*” [Joe.1:16].

The land lost its productiveness, the commodities of corn, wine and oil failed, and the trees ceased to bear fruit—all because “*joy is withered*” from the inhabitants. Do you marvel that John wrote centuries afterward saying, “*Beloved, I wish (pray) above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health even as they soul prospereth*” [3Jo.2]? In Joel’s days, that sad withering began. It rapidly increased till Jesus came when there were but a few who looked for the Messiah. Individuals received Him, and the Gift of the Holy Spirit; but the Jews, as a nation, rejected both.

APPLICATION

Has not Joel painted a picture of Christendom? What confronts us today? What means the fight between Modernism and Fundamentalism? Why are some ministers crying for an old time revival? Ah! Joy is withered from Christendom. Joy and gladness are cut off from the churches. “*The joy of the Lord is your strength,*” cried Nehemiah [Neh.8:10]. Jesus said, “*These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might be in you*” and that “*your joy might be full*” [Joh.15:11, 17:13]. Over 40 years ago, the Holy Spirit visited The Church, restoring the former power and joy of the Lord; but she refused Him. When the Spirit of joy sought entrance into pulpits and pews, the preachers and people said, “No, we do not want fanaticism and wildfire.” They rejected the Joy-bringer and the Joy-sustainer. No Baptist congregations today would allow Spurgeon to leap 2 feet high with the joy of the Lord; neither do they have constant revival of real new births, as he did.

Beloved saints, let us take warning. Welcome the dear Holy Spirit in His unlimited Pentecostal fullness. Fear not to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. Let the gifts of the Spirit be restored and displayed for God’s glory. Having received the Spirit, keep yielding to Him and learn the Word, so as to know how to be used by Him and how to “**walk in the Spirit.**”

If you want to lose out, be defeated and prove a failure, just yield to sadness. When grief comes, give up to it and hang your harp on the willow; quit singing about Jesus, quit praising the Lord; cool off your ardor for the Truth, and Satan will soon overpower you. If you seek to be nice and religiously polite and not so hilarious as formerly, your faith will weaken, your victory will subside, your physical frame will grow weary and the gate will presently be open for sickness to walk in and take possession. Oh, let not the joy wither. Keep the joy-bells pealing. Maintain the shout of triumph. Rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and the God of glory will never fail you, but He will thunder against your enemies and fight your battles for you.

MY TESTIMONY

I thank God over and over that He made me thirsty for the Holy Spirit. Despite the discouraging words of friends, He held the water trough before me until my thirst was quenched and my longing heart was satisfied. My mind was hot with thinking and study; my body was weary with ardent toil, and I yearned and cried for the “**rivers of living water**.” When I let go, threw up my hands in entire abandonment to God, threw off my preacher robe and bid goodbye to sectarianism, refusing to be bound by men and things, and let the Lord have absolute sway in my life, then He poured in unspeakable joy and gladness, which has never leaked out to this day. Over 40 years of joy, and glory too, has been my daily portion. Hallelujah! If he could, the devil would put a quietus on me as he has on some others. He would make me still, nice, proper, and mechanical, if he could; for I am naturally studious, deliberate and exact; but I refuse satanic opiates and cooling parlors. By God’s grace, I purpose to live in the torrid zone of Pentecostal power till Jesus comes.

Praise the Lord! He has brought me on victoriously and gladdened my heart wonderfully. He has shown me, not only by the Word, but by observation and experience, what it means to be filled practically with the Spirit, and to keep filling with the Spirit, and keep yielding to the Truth. He has made me to see the danger of compromise, especially with the religious world, and be willing to “**sit alone**” with Jeremiah, “*filled with indignation*” [Jer.15:17]. My fervent desire and purpose is to be among the “*living creatures*” whom Ezekiel said, “*ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning*,” and from whose midst, other linen-clothed messengers may fill their hands with “*coals of fire and scatter them*” near and far for God’s glory. God forbid that He should have to say, “*Gird yourselves and lament, ye priests; howl ye ministers of the altar*” [Joe.1:13]. We will never hear such a dismal exhortation if we go “*every one straight forward whither the Spirit goes*,” and turn not when we go; but the glory of the Lord will be lifted up and stand over the threshold of His house and the court will be filled with the brightness of His glory [Eze.1:12-13; 10:1, 4].

PROPHETIC AND PATHETIC.

“The meat offering and drink offering is cut off from the house of God; the priests, the Lord’s ministers mourn” [Joe.1:9, 13]

Evidently these words refer to the future from Joel’s day. The offerings were still kept up in his time. Hosea said, “*Israel shall abide for many days without a king and without a prince and without a sacrifice*” [Hos.3:4]. For 2,520 years, they have been deprived of a king, having rejected Jesus when He offered to return and reign [Act.7:55-56]. The offerings were discontinued no doubt from the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. These words about the offerings being cut off will have their final and most important fulfillment during the 7 years of coming judgment. Joel 1:15 indicates this clearly, which says, “*The day of the Lord is at hand*.” That is, the day of the Lord will be here, “*as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come*,” when the priests and ministers will lament,

mourn, weep, and howl on account of the cutting off of the offerings and sacrifices. Before that period of judgment will begin, the Jews will be at home in their land and will resume the sacrifices, because the real Priest, Jesus Christ, will be due to be received; but they will not yet receive Him. Hence, they will return to the shadows, and accept overtures from one who will prove false to them and cause the daily sacrifice to cease and also the meal offering [Dan.8:11, Dan.9:27]. Then they will weep and mourn, as Joel foretells.

DEVASTATION DESCRIBED [JOE.2:1-11]

"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." [Joe.2:1]

The first division of the book was covered previously. Let us note several preliminaries before studying this portion. The name **Joel** means "*Jehovah is God, or might.*" There is real significance in this and in the meaning of his father's name.

TIME

When Joel's prophecy will be fulfilled, the Antichrist will be in power, and the world will be wondering after him because he will show off himself as God. He will deceive the people and make them believe that he is the Son of God, the Anointed of God and the millennial king. But the truth is that the Lord Jesus Christ will be God. He will be the Jehovah for that day. In Isaiah 9:6, we read of the entire career of the Lord Jesus Christ, from the beginning of His 1st Advent to the end of His 2nd Advent:

- "*For unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given*" [Isa.9:6]. This speaks of Jesus' 1st Advent.
- "*His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*" These last statements of course refer to His 2nd Advent, which will cover a period of 1,000 years.

Bethuel, the father of Joel, means, "*persuaded, or enlarged of God.*" Israel will be persuaded that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, and He will be the Persuader. As a result of His persuasion, they will be enlarged. We will read of their enlargement later in this prophecy. I wish to speak again briefly of the time of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.

NO OVERLAPPING

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up the vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy." [Dan.9:24]

This verse was fulfilled within the first 7 years of this age. That extended from the crucifixion of Christ to the death of Stephen. Those first 7 years were the beginning of the millennial reign of Christ, if the Jews had received Him as their Messiah; but because they did not receive Him and because God knew that they would not receive Him, Daniel was moved to make another statement. Let us look at Daniel 9:26 to get the connection:

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood; and unto the end of the war, desolations are determined."

Notice that “*the prince*” is coming, a wicked prince. His ancestors would destroy Jerusalem. That people were the Romans, who, in 71 A.D. under Titus the Roman General, came up with a great army and besieged Jerusalem for 7 years. That connects immediately with the next verse in Daniel 9:

“And he shall confirm the covenant with the many for one week: and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even unto the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolator.”
[Dan.9:27]

Nearly 1,900 years intervene between Titus’ campaign and this verse. That Roman prince (who is doubtless here now) will make an agreement with the Jews for 7 years. But he will break that covenant in the middle of that 7 years by rejecting Jewish ceremonies.

- Daniel 9:24 speaks entirely and absolutely of blessing; no curse, no devastation, no destruction. It names 6 items altogether of blessing.
- In Daniel 9:27, we read of no blessing whatever. It speaks only of devastation, destruction and overspreading desolation.

Prophetic students make a serious mistake when they insist that Daniel 9:24 must be fulfilled again simultaneously with the Daniel 9:27; it is not so stated by Daniel at all.

- Daniel 9:24 does not need to be repeated as its 6 blessings only wait to be received by the Jews. Notice further...
- Daniel 9:24 was “*determined*,” whereas Daniel 9:27 was simple announced.
- Daniel 9:24 was fulfilled in the will of God. Daniel 9:27 will be fulfilled out of the will of God, because the blessings of Daniel 9:24 were not received by the people upon whom they were bestowed.
- The desolation of Daniel 9:27 will come inevitably as a chastisement upon the Jews, because they did not receive Christ as their Messiah, who brought the 6 blessings of Daniel 9:24.

When Jesus Christ will set up His throne in the heavens, the Gentile Times will end. The 2,520 years of Gentile dominion must cease when Jewish times begin. Two lines of kings cannot reign over the same domain at the same time. Gentile dominion was Divinely Decreed for 2,520 years, from 606 B.C. to 1933 A.D., and cannot go beyond that period without a herculean crash. Jesus Christ, the Divinely Anointed Jew of destiny, must begin to reign at the close of that period. Now because the nations will not accept His rulership, but continue their dominion, wholly by the power of the devil, the Lord must take the universal dominion from them by Divine Despotic Force; for they will be devilish usurpers of His domain. Unsparing and worldwide judgment is inevitable.

There will be no overlapping of Daniel 9:24 and 27 during those days. Because Israel refused the 6 blessings of Daniel 9:27 at the beginning of this age (which should have begun the Millennium) and accepts the overtures of “*the prince*” (the Roman), God will use the usurping powers to give them a final spanking during the days of “*darkness and gloominess*” of which Joel writes. Then the woes of Daniel 9:27 will culminate and end with the battle of Armageddon. Israel will receive Jesus as their national Deliverer and Savior, and the 6 blessings of Daniel 9:24 will flow in upon them without measure.

ALARM SOUNDED

"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." [Joe.2:1]

If the alarm was first given 2,700 years ago, how very necessary that it be sounded out today. That period was not "*nigh at hand*" in Joel's time; but in the time prefigured by his startling words it will indeed be at hand. That critical period is fast approaching. The Day of the Lord is imminent. In the broadest sense, the Day of the Lord, called "*The Lord's Day*" in Revelation 1:10, embraces the entire 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ. But Joel refers to a brief period of judgment, which will cover nearly the first 7 years of the Millennium.

DESCRIPTION OF THAT DAY

Joel here says,

"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." [Joe.2:2]

- Zephaniah 1:15-18 describes this "*day of darkness and of gloominess*" in more detail: "*That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of clouds and thick darkness.*"
- God says, "*I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust and their flesh shall be as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath*" [Zep.1:17-18a].
- Amos 5:18-20 speaks of the terribleness of that day upon those who call for the Day of the Lord with their lips only. It says, "*Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! To what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness and not light, as if a man did flee from a lion and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness and not light? Even very dark and no brightness in it?*"

We have cited only 3 of the many references to "*the great and dreadful day of the Lord*" [Mal.4:5]. The phrase "*day of the Lord*," occurs 24 times¹ in the Old Testament. It is found in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Lamentations, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Zephaniah, Zechariah, and Malachi. It seems that more space is given in the Scriptures to the happenings of the first 7 years of the Millennium than to any other subject.

The phrase, "*that day*," referring to the day of the Lord, occurs scores of times. You will not believe me until you search the Word along this line. Consider that the whole world will be arrayed against Jesus Christ in that day. Satan will then have his final swing of 42 months on earth. As a nation, the Jews will receive the Antichrist. The Gentile nations allied as one grand empire will wonder "*after the beast*," the Antichrist [Rev.13:3]. At the beginning of the 7 years, many Christians will be perched on the fences of indifference, half-heartedness, uncertainty, and selfishness, even where they are now; hence, they will not know when the Lord's dominion really will begin, and will not be prepared for translation out of this terrible scene. The Jews' rejection of Christ, the Gentiles' rebellion and usurpation against Him, and the Christians' indifference to His place and honor combine to make a great and terrible day.

¹ Isa.2:12; Isa.13:6, 9; Isa.34:8; Jer.46:10; Lam.2:22; Eze.13:5; Eze.30:3; Joe.1:15; Joe.2:1, 11, 31; Joe.3:14; Amo.5:18; Amo.5:20; Oba.1:15; Zep.1:7-8, 14, 18; Zep.2:2-3; Zec.14:1; and Mal.4:5.

Oh, let us be in the perfect, glorious will of God by keeping absolutely surrendered to Jesus now, every day, every hour, and thus be prepared to ascend to meet the Lord in the air, when He blows the trumpet of translation. We belong in His perfect will now. We will belong in heaven when that day dawns, even when the Millennium begins. By God's grace, we may be "*accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man*" [Luk.21:36].

I repeat, that the great majority of The Church will be in some considerable measure out of God's perfect will at the beginning of those 7 years. That sad fact will help to pave the way for Joel's "*great and terrible day of the Lord*." The whole Church ought to be of Philadelphian character, that is, without blame before the Lord. All should be full overcomers. Our Lord says to all Philadelphia saints, "*Because thou hast kept the Word of my patience, I also will keep thee from* (literally...out of) *the hour of temptation that is coming on all the world to try them that dwell on the earth*" [Rev.3:10]. That hour of temptation will begin when Gentile dominion ends and when Christ's dominion commences. It will continue nearly 7 years and will be culminated by the battle of Armageddon. Philadelphia saints will be kept out of that hour of temptation by translation. Other saints will pass into it and "*come out of*" it [Rev.7:14] before the "*great tribulation*" of Matthew 24:21 begins. The "*hour of temptation*" [Rev.3:10, Rev.7:14] will be worldwide and affect The Church, "*The great tribulation*" [Mat.24] is "*Jacob's time of trouble*" [Jer.30:7] and will especially affect the Jews in Palestine. Keep these 2 facts distinct. All present day believers should live so as to escape the former. They should live in preparation for translation any moment. But by their fruits we know that multitudes are not so living. Their love for pleasure, or fame, or place betrays them. Their greed for wealth and their avaricious hoarding it up betrays them. Hear the thousands of eagles screaming in the safety vaults of saved people. Hear the sad groans of houses and lands deeded to those who sometimes speak of the advent of Jesus. Do not tell me that such possessors of wealth are looking for Jesus to come, or that they are prepared for His coming. They are talking about and preparing for old age. Oh, how few believers really believe the Bible.

TERROR OF THE DEVASTATORS

Joel declares that they will be "*a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any after it, to the years of many generations*" [Joe.2:2]. This cannot refer to the siege of the Romans against Jerusalem in 70 A.D., or to any Divine Visitation before then, because it speaks expressly of "*the day of the Lord*." The "*the day of the Lord*" suggests Satan's assembled hosts at the end of the Millennium [Rev.20:7-11].

"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." [Joe.2:3]

Today, Palestine is being improved by the expenditure of immense sums of money. Houses are being built. Irrigation devices are being planted to make the land productive. The Zionist movement would usher in millennial prosperity if it could. The devastating nations will find a fat field before them indeed. But oh, how terrible and unsparing the waste and desolation that is soon to come. Could we expect anything less? In that day, God will gather all nations to battle before Jerusalem [Zec.14]. "*The holy city shall the Gentiles tread under foot for forty and two months*" [Rev.11:2]. "*Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision*" [Joe.3:14]. One's pencil fails to picture the overspreading hordes in the Holy land in that day.

APPEARANCE OF THE DEVASTATORS

Joel's portrayal of them is quite similar to John's painting in Revelation 8. They are like...

"The appearance of horses, and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array." [Joe.2:4-5]

These graphic utterances suggest the simultaneous movement of earth-planes and aeroplanes in the same direction and for the same purpose—utter devastation. Power, speed, height, flight, daring endurance, unitedness, and persistence unto perfection will characterize that warring host. Now this may seem strange that God calls them *"His army, His camp"* [Joe.2:11]. Although Satan will equip that host and move them to assemble there; yet, God will use them to chastise His ancient people, the Jews (see Zep.1:17).

"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." [Joe.2:10]

The tribulation of the Jews will be ended by the consummation of that great and terrible day of the Lord, even as Matthew 24:29 indicates. Isaiah 13:6-11 foretells that awful day. He announces one important purpose of it concerning Palestine, saying, *"He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it"* [Isa.13:9]. Those Jews, who will accept the Antichrist and reject the true Messiah, will be overthrown and perish. A remnant will be miraculously preserved and delivered by Divine Intervention. The convulsions of nature in the heavens and on the earth beggar description.

There will be indescribable death struggles between nations and nations. Hitherto unknown and unused war implements in earth and sea and sky will be employed. The battle of Armageddon will rage. Devil-possessed men will not only fight one another; but they will be arrayed with thrice heated hatred against Jehovah and His Anointed One. No doubt some aeroplanes will attempt untried upward flights and endeavor to destroy the glorified saints. But the Lord will descend with His mighty host of holy ones and overthrow all His foes with glorious triumph. Hallelujah!

DEVASTATION REVERSED [JOE.2:12-3:21]

"Therefore, also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning: 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." [Joe.2:12-13]

Joel 2:12-17 indicates that God will bring the dire devastations to an end, upon Israel's repentance. Hence, they will be fulfilled within the 7th year of the "week" of worldwide trial.

"Turn ye," is Jehovah's earnest exhortation, as of a loving father to his wayward children. That was always His tender attitude toward His ancient people after he had divorced them. Hosea 13:9 expresses His deep, plaintive feelings, He exclaims, *"O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help."* Their repentance must be *"with all your heart."* An outward, apparent turning will not suffice. Hence, He says, *"Rend your heart, and not your garments."* We have witnessed superficial, make-believe repentance. It sheds tears, rolls on the floor, and tears its raiment; but it has no depth and does not last. It turns seemingly, because it was caught in a wrong, or because it wants to be delivered from trouble. When the heart is actually torn with sorrow because of departure from the Lord, there are abiding results; for He is drawn on the scene thereby and accepts those who turn to Him.

HOPE

"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?" [Joe.2:14]

Joel was not in doubt concerning God's mercy. He knew what is written in Deuteronomy 4:29-30, where Moses said, *"In the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God and shalt be obedient unto His voice, thou shalt find Him."* Peter declares, that *"the Lord is not slack concerning His promises as some men count slackness"* [2Pe.3:9].

Some people are perplexed about God repenting. It is not as if He had done wrong; for He cannot do evil. He does not even change His mind; but His attitude toward men is changed when they turn from their evil ways unto Him. Note the references from Genesis 6:6, and study especially Isaiah 63:14. You will see that God never swerved from His purpose of cutting off the old creation and of bringing in a new creation. His *"repenting,"* or *"repenting not,"* hinged on that purpose.

Finally, observe, that whatever He did it was *"to make Himself a glorious name"* [Isa.63:14]. That is His ultimate object in showing mercy to Israel and replacing them in the promised land.

OFFERINGS

"A meat offering and a drink offering," the blessing which Joel hoped the Lord would grant is yet future (see our notes on Joe.1:9, 13). Israel will resume their sacrifices, foreshadowing their hope of the coming of the Messiah. God will show His favor temporarily by accepting them. Presently, the Lord will reveal Himself to them from the skies, and bless them as indicated in Joel 2:18-20.

A GREAT REVIVAL DUE

"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." [Joe.2:16]

The exhortations of the preceding verses will be heeded. Young and old, great and small, will assemble in Jerusalem and cry out to God. The crushing heel of the nations will drive the Jews to the Lord. Psalm 85 will be the voice of their entreaty: *"Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?"* [Psa.85:6]. With fervent expectation, the awakened prophets will exclaim, *"Come and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn and He will heal us. He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After 2 days (2,000 years will have passed), will He revive us. In the third day (at the beginning of the Millennium), He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight"* [Hos.6:1-3].

HOW TO PRECIPITATE A REVIVAL

"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?" [Joe.2:17]

It appears that the temple will be rebuilt between now and that time, probably not the one described in Ezekiel 40 (see Isa.60:10 and Zec.1:16). And yet, will not Daniel 9:25 have another fulfillment? *"The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."* The prayer of the priests will be, *"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?"* That will be the time of the treading

under foot of Jerusalem for 3½ years [Rev.11:1-2]. It will be the period of “*Jacob’s trouble*” [Jer.30:7], the “great tribulation” which there has been none greater [Mat.24:21-22]. Oh, will there not be a dire need of repentance and crying out to the living God? A remnant will weep and wail, lament and mourn. Yes, it is the remnant always who saves the situation by their bitter tears and dying groans. They will refuse the rulership of Antichrist. He is not Israel’s Messiah and King. Infidels will yell mockingly, saying, “Where is the God of the Jews?” Then “*He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath and vex them in His sore displeasure*” [Psa.2:4-5] (see also Pro.1:24-32). The proud and haughty shall be humbled to dust and destruction; but the Jews, who shall humble themselves before Almighty God, will be exalted forever.

DELIVERANCE DUE

“Then will the Lord be jealous for His land and pity His people.” [Joe.2:18]

This is the first of 7 potent points in this portion. God will answer the prayers of His oppressed people and rise to their rescue. He will bring their sorrow to an end suddenly. Jesus said, “And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake, those days shall be shortened” [Mat.24:22]. They will fall short 250 days of the 7 years that Satan purposes to dominate men and destroy the children of God. Joel begins this portion by speaking of God’s blessing upon the land. The deliverance of Israel, related by other prophets, is implied.

REPROACH REMOVED

“Yea, the Lord will answer 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.” [Joe.2:19]

The Jews are known to be thrifty. They make and lay up money where others fail. To be rag and bottle gatherers is indeed a reproach to them—a hiss and a byword among the Gentiles. The most humiliating thing that could befall them is that their land should be barren. It is a stinging pain for a Jew to hear a Gentile say of him, “He is no good. He cannot make a living.” Therefore, what a day that will be when the whole country will again be productive. How Israel will rejoice, especially when they turn to the Lord and acknowledge Jesus Christ to be their Messiah and King. Then the tables will be turned. Then it will be the time for the Gentiles to blush; for Jehovah will be on the side of Israel. They will again be the chief folk on earth. Their 3 leading commodities—corn, wine and oil (food, intoxicant, and lubricant) will abound; there will be an ample supply.

REVENGE RETURNED

“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 savor shall come up, because he hath done great things.” [Joe.2:20]

See notes on Joel 1:4. Primarily, the army of the north refers to the Syrians; but other nations will be gathered at the gates of Jerusalem in that awful day (compare Jer.1:14-15 with Eze.38:1-6). Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya will be there. “*Gomer and all his lands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters and all his lands*” [Eze.38:6]. Observe what God says to Gog, “*and I will turn thee back and put hooks in thy jaws*” [Eze.38:4] (read Eze.38-39). Evidently the countries east from Palestine will be desolate (see Jer.50:39-40, Jer.51:42-43).

“*The east sea*” refers to the Caspian Sea, which is north of Persia and east from Russia.

“*The utmost sea*,” also called The Great Sea, is the Mediterranean, which borders Palestine on the west.

“*His stink shall come up and ill savor shall come up.*” The odor of the egregious defeat of Israel’s foes will ascend before them like the nauseating, steaming stench of a huge manure pile. The reproach will be turned upon them forever, “*because he hath done great things*” (“*magnified to do great things*” margin). Satan will make Gog “*think an evil thought*” (*conceive a mischievous purpose*) to overrun and despoil the holy land [Eze.38:10]. But Jehovah will know it, and suddenly discomfit him and all his bloodthirsty horde.

PROSPERITY PLEDGED

“Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things. 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.” [Joe.2:21-22]

How wonderful! God’s eyes are upon the holy land to renew its fertility and upon the animals to put an end to their groans and ferocity [Rom.8:21, Isa.11:6-9]. Everything everywhere in that region will abound with life and health and prosperity. The orchards will blossom and bloom and be fruitful. The vineyards will be green and vines laden with the most luscious grapes. The whole nation of Israel will be overwhelmed with prosperity, as illustrated by the fruitfulness of the vine and fig tree. The prophet’s words of encouragement continue, as he speaks now to the people.

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion and rejoice in the Lord your God.” [Joe.2:23a]

As if to say,

“You have not brought all this about by your own efforts. Your wealth has not purchased this sudden outburst of plenty; neither have you merited it by your goodness. My grace, wisdom, and might, because of my covenant with our fathers, have wrought this for you.”

God had promised the land to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for an everlasting possession, saying also, “*And I will be their God*” [Gen.17:8]. Then follows the proof of it.

THE RAINS RESTORED

“For He hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain (rains), the former rain and the latter rain in (as at) the first. And the floors shall be full of wheat and fats (vats) shall overflow with wine and oil.” [Joe.2:23b-24]

Some basic facts must be noted in order to understand these words easily and clearly. First, Joel wrote as if “*the day of the Lord*” were in sight (see Joe.1:15, Joe.2:11, Joe.3). He does not recognize the 1st Advent of Christ and this Church Period. He beholds only Israel’s past plenty, while obedient under Joshua, and later, and then their poverty and the withholding of the rains because of their disobedience. The withholding of the rains and the nearness of the day of the Lord stirred him up to exhort them to repentance.

Before proceeding, let the student observe that 3 Hebrew words in particular are used with reference to the rains in Palestine.

- **MOREH**, the early sprinkling rain, translated, “*the first, the former, the early rain*,” which falls in October.
- **MALQOSH**, the gathered rain, translated, “*the latter rain*,” which falls in March.
- And **GESHEM**, the heavy, drenching rains, which include the former and the latter. **GESHEM** is always plural, and should be so translated as in Leviticus 26:4 [RV]. In Jeremiah 3:3, Ezekiel 34:26, and Zechariah 10:1, **GESHEM** is translated “*showers*.”

In our text in Joel, it is “*the rain*” (literally...“*rains*”). Therefore, we may paraphrase the verse thus:

“For He hath given you moreh, the early, sprinkling rain, in just measure [RV]; and He will cause to come down for you geshem, the showers, that is, both moreh, the early sprinkling rain, and malqosh, the latter, or gathered rain, as at the first, when Joshua led Israel into Canaan.”

4 RAIN EPOCHS

It is very important to know that 4 distinct stages (epochs) are recorded concerning Israel and their rains.

- **First** was **THE ORIGINAL PROMISE**. God said to Israel, “*If ye walk in my commandments and do them, I will give you rains (geshem) in their season; and the land shall yield her increase and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit*” [Lev.26:3-4 RV] (compare also Deu.11:14-15). That promise was most certainly fulfilled, beginning under Joshua’s dominion. Note Ezra 10:9-13 and also Song of Solomon 2:11-12, “*For lo, the winter is past; the rain (geshem, rains) is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth.*” Joel remembered the days of prosperity, saying, “*The land is as the garden of Eden before*” the devastators [Joe.2:3]. And the phrase, “*in the first*” [Joe.2:23] refers back to that time. The word **month** is not in the Hebrew.
- **Second** was the **PERIOD OF SCARCITY AND DROUGHT**, which Joel deplors [Joe.1:10-20] (study also Jer.3:1-3 and Jer.5:24). Malachi 3:10 implies that time of barrenness of the land and promises plenty upon their repentance.
- **Third** the **RAINS FELL AND PLENTY WAS RESTORED** at the 1st Advent of Jesus. This is exactly what Joel’s words mean, “*He hath given you the former rain (moreh) moderately*” (“*in just measure*” RV). This is also implied by such citations as James 5:7, Acts 4:34-37, and Acts 11:28 with Acts 3:19, which the student may examine. The margin reads, “*He hath given you a Teacher of righteousness*,” which refers to Jesus Christ. How marvelous that the Hebrew word **MOREH** should mean both the spiritual Blessor and the material blessings. Indeed, everything depends upon Christ. All God’s plans and purposes are wrapped up in His Son. “*And He is before all things and by Him all things consist (hold together)*” [Col.1:17]. His coming brought spiritual and material plenty. “*It is time to seek the Lord till He come and rain righteousness upon you*” [Hos.10:12]. Job is a beautiful type of Christ at this point. He said, of the people, “*And they waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain*” [Job 29:23]

Joel and his contemporaries had only 1 Advent of the Messiah in mind, even that which is yet future; but God saw much more. Therefore, Joel’s declaration “*He hath given you the former rain moderately*,” was fulfilled by the Advent of Jesus Christ as the Teacher of righteousness in the New Testament. He is called “*a Teacher come from God*” [Joh.3:2]. The

Greek word, translated **teach**, or **teacher**, occurs over a 100 times with reference to Jesus. The Greek term rendered **teacher** is translated “*Master*” nearly 50 times. The word **teach** is used of the Holy Spirit only once in John 14:26; but He is nowhere called a teacher. Hence, the phrase, “*for he hath given you the former rain* (teacher of righteousness) *moderately*” in Joel 2:23 cannot refer to Him.

Finally, we come to the...**Fourth** stage of **ISRAEL AND OF THE RAINS ON THEIR LAND**. This is yet future. Joel continues by saying, “*And He will cause to come down for you the rain (geshem, rains or showers) the former rain and the latter rain as at the first.*” What is said of David, the king’s son, refers finally to Jesus: “*He shall come down like a rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth*” [Psa.72:1, 6]. Hosea 6:3 confirms this view, “*Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.*”

“*His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain (geshem, rains); as the latter rain that watereth the earth*” [RV]. These citations speak of the Lord’s 2nd Advent in particular. Hosea says, “*After two days* (2,000 years, as 2Pe.3:8 explains), *will He revive us. In the third day* (the Millennium) *He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight.*” He agrees with Joel’s 2nd, or prophetic statement. From Hosea until Jesus returns will be more than 2,700 years. Hence, in his 3rd dispensational day, Israel will be revived and their land will receive copious showers, the early and later rains, and will abound in fruitage. Zechariah speaks of the same hopeful days, exhorting his people to “*Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain*” [Zec.10:1] with the promise of the pent-up heavy rains (**geshem**) and a plentiful harvest. Without knowing it, in Verse 23, Joel announced both advents of Jesus.

“*In the first month.*” Let us look at this perplexing phrase. This cannot mean that all the rains will be crowded into the 1st month. In fact, the word **month** is not in the Hebrew, nor is it implied by the adjective, “*first.*” The Revised Version reads “*at the first month.*” Now supply “*as*” before “*at,*” so that it reads, “*As at the first,*” then our problem is solved. Note how often “*as*” is used in Job 29:23, Psa.72:6, and Hos.6:3. This is evidently the meaning. When the Lord comes again, the land will be restored to its original productiveness; for the rains will fall upon it as copiously as they did “*at the first,*” or when Israel first dwelt therein, before the showers were withheld because of Israel’s sins. The following 4 verses prove this to be the meaning. Read them and rejoice.

“And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil. 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. 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. 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.”
[Joe.2:24-27]

“*And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten*” (see notes on Joe.1:4). The unwordable devastation of the nations will be ended suddenly by Divine Interference at the coming of Jesus. Their ravages will be followed by marvelous prosperity. The land will be restored to its former fruitfulness. Hence, these gracious words of hope and comfort, “*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.*” The Gentiles will never again have occasion to reproach the Jews on account of God’s judgment upon them. They will no longer be a hiss and a byword among the nations. They will dwell in their own land and be safe forever.

REVELATION RENEWED

"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." [Joe.2:27]

- *"And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it"* [Isa.40:5].
- *"So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel"* [Eze.39:7].
- *"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God. We have waited for Him and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him. We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation"* [Isa.25:9].

The Jews as a people will accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah and King. He will overthrow the Antichrist and save them. Hence, again, Joel says, *"And my people shall never be ashamed."*

Grace Anthem

Faith triumphant! Blessed victory!
Every barrier swept away.
Heaven descending; joy and fullness;
Dawn of everlasting Day! Jesus only—
Him to love and Him obey.

PENTECOST PROMISED [JOE.2:28-32]

This portion contains the culmination of the swallowing up of the devastation. The oft-promised spiritual showers are here foretold. The material rains were only reminders and symbols of the far greater spiritual *"floods upon the dry ground"* [Isa.44:3]. Joel beheld the pouring out of the Spirit just before the Day of the Lord, the day of darkness, gloominess and judgment. But Peter, by Divine Inspiration, declares Joel's prophecy partly fulfilled in his day. Of course Peter expected the foretold day of darkness to follow the advent of the Spirit, even as Joel did. But he understood differently when he wrote his 2nd epistle [2Pe.3:8].

There are 3 points of difference between these 2 men's words although they both spoke by and concerning the same Holy Spirit.

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh."</i> [Joe.2:28a] | <i>"And it shall come to pass ('and it shall be' RV) in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh."</i> [Act.2:17a, spoken by Peter] |
|---|---|

The **1ST POINT** is that Joel said, *"Afterward,"* that is, after all that is recorded in Joel 1, Joel 2:1-27, and Joel 3:

- After the treading down of the city by the nations and the consequent losses;
- After the overthrow of those nations and the restoration of fruitfulness and plenty in the land;

- even after what we shall read in Joel 3; because the fullest measure of the Spirit's presence and power in Palestine will follow the battle of Armageddon.

Therefore, Peter could not say, "Afterward," but "*in the last days*" (see our studies in Act.2).

This leads us to the **3RD POINT** in which Peter differs from Joel. Peter writes that thus "*saith God, I will pour out of* (Greek: **ΑΠΟ**) *my Spirit.*" At the beginning, Pentecost was only an earnest of the "*floods upon the dry ground*" [Isa.44:1-4], the "*showers of blessings*" [Eze.34:26]. The Spirit has not yet been poured out upon all flesh. The mighty visitation of the Holy Spirit, of the past 46 years is a renewal of the first showers of Pentecost as an earnest of the final and complete fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. Peter's words, "*In the last days,*" include the present Church Age and the coming Millennial Age. Time compassed by 2 great periods, the first days of the period before Christ came, and "*the last days,*" the period since He came. These are expressed by the 2 calendar countings: A.M. (Anno Mundi, in the year of the world) and A.D. (Anno Domini, in the year of our Lord). Hosea [Hos.6:1-3] and Peter [2Pe.3:8] tell us that there are 3 last dispensational days. But we want to impress upon our minds, that the final Pentecost will be far more wonderful and powerful than the first, or the present, effusion of the Spirit. By means of the early spiritual rain, the 1st Advent of Christ and the Holy Spirit, God has been "*visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name*" [Act.15:14]. There was only a sprinkling of salvation for the Jews, because they refused the Messiah nationally. But at Christ's 2nd Advent, and the final outpouring of the Spirit, the great worldwide revival among Jews and Gentiles, will take place.

"After this (after this Church Age) I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."
[Act.15:16-17]

Those will be halcyon days for both Jews and Gentiles. The golden age will then be here.

The **2ND POINT** in which Peter's words differ from Joel, is this. Peter added, "*Saith God,*" the emphatic Greek order for **God saith**. Peter sought to impress his hearers, that he was not simply quoting Joel's words, but the words of God. They were responsible to accept the prophecy as Divine. Are we not responsible to accept them as Divine? Were not Peter's words also the voice of Jehovah? Not one prophetic student denies that we are in the last days. Then, how can men deliberately denounce the present, effective, phenomenal working of God and call it fanatical and devilish? What happened in the beginning of the last days? How can Acts 15:17 be fulfilled in the closing days except by a repetition, or a continuation, of the same miraculous phenomena of the first last days? If the phenomena in Peter's day were the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy in any measure, what else can similar supernatural phenomena be today if not another fulfillment of Joel's prophecy? How dare men garble the Scriptures by introducing substitute for Jehovah's own sovereign Gift and His miraculous accompaniments? How dare men admit the miraculous of the early "*last days,*" and insist that we can be anointed with the Holy Spirit and power in the "*last days*" **without the** Spirit's own phenomenal sign and without the works of power that prove His presence? Peter exclaimed, "*This is THAT which was spoken by the prophet Joel?*" [Act.2:16]. Certainly, we need to be able to say of our anointing, or baptism, as some term it, this is **THAT** which was spoken by Joel and enjoyed by Peter. Anything less is spurious, being a vain imitation. Not only did God say, but He "*saith.*" He has continued to say, "*This is that*" for lo, these 1,900 years. How foolish are those who turn a deaf ear to His voice. But how blest and victorious and useful and how pleasing to Him, are those who believe and heed His words.

Joel's "afterward" has therefore already come to pass in a measure. To some extent, the material rains have been falling in Palestine for about 25 years. Over 40 years ago, the Holy Spirit began to manifest His mighty power in signs and wonders. People became filled with the Holy Spirit, receiving the distinctive supernatural sign of their anointing. Our God be praised! These phenomena continue; for Jesus said, "*These signs shall follow them that believe*" [Mar.16:16-17], and some saints still believe God is preparing The Church for translation; for it is "*the day of His preparation*" [Nah.2:3]. The world is being warned of certain judgment, and the Jews are being made ready to receive Christ as their Messiah and King, although they may not realize it.

TRIBULATION DAYS

"And I will show wonders in the heavens and the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come." [Joe.2:30-31]

Revelation 8 and 9 record somewhat in detail the things here mentioned by Joel. They will likely begin before and continue throughout the time of **Jacob's Trouble**, the Great Tribulation upon the Jews. "*The great and terrible day of the Lord*" will follow; for Jesus said, "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened*" [Mat.24:29]. The Battle of Armageddon will culminate and end The Tribulation days. It seems that the darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars and the shaking of the heavens will be occasioned by that battle, or at least occur at that time. All the terrific and indescribable commotions in the sky and on earth for that brief time, Joel foresaw as "*great*" and "*terrible*."

"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." [Joe 2:32]

"*The remnant*" of Jews shall be delivered during those days.

The prophecy of the 2 witnesses [Rev.11] will be effectual. Some of their hearers will cry out to Jehovah and believe on Jesus and be saved from their sins and "*endure unto the end*" of The Tribulation. "*The same shall be saved*" miraculously from physical death; for those days will be shortened by sovereign Divine Intervention [Mat.24:13, 22].

As we read in Joel 3:1, God says, "*I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem*" (see also Mic.4:6-7). Observe that Peter quotes only part of this last verse, "*And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved*" [Act.2:21], because The Tribulation could not come within the first 7 years of the Spirit's advent. Only Daniel 9:24, with its half dozen proffered blessings, could be fulfilled. Daniel 9:27, a week, (7 years) of trial and judgment, will occupy the opening of the Millennium, because Israel, as a nation, did not accept those 6 blessings in the beginning; but that week will be shortened 250 days by the Lord's mighty hand. "*And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened*" [Mat.24:22].

DEVASTATORS JUDGED [JOE.3:1-16A]

TIME OF THE JUDGMENT

"For behold in those days and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem." [Joe.3:1]

The fulfillment of this portion will occur during the 7 years of trouble mentioned in Daniel 9:27, called by some “The last week of Daniel.” It is termed “*the hour of temptation* (literally...“*trial*”) *which shall come upon all the world*” [Rev.3:10]. Within that time, the Lord will deliver Israel out of their long drawn-out captivity.

DEVASTATORS ASSEMBLED

“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.” [Joe.3:2]

Zechariah 14 says that God will gather all the nations against Jerusalem at that time. The valley of Jehoshaphat is east of Jerusalem, between it and the Mount of Olives. That international gathering will cover a small part of the 3½ years; “*for the holy city shall they tread under foot forty-two months*” [Rev.11:2]. It will be Jehovah’s final chastisement of His ancient people which would be averted if they would have accepted Christ nearly 3 years before instead of accepting a covenant with an enemy of His. But the Lord will also plead for them, not by gentle, persuasive words, but with fire, the sword, pestilence, hailstones, and brimstone [Isa.66:16, Eze.38:22]. The phrase, “*all nations*,” evidently includes especially the 2 contending great leagues of nations, the Western (European) Confederacy, dominated by the Antichrist, and the Northern confederacy, headed by Gog [Eze.38:3]. These 2 leagues will be bitterly opposed to each other. Study about “*the king*,” the Antichrist, and “*the king of the north*” in Daniel 11:36, 40, 44-45.

RETRIBUTION RENDERED

“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.” [Joe.3:4]

Tyre and Sidon, being part of the Roman Empire, were then representative of the Western League. Ostensibly, they will protect the Jews from the onslaughts of the northern army [Eze.38:3-12], and thereby claim to do the Lord a great favor. But, in reality they will be seeking the riches of that land, even as the Northern confederacy will be doing at that time. They will be usurping God’s place, as the Protector of His people; for He will be on His throne. Thus, they will incur His just wrath. He will not forget the cruelty of the 4 world powers against Israel, before Christ came, namely, the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires (compare Joe.3:6 with 2Kg.17, 24-25). God will deliver His people from the slavery of the nations. Not only so; but He will punish the nations for their oppression of His people. This is the meaning of Joel 3:7:

“Behold I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompence upon your own heads.”

A DIVINE CHALLENGE

“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: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. 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. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down: for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great.” [Joe.3:9-13]

At that time, Jesus Christ will be on His millennial throne. He will be the Authorized Ruler; but the nations will be united against Him. He will know their wicked counsel and purpose [Psa.2:2]. They imagine a vain thing; namely, that they can control all the world and get possession of the holy land, the home of the Jew. Therefore, they gather around Jerusalem. The Western and Northern confederacies will be in hot contention against each other. Hence, the Lord utters the 7-fold challenge of these 5 verses. He bids all the nations to make the fullest and most powerful preparation. He challenges the utmost wisdom and skill of their mightiest men. He invites their ships, both air and sea, as well as their land tanks. And he exclaims, *"There will I sit to judge all the heathen (nations) round about."*

JUST JUDGMENT EXECUTED

When the hatred and rage of the nations are at their height, and their cup of iniquity is full, the Lord shall bring down His mighty ones and deliver Israel: *"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels (the glorified saints), in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power"* [2Th.1:7-9].

"Multitudes in the valley of decision (concision, threshing—margin); for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision" [Joe.3:14]

That is, in the valley of cutting off by just judgment. The time of that assemblage of the nations is plainly the **Day of the Lord**. His judgment of them will culminate with the Battle of Armageddon, which will extend to about 60 miles north, from Jerusalem in the valley of Megiddo.

SIGNS IN HEAVEN

"The sun and the moon shall be darkened and the stars shall withdraw their shining." [Joe.3:15]

Jesus declared that the darkening of the sun and moon should immediately follow Israel's time of tribulation [Mat.24:29]. Joel 2:31 shows that it occurs *"before the great and the terrible (notable) day of the Lord."* Daniel 7:12 seems to come in here. That day is described in Zechariah 14 thus:

"The light shall not be with brightness and with gloom; but it shall be one day which is known unto the Lord; not day and not night." [Zec.14:6-7 RV]

It will be 75 days long (see our chart on Revelation). Because of His mighty power...

"The Lord shall roar out of Zion" (AS A LION ROARS OVER ITS PREY) in triumph over His conquered foes, "and utter His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake." [Joe.3:16a]

The whole world will lie defeated at His feet, and begin to acknowledge Him as *"King of kings and Lord of lords"* [Rev.19:16].

DEVASTATION FOLLOWED BY MILLENNIAL GLORY [JOE.3:16B-21]

"But the Lord will be the hope (or harbor) of His people and the strength of the children of Israel." [Joe.3:16b]

He will not roar against His own. He will appear to their mighty deliverance and great delight. That will be the beginning of the golden age. Israel will know then that Jesus is the Lord their God dwelling in Zion. Neither the Arabs, nor any other foreigner will have quarters there.

PROSPERITY WILL PREVAIL

"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 of the house of the Lord and shall water the valley of Shittim." [Joe.3:18]

The vineyard will be unspeakably productive. Cattle and goats will roam the forests and hills. The rains (**geshem** and **moreh**), promised in Leviticus 26:4 and Deuteronomy 11:14, will fall very copiously and fill all the river beds with fresh water.

We read of the same "*fountain*" in Psalm 46:4 and Ezekiel 47. In Revelation 22:1 we read of a stream "*proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb*" in the heavenly city, which corresponds with the one of which Joel writes. The stream below is the symbol and result of the One on high, which is the Holy Spirit.

Shittim is a place in Moab east of the Salt Sea. Israel camped there just before crossing Jordan, and from there Joshua sent 2 spies to view Jericho [Jos.2:1, Jos.3:1]. The shittim wood (acacia tree) grew there. It is likely somewhat barren now; but will be fertile and productive during the Millennium.

Egypt and Edom will be desolate places because of their ill treatment of God's people in the past. God does not forget the sore bondage that Jacob endured in Egypt over 4,000 years ago, nor the selfishness and cruelty of the Edomites against them on their way to the promised land [Joe.3:19].

FINAL WORD OF JOEL

"But Judah shall dwell forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation" [Joe.3:20]

One thousand years of safety, peace, and plenty lie just ahead for God's ancient people, who suffered losses and crosses, hardships and persecution. They shall continue in their own land throughout eternity. God says,

"For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed; for the Lord dwelleth in Zion." [Joe.3:21]

The many plagues and diseases that have fallen upon humanity will be gone forever. Israel will not suffer from scabs, scurvy, and leprosy; for the Lord will purify their blood. No doctors and druggists will be needed then; for where the Lord shall dwell, all will be forever well.

THE OVERCOMER

I have fought a good fight
By the day and the night,
As I stood in the front of the line.
So I lay down my sword—
That Divine, holy Word;
For I know that the crown is now mine.

I have finished the race
By the power of grace,
Which enabled me so well to run.
I have passed every test,
And now enter the rest,
That is mine in God's well-beloved Son.

I have found His Word treasure,
His will all my pleasure,
As I passed by the discerning eye
Of the Judge on His throne;
And I hold as my own

-- V --