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By Dan Maines

## Joel 3

### Joel 3:1-2

For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and they have divided up My land.

† God declares a coming restoration for His people and judgment upon the nations that oppressed them.

† Historically, this occurred when God avenged the Jews' bloodshed through the downfall of their persecutors.

† Prophetically, this valley of judgment points to the covenantal reckoning that culminated in AD 70.

† Jerome interpreted the valley of Jehoshaphat as symbolic of divine justice rather than a geographic location.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, judgment is complete, and God's people now live restored in spiritual Zion.

### **Joel 3:3-4**

They have also cast lots for My people, traded a boy for a harlot and sold a girl for wine that they may drink. Moreover, what are you to Me, O Tyre, Sidon and all the regions of Philistia? Are you rendering Me a recompense? But if you do recompense Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense on your head.

† The nations' cruelty reveals their contempt for God's covenant people.

† Historically, neighboring nations sold Jews into slavery during invasions.

† Prophetically, this represents the world's rebellion against God's covenant purpose.

† Jerome said that the recompense promised here was fulfilled when those very nations suffered Roman conquest.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, every injustice has been repaid, and righteousness now prevails forever.

### **Joel 3:5-6**

Since you have taken My silver and My gold, brought My precious treasures to your temples, and sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their territory.

† The plundering of God's treasures symbolizes spiritual robbery against His covenant.

† Historically, many captives were taken and sold throughout the Greco-Roman world.

† Prophetically, these acts were avenged when God overturned the oppressors' kingdoms.

† Eusebius noted that the dispersion of the Jews fulfilled this prophecy literally.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, the true treasure is the presence of Christ within His people.

### **Joel 3:7-8**

Behold, I am going to arouse them from the place where you have sold them, and return your recompense on your head. Also I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a distant nation, for the Lord has spoken.

† Divine justice repays every act of oppression.

† Historically, Judah's enemies were conquered and enslaved in turn.

† Prophetically, this reversal signifies the triumph of the covenant community through Christ.

† Jerome said that God's justice perfectly balances mercy and retribution.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, vengeance is complete, and all nations now bow to the King of kings.

### **Joel 3:9-10**

Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare a war! Rouse the mighty men! Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up! Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am a mighty man.

† The nations are summoned for divine confrontation.

† Historically, this describes the mobilization of armies against God's covenant people.

† Prophetically, it portrays the gathering of nations in rebellion before their downfall.

† Eusebius viewed this as fulfilled in the gathering of the Roman legions against Jerusalem.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, the call to war has ceased, for Christ's peace reigns forever.

### **Joel 3:11-12**

Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, and gather yourselves there. Bring down, O Lord, Your mighty ones. Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.

† God's courtroom imagery reveals His sovereign authority over all nations.

† Historically, the valley represents the decisive moment of divine intervention.

† Prophetically, this depicts the judgment of the nations at the end of the old covenant age.

† Jerome said that “the valley of Jehoshaphat” means “the Lord judges,” symbolizing covenant justice.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, God's judgment has been executed, and His reign is righteous and eternal.

### **Joel 3:13-14**

Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

† The harvest and wine press imagery symbolize judgment and separation.

† Historically, this reflects the slaughter and bloodshed during the Jewish War.

† Prophetically, it matches Revelation 14:19, fulfilled in the first century.

† Jerome wrote that the valley of decision represents God's

irreversible verdict against rebellion.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, the harvest of judgment has passed, and the harvest of righteousness endures.

### **Joel 3:15-16**

The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness. The Lord roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. But the Lord is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel.

† The darkening of celestial bodies marks covenantal upheaval.

† Historically, this was fulfilled in Jerusalem's fall and the end of the temple system.

† Prophetically, it mirrors the apocalyptic signs Jesus foretold in Matthew 24:29.

† Eusebius said that God's roar from Zion symbolized the proclamation of His gospel power.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, believers stand secure in the refuge of Christ, the eternal Zion.

### **Joel 3:17-18**

Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, and strangers will pass through it no more. And in that day the mountains will drip with sweet wine, and the hills will flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; and a spring will go out from the house of the Lord to water the valley of Shittim.

† The prophecy concludes with the image of the restored, spiritual Jerusalem.

† Historically, physical Jerusalem was destroyed, but spiritual Zion arose in its place.

† Prophetically, the flowing waters represent the life of the Spirit proceeding from Christ.

† Jerome saw this river as the living water Jesus promised in John 7:38.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, the saints dwell eternally in the presence of the Lord, never defiled again.

### **Joel 3:19-21**

Egypt will become a waste, and Edom will become a desolate wilderness, because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, in whose land they have shed innocent blood. But Judah will be inhabited forever and Jerusalem for all generations. And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged, for the Lord dwells in Zion.

† Egypt and Edom represent all hostile nations brought to ruin.

† Historically, these nations were subdued under divine judgment.

† Prophetically, this points to the destruction of all who opposed God's covenant kingdom.

† Eusebius and Jerome both identified this as the final fulfillment of God's vengeance in history.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, Jerusalem is the eternal city of peace where the Lord dwells forever.

### **How it applies to us today**

† Joel 3 reveals the certainty of divine justice and the completion of prophecy.

† The nations' judgment and Jerusalem's restoration were fulfilled in the first century.

† God's dwelling is now with His people in the spiritual Zion.

† The valley of decision has passed; the kingdom of peace remains forever.

† We now live in the reality of the fulfilled kingdom where the Lord reigns eternally.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

## Source Index

- † The Holy Bible, NASB
- † Josephus, The Wars of the Jews, Book 6
- † Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3
- † Jerome, Commentary on Joel
- † Clement of Rome, 1 Clement
- † Tertullian, Against Marcion, Book 4
- † Hippolytus, Commentary on Joel

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