

## ***Session 10 End-Time Judgment on Israel's Enemies***

*Please refer to the teaching notes for this message.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

We're on our tenth class, looking at session notes number twelve. Joel 3:1-8, "For behold, in those days and at that time" (Joel 3:1)—incidentally, the phrase "in those days and at that time" is still referring to the end of the previous chapter, "I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh." He's in the same conversation, talking about the time frame of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Because there's a chapter break, some people start reading Joel 3:1 when they ought to start in Joel 2:28 in order to get the whole flow of what's happening here.

### **HE WILL ENTER INTO JUDGMENT WITH ALL NATIONS IN THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT**

"For behold in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem" (Joel 3:1). That's a really interesting new twist. He's been talking about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; now He's talking about Jewish prisoners in death camps. Like what? He just makes this sudden turn. The captives? The prisoners? We know from history that when the Jews are placed in camps by anti-Semitic nations, it's a very, very traumatic situation. These are prison camps, death camps. "At that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations" (v. 1-2). This is occurring at the same time as the death camps. "I will... gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat" (v. 2). In essence, that's around the city of Jerusalem. "And I will enter into judgment with them there." With whom? All the nations. The Lord says, "I have an appointment in the area of Jerusalem; I have an appointment for all the nations to judge them in that place. In the place where they've done their greatest crimes in history, I will bring My judgment against them in that very place. I will do it on account of My people, My heritage Israel."

He lists three particular sins: "They have scattered My people among the nations" (Joel 3:2, paraphrased); Number two: "They have... divided up My land" (v. 2b, NKJV); number three: "They have cast lots"—or sold into slavery—"...My people" (v. 3). They have sold a little Jewish boy for as insignificant an amount of money as the payment for a harlot. They have sold a girl for such an insignificant amount as a glass of wine.

### **"INDEED, WHAT HAVE YOU TO DO WITH ME, O TYRE AND SIDON?"**

Now God challenges these nations around Israel. This is a really heavy challenge; it's divine sarcasm. He says, "Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon?" (Joel 3:4). That's modern-day Lebanon. In other words, He's taunting them: "Oh resisting nations, do you think you can pick a fight with Me? So you think it's of no consequence that I have warned you? You have cast away My warning and you rise up and attack My purposes. You think it's of no consequence." This is a terrifying sentence here: "Indeed, what have you to do with me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia?"—the Gaza strip. Meaning, "You think you will challenge Me? Will you retaliate against Me? Will you hear My claims, My warnings, rise up and attack My purposes? Will you retaliate against Me?" He says, "If you [do] retaliate against Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head" (Joel 3:4b).

Of course this is a Jewish prophet speaking to the Gentile nations. And it only bolsters the pride and the arrogance of the Gentile nations. They say, "How dare you, O Jewish prophet, warn us in the name of the God of Israel, a God who doesn't even exist?"

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## **HE WILL RETALIATE THE SLAVERY OF THE NATIONS UPON THEIR OWN HEADS**

This is a very dramatic passage here. The Lord says, “I will return your retaliation upon your own head, because you have taken My silver and My gold” (Joel 3:4-5)—they have plundered His nation, carried the treasures into their own temples, and used His money to fund their own sacrilegious worship systems. “You use My money to support that which is against Me, worship movements that defy Me.”

Also, we see in verse 6, the people of Judah and the very people of Jerusalem they have said as slaves to the Greeks, “that you may remove them far from their borders” (Joel 3:6)—the borders of Israel. The Lord God will cause them to reap what they have sown: “I will raise them out of the place [of slavery] to which you have sold them, and I will return your retaliation upon your own head” (v. 7). He’s saying, “I will return back upon your own head, as a nation, that which you did to Israel. I will return it back to you. I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hands of Judah and they will sell them.” This is referring to a system of indentured servants, not the cruel barbaric type of servitude. “Your own children will actually serve them and their purposes for charge and for money.” Then the Lord says, “And they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off” (v. 8). The Sabeans dwell in the country of Yemen in Southern Arabia. “For the Lord has spoken” (ibid).

## **THE NEAR-UNIVERSAL OFFENSIVENESS OF THIS END-TIME MESSAGE**

We’ll break this down little by little, because it has tremendous relevance for what’s happening in the world today and what we’re to prophesy and declare. This is a politically incorrect message. The Jewish people don’t like this message: “You’re going into slavery.” The Gentiles don’t like this message: “You’ll be repaid by the Lord for taking them into slavery.” Neither group likes certain elements of Joel 3. But the prophetic Church must declare these truths even ahead of time. Even in the heat of the battle, we will declare these oracles of the Lord. It will be costly to declare them. In this context, in a Bible school, it’s interesting to study Joel 3; but when we have to say these things out there, it will be a whole different issue. However, the Holy Spirit will back it up with power.

## **THE MOST EPIC, MOST TERRIFYING, MOST GLORIOUS STORY IMAGINABLE**

Roman numeral I. The second coming of Jesus. Jesus is going to return to the earth. We know that, but the events leading up to it and the events that will follow it, the time that I believe we’re in right now, those decades leading up to His coming, and even the events immediately proceeding it, constitute the greatest drama imaginable. The story couldn’t be any more dramatic. There has never been a movie produced or a story that has been told that has more drama than the drama God is orchestrating across the earth in the generation in which the Lord returns. There’s so much evil going on; there’s so much good; there’s so much heroic goodness. There’s great perversity and evil; yet there are sudden reversals and turnarounds where the Lord breaks in suddenly and reverses the fortunes of those who call on His name. It’s so dramatic. We have a role in this great drama. That’s why I have such a burden that the people of God would understand it: because so many of God’s people have never studied these chapters, these 150 chapters in the Bible that speak about the events of the end-time drama, positive and negative, leading to the coming of the Lord and what happens after He comes. It’s not OK that we’re illiterate concerning most of the 150 chapters in the Bible related to this great drama. We must begin to see what God has put in His Word about this drama. It’s very exciting; it’s dangerous; it’s dynamic; it’s glorious. It’s everything and every emotion imaginable.

## **ISRAEL WILL BE AGAIN TAKEN CAPTIVE AND SCATTERED AMONG THE NATIONS**

Paragraph B. Before the Lord returns, the anti-Semitic nations, which will be many, many nations of the earth, many more than right now, those nations that shift over to possess a real, entrenched hatred against Israel, will

take the Jewish people captive and scatter them across nations, against their will, into captivity. It will be much like what Hitler did in Nazi Germany. He took them outside of their own country of Germany, the German Jews, and put them in death camps and other nations surrounding.

### **“I WILL GATHER ALL THE NATIONS TO BATTLE AGAINST JERUSALEM”**

Zechariah 14:2 gives a very clear statement of what’s going to happen in this drama. The reason we need to know this is because we will participate in this drama. The people of God will participate in that hour. I believe we’re in the early days of this. I believe we’re some decades away, but I also believe there are some people in this room who will see these events with your own eyes. I believe that you will see them in your lifetime and in the lifetime of your children and grandchildren.

In Zechariah 14:2, the Lord says, “I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem.” God is gathering the nations, and so is the Devil. There are two different gatherings, but it’s the same event. They’re all coming to Jerusalem. The Devil is deceiving them; he has his own motives that are evil. God is drawing them; He has His own motives which are redemptive. In this particular passage, we see God drawing them. In other passages, we see the Devil drawing them. Both are true.

He says, “The city shall be taken” (Zech. 14:2). That’s a statement where you go, “Uhh...” Because we’re praying and crying out for the purpose of God in Jerusalem. Let me tell you this. The city of Jerusalem will be captured one day before the Lord returns. It’s going to happen. I’ve said that to some of my friends who live there. Some of them don’t like it. But we won’t break the Word of God. It’s going to happen. The city will be taken again. “The houses [will be] rifled, the women ravished” (ibid)—raped and abused. “Half of the city will go into prison camps.” Half of the city will be taken against their will into death camps. Many will die, though some will survive.

### **JESUS WILL DESCEND TO DELIVER THE JEWS IN THE HOUR OF ANNIHILATION**

Right now, there are 600,000 Jews who live in the city of Jerusalem. If this happened today based on today’s numbers, that would be 300,000 Jewish people taken into prison camps from one city alone. This is going to happen, but there will be a remnant that survives, that God will supernaturally protect. They will call on the name of the Lord and they will stay in the city of Jerusalem. They won’t be taken out, which means, though the city will be taken, there will be a resistance, a Jewish resistance in the city until the Lord comes Himself. As a matter of fact, when Jesus comes at the second coming, part of what He’s doing is coming to rescue the Jewish resistance movement that’s calling on His name in the city of Jerusalem surrounded by the nations, in a great siege, and on the verge of being utterly annihilated. Then the Son of God Himself comes out of heaven and rescues them. They say, “Son of David, You, Jesus of Nazareth, You’re the Messiah!” Then Israel is saved and the story gets really cool after that.

### **WE NEED TO BE READY TO STAND IN THE GAP FOR THEM WHEN DARKNESS FALLS**

Paragraph C. Jesus even prophesied this issue of Jews in death and prison camps. Again, it says *captivity*, it says *prison*, but I tell you, when you look at history, these aren’t nice accommodation camps. I’m telling you, this is bad. The Devil wants to destroy and annihilate the Jewish people. The reason we care about this is because Jesus is requiring that His Church stands in the gap for them. He requires it. Many believers will refuse it because they don’t even know it’s in the Bible. They will actually deny the Lord and fall away in all this drama. Many others who understand that it’s in the Word will understand the reason for it, the purpose of it, and they will be girded, ready, and equipped to stand. God will use them in supernatural ways to reveal Jesus and to

bring deliverance. The Lord will even visit them in power and honor and it will be a glorious hour of purifying for the Body of Christ.

### **THE WONDER OF THE JEWS AS THEY REALIZE WE GROW FROM THE SAME VINE**

A lot of Gentile believers say, “I don’t get the whole Israel thing.” You need to understand the Israel thing before it’s over. The Lord has a dynamic role for the Gentile church to stand in the gap as His voice, as His representatives, declaring comfort to Israel and saying, “Jesus is your answer; Jesus is your answer.”

Of course they will say, “We don’t believe in Jesus.” We will be the only group on earth standing for them, making provision for them, calling out for them with supernatural miracles in the name of Jesus. This is going to disorient the nation of Israel for a little while until they figure out we really are those grafted into the vine of the tree of Abraham. We are grafted into the Jewish faith; it’s the Jewish Messiah we worship. They’re not joining *our* religion; we joined the tree of Abraham—that olive tree, we were grafted into it. They’ll say to us, “But we thought Christianity was Gentile.”

“No, true Christianity is in the olive tree, too. We’re grafted in. You have the prophets; you have the promises. You have the covenants; you have the Word of God. It’s your people to whom salvation was given, and we were graciously brought into your story. Now *we’re* calling *you* into your story.”

They won’t believe us. They’ll just think we’re Gentile, whatever, whatever, whatever. Until we stand in the gap, risk our lives, and show supernatural power in the name of Jesus. This is going to shift the entire mindset of the Jewish nation, those who survive, to where they will call upon Jesus. Jesus will come into Jerusalem, deliver them, set up His kingdom, and drive evil off the planet. It’s a very dramatic, dynamic story.

### **“THEY WILL FALL BY THE EDGE OF THE SWORD, AND BE LED AWAY CAPTIVE”**

Paragraph C. Jesus tells us this, so those who love Jesus, you can’t cast this aside. He says, “[Israel] will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Lk. 21:24).

Many people cast this prophecy of Jesus away because they say, “That happened in 70 A.D. when Israel was taken into prison camps by the Romans.” It’s true, but I believe this is the right interpretation: It was only partially fulfilled in 70 A.D., not completely. There are several dimensions to this prophecy that haven’t been fulfilled yet. Israel wasn’t taken into captivity in all nations. They were driven out of Jerusalem, taken into captivity in a few nations, but this is a prophecy yet to be fulfilled, because the Old Testament prophets talked about this as a prominent feature of the end times. That’s Jews in death camps. It’s almost never mentioned when we talk about the end times and the second coming of the Lord. It’s almost never mentioned, but it’s one of the most prominent themes of the Old Testament prophets. Jesus is not just returning to rapture us so that we can go away. He’s returning to rapture us, but He’s coming to deliver the captivity of the Jewish people and shock the nations of the earth with His great deliverance. The second coming is in the context of a military conflict and the liberation of prison camps. The second coming from the Old Testament point of view is described in that context. To not understand this is to be in confusion on many, many passages related to the second coming and the end times that are in the Old Testament. We will never understand the New Testament descriptions of the second coming unless they’re in unity and contextualized with the Old Testament descriptions of the second coming and end times. We have to bring them both together to get the whole picture and see it accurately.

**WE WILL BE AMBASSADORS OF THE LORD IN THIS CRISIS ON HIS BEHALF TO ISRAEL**

Top of page 112. Paragraph G. I have a whole list of verses about how Israel will go into captivity in the end times. I'm not happy about this. It's not my idea; in the flesh, I'm overwhelmed at the reality of this. It's a very prominent theme in the Bible, but almost totally ignored today by the Body of Christ. We can't ignore it, because we will be the ambassadors of the Lord in the crisis on His behalf to them. We can't *not* get what's going on. We have to get it; we have to grasp where this thing is going. This will really inconvenience our lives and our plans and our ministries. Israel in death camps will be a burden to the whole earth.

When Nazi German rose up in the 1940s and put Jews in death camps, the Body of Christ in Europe was mandated by God to stand in the gap for their deliverance. There were a few heroic individuals, maybe a few thousand, I don't know the number. But the majority of the Church ignored it, backslid, and denied the Lord. There were heroic examples, people like Corrie Ten Boom, who wrote *The Hiding Place*. It's one of the classic films from the 1970s, which told the story of Corrie Ten Boom in the Netherlands, in Holland, and how her family hid the Jews and went into the death camps themselves because they violated the state laws. You can't hide the Jews. But they led many people to the Lord. Her family died in the death camps, but young Corrie Ten Boom was delivered, spared, and went around to tell the nations what happened. There were people like Dietrich Bonhoffer, one of the pastors who took a stand in Germany and stood with the Jews against Hitler. There was Niemoeller, one of the most well-known pastors in the land, who stood against Hitler and for the Jews. These all all went to the death camps and died in them, but brought the message of Jesus to the Jewish people and led many people to the Lord, as the stories are told. No one knows the whole story.

**THE PURIFICATION OF THE CHURCH IN THE MIDST OF GREAT SIGNS AND WONDERS**

This is going to purify the Church and it will be the occasion of tremendous signs and wonders in the Church. Because the signs and wonders, as we know, aren't just to make meetings exciting; they will be an issue of life and death for the end-time Church. It won't just be fun and games; it will be a very serious issue. The Holy Spirit won't be something we just play with; this will be a very serious, sober reality operating in the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Of course we know that. When we look across the nations, it seems like in Charismania the Holy Spirit is understood as a plaything or something to make meetings more fun or stories more exciting. But the Holy Spirit is serious about preparing a people for the most dramatic hour of human history with life and death implications at every single part of the drama. At such a time as this, we're getting ready for that hour that's coming. We need to know these passages; we need to reckon with them.

As I've talked with a number of my Jewish leader friends in Israel, they say, "Man, you keep hitting this death camp thing."

I say, "We have to. Everyone needs to know. The Jewish people need to know where this is going."

"Well that's so negative," some of them have told me.

I say, "I know. I don't vote on it; I just read it. I don't write the script, I just deliver it." Like all of us. We're ambassadors. You need to prepare the Jews for what's coming, and we need to prepare the Gentile church to take a stand and be able to have understanding at such a time as this." We have to understand this stuff; we have to understand it.



Well, there it is. Roman numeral II. I think I just went into it. First, Jews in death camps, prison camps, is a prominent feature. It's a main part of the Old Testament testimony of the coming of the Lord. It reveals the nature of Satan's rage against Israel. We know Satan hates Israel, but I don't think we grasp the intensity of his rage. He wants to annihilate them. I'm talking about obliterating the Jewish people so that there's no one left who can call on the name of the Lord to return to Jerusalem. Because Jesus said, "I won't return until the Jewish people in that city beckon Me, invite Me" (Mt. 23:37-39, paraphrased).

In his heart Satan responds, "There will be no Jewish people to call You back. Therefore, You will never come back. Therefore I will never be thrown into prison when you come back." He hates the Jewish people.

Also, this shows the measure of the intensity of what God will do to purify Israel and the Church. This fire is going to purify the nation of Israel. It will also purify the Church like it did in Europe. Of course most of the Church in the 1940s fell away from the Lord. But it won't be that way in the end. God will have a people all over the nations who will be true to the Word of the Lord, who will trust in Jesus, and we will have our lives anchored in eternity. We will be fearless in front of death. This is where this thing is going. The power of God will break forth in remarkable ways in this context.

### **GOD WILL JOYFULLY RESTORE THOSE UNDER JUDGMENT IF THEY TURN AND REPENT**

Top of page 113. Another reason we need to understand about the prison camps is because it gives us insight into God's heart to restore anyone, even Israel in her rebellion, who is under severe discipline. When we read the story of the Jews or the testimony of Scripture of Jews in prison camps, that's not the whole story. The whole story is that they're liberated. Part of the story, yes, is that they go into them. Ouch! The other part of the story is that they're liberated. When they're liberated from the death camps, they come into salvation. There's a message in the story; there are many messages in this story, but one of them is, "Even a rebellious nation that I have disciplined, I will restore them suddenly and I will give them double honor when I restore them." The message that we receive as individuals, and even as nations, is that whenever God's discipline is severe, there is always restoration, even double honor, if we will but call on the name of the Lord. That's all He's waiting for, that they would call on the name of the Lord. When we see the whole story, we see how severe the discipline, but we see also the double honor He grants them. We say, "If You'll do that for Israel, we know it's in Your heart. This is what You'll do for anyone who calls on Your name, whether a nation or an individual." We have the testimony of God's heart towards Israel.

### **THE DEATH CAMPS ARE MENTIONED NEAR-CONSTANTLY IN END-TIME PROPHECY**

Paragraph C. The third reason we have to know this is because we can't understand the story line without this. When we study the second coming passages in the Old and New Testament, to get a unified story line that has no contradiction in it, we have to understand these many, many passages. I haven't counted them, but there are something like twenty-five. There are more descriptions of the death camps than almost any other subject about the end times. There's more on agricultural restoration and a few other things, but that's at the top of the list. The trumpet is only mentioned maybe four times altogether. The prison camps are mentioned closer to twenty-five times. We will be changed in an instant and transformed instantly—that's only mentioned twice. That every eye will see Him, that's mentioned twice, yea, three times if you throw in Zechariah 12. When you put in all the different features of the second coming descriptions in the Bible, this issue of the trauma of prison camps is at the top of the list. I don't mean it's number one, but it's in that top two or three in the priority of what the Lord wants us to grasp about the end-time drama. It must be grasped.

### **AWAKENING TO THE WEIGHT OF THE “ISRAEL ISSUE” IN THE END-TIME DRAMA**

Roman numeral III. As I talk about this, of course the people who have a real heart for Israel, which is everyone who is really paying attention to what God is saying about it, begins to wake up to how significant the battle for Jerusalem is in the Spirit. Again, many of you are twenty years old and you say, “My church didn’t do it; I’ve only been here a few months, I don’t get it.” Give yourself a little time. Let me say this: If you’re paying attention, sooner or later you will catch the weight of how significant the “Israel issue” is in the end-time drama. It’s what I call “the battle for Jerusalem.” It’s one of the premier battles in the Spirit, the battle for Jerusalem. Jesus wants it, the Devil wants it, and all the nations are attacking it. It’s all dramatic, dangerous, and glorious at the same time.

### **APOSTATE AND APOSTOLIC ISRAEL: THE REPROBATE AND THE RIGHTEOUS**

People who love Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles, who love Jesus and God’s purpose, ask the question, “Do the Jews go back, do the Jews stay here? What do they do? What do they do?” I have five different responses of the Jewish people related to the land of Israel. I believe there are these five responses. There might be more; these are five I’ve identified. There will be very different responses by Israel, by the Jewish people in the land.

The first response is very negative. I call it “apostate Israel.” Those are the Jews in the land who take the mark of the beast and worship the Antichrist. They will never be saved when they do that. *Apostate* means they have denied the Lord in the full sense.

The next group I call “apostolic Israel.” Those are the guys and gals in the land, the Jewish believers in the land who love Jesus, who will have supernatural protection and come and go and preach the Gospel and perform signs and wonders. They will even be able to go places in the midst of the land, to go and come back. They will have a supernatural dimension about their life. I call that apostolic Israel.

### **THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION: SHOULD THEY STAY OR SHOULD THEY FLEE?**

Paragraph D. There’s Israel in flight. These are the Jewish believers who are in the land and read the exhortation of Jesus in Matthew 24. Jesus spoke of the abomination of desolation (Mt. 24:15), and the abomination of desolation in one sentence means the Antichrist’s worship system that will be set up in the Jerusalem temple. That’s what it means when it’s all boiled down in a practical way. “When you see the Antichrist worship system in the Jerusalem temple, when it’s all set up and this man stands in that temple and says, ‘Hey, by the way, I’m God, worship me,’ when that happens,” Jesus said, “Flee” (v. 15-16, paraphrased). I believe some Jews will stay by the will of God; others will flee by the will of God.

Some people said, “Well should they stay or should they go?”

I said, “They should obey God.” It’s common for a person who has a particular position to expect everyone else to align with that position. Those who go will say, “You must go.” Not necessarily. Those who stay: “You need to stay.” Not necessarily; I think you should obey the Lord. Should you as a Jew stay in a foreign land or should you go back to Israel? Some are sitting back, some aren’t sitting back. I say, “Obey the Lord.” Again, whoever councils you, more often than not, will council you with what they did. That’s cool; that’s understandable. I believe the sufficient answer is that there are different responses. The Jewish people must one by one obey the Spirit’s direction in their lives. Some will flee when it happens.

**ONE THIRD OF THE PEOPLE WILL BE SAVED; TWO THIRDS WILL BE SLAIN**

Then there's Israel in prison. Those are the ones in the land who are taken away captive. Half the city of Jerusalem will be taken away captive. At the top of page 114, there's the number in Israel that's killed. This is so dramatic. It doesn't seem right to say it in a teaching as a point in passing, but God says in Zechariah 13:8 that two-thirds of the Jewish people will be killed.

You say, "That's horrific." It is. One-third will be saved. No one knows exactly the number of Jewish people in the world. There are so many ways to count Jewish lineage: by the mother, by the father, by both, the one fourth, the two thirds. There are so many designations. Some say there are about eighteen million in the earth; others say that's a little high. But if that's the case, we're talking about twelve million of them dying and six million getting saved, because if one third are saved, we're talking about five or six million coming to Jesus. Not 100,000, five or six million coming radically to Jesus, born again. That's the great story, that five or six million will be saved. The other side of the story is that ten or twelve million die.

You say, "I don't want to know that." We do want to know that. This is the gravity of how serious this conflict is going to be. It's so weighty; it's so real; it's so not avoidable or pleasant. It must be answered with the Word of the Lord. We must, as God's people, understand it and be prepared to speak into it; we must take a stand, and we must be involved. We have to know it's horrifying, because in the Hitler death camps six million were murdered. In the Antichrist's death camps, it may be twelve million. We don't know, but it's two thirds of the Jewish people. That's a heavy, heavy word. It might be twice the number slain by Adolph Hitler. All I know is that we don't get to vote on that. What we're working for, as those standing in the gap, is for the five or six millions that will be saved.

When Jewish people hear this, they absolutely hate what I've just said in the last three minutes. They hate it with a passion, but it's in the Hebrew prophets. It's a Jewish prophet who said this. It's not a Gentile; a Jewish prophet said this. Zechariah said it, as did many other prophets; Isaiah said it more than anyone, and he is one of the premier Jewish prophets.

**JESUS WILL BE THE GREATER MOSES, DELIVERING THE CAPTIVES TO ISRAEL**

The return of the Jewish captives to Israel. The reason I'm focusing on the captives is because the captives are mentioned several times in Joel 3:1-8. It's the subject of the captives and Joel doesn't ignore it; Joel addresses this subject. They will be in captivity, and he addresses the subject, and the nations that participated will be judged. We have to proclaim both of these truths. They're going into captivity. Ouch! Those who take them captive will be judged. We say, "Yay, I want to say that." You wait until you meet those nations and other leaders; you may not have the boldness that it feels like we ought to have. That boldness may not be there automatically; this is a weighty, difficult message.

Roman numeral IV. The return of the Jewish captives to Israel. They will return. "In those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives" (Joel 3:1). Well, in order to bring the captives back, the captives first have to be taken. The bad news is that they're taken. The good news is, "I the Lord will bring them back." Jesus at His second coming will function as the greater Moses, delivering the captives of Israel. Not just in Egypt, but all throughout the Middle East and other nations as well. They will be in all nations. Jesus will come, not only as the Moses that delivered the Jews from Egypt, but the greater Moses that delivered the Jews in the nations from captivity.



**“IN THOSE DAYS AND AT THAT TIME, WHEN I BRING BACK THE CAPTIVES...”**

Paragraph A. Instead of winding his book down to a slow end after the great outpouring of the Spirit, Joel in the same paragraph—it's unfortunate there's a chapter break right there between chapter 2 with the outpouring of the Spirit and chapter 3. How does the great “outpouring of the Spirit” chapter end? “Those who call upon the name of the Lord will be delivered” (Joel 2:32, paraphrased). The next verse: “At that time, when I bring back the captives...” (Joel 3:1). Those who call upon the Lord will be delivered, and they're in captivity calling on the Lord if you put the two verses together. You *must* put the two verses together to get the story line clear. There's no break between Joel 2 and Joel 3; it's a continual thought. He's in one prophetic oracle; he's giving one message.

**FIVE THINGS THAT WILL HAPPEN SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THEIR FULLEST DEGREE**

Paragraph B. Look at five things that happen simultaneously, meaning in the same time frame. Five things are happening at the fullest degree, though each of them has happened partially throughout history. All five of these have had a partial fulfillment in history. All five of them have their complete fulfillment in the same time frame. First the great outpouring of the Spirit: it's been going on for 2,000 years, but it will really go to another level before the Lord returns. Then the supernatural deliverance of the Jews; then the terrifying signs in the heavens; then the liberation of Jews in prison camps and God's judgment on anti-Semitic nations. All five of those are integrated together.

**THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT IS NOT SEPARABLE FROM GOD'S OTHER PURPOSES**

Here is the point I want you to get. The outpouring of the Spirit and the spirit of prophecy is related to these other four ideas. The outpouring of the Spirit is not separated from these other ideas; they're joined together. Throughout history, the Holy Spirit has poured out His Spirit and accomplished many purposes. When it comes to a crescendo at the end, all five of these will be merged together. They will be prophesying about the deliverance of the Jews; they will be prophesying about the terrifying signs in the heavens; they will be prophesying about the liberation of Jewish camps; they will be prophesying about judgment on the anti-Semitic nations. The prophets will do all these things together. We find the message with which the outpouring of the Spirit is identified. It's not the only message, but it's part of the message when we read the book of Joel in its proper context.

**GOD WILL GATHER ALL THE NATIONS TO JERUSALEM FOR JUDGMENT**

Top of page 115. The gathering of all nations. Roman numeral IV. “I will... gather all nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people” (Joel 3:1-2)—He will judge all the nations there specifically in the valley of Jehoshaphat. The valley of Jehoshaphat is in the region of the city of Jerusalem.

Paragraph A. First, God is going to gather all the nations together to Jerusalem for judgment. It's clear in many places that they're gathered to Jerusalem. God gathers them to the city of Jerusalem. Here it's called “the valley of Jehoshaphat.” The phrase “valley of Jehoshaphat” is a little precarious, because there's no such valley called the valley of Jehoshaphat in Israel or in Israel's history. There's no place with that name. The commentators say, “What's that valley? Where is this valley of Jehoshaphat?”

**THE VICTORY OF JEHOSHAPHAT FORESHADOWED THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF GOD**

Some commentators say, “Because there's not a place called the valley of Jehoshaphat, it's only symbolic.” I don't think that's the best answer. I think the valley of Jehoshaphat is a specific place. It's the valley where

King Jehoshaphat, the king of Israel, had a great victory. As a matter of fact, he had a solemn assembly; he called the people to fast and pray. They were surrounded by the enemy; they had a supernatural deliverance. They went to this valley, worshiped the Lord, and gave Him thanks. I believe that's the valley of Jehoshaphat. Because again, he was surrounded by hostile nations, fasted and prayed, called the people together, experienced a supernatural deliverance, and praised the Lord in this valley. In my opinion, that's the valley of Jehoshaphat, right outside the city of Jerusalem. Because many passages describe the city of Jerusalem as the city the nations will be gathered. I believe that Jehoshaphat worshiped the Lord and had the victory commemorated in the valley outside Jerusalem. You put that together with the fact that all the nations are going to gather to Jerusalem; that's where the Lord is going to meet them and judge them. I believe the valley of Jehoshaphat is in the region of Jerusalem.

### **THREE REASONS GOD WILL GATHER THE NATIONS TO JERUSALEM FOR JUDGMENT**

Paragraph six. Three reasons. These aren't the only three reasons, but three that Joel highlights. These three matter, because if God spoke them through the prophets, He's saying, "Pay special attention to these three reasons." More difficult for us, He's saying, "I want My prophets to say them."

"Say them to whom? Let's say them at a church conference."

"I want you to say what Joel said."

When I study this passage, it's very interesting. I think about saying this in front of Islamic leaders; I'm not talking about in a church or at a prophecy conference, I'm talking about in the open air: "OK... God is going to gather all of you, not just Islamic nations, but all the nations. He's going to gather all of you to Jerusalem."

"Well, we beg your pardon. We're going to Jerusalem, because we have a unified plan and we will destroy that wicked city."

"Well, that's your version. The God of Israel is leading you into an ambush."

"Where is the ambush?"

"He is coming from heaven, suddenly, with the multitudes. You're being led into an ambush."

"The God of Israel is calling us mighty nations to Jerusalem? We don't think so. We think we're going because we're getting rid of these people who are a burden to us. The God of Israel doesn't even exist. If He existed, Israel would have been delivered a long time ago."

"No, the God of Israel was crucified on a cross to pay the price for redemption and He's coming back to take over the world."

"Right..." It's a difficult message. Again, don't just study it because it's fun to study. It is enjoyable to study the prophecies; but study it and picture yourself saying it, not in a church conference, but out there. Don't say it until you get it clear. This isn't the moment to show your bravado and say, "I fear no man." Get clear first and be anointed and say only what He says to say. This isn't the time for prophetic showmanship; this is the time for real, precise obedience in the Spirit. This is the message we'll say; not the only message, but we will speak this

politically incorrect message to both the Jews and the Gentiles. Both in and outside the Church, this message at every place is totally politically incorrect. It's like the preacher said: "God isn't out to hurt your pride. He's out to kill it."

### **THEY WILL SCATTER ISRAEL, DIVIDE THE LAND, AND ENSLAVE HER PEOPLE**

Paragraph A. They scattered Israel. They scattered Israel. Secondly, they divided up the land. Thirdly, they enslaved the people. All three of these have happened throughout history; they all have historical precedent, but all three of them are going to reach their highest measure of sin and judgment in times still to come.

Paragraph B. Scattering Israel. The point isn't that the nations are going to scatter Israel; the point is what God is going to do about it. The message isn't, "Hey, guess what, Israel? You're going to be scattered." No, that's not the main message. The main message is, "Hey nations, you scatter Israel, the Lord is going to hold you accountable and He's going to confront you face to face because of it."

### **PSALM 2: THE DIVINE DRAMA IN FOUR SHORT ACTS**

Top of page 117. God's challenge to the nation. I've all but gone through this, but it's such a dramatic passage. It's this divine sarcasm—*sarcasm* isn't the right word. It's this challenging, in-your-face oracle of God to these nations in the spirit of Psalm 2. If you don't know Psalm 2, just write that down and say, "I must learn Psalm 2." Psalm 2 is a must for every believer in the generation in which the Lord returns. Psalm 2 is the clearest description of the end-time drama.

I'll take just a moment and tell you what Psalm 2 is. Psalm 2 has twelve verses. Psalm 2 was described by Charles Spurgeon, who was one of the most well-known preachers in London, England in the 1800s. I read this years ago and I loved it; I just can't improve upon it, so I use his version of it. He said, "Psalm 2 is the divine drama in four different acts." It's on the stage of history. In every one of these acts, each player get three verses. In act one, we have the kings of the earth. They stand on the stage; they raise their fists to God. They say, "We don't want You! We don't want your Son! We don't want your Word. We're finished with You; You're out of here."

That's act one. The curtain closes. In act two, the Father comes on the scene. He says, "I laugh at your threats; I mock your threats. For I will destroy you in My fury. It doesn't matter that you don't like My Son; I have already anointed Him."

The curtain closes. It opens for act three. Jesus comes on the stage. He says, "Father, release the nations. I ask You in intercession: Let Me break the nations, let Me possess them."

The nations are thinking, "Ahhh." The curtain closes.

It opens again, act four. King David comes on the stage. King David says, "If I was you guys, O kings, O judges of the earth, I would be wise. You should tremble before Him. If I was you, I would kiss the Son. I would bow down and pay homage; I would kiss the Son. That's your only way out of this fight that you've picked."

That's the four acts. In act one, the first three verses, the kings say, "We want Your Son out of here." In act two, the Father says it doesn't matter; He is already anointed. In act three, Jesus says, "Give Me the earth." In act

four, David says, “You had better bow down, O nations.” That’s what’s going on; it’s a very dramatic psalm, Psalm 2. It has its fullness in the end times.

### **A CHALLENGING, IN-YOUR-FACE ORACLE OF GOD TO THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH**

This passage here, Joel 3:4-8 is in the same spirit of the dialogue in which the Father is challenging the nations in Psalm 2. It’s almost like a different version of that same conversation. God says, in verse 4, “What have you to do with Me? You’re telling Me, O Tyre and Sidon”—modern-day Lebanon—“you’re telling Me you don’t care about My Word and My threat?” (Joel 3:4, paraphrased).

They say, “We don’t care about Your Word or Your threats.”

“O coastlands of Philistia, O Gaza, you don’t care that the Jewish prophets warned you to back down?”

“No.”

“You don’t care about My Word?”

“No...”

Because what will happen is that these nations will join the Antichrist’s worldwide army. The Antichrist will have big muscles, so to speak; he will have the most powerful army in history. They will stand under his shadow and say to God, “We’re part of the most successful military force in human history. Weak little Israel with no army, with no resources, with a whole world against them, we don’t care what you say, prophets of Israel, prophets of the God of Israel.”

God says, “You should care, because though Israel is weak, Israel’s God is not weak.” That’s what’s going on here. He says, “You will retaliate against Me? You think because you joined this big international army that’s so powerful that somehow you’re immune from My Word and I won’t challenge you face to face before all the earth? If you retaliate against Me, if you throw My Word down, I will swiftly, speedily return judgment back on you.”

### **GOD IS LOOKING FOR FEARLESS PROPHETIC VOICES THAT WILL STAND FOR TRUTH**

Now, who is going to say that between now and when Jesus returns? You. You’re going to speak this conversation.

“Ooo, Give me the spirit of prophecy, dreams and visions.”

Well the dream is, “Tell the rebellious nations I am about to destroy them.”

“No, no Lord. I was thinking of more, tell the secrets of the heart; then I’ll have a big ministry, and a great conference and it will be exciting.”

Jeremiah was a young man. He had the prophetic spirit, but it was a message of, “Tell the nations this and that.”

“I don’t want to tell them this and that...”

“And tell your own nation some things, Jeremiah.”

Jeremiah was thrown into prison for doing it. You want to be a prophet? Good. God is looking for fearless prophetic voices that will take a stand for truth.

### **THE ENEMY WILL STEAL ISRAEL'S WEALTH TO FINANCE WICKED SYSTEMS**

God says in verse 5, “You have taken My silver and My gold” (Joel 3:5).

In Haggai 2:8, God says, “The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine” (Hag. 2:8). That's an end-time passage. God says, “Don't take My silver and gold.” Here is what they do with the silver and gold: They take it from Israel. They've done it throughout history, because all of these have happened throughout history but they have a crescendo, their greatest fulfillment, at the end of the age. They use the money to finance their godless idolatrous worship system. Of course we know from Revelation 13:16-17 that the Antichrist is going to finance a worldwide worship system and make everyone take a mark to pay into that system. God says, “That's My gold and My silver; it won't finance your worship movement.”

The Antichrist says, “Yes it will.” Because gold and silver is power.

God says, “Those are My resources; they won't be used to worship devils.”

### **THE PEOPLE OF JUDAH AND JERUSALEM WILL BE SOLD INTO SLAVERY**

The challenge is on. In verse 6 He says, “Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem you have sold to the Greeks” (Joel 3:6). They have been sold into slavery. He says, “That's not OK; I want them freed. As a matter of fact, you will pay for this.” Not only do we need to understand it so we understand the drama more clearly, so we can make sense of it—we want to be able to read anywhere in the Bible and make sense of the drama without there being contradiction in the story line, it's true. But we also need to know so we can prophesy these themes in the decades ahead. We might need to start prophesying them sooner rather than later. They need to be spoken by God's servants, the majority of whom are Gentile, born again believers. There are a lot of Jewish believers, but there are hundreds of millions of born again, Spirit-filled believers. They must start saying what God has said in the Word of God.

### **GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE WHOLE HUMAN STORY**

Bottom of page 118. I'm going to bring this to an end in a moment. Roman numeral VIII. The underlying issue is God's sovereignty. People say, and rightfully, understandably so, “I don't get this whole Israel thing. It bugs me. Who cares?”

I've heard this for years. I said it. I remember when Bob Jones first met me. I said, “I don't do the whole Israel thing.”

He said, “You will, mark my words.”

“My people don't shop in Grandview.”

“They'll do that too.” He was right. It's the issue, paragraph A, of God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty is the foundational premise behind the whole human story. God has the right to choose what He wants to do, who will



be in authority, where He wants to do it and how the story line will unfold. He has the right to choose all of that. What is it He wants to do? “I want My Son to rule all the earth.”

“You’re God. You want Him to rule on the earth? He will rule on the earth. Done.”

He has the right to choose who will be the primary authority figures. He says, “I want the Jewish people to be the lead nation.”

“You want it?”

“Yes.”

“OK. If it’s You, I love You, I love what You want, let’s do it.”

He gets to choose where. He said, “Jerusalem.”

“Why Jerusalem?”

“It’s none of your business; I want Jerusalem.”

“If you choose Jerusalem, I love You and I love what You love. Jerusalem is as good as any other place.”

He says, “That’s the place I have chosen.” Back in the beginning, when all things were even, He could have chosen anywhere. Yet He said, “That’s where I want to rule forever.” This is an eternal decision, not a haphazard one. This is a thoroughly thought-through decision from eternity past with eternal future implications. “I want to choose how the drama will unfold. I will choose the drama and how it will come to completion. I will gather all the nations around Jerusalem. The Jewish people will eventually accept My Son.”

“OK.”

Page 119. Paragraph B. In our unrenewed thinking, we don’t like this. We want God to rule from our nation. “If I was You, God, I would rule from *my* nation and nationality.”

“You’re not Me and I have chosen Jerusalem.”

“OK, that’s good enough for me.”

### **GOD IS ORCHESTRATING HISTORY TO REVEAL THE GLORY OF HIS NAME**

Paragraph C. It’s a revelation of His glory. He’s orchestrating history to reveal the glory of His name. He says this in Ezekiel 36: “Israel, I’m not doing it for you particularly, though I do love you” (Eze. 36:36, paraphrased). God so loves the earth. “I love the nations. I do love you, Israel, but I’m doing this to prove and exhibit My holy name to everyone. I will have a story line against all odds.”

It's not a perfect phrase, but the phrase I've used over the years is that God puts Himself in divine checkmate. It's like He paints Himself into a corner on purpose. He gave the oil to the Islamic nations who hate Israel. He gave the oil. It's not like we can say, "Lord, You put the oil in the wrong spot."

"You're kidding!"

"Yes, you gave it to those guys."

"I thought I told them to put it over there..."

No, that's not what happened. It's not an accident; He put the oil there so that the whole earth needs the oil to run. He did it on purpose. So all the nations are against Israel, and then the nation that's most hostile towards Jesus has to be the nation that becomes the most fervently for Him. He chooses the nation that won't exist because everyone is against them. They have to worship Jesus and choose Him, though they hate Him more than any other nation hates Him.

The Father says, "Watch this: I will save the weakest nation from all the others. I will take the most rebellious nation and make them the most tender, most loving of all nations. Watch this. I will flex My muscles, show My love, exhibit My brilliance, and the whole earth will bow down and say, 'You are God.' And I won't violate anyone's free will when I do it."

That's what's going on. Amen.