

(Section 6) THE GLORY – AT LAST!

Section 5 ended once again in gloom with the “*great and terrible day of the LORD*”. Yes there will be deliverance in Jerusalem for the “*remnant whom the Lord would call*” (Joel 2:31,32) but for the world, gloom thicker than ever. This will block out the “*sun of righteousness*” and bring on God’s 7 thunder judgments (Rev. 10:3,4). These thunder judgments play a part in Joel chapter 3 but they are sealed and need first to be opened and read. Being sealed means we can't read them like we do the seals, trumpets, and vials. This however doesn't mean we can't search them out.

- *Revelation 10:3 And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. 4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.*

There are three important clues to the seven thunders, namely: **time, order, and place**. Their **TIMING** is given in Rev. 10:1-4 as being after the cry of the rainbow angel; therefore they occur **after** Armageddon and the mid-heaven gospel proclamation by the resurrected saints. Their **ORDER** for the first four is suggested by the common pattern upon: **earth, sea, water, and sun**. This pattern is used in the first four trumpets in Revelation 8:1-12 and the first four vials in Revelation 16:1-9. Also of support between Revelations 8 & 10 in Revelation 10, the 7 Thunders occur even though the thunders take place after the vials. Further we also have the **PLACE: earth, sea, water, and sun**. From all this the following interpretation is made:

Order and Place	Trumpets	Vials
Earth	Revelation 8:7	Revelations 16:2
Sea	Revelation 8:8	Revelations 16:3
Waters	Revelation 8:10	Revelations 16:4
Sun	Revelations 8:12	Revelations 16:8

- **First thunder:** God’s judgment upon the **earth**, Isa.26:21.
 - *Isaiah 26:21 "For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the **earth** for their iniquity: ..." This describes the Lion of the tribe of Judah as he roars commanding the nations to submit.*

- **Second thunder:** God’s judgment upon the **sea**, Psa.48:7.
 - *Psalm 48:7 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind. At this point the Western world loses its navel power.*
- **Third thunder:** God’s judgment on the **rivers**, Hab.3:8.
 - *Habakkuk 3:8 Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the **rivers**? was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation? Jesus thunders against the armies of the world.*
- **Fourth thunder:** God’s judgment on the **sun**, Joel 2:31; 3:15.
 - *Joel 3:15 The **sun** and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. Jesus thunders removing much of the political power of the nations.*
- **Fifth thunder:** God’s judgment on the Muslim kings in Psalm.83 who have taken **counsel** against Israel and the saints. This **fifth** thunder caps trumpet#5 putting an end to this power.
 - *Psalm 83:3 They have taken crafty **counsel** against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.*
- **Sixth thunder:** God’s judgment on the Christian kings in Psalm.2 who also have taken counsel against God and Jesus.
 - *Psalm 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take **counsel** together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,*
- **Seventh thunder:** God’s judgment on the beast and false prophet, Rev.19:20.
 - *Rev. 19:20 And the beast (makeup, see picture p.52) was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

Thunder	Order and Place	Quotation	Scripture
1	Earth	“punish the inhabitants of the earth”	Isa.26:21
2	Sea	“thou breakest the ships of Tarshish”	Psa.48:7
3	Waters	“was thine anger against the rivers”	Hab.3:8
4	Sun	Sun and moon darkened	Joel 2;31
5	Muslims	“they have taken crafty counsel”	Psalm 83
6	Christendom destruction	Rulers take counsel together	Psalm 2
7	Beast and false prophet	Both cast alive into fire	Rev.19:20

JOEL'S LAST CHAPTER – Joel chapter 3

- *JOEL 3:1 For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity <7622> of Judah (1948 ???) and Jerusalem (1967 ???), 2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley <6010> of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them ...'.*
- *REV 16:16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*
 - Armageddon in Hebrew to means: “A **heap** of sheaves in the **valley** of **judgment**.”
 - Armageddon is a composite of three Hebrew words: “aremah”, “gay” and “duwn”.
 - 6010 “emeq”AV valley 63, vale 4, dale 2; 69 1) valley, vale, low land, open country.
 - 6194 "aremah" A **heap** (of corn), Ruth 3:7
 - 1516 "gay" A gorge: **valley**, Zech. 14:4
 - 1777 "duwn" Rule, by impl. **judge**, Psa. 9:8
 - 7622 “sh@buwth” captivity 31, captives 1, variant 11, Strong's synonym 1; 44

The usual interpretation for “*in those days*” is 1948 for “*the captivity of Judah*” and 1967 for “*Jerusalem*”. This however does not fit well with the context nor is it chronological.

- It is suggested Joel 3:1 sets the time **when** the **fortunes** of Judah and Jerusalem have been brought back by Christ who is on David’s throne, (Luke 1:32).

“captivity” or “fortunes”?

- *Joel 3:1 In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, (NIV)*
- *Joel 3:1 For then, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, (NRSV)*
- *Joel 3:1 For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, (KJV)*

The main difference is in the translation of “*captivity*” to “*fortunes*”. The reason is that though the prime context is future, there are still links to the audience in Joel’s day. These links are also seen in Joel 3:6,20, and since the people of Joel’s day had yet to go into captivity, the NIV and NRSV translated the Hebrew word “sh@buwth” as “**fortunes**”.

- The bringing again of the “*fortunes*” of Judah and Jerusalem fits well the context of Israel just before the “*great and terrible day of the LORD*” when Jesus is upon David’s throne in Jerusalem but “sh@buwth” is not so translated in the KJV. Yes “*fortunes*” eliminates the difficulty of being too restrictive since the “*captivity*” that has returned today, includes Ethiopian Jews, Russian Jews, in fact Jews from all over the world and Strong’s does say “sh@buwth”, figuratively can mean a former state of prosperity”. Therefore it is doubly hard to conclude that the Jews today in the land are only from the stock in Joel’s day and who made up Judah and Jerusalem. This however is needed for the 1948 and 1967 interpretation.

Also remember, Joel chapter 1 concerns the “*day of the LORD*” upon Israel around 600 BC. Joel

chapter 2 concerns the "*day of the LORD*" when Christ is manifested to the world and destroys the "*Northern Army*" at Armageddon. Joel chapter 3 details event surrounding the "*great and terrible day of the LORD*", when the nations will be judged divided and finally commanded to the "*supper of the great God*". Then God's judgments will go forth throughout the world. To interpret Joel 3:1 out of chronological order when there is a strong case to be made that Joel is in chronological order doesn't build faith.

- "Captivity (7622) sh@buwth: "exile, concretely prisoners; figuratively a former state of prosperity" (Strong's).
- The following chart shows that "captivity" scripturally speaking, is predicated on national repentance. The events of 1948 and 1967, as significant as they were could only be tokens that the captivity will return, not that it already has. This adds further evidence supporting the translation found in the NRSV and NIV that "captivity" in Joel 3:1 should be "fortunes" since Israel as a nation has yet to repent.

Description	Quotation	Scripture
Captivity returned for repentance	"and shalt return unto the LORD ... then the LORD thy "God will turn thy captivity and have compassion upon thee.	Deuteronomy 30:1-3
Captivity returned for repentance	"I ... repent in dust and ashes ... and the LORD turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends"	Job 42:6-10
Captivity returned through forgiveness	"thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob ... forgiven the iniquity of thy people"	Psalms 85:1-2
Captivity returned for repentance	"ye shall seek me ... and I will be found of you ... and I will turn away your captivity"	Jeremiah 29:13
Captivity returned through mercy	"I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places"	Jeremiah 30:18

If Joel chapter 3 follows in chronological order and describes "*the great and terrible day of the LORD*" in Joel 2:31, the question arises concerning the "*valley of Jehoshaphat*" and whether this is the Kidron or Hinnon valleys and the judgment of Armageddon? In answering, scripture does not record that the Kidron or any valley was called the "*valley of Jehoshaphat*". In fact, history shows that it wasn't until the 4th century, in 325 AD that the Empress, Helena (mother of Constantine) was the first to draw this interpretation. To this *The Interpreter's Bible Dictionary of the Bible* adds:

"A few Jewish commentators, followed by the majority of early and medieval Christian exegetes, however, interpreted the toponym realistically. Kimchi supposes that a valley near Jerusalem would have named for a monument built by King Jehoshaphat. The Valley of Jehoshaphat has been identified at times with the Valley of Hinnom, and since the fourth century A.D., with the Valley of the Kidron. The basis of speculations concerning God's vengeance in the day of judgment, of which the destruction of idols burnt in the Kidron by reformer kings was regarded as a type." (vol. 2, p.816, Abingdon Press)

So, this equation of linking the valley <6010>"emec" of *Jehoshaphat* with either the Kidron or Hinnom valleys <1516 "gay"> is speculative at best. When the Hebrew words for valley are checked, as in Joshua 18:16, it is concluded this interpretation does not fit, for the valley <6010 "emec"> of *Jehoshaphat* doesn't describe a narrow gorge type valley. It is important to remember that the Hebrew word "gay" which makes up the Hebrew word, Armageddon describes a narrow gorge like the Kidron or Hinnom valleys.

“emec” <6010> and “gay” <1516>

- *Joshua 18:16 And the border came down to the end of the mountain that lieth before the valley <1516> of the son of Hinnom, and which is in the valley <6010> of the giants on the north and descended to the valley <1516> of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south, and descended to Enrogel, ...*
- “emec” 6010 Strong’s – a vale (that is, broad depression) cp Eze.39:11,15; Zech.14:4-5.
- “gay” 1516 Strong’s – a gorge (from its lofty sides) cp Eze. 39:11,15; Zech.14:4-5.

The valleys of Hinnom and Kidron are narrow gorges which are IN the valley ("emec") of the giants. This shows these two Hebrew words shouldn't be equated and this greatly weakens the interpretation that Armageddon and the valley of Jehoshaphat describe the same event.

What can be supported from Joel 3:1,2 is that “*in that time*” applies to when Jesus will summon the nations to the “*valley of Jehoshaphat*” (Joel 3:2-8) to judge on their treatment of God's chosen people.

TIMING – AFTER Armageddon when Jesus upon David’s throne.

JOEL 3:2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them...

- 8199 shaphat {shaw-fat} AV - **judge (v) 119**, judge (n) 60, **plead 11**, avenged 2, condemn 2, execute 2, judgment 2, defend 1, deliver 1, misc 3; 203
- In Joel 3:12 “shaphat” is translated “judge” but because of the context, verses 3-8 the KJV translators translated “shaphat” **plead**. The NKJV translates v.2 as “*enter into judgment with them there.*” In Joel 3:12 the context changes and “shaphat” is translated “judge”.
- The LXX reads: “*en te koiladi tes dikes*” » “*in the valley of judgment*”. Strong’s commenting on the word for judgment (“*dike*” – 1349), says it means right or “i.e. justice (the principle, a **decision**, or its execution)”.

The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible, (vol. 2, p.816) says re: “*the valley of Jehoshaphat*”:

*“A valley in which God shall summon the nations to be judged in the days of the messianic restoration of Judah and Jerusalem, according to Joel 3:2,12. The intent of this text is symbolical rather than geographical, as may be inferred from the etymology of the name Jehoshaphat, ‘Yahweh shall judge’ or from Joel 3:14, where the same valley is called ‘valley of decision’, in the sense of a **judicial decision** or a verdict.”*

The emphasis is the judgment of nations and not the valley itself as seen in the meaning of Jehoshaphat, “Jehovah has judged”. Therefore what is described is a judicial court where nations are summoned, judged and verdicts rendered according to how they have treated God's people. This court scene however presents difficulties since today’s nations are not made up of the actual people who were directly responsible for that described in Joel 3:3-6 but their ancestors, who in the time of Joel in the days of Jehoikim, brought Judah and Jerusalem very low. Scripture is clear however that “the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father,” (Eze. 18:20-22) which would be the case if today’s sons were judged for what their fathers had done.

A possible solution is this could describe the nations today if they participate in a future fulfilment of the abuse of God's people. This however requires a future fulfilment of v.4 with "Tyre, Zidon and coasts of Palestine overrunning Israel and then Greece purchasing these people as slaves. Another solution is seen in covering Joel 3:3-6.

JOEL 3:3 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. 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; 5 Because ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly pleasant things: 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.

Assuming Joel chapter 3 is primarily a latter day prophecy taking place after the judgment of the responsible and when Jesus is on David's throne. The question is - does God hold some of these ancient people, who have plundered Solomon's temple and sold his people to the "Grecians" responsible? Further will they be raised to judgment, found wanting and go back to their native countries? Before answering, the Bible does speak of the queen of Sheba and the men of Nineveh rising in judgment against those who heard Jesus speak during his ministry.

Men of ancient Nineveh and Ethiopia raised?

MAT 12:41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

MAT 12:42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

Part of the difficulty is to know whom God will raise to judgment for little is known about ancient Nineveh. God did send His prophet Jonah to the men of Nineveh for some reason and they did repent, but there is no concrete support to show if some knew the revealed will of God. Although scripture does say that God is taking a people for his name throughout all ages, (Acts 15:14; Rm.1:5). This being said, it still is difficult to know just how literal Joel 3:3-6 applies. Jesus' parable, of the "sheep and goats" is helpful depending on the interpretation, and can support that Joel 3:3-6 is literal. Usually however the "sheep" and "goats" are interpreted as applying to individuals and not nations. Because of its importance to interpreting Joel chapter 3:3-8, a close look becomes necessary:

The CONTEXT of the PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND GOATS, Matt.25:31-46.

1. Part of the Olivet prophecy - Matthew chapters 24 & 25.
2. This parable is in answer to the disciples LAST question (Mt.24:3) the "*end of the world*" (165 "aion"). This is supported in Matt. 25:46 where the same Greek root "aion" appears.
3. It is the last of five parables that follow each other chronologically:
 - Matt. 24:43 (*goodman of the house*) = BEFORE Christ's return.
 - Matt. 24:45 (*faithful/wise servant*)= BEFORE Christ's return
 - Matt. 25:1-13 (*ten virgins*) = AT Christ's return as a thief.

- Matt. 25:14-30 (*talents*) = Judgment seat basis which is AFTER Christ's return
- Matt. 25:31-46 (*sheep/goats*) = judgment of nations AFTER judgment of the saints and when Jesus sits upon David's throne.

4. Further support to the timing:

- *MAT 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.*
- *MAT 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed ...*
- *MAT 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, ...*
 - The timing is after Jesus comes in glory, Mat.24:27 and not his coming as a "thief".
 - The timing is when "he (Jesus) sits upon the "throne of his glory." (v.31)
 - The timing is when Jesus is KING upon David's throne, Lk.1:32.
 - The timing is before the "end of the age" and beginning of the millennium, Matt.24:3.

ANALYSIS:

Once the timing of this parable is established as **after the saints have been judged**, the prime interpretation can be made. That's not to say there are not other levels of interpretation including an individual level and so judged, for faith is active and feeds the hungry, gives drink to the thirsty, houses the stranger, clothes the naked, visits the sick and imprisoned.

INTERPRETING Matthew 25:31-46:

MAT 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels <32 "aggelos"> with him, then shall he sit upon the throne <2362 "thronos"> of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations <1484 "ethnos">: ...

- "**Son of man**" describes Christ's mission for mankind, namely: to preach the gospel, bring in forgiveness, mediate at God's right hand and in the future reign as king of kings. In contrast, "*son of God*" portrays Jesus' relationship with God.
 - "**Son of man**" is used in verse 31 because the context is about his future mission to judge the Gentile nations. The saints have already been judged having heard the voice of the "*son of God*", John 5:25.
 - *John 5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.*
- A. "**Throne of his glory**" -- This is a telling phrase that helps establish the timing of this parable. Matthew 19:28 is the ONLY other place where this phrase is used and applies AFTER the resurrection and judgement.
- *Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the **throne of his glory**, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*
- B. **Context** - Here the disciples have already been judged and also sit on thrones judging the tribes, Luke 22:29,30.
- C. "**Throne**" 2362 thronos {thron'-os} from thrao (to sit), a stately seat ("throne"). AV - throne 54, seat 7; 61.
- (Telling Pt.) "Thronos" is the throne of a king as compared to the judgment seat of a

- judge. Jesus will sit to judge his brethren seated upon the "bema" and not the "thronos".
- 2CO 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat <968 "bema"> of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;
 - ROM 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat <968 "bema"> of Christ.
 - (968 bema; n. AV - judgment seat 10, throne 1, misc. 1, 12).
 - Daniel 7:9-10 speaks of this time when the books were open and Jesus did "sit" to judge the nations which will affect "ten thousand times ten thousand".
- D. "Angels" 32 *aggelos* {ang'-el-os} from *aggello* (to bring tidings); n m AV - angel 179, messenger 7; 186.
- Interpreting "aggelos" (messenger) depends on the context for the messenger can be mortal or immortal.
 - Luke 7:24 And when the messengers <32 "aggelos"> of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, ...
 - See also Heb.12:1; Matt.24:30; 26:64; Rev.1:7.
 - The context of Mt.25:31 is when Jesus sits upon David's throne and his angels (messengers which here are the immortal saints) will be with him and in the kingdom as kings and priest (Rev. 5:10).
- E. The context, Mt. 25:31, is when Jesus sits upon David's throne and his angels (messengers which here are the immortal saints) will be with him in the millennial kingdom as kings and priests.
- 1Cor.6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? ...
 - Rev. 5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.
 - Daniel 7:10-11 ...the judgment was set, and the books were opened. ¹¹ I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.
 - The "beast" is the ten horn beast of Dan.7:7. This 10 horn beast is further described in Rev. 17:3; 19:21.

MAT 25:32 And before him shall be gathered all nations <1484>: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

- (Telling pt.) "Nations" 1484 "ethnos" {eth'-nos} plural probably from 1486; n. AV - Gentiles 93, nation 64, heathen 5, people 2; 164.
 - (Liddell and Scott Greek-English Lexicon) "...in New Testament (ethnos) the nations, Gentiles, i.e. all but Jews and Christians."
 - (Moulton and Milligan) "... LXX and NT (ethnos) 'describes the pagan world, outside the Jewish church (laos -people) itself, as in Acts 10:22, 24:17."
 - The word "ethnos" is NOT applied to specific individuals. (Mt. 4:15; 6:32; 10:5,18;12:18,21; 20:19,25; 21:43; 24:7,9,14; 25:32; 28:19)

- "Ethnos" applies to a number of people living together. Christ is not judging individuals here. The Gentile nations will be judged by Christ, (Mic.4:3; Psa.110:6; Isa.2:4; Acts 14:16).
- Joel 3:2-5 details a basis of judgment as to their treatment of natural Israel. In Matt. 25:31-46, Christ expands this, including their treatment of his brethren.
- If this applied to the judgment of individuals then this parable supports judgment of all people and not just the responsible.
- Jesus will judge the nations for they now are "*the minister of God*", (Rom.13:4) and therefore responsible to judgment.
- In v.32 the sheep are those nations who have welfare programs and hear Jesus the Jewish king who has inherited the throne of his father David. This is before the millennium when the world will be given opportunity to accept Jesus as the "*great king*", (Psa.48:2; Isaiah 19:21; 18:3).
- Yes "ethnos" is used in scripture in an elliptical (cryptic, incomplete) manner when speaking of certain individuals from a nation but as in so many places the context defines the interpretation.
 - ("**ethnos**" = **nations not individuals**) *REV 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations ("ethnos"), and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;*
 - ("**ethnos**" = **individuals**) *Matthew28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ("ethnos" = individuals), baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (However NKJV, NRSV = "*disciples of all nations*")*
 - ("**ethnos**" = **nations**) *Matthew24:7 For nation ("ethnos") shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.*
 - Here individual are gathered but as representatives of various nations. It is however the nation which is judged as a sheep or goat. This is why these translations (KJV, NKJV, NAS, NRSV, NIV, Rotherham,) translate "ethnos" as nations. The nations will continue to be judged in the Millennial Age. For example, the nation of Egypt will be judged, Zech.14:17,18).
- There is no difficulty in scripture showing animals are symbols of nations. For example the goat in Dan.8:5,8,21 is used as a symbol of Greece.

MAT 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

- "**King**" shows the timing is after Jesus is upon David's throne in Jerusalem.
- The righteous nations will be blessed in the kingdom age and receive their allotted place.
 - *GAL.3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.*
- Today the nations bear responsibility for their actions being the "*minister of God*".
 - Acts 14:16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.
 - *Rom.13:4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*

MAT 25:35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

- The test of this judgment is the treatment accorded by the nations (sheep/goats) to those whom Christ calls "*my brethren*".
- Much more is required of Christ's brethren at the judgment seat than the giving of temporal food. The judgment of the faithful is on the basis of their faith which is accounted for righteousness, Gal. 3:6. Faith however is active and produces works but to use works as a basis of judgment for the saints undermines that it is not works that saves. Applying this to the nations is a better fit since the basis of their works isn't from their faith in God but their good choice to keep the nation together.
- Christ's brethren are to develop their talents, providing spiritual "*meat in due season*" and turning many to righteousness. This is the difference between the "*good man*" (Mt.24:43) whose house was broken up and the "*wise servant*" (Mt.24:45; Luke 12:42) who gave his house spiritual meat, (Mt. 25:14; Dan.12:3).
- An incorrect understanding of the parable of the sheep and goats can lead to an incorrect emphasis on the temporal things which lies in God's arena and where God says He will provide, (Luke 12:24,27). That's not to say we don't provide these temporal things, which often give added opportunity to provide spiritual food but the saints judgment is NOT on the basis of works Eph.2:9 although faith is demonstrated by works, (James 2:14-20).
- The nations are judged by God; in the past Nineveh was to be destroyed because of their wickedness, Nahum 1:1. Israel was to be blessed or cursed depending on their obedience to God, Deuteronomy chapter 28. Nations in our age are even more responsible (Rom.13:4) than in Old Testament times when "*God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*" (Acts 14:16). In the millennium the nations will have further responsibilities, i.e. that their people keep the feast of tabernacles, Zec.14:18.
- Before the nations in this parable are judged, they also will have had opportunity to accept Christ (Psalms 48:4) who will be ruling upon the "*throne of his glory*". Their leaders will be commanded to Jerusalem and separated. A basis of this judgment will be their treatment of God's people, (Joel 3:2-8) and whether they have acted as sheep or goats.

MAT 25:37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

- As noted, v.36 much more is required of saints than these types of works.
- Christ's saints are to manifest the "*fruits of the spirit*". They must be well aware of the temporal needs of the body of Christ.
- Christ's judgment of the saints is on the basis of "*faith*", Rom 3:28. Works come naturally because Christ's saints will manifest "agape" love. The context for this judgment is works therefore this isn't the judgment of the saints but the nations.
- The nations would be unaware of who were Jesus' brethren and so their surprise.

MAT 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these <5130 "touton"> *my brethren*, ye have done it unto me.

- "*These*" 5130 touton {too'-tone}, plural masculine or neuter, pronoun. AV - these 38, these things

21, such 2, these matters 1, such matters 1, those 1, misc. 5; 69

- The sheep or goat nation in this context can't be Christ's brethren since not only is "brethren" in the genitive case, but "**these**" is emphatic in the sense of Jesus point to these here, my brethren, showing Christ's brethren are **THERE** with him and as if Jesus points to them to verify his judgment and then separates and pronounces judgment. (See also v.45.)

MAT 25:41 *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*

- Those on Jesus' left hand are those goat nations which will continue to resist Jesus upon David's throne, (i.e. Psa.83:3). They will be destroyed, eaten up or severely pruned. (See v.46)
 - *REV 19:20* *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*
 - *PSA 83:3* *They have taken crafty counsel against thy people and consulted against thy hidden ones.*

MAT 25:45 *Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting <166 'aionios'> punishment <2851>: but the righteous <1342> into life eternal <166 'aionios'>.*

- *"And these shall go forth to the aioian cutting-off: but the righteous to the aionian Life."* (Diaglott)
- *"everlasting"* 166 aionios {ahee-o'-nee-os} from 165; adj. AV - eternal 42, everlasting 25, misc 4; 71
 - Moulton & Milligan : "aionios" depicts that of which the horizon is not in view, whether the horizon be at an infinite distance or whether it lies no farther than the span of a Caesar's life.
- *"punishment"* 2851 kolasis {kol'-as-is} from 2849; n f AV - punishment 1, torment 1; 2
 - 2849 kolazo {kol-ad'-zo}; v AV - punish 2; 2 (1) to lop or prune, as trees and wings (2) to curb, check, restrain (3) to chastise, correct, punishment (4) to cause to be punished
- *"righteous"* 1342 dikaios {dik'-ah-yos}; adj. AV - righteous 41, just 33, right 5, meet 2; 81.

Context is key to interpreting "aionios". For example, "aionios" in 2Pe.1:11 apply to the millennial age for 1Co.15:24 says at the end of the millennial age Jesus delivers the kingdom to God.

- *2 Peter 1:11* *For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting <166> kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*
- *1 Cor.15:24* *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.*
- *Rev.14:6* *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting <166> ("aionios") gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,*

The context of Mat.25:46, applies when Jesus is upon David's throne just before the millennial age, Mat.25:31. Verse 46 describes the goat nations who in the millennial age will undergo pruning which is one of the meanings of *"punishment"* "kolasis" <2851>. This is in contrast with (Mat.25:41) those

nations which are destroyed with the beast and false prophet, (Rev. 19:20) and the sheep nations like Assyria which will have a privilege position in the millennium.

- *Isaiah 19:24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land:*
- *Isaiah 60:12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*

Having this understanding of the parable of the sheep and goats and knowing that Jesus is to judge the nations when he sits upon David's throne is not only important to interpreting Joel 3:2-8 but to many other Bible prophecies. For example in Eze.25:14, Edom has yet to fully experience God's vengeance – "BY the hand of MY people Israel." Yes under the Maccabees there was a partial fulfilment, but that was limited and does not do justice to the emphatic expression, "by the hand of MY people Israel, shall they know my vengeance."

- **VENGEANCE UPON THE SURROUNDING NATIONS**

- *EZE. 25:14 And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord GOD.*
- *EZE. 25:17 And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.*
 - A future prophecy for Israel has yet to lay their hand upon Edom. (= Arabs, Obadiah 1:17-21)
 - A future prophecy because of the phrase, "*they shall know*".
 - This final vengeance will follow the court scene in Joel 3:3-6 where the nations will have great difficulty accepting the basis of judgment and the resulting punishment, i.e. in Joel 3:8 of having their people sold to the Sabeans.

THE NATIONS JUDGED UPON THEIR TREATMENT OF ISRAEL!

JOEL 3:2 I will also gather all nations, ... and will plead with them there for my people ..., whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. 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. 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? ... 6 The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, ...

One occasion of this national involvement was during the Babylonian invasions (2Kings24:13,14) when the surrounding nations joined in looting, however this probably refers to the many local border wars. Selling captured people as slaves was commonly done and selling them to the Greeks would remove them far off where they couldn't easily be bought back. The surrounding nations who parted God's land and sold his people are yet to be judged and will find themselves as goats, upon Christ's left hand. There are several Bible prophecies describing this including: Zechariah 10:3 where the goats are punished (Amos 1:9), where Tyre broke their covenant with Israel and sold them to slavery (Obadiah 1:15), where Edom is punished on the basis of their treatment of Israel. It is thought the Edomites are

the ancestors of the Palestinians, and this is the old hatred between Jacob and Esau. This same hatred is seen today and Jesus will deal with it as seen in Joel 3:8.

THE NATIONS JUDGED ON THEIR TREATMENT OF ISRAEL!

- *ZEC 10:3 Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.*
- *AMOS 1:9 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant:*
- *EZE 27:13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants: they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy market.*
- *OBA.1:15 For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.*
- *GEN.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.*

What goes around comes around for God has raised His exiled people and brought them back as a nation and it will be the modern Phoenicians and “*those of the coast of Palestine*” who will be exiled in the future.

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND!

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 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, <7615> to a people far off: for the LORD hath spoken it.

- 7615 Sh@ba'iy {sheb-aw-ee'}; adj. AV - Sabeans 1; 1
 - 7614 Sh@ba' {sheb-aw'} of foreign origin; AV - Sheba 23; 23
Sheba was a son of Jokshan, the son of Abraham by Keturah and a nation in southern Arabia.
 - (Elpis Israel, J. Thomas, p.436, 14th Ed.) “In speaking of events these days, the prophets refer not to races of men, but to powers on territories designated by the names of the peoples who anciently inhabited them.”
 - The territories mentioned in Joel 3:4 are “*Tyre*”, “*Zidon*” and the “*coast of Palestine*”. Today’s powers on these territories are Lebanon and the Palestinians.

Joel 3:8 foretells what is yet to happen to these people that they will be deported to Arabia. This solution will not be well received by the nations that surround Israel and they will take “*counsel*” against Israel and the “*hidden ones*” (saints) who will be ruling with Jesus in Jerusalem, Psalms 83:3; 110:2. This will bring on the 5th thunder judgment as detailed on pages 63 & 64 and in Isaiah chapter 34.

JESUS ON DAVID'S THRONE RULING "IN THE MIDST OF ENEMIES!"

- *Psalm 83:3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.*
- *Psalm 110:2 The LORD shall send the rod (Jesus) of thy (David's) strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies*
- ***Isaiah chapter 34 – God's judgments upon the surrounding nations.***

This solution will not sit well with the nations throughout the world, being viewed probably as a form of racism. This will cause the Gentile nations to also take "*counsel against the LORD and His anointed*" (Psa. 2:1-5), bringing on God's 6th thunder judgment.

RESISTANCE TO JESUS SPREADS!

Joel 3:9 Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare <6942> 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.

- 6942 qadash (kaw-dash') a primitive root; v AV – sanctify 108, hallow 25, dedicate 10, holy 7, prepare 7, consecrate 5, misc. 10; 172.
- (1) To consecrate, sanctify, prepare dedicate be hallowed, be holy.
- Joel 3:10 is the reverse of Isa.2:4 which shows the timing is before the millennial age.
 - *Isaiah 2:4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*
- *Psalm 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. 4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. 5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.*

This war preparation spreads into many of the Gentile nations. They too will be "*vexed*" and being drunk with a "*strong delusion*" will also take counsel against Israel's immortal king. At this time all nations will be commanded by Israel's king to be judged in the "*valley of Jehoshaphat*".

- This is NOT the "*supper of the great God*", Rev. 19:17,18; Eze.39:17-20 where "*the kings of the earth*" feel God's 6th thunder judgment and their kingdoms are eaten by those nations who give their allegiance to Israel's "*great king*" but that described in Jesus' parable of the sheep and goats in Mat. 25:31-46.

Joel 3:11 Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones <1368> to come down, O LORD. 12 Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit <3427> to judge all the heathen round about.

- 1368 gibbowr {ghib-bore'} AV- mighty 63, mighty man 68, strong 4, valiant 3, misc.20.

- 3427 yashab {yaw-shab'}; v AV - dwell 437, inhabitant 221, sit 172, abide 70, inhabit 39, down 26, remain 23, in 22, tarry 19, set 14, continue 5, place 7, still 5, misc.28; 1088.
- Joel 3:2 also shows the nations are told to assemble for judgment. Notice the judge is sitting which describes a court setting. The NRSV & NIV show urgency to this command.
- The “*mighty ones*” are the saints and the judge who sits is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Joel 3:13 Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press <1660> is full, the fats <3342> overflow; for their wickedness is great.

- 1660 gath {gath} (sense of treading out grapes); n f AV - winepress 3, press 1, winefat 1; 5.
- 3342 yeqeb {yeh'-keb}; n m AV – winepresses 10, press 2, fats 2, pressfat 1, wine 1; 16.
- Even though “*the grapes*” is absent in the Hebrew text, there is good reason to include it in the English for almost every passage in which a harvest is the context for the Hebrew word for “*tread*” (1869 “*darak*”) is a grape harvest. (i.e. Jud.9:27; Neh.13:15; Job 24:11; Isa. 16:10; 63:2,3; Jer. 25:30; 48:33; 51:33; Amos 9:13; Mic. 6:15)

The judgment having been made the text leaves no doubt this harvest is the grape harvest judgment and Joel 3:13 is part of God’s 7th vial judgment (Rev. 16:17-21). Some have difficulty with the use of a sickle to harvest grapes but since a sickle is also used in Rev. 14:18 where the context is obviously the grape harvest, this objection is not valid.

- *REV 14:18 ... Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe*

MULTITUDES FROM ALL NATIONS

Joel 3:14 Multitudes <1995>, multitudes <1995> in the valley <6010> of decision <2742>: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley <6010> of decision 2742>.

- 1995 hamown {haw-mone'} or hamon (Ezek. 5:7) {haw-mone'} from 1993; n m AV - multitude 62, noise 4, tumult 4, abundance 3, many 3, store 2, company 1, misc. 4; 83
- 6010 `emeq {ay'-mek} n m AV - valley 63, vale 4, dale 2; 69
- 2742 charuwts {khaw-roots'} AV - gold 6, diligent 5, decision 2, threshing instrument 2, sharp 1, sharp things 1, wall 1; 18

The multitudes are NOT Gog’s multitude (*haw-mond-gowg*) as in Ezekiel 39:11 but the multitudes of people, of “*all the nations*” gathered to the “*valley* (*“emeq”* not “*gay*” as in Armageddon) of *Jehoshaphat*” where judgment is made upon them by the Lord Jesus Christ, Joel 3:2,12. It is here that the nations are bound as described in Psalm 2:3.

- *Psalm 2:3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*

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

Using highly figurative language Joel describes the Gentile political heaven losing power to shine.

This type of prophetic symbolic language is used throughout scripture, i.e. Isa.1:2,10; 34:4-6; 65:17.

- *Isaiah 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. 10 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.*
- *Isaiah 65:17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.¹⁸ But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.*
- *Isaiah 34:4 And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. 5 For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.*

The timing of this Gentile political heaven losing power is at first gradual during the mid-heaven proclamation but upon resistance of the "great whore" this rebuff gains momentum bringing on the "great and terrible day of the LORD".

- *Rev. 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the **great whore** that sitteth upon many waters: [2] With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*
- *Jeremiah 25:15 For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.*
- *Rev. 17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

This resistance is caused by a "strong delusion" that acts like wine making the nations drunk into believing Jesus is the Antichrist. They with the "great whore" who rides them however will be anti-Christ causing the "great and terrible day of the LORD" to come.

- *2 Thes. 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them **strong delusion**, that they should believe a lie:*
- *Jeremiah 25:33 And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.*

JESUS AS A ROARING LION COMMANDS ALLEGIANCE OF ALL NATIONS:

*Joel 3:16 The LORD also shall **roar** <7580> 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.*

- 7580 sha'ag {shaw-ag'} a primitive root; AV - **roar 19**, mightily 1, misc.1; 21. (1a) of lion, conqueror.
- In Joel 3:16, "**roar**" ("shaw-ag") expresses the command from the "Lion of the tribe of Judah", (Gen.49:8-10), Rev.5:5. The LORD will be the strength of Israel and through His son will dwell in their midst.

- *Zephaniah 3:15 The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.*
 - Jesus as king “*in the midst*” of Israel will not long continue to rule in the midst of enemies but will go forth to rule them with a rod of iron.
 - *Psalm 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.*
- Joel 3:16 is an **important addition** showing this must be **after** Armageddon, **for to “roar” out of Jerusalem, Jesus would need to be set up there**, upon the throne of his father David, and once set up there, there will be deliverance there. (See also Psa.2:6; 110:2)
 - Psa.2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. (KJV)
 - Psalm 110:2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. (KJV)
- This is why the last sentence in Joel 2:32 “...for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance ...” **isn’t** quoted in the partial fulfillment in Acts 2:21 for in AD 70 there was no divine deliverance in Jerusalem.
- Jeremiah 25 shows the judgment upon the “*king of Sheshach*” (Babylon) **follows** the judgment upon the surrounding nations.
 - This judgment upon great Babylon goes forth upon all of the inhabitants of the earth and the slain of the Lord in v.33 “*shall be in that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth*”. And no wonder, for the nations will have been given a wonderful opportunity to accept Jesus and many will not, therefore the Psalmist prophecies that “*the LORD shall send the rod*”, which is the “*rod of Jesse*” (Jesus), “*out of Zion and he shall rule them with a rod of iron*”.
 - V.30 *Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall **roar** <7580> from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily **roar** <7580> upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the **grapes**, against all the inhabitants of the earth.*
 - V.26 *And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach <8347> shall drink after them.*
 - 8347 Sheshak {shay-shak'} of foreign derivation; AV - Sheshach 2; 2. Sheshach = another name for Babylon apparently taken from the goddess 'Shach'.
 - Easton’s Bible Dictionary “(Jer.25:26), supposed to be equivalent to Babel (Babylon), according to be a secret (cabalistic) mode of writing among the Jews of unknown antiquity, which consisted in substituting the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet for the first, the last but one for the second, and so on. Thus the letters sh,sh,ch become b,b,l, i.e., Babel. This is supposed to be confirmed by a reference to Jer.51:41, where Sheshach and Babylon are in parallel clauses. There seems to be no reason to doubt that Babylon is here intended by this name. (See Streane’s Jeremiah, 1.c.)”
 - “After” shows Babylon the Great and its rider are last to be judged. This judgment is

God's 7th thunder judgment which concludes with the beast and false prophet destroyed in the lake of fire, Rev. 19:20.

The Psalmist gives further insight to one of the root causes behind why these nations (*Babylon the Great*) resist Jesus who is enthroned in Jerusalem as king. Psalm 2:1 says they "*imagine a vain thing*" and as already shown, this is linked with the "*false prophet*" of Rev. 19:20 and the "*man of sin*" of 2Th.2:11. This "*strong delusion*" is today's popular belief in a future Antichrist, the incarnation of Satan, who sets himself up in Jerusalem.

- Psalm 2:1 **Why** do the heathen rage, and the people *imagine a vain thing*? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.
 - **Why**, because the false prophet is anti-Christ!
- Revelation 19:20 And the beast was taken, and with him the **false prophet** that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone
- 2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that **man of sin** be revealed, the son of perdition;

The prophet Isaiah says '*he (Jesus) shall judge among the nations and rebuke many people*'. Micah 4:3 is the reverse of Joel 3:10 where finally the swords are beaten into "*plowshares*", and the spears into "*pruninghooks*" and the nations learn war no more.

FINALLY THEY SHALL LEARN WAR NO MORE!

Isaiah 2:4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (KJV)

MIC 4:3 And he shall judge among many nations, and rebuke strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

In Joel, God gathers the nations to battle: "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears." Isaiah and Micah prophesy about the time when "*they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks*" --- a beautiful reversal of the troublous time of the end.

After God's 7th thunder judgment upon the beast and false prophet, the millennial kingdom age begins. Joel describes this kingdom age with God dwelling in Zion and Jerusalem being the holy city. Here the gloom will be gone not only from Israel but the whole earth for all will be filled with God's glory and all people will know the king in Jerusalem is the Lord Jesus Christ.

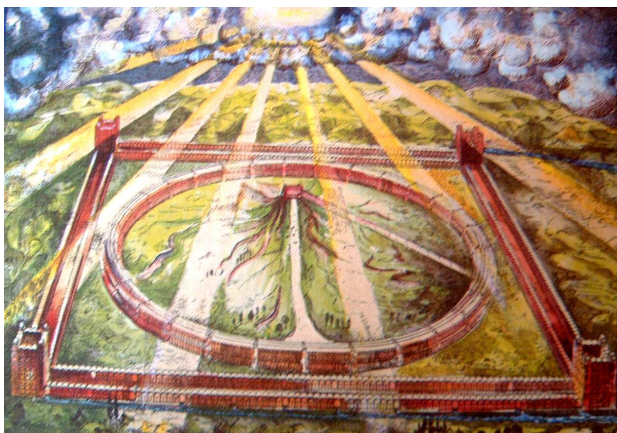
Joel 3:17 So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain:

then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers <2114> pass through her any more.

- 2114 zuwr {zoor}; v AV - stranger 45, strange 18, estranged 4, stranger + 0376 3, another 2, strange woman 2, gone away 1, fanners 1, another place 1; 77
- The following passages speak about the time when there will be no more strangers among God's people: Nahum 1:15; Isaiah 35:8; 52:1; Zec.14:21; Rev. 21:27.

Mt. Zion is to be greatly elevated in the minds of men throughout the world. This elevation also will include a physical dimension for the Psalmist (Psalms 48:2) describes this mountain from the sides of the north where today there is no northern elevation. Ezekiel's temple (Ezekiel chapters 40-44) will surround Mt. Zion being over a mile square and it is here that the nations go to worship.

- *Psalm 48:2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.*
- *Isaiah 56:7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.*
- *Zechariah 8:3 Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain.*



Mt. Zion, God's holy mountain will become the centre of world worship. Jerusalem will become the world capital from which God's law will go forth and where never again "the wicked allowed to pass through".

- *Jeremiah 3:17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil*

heart.

- *Nahum 1:15 Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.*
- *Isaiah 52:1 Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.*

Joel continues to describe this new order including a description of great agricultural bounty. He waxes

poetic but this does not mean there isn't an actual physical base to his description, with water flowing from the temple described in Ezekiel chapters 40-44 to the Dead Sea area.

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 of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim (7851).

- 7851 Shittiyim {shit-teem'}; n pr loc AV - Shittim 5; Shittim = "the **acacias**" (1) place of Israel's encampment between the conquest of the transjordanic region and crossing the Jordan into Canaan.

The language is metaphorical. The prophet sees the hills of Judah, which were once barren now clothed with lush vegetation forming a complete reversal of the languishing vine that the locust, cankerworm, caterpillar, and palmerworm had eaten. The "wine" and the "milk" (first principles of God's word, (Heb.5:12-14) will flow freely as rivers that make glad the city of God. These pure waters of life, clear as crystal, will proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb to cleanse the valley of Shittim, where once Israel committed whoredom and idolatry. A metaphorical scene yes, but also, very real for the mountain tops will produce corn, (Psa. 72:16) and there will be a literal temple with a spring that becomes a river (Eze.47:5) which divides flowing into the Mediterranean (Zec.14:8) and in the opposite direction through the valley of **acacias** into the Dead Sea. This will cause the Dead Sea to live!

- *Psalm 72:16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass...*
- *Zechariah 14:8 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: ...*

It is the spiritual dimension that is so meaningful for in the kingdom age this temple spring produces living water (God's laws) which will flow forth causing the mountains (nations) to enact new righteous laws and the hills (courts) to give forth nourishment and righteous judgment.

- *Deuteronomy 32:2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:*
- *Micah 4:2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*
- *Revelation 22:1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

In contrast to Israel flowing with water, Egypt and Edom are singled out for their ill treatment of Israel as earlier Philistia and Phoenicia were in Joel 3:4. Egypt and Edom will also undergo further punishment, however in the case of Egypt the prophet Isaiah speaks of Egypt being healed and in the kingdom age being blessed with Israel, Isa.19: 24,25.

Joel 3:19 Egypt shall be a desolation <8076>, and Edom shall be a desolate <8076> wilderness,

for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

- 8077 “shamamah”, n f AV - desolate 40, desolation 14, waste 1, misc. 3; 58
- Isaiah 19:22,24,25 says that Egypt is yet to be smitten and then healed to become one with Israel and Assyria. Isaiah 11:15 says that the tongue of the Egyptian sea, shall be dried up and in the kingdom age there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria.
 - *Isaiah 19:22 And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them. 24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing ...*
 - *Isaiah 11:15 And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod.*
 - Isaiah 11:15 fits well with Zec. 14:18 in that the tongue of the Egyptian sea is to be dried up for today Egypt is not dependant upon rain but in the kingdom age she will be dependant.
 - *Zechariah 14:18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.*
- As for Edom this nation will not be healed but her desolation is forever as detailed by the prophets Ezekiel and Malachi.
- *Ezekiel 35:9 I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. 14 Thus saith the Lord GOD; When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate.*
- *Malachi 1:4 Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.*

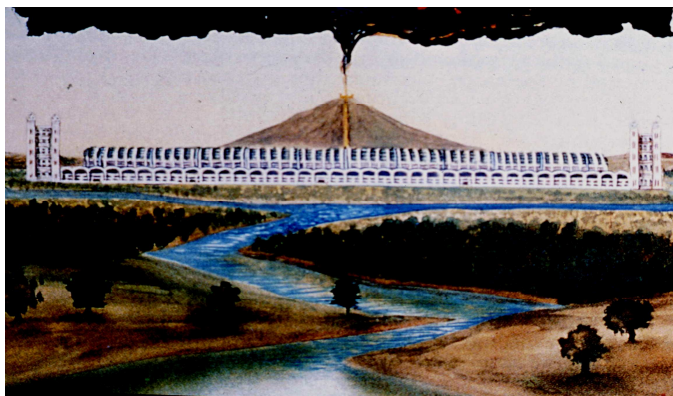
Children seem to be of special relevance in Joel’s prophecy. (Joel 1:3; 2:16,23,28; 3:3,6,8,16,19)

Joel 3:20 But Judah shall dwell for ever<5769>, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. 21 For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the LORD dwelleth in Zion.

- 5769 `owlam {o-lawm'}; n m AV - ever 272, everlasting 63, old 22, perpetual 22, evermore 15, never 13, time 6, ancient 5, world 4, always 3, alway 2, long 2, more 2, misc 8; 439
- Judah’s is to be cleansed (forgiven for their past and anticipation of the words of the Jews when they said “*His blood be on us and our children*” Mt.27:24-25) and to dwell throughout the kingdom age. Judah is contrasted with Edom v.19 which is described as a desolate wilderness whose blood isn’t cleansed. The context is the kingdom age when the LORD (Jesus who bears his Father’s name as the angel did in the wilderness, Exo.23:21) dwells on God’s holy hill Zion and finally the

gloom is gone!

- *Psa.2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*
- *Psa.72:19 And blessed by his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.*



In seeing the vision of Joel, the gloom can be gone for us too, for Joel is an amazing prophecy that uses vivid pictures that can warn, inspire, and cheer. Today it is especially important to see the vision, to see ourselves there, as “*kings and priests*” in a new, beautiful world that will finally glorify God's name. Because of God’s grace, his son’s redeeming work and our faith we have opportunity to be part of it! May God bless you in understanding His prophet Joel

“and let the whole earth be filled with His glory, Amen, and Amen.”