

The Book of Joel

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(1992 Study)

The following notes on the Book of Joel were compiled from a Bible study led by Bro. Frank Shallieu in 1992. They should be utilized with the following understanding:

1. Each paragraph preceded by “**Comment**” or “**Q**” (an abbreviation for “Question”) was introduced by someone other than Bro. Frank.
2. The original study did not follow a prepared text but was extemporaneous in nature.
3. Although the transcriber tried to faithfully, with the Lord’s help, set forth the thoughts that were presented in the study, the notes are not a verbatim rendering and, therefore, should be considered in that context.
4. Finally, Bro. Frank did not review the notes for possible errors that may have inadvertently entered the text.

With this disclaimer in mind, may the notes be a blessing as a useful study guide.

THE BOOK OF JOEL

(Study led by Bro. Frank Shallieu in 1992)

Joel 1:1 The word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.

The name Joel signifies “Jehovah is God” or, in a *very authoritative* sense based on the contents of this book, “Jehovah, the Mighty God.” The *mighty* judgments that are suggested will manifest that God is Jehovah. As a whole, the Book of Joel pertains to the last days of the present age, with a partial fulfillment in the past as a type.

Comment: Pethuel means “God delivers.”

Joel 1:2 Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?

Joel 1:3 Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.

Joel particularly instructed the older men to pay attention to what he was about to say, starting with a question, “Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?” The older men were to search their memories, looking back into their earliest experiences and even the experiences of their predecessors. Moreover, the old men and all inhabitants of the land were to tell their children, their grandchildren, and their great grandchildren—going forward three generations.

Joel was saying, “Pay attention, especially you older men, in searching your memories and statements handed down to you through your parents and grandparents. Has there been anything like what I am about to tell you?”

Joel 1:4 That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.

Comment: The Revised Standard shows that verse 4 is referring to all stages of the locust. “What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten. What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten, and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten.”

Reply: Laying waste all vegetation pictures *total* destruction. The locust is very destructive in its various stages of transformation. The four stages include cutting, swarming, hopping, and destroying. In this particular plague, the locust was resident in the *same* area for *all* of its stages. Stated another way, the locust plague was simultaneous in that all four insect groups ate immediately, one after the other. When they were done, nothing was left.

Normally, as each stage of locust development takes place, the insects move to another area to cause destruction; that is, the different stages of development do not all take place in the same area. However, here a fourfold destruction occurred. A locust plague denudes the normal green material, but with all four stages occurring in the same place, Joel was describing something unprecedented.

This plague was unusual in that all four varieties of locust were together. Hence, as a prophecy, the plague pictured a confederate army with individual, separate, vicious qualities. What

damage one group would not do, the others accomplished. The complete devastation resulted in the people being taken captive and the land being left desolate.

Joel 1:5 Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.

Why did the prophet say, “Awake, ye drunkards”? Joel performed the duty of a watchman in his day. He was addressing those in Israel who were asleep and should have been more alert. In addition to being intoxicated and not watching, the people were in a stupefied condition and had difficulty reasoning in a rational fashion.

“Howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.” What was the “new wine”? Probably the Revised Standard is a little more accurate with the term “sweet wine” instead of “new wine,” for sweet wine induces sleepiness.

From the natural standpoint of a person who liked wine, the supply would run out, and there would be no replenishing of that which he enjoyed. The new crop, the new wine, would be cut off, and there was no more to be harvested. Those who were partaking of this wine were drunk and unaware that conditions would radically change.

From the spiritual standpoint, those who have been imbibing the false wine (doctrine) of Christendom are intoxicated and asleep. The “drunkards” need to wake up and realize what is happening, but because they fail to watch and sound an alarm, they will sleep through the doctrines of demons in the coming church-state hour of power. However, a time will come for shock and renewal. The old wine will wear off, and a new experience will come upon them—a radical change for which they are ill prepared.

Joel 1:6 For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion.

“A nation is come up upon my land ... whose teeth are the teeth of a lion.” In the spiritual sense at the end of the age, this “nation ... strong, and without number” will be the Lord’s Great Army (Joel 2:11). In Belshazzar’s feast, the princes and the lords were drunk with wine while the city was being surrounded. They were unaware of the impending destruction, the immediacy of a radical change.

From a natural standpoint, we cannot pin down a specific year when Joel gave this prophecy, which applied to the whole land of Israel. For the ten tribes, the strong “nation” was Assyria, and for the two tribes, it would be Babylon. The Book of Joel was written before the 606 BC experience, when King Nebuchadnezzar came down and destroyed Judah and Benjamin, but the question is how much before? Probably it was written around 800 BC, either shortly before or just after the captivity of the ten tribes and the despoliation of the land by Assyria.

Q: Was Joel referring to a literal plague that had occurred back there?

A: Yes, he was drawing a lesson from that which was unique, saying it was a sign. To the Jews as a people, a sign or omen was very significant, and the Lord dealt with Israel along this line. The only problem was that the people did not draw the appropriate lesson. Jesus said, “An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas” (Matt. 12:39). To ask for a sign was not necessarily a wrong principle. The problem was that the people were not in the proper heart condition for them to be amenable to the sign.

Joel was saying, “In searching your memory, you will realize that a plague like this has never occurred before. It will happen again but not in the way you would anticipate.” A conqueror would lay waste the land. Thus the natural experience of the locust plague the Jews witnessed back there had its counterpart in the army that would come down.

From the spiritual standpoint, the locust plague is a sign of the end of the age. The implication is that natural calamities will occur. Hunger will be a great factor in the Time of Trouble, and money will be meaningless, for silver and gold will not purchase anything and cannot be eaten. The very basic elements of nature—food and water—are essential. While back there the locust plague remaining resident in the area with its four waves of affliction was a most unusual sign, it would be followed by something even more drastic in another way. Accordingly, in the great Time of Trouble in the near future, there will be famine and hunger, and the people will curse their god and their king (Isa. 8:21). However, the *unfavorable* condition will be a prelude to something even more striking, namely, God’s deliverance of the Holy Remnant of Israel from Jacob’s Trouble—a *favorable* condition.

The strong nation would have “the teeth of a lion, and ... the cheek teeth of a great lion.” Spiritually, Satan is the lion, and in the natural picture, King Nebuchadnezzar was called “the lion ... come up from his thicket” (Jer. 4:7). A lion uses its “cheek teeth” to crush the prey, and the other teeth masticate the food for digestion. In other words, the coming violence and the completeness of the destruction would be very notable.

Joel 1:7 He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white.

In one stage of development of the locust, even the bark of trees is consumed, the reason being that no other greenery is available. Notice the use of past and present tense, yet this was a prophecy of the future. Joel was referring to the conquest of Judah. The ten tribes may already have been taken captive, so from the natural standpoint, the future prophecy applied to King Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of Judah, when the *entire* land, both the northern and the southern kingdoms, was left desolate. When the ten tribes were taken into captivity, their land was temporarily desolated, then it was occupied by the Samaritans, and finally the land was completely desolated by Nebuchadnezzar. As devastating as the Assyrian conquest of the northern kingdom was, there was a slight recovery, and then Nebuchadnezzar laid waste the entire land of Israel.

In verses 6 and 7, the phrases “my land,” “my vine,” and “my fig tree” help to focus on the historic past of 606 BC, which was future from Joel’s perspective. In other words, Joel was predicting a future calamity along natural lines that did not occur in his day but took place in 606 BC with Nebuchadnezzar. Proof that this first chapter is not speaking of Jacob’s Trouble is the fact the land will not be completely wasted at that time, nor will all crops be destroyed. Yes, the trouble will be devastating, but vegetation will not be despoiled. Jacob’s Trouble will be warfare, whereas Joel was telling here about the aftereffects of King Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest. In fact, the land was so denuded that he left some Jews there as vinedressers lest it become fallow and sterile for a hundred years. However, Gedaliah was subsequently slain, and the remaining vinedressers fled to Egypt, leaving the land desolate for 70 years. Not only from a prophetic standpoint did the land have to rest for 70 years, but also it took 70 years for the land to recover from the devastated circumstance.

From another perspective, the four stages of the development of the locust could be considered (1) the Assyrian desolation of the ten tribes, (2) the 606 BC destruction by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, (3) the destruction in AD 69-70 by the Romans, and (4) the defeat under Hadrian in AD 135, followed by the Diaspora. These applications were upon the same

people and land, Israel, but not at the same time. In AD 135, the commandment was given that if any Jew came within sight of Jerusalem, even from a mountain, the inhabitants could kill him. Instead of lasting 70 years, the Diaspora continued for about 1,800 years, during which time the land was relatively desolate.

Verse 7 gives the reason why the locust plague does not refer to Jacob's Trouble: "He hath laid my vine waste, and ... he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white." Even though nine out of ten Jews in Israel will be put to death in Jacob's Trouble, the land will not be affected, relatively speaking.

It is true that much of the burden of the Book of Joel pertains to Gog and Magog and Jacob's Trouble but not here in the beginning. First, a historical background is given as a basis for what will be described later in much detail.

Joel 1:8 Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.

Succeeding verses are still related to the wasting of the land. In saying, "Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth," Joel was showing that as punishment, Israel would experience a separation from God, an estrangement. In other books of the Old Testament, as here, Jehovah was likened to Israel's "husband" from a *national or collective* standpoint. Israel was figuratively married to Jehovah.

Joel 1:9 The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn.

Notice that there would be no more services in the Temple, "the house of the LORD." The captivity of the northern kingdom did not affect Judah, for the Temple was still intact, but when the king of Babylon came down, both the city of Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed. As a result, no more services could be performed for 70 years. The priests (Jehovah's ministers) who were taken to Babylon mourned in captivity, where their special privileges of service were cut off.

Joel 1:10 The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.

Again a picture of destruction is given. If the four stages of development of the locust are considered as previously suggested—namely, that they picture the Assyrian captivity of the ten tribes, the Babylonian captivity in 606 BC, the destruction of AD 69-70, and the trouble under Hadrian in AD 135—verse 10 shows punitive judgment. The Israelites were being corrected.

The spiritual application of punitive judgment is to Christendom. Judgments have occurred as warnings down through the Gospel Age, but the final judgment is yet future. For example, "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD'S hand.... We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed" (Jer. 51:7,9). A strong judgment was the death of the beast in the past. Thus at one time, Papacy was negated, and eventually it will be destroyed *forever*.

Notice that there is no hope of recovery in this picture here in Joel. Both nominal natural Israel and nominal spiritual Israel have received warnings and judgments.

Q: Is the thought that Joel was speaking of the Lord's Great Army going down to destroy Christendom rather than Israel?

A: Yes. God said through the Prophet Jeremiah, "Though I make a full end of all nations

whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee” (Jer. 30:11). Thus God will not make a full end of Israel. Although Jacob’s Trouble will be an experience unprecedented for severity, the Holy Remnant will be saved out of it. Joel was showing God’s displeasure with the fact that the people as a whole were disobedient.

Zerubbabel’s Temple, which was refurbished in the days of Herod, was destroyed in AD 69-70. From that date up until the present day, there has been no Temple in Jerusalem.

Q: If verse 4 is given the application of four long-separated time periods of trouble coming on natural Israel or nominal spiritual Israel, how would we harmonize verse 2, which says, “Have you ever heard of anything like this in the past?”

A: Verse 2 is speaking of a *natural* calamity where the palmerworm, locust, cankerworm, and caterpillar caused *great* destruction. God was asking, “Have you old men ever seen such a thing in the past?” The natural destruction was the prototype from which lessons are drawn about nominal natural Israel and nominal spiritual Israel. The *four* literal stages that constituted the locust plague came at one time, and it is unique that *four* judgments have come upon the same people and land. The four stages of the locust devoured all greenery including the bark of trees, forcing the Israelites to eat and survive off food they had in storage. Joel drew lessons from that natural incident, which occurred in one year, saying the king of Babylon would come down and lay waste the whole land. Moreover, the Temple services would be discontinued.

Q: Then was Joel speaking of Jacob’s Trouble?

A: No. The land will be quickly revived after Jacob’s Trouble.

It is rather unusual that nothing is mentioned here about the people, just the crop devastation and the land being laid bare. Of course, the Jews did not realize that the land would be so bare and that any survivors would be taken to another place. “The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.” Verses 11 and 12 then discuss the grains and other types of food. In other words, everything pertaining to food and the things that make for a pleasant life and human comfort would be destroyed.

The same will be true of the destruction of Christendom. We do not emphasize the physical violence—just that Christendom will be a wasted desolation. From the negative standpoint, we cannot take the natural application to Jacob’s Trouble because in that situation, the land will not be affected in this drastic fashion.

Joel 1:11 Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished.

Joel 1:12 The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.

Verses 11 and 12 discuss the food joys, comforts, and necessities of life. When the locust-plague experience literally came on the nation in one year, the people probably had a very difficult time because all crops were destroyed. The people would have lived on rations before the next harvest. Thus the recovery time was a little more than a year. However, the plague typified a more lasting destruction because when the king of Babylon came down, the recovery required 70 years. In the Diaspora, the length of time for the recovery process to begin was 1,800 years. These verses are all negative.

Joel 1:13 Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God.

In review, the preceding verses pertain to a literal plague that came upon Israel at the time of Joel, in which the four stages of the development of the locust each did a damaging work in consuming all greenery of the land. It was unusual that all four stages took place in the one spot, for almost invariably locusts travel from one place to another, going from south to north. The four stages had such a damaging influence that all verdure was destroyed, leaving no fruit or crops behind and causing the Israelites to depend on whatever food was in storage.

Verse 13 tells that the priests and ministers of the altar were in mourning because so little food was left in the land. With the people having only enough for their bare sustenance, they could not bring meal offerings, tithes, etc., to the Temple, and the services were adversely affected. The experience should have been viewed as a punishment or judgment from God, who allowed such conditions to exist. When the people did not have enough food to bring offerings according to God's will and commandments, something was obviously wrong, and the wrong lay with the people.

Joel 1:14 Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD.

A call was made for a great assembly of the people, including all levels of leadership, to fast, pray, repent, and listen to what the Lord had to say under this circumstance.

Joel 1:15 Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

The "day of the LORD" refers to Christendom; it will be "a destruction from the Almighty." To the contrary, when Gog and Magog come down, God will not destroy Israel but will save it (specifically, the Holy Remnant). The picture is complicated, requiring the refining of Scripture to see the distinction between Christendom and Israel at the end of the age.

Comment: In support of the premise that this is a picture of Christendom, the hordes of Gog and Magog will be going down to Israel because food will be *plentiful*, not scarce.

Reply: Yes, they will go to the land that has gotten "cattle and goods" (Ezek. 38:12).

A backdrop was being established for a lesson of the future at the end of the Gospel Age. The lesson is based upon things that happened in the Prophet Joel's day, or about 800 BC. Of the Minor Prophets, the Book of Joel is more or less in sequence, starting with Hosea, Joel, and Amos, all three of whom were relatively contemporary.

The next several verses list various adverse effects on the nation. The third chapter of Joel pertains almost entirely to the end of the age, being clearly prophetic. The second chapter is sort of a mixed situation. This first chapter is based on the literal plague that had befallen the land, which Joel said was like a judgment from God and a prelude to some terrible things to happen. It bemoaned the circumstances that prevailed at the time Joel spoke to the people.

Joel 1:16 Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?

In this period of mourning in Joel's day, the lack of sufficient produce to offer to the Lord

affected the Temple services, which became times of sadness. Instead they should have been joyous occasions like going to a convention and fellowshiping with brethren. Under the Law, when the Israelites went to the Temple for special feast days, they were to consume the greater portion of whatever offerings they brought. Thus everyone was affected back there.

Joel 1:17 The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered.

Joel 1:18 How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.

Joel 1:19 O LORD, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.

Joel 1:20 The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

These conditions existed in Joel's day as a result of the terrible locust plague on the nation. He was setting the stage for the need for repentance—for an explanation of what was wrong and how to rectify it. In the next chapter, Joel began to draw certain lessons to help the people understand some of the things that had befallen them.

Not only was there a locust plague, but also it seemed as if all nature was against the Israelites. Everything was contrary. A drought had accompanied the locust plague, causing the "beasts of the field" (domesticated animals) to cry, the "rivers of waters" to dry up, and fire to devour the "pastures of the wilderness." Such was the situation, or setting, of the first chapter. Imagine hearing the beasts lowing and crying for food and water! For the people, food and water had to be strictly rationed, and a great deal of labor was exerted just to get the meager food.

Today we get a slight idea of those conditions when people have to spend all day at the market just to get a loaf of bread. A person's whole life is changed so that he is not working his normal hours and getting his normal pay. Daily living and habits are radically altered when everything is geared for survival.

As stated earlier, Joel was giving a backdrop, a picture, of what will happen at the end of the Gospel Age. In addition, there was a lesson for the Israelites in the prophet's day. First, the ten tribes were carried away captive to a foreign land, and eventually King Nebuchadnezzar took away the two tribes. In AD 69-70 and again in AD 135, terrible holocausts occurred, and there will be one more holocaust at the end of this age, in the great day of God's wrath, still future. The backdrop given here is working up to the third chapter, which describes detailed war. In other words, conditions will be similar at the end of this age. For the education of the world of mankind to be effective, the people first have to be humbled; they have to get down on their knees and look up to God for survival.

Comment: In the Revised Standard, verse 17 starts with, "The seed shrivels under the clods," indicating a drought.

Reply: Yes, there was a double calamity. Not only did the locust plague devastate the nation of Israel, but also the God of nature seemed to be bringing judgment.

Notice how Joel put himself in the picture with the pronouns "our" and "I." "Is not the meat cut off before *our* eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of *our* God?" (verse 16). "O LORD, to thee will *I* cry" (verse 19). While Joel was talking to the people, he was also

experiencing the existing conditions. God laid it upon the prophet's heart to advise the people, the priesthood, and the elders to congregate at the Temple to have a fast and bring the matter to the Lord for relief. "Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD" (verse 14). Joel was giving a call to repentance.

Comment: The emphasis seems to be on food and water, the necessities of life.

Reply: Yes, the rivers had dried up, and all the grain products and fruit—everything green—had been affected.

Joel 2:1 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;

Verse 1 emphasizes several principles. The priests were instructed to "blow ... the trumpet in Zion" because they were the responsible parties between the people and God. The responsibility to warn fell chiefly on the religious leadership and the prophets. Next the responsibility was on the elders, and then it went on down the line. A trumpet was to be blown and an alarm sounded to create a mood conducive to prayer, fasting, and repentance if so be that God would be merciful to the nation. Thus the circumstance was a matter of not only individual survival but also collective survival with the people calling to the Lord for deliverance from a coming calamity. However, the people did not really respond in the final analysis because when something else happened, they forgot.

Q: Is the "day of the LORD" the great Time of Trouble at the end of this age?

A: The "day of the LORD" came with regard to the people of Israel shortly after Joel's writing, but it hinted of a doomsday way down at this end of the age. Therefore, the trouble first started with something that happened back there, which we will discuss to get the picture straight before jumping to our day. In other words, chapter 2 gives the interpretation of the first chapter—before going to the third chapter. The purpose of the alarm was to make the people tremble and to wake them up as to the realization of what was about to happen.

Q: Who will "Zion" be in the future?

A: At the time of Gog and Magog, a trumpet will be blown in natural Israel ("Zion"), and an alarm will be sounded in God's "holy mountain," or kingdom, i.e., Israel. Natural Israel will be affected in Jacob's Trouble. In addition, some prophecies zero in on only spiritual Christendom.

Of course, since our chief opponent in the future will be Christendom, there is a moral lesson. To blow the trumpet, or the alarm, means that each of us has a certain degree of responsibility to inform others who are similarly trying to please God. We should alert or warn of the trouble that is about to occur. However, the account here is painting a more natural picture. The Lord's Great Army of the future will be somewhat like what happened in the past along literal lines. They will pillage and cause destruction in pulling down the present order and feeding upon the remnants of civilization as they now exist. As Christians, we have a responsibility, knowing that a judgment is coming and that judgment begins with the "house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17).

Q: Is there a responsibility at present to tell natural Israel that another time of trouble is coming?

A: Yes, if God's providence places us in such a position. As we get opportunity to speak, then to withhold such pertinent information would be wrong. Our first or primary responsibility is to

do Harvest work, which is to look for those who are already *spiritually* minded. But as circumstances arise—should our condition change where we have a Jewish audience or ear—we would inform the Jew on his level. As conditions develop more and more and people are concerned about what they are to do, we should instruct them accordingly. For instance, at the First Advent, John the Baptist preached repentance and cleansing from sin when soldiers asked him, “What should we do?” And others who were not looking for a spiritual hope also asked for advice.

To repeat, the primary work of the Gospel Age is the ornamenting of the bridal garment—to seek others with the high calling. However, if Providence changes the situation, we would give a message to Israel and to others. Our problem will eventually be with nominal Christendom, who will apply the heat to us. After Babylon falls, the chief responsibility of the Great Company will be to the Jew; their message will be to natural Zion. In other words, as time passes and the end of the age gets nearer and nearer, responsibilities can change. If we find that Babylon is being destroyed and we are not one of the very elect, our next responsibility will be for our fellow brethren and natural Israel. But that does not mean something cannot be done beforehand *if Providence opens the door*. The door should not be forced. We can try various doors, going around to see if the handle opens them, but we are not to kick the door to force it open. When the door does open, we may have different or additional responsibilities.

Joel 2:2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

Verse 2 describes this “day of the LORD” as being “a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains.” With the coming of “a great [and strong] people ... there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.” Joel was still hearkening back to the locust plague. He was saying that what had literally happened with a “dark cloud” of locusts coming in and denuding the land pictured that a northern army would come down into Israel to despoil the land. This coming judgment of God, instead of being a plague of creatures of nature, would be a plague of the human species. In other words, an enemy host would invade the land. Back there this invasion was awesome, but at the end of the Gospel Age, the trouble will be *even more awesome*. An *unbelievably immense host* will come down against Israel in Jacob’s Trouble. But in the time frame back there in the prophet’s day, with earth’s population what it was, something very similar happened and also subsequently when a northern army came down. Joel was saying, “You think what you just experienced with the literal locust plague and crop failures was bad, but an even worse judgment is coming.” Why would it be worse? Now the people were surviving (even though with great difficulty) on the food that was in storage, but when the northern army came down, many people would be killed.

What about the expression “a great people and a strong”? If we have ever held a large grasshopper in our hands, we felt the proportionately *great power and strength* of the legs of that insect. The counterpart would be the people of the northern army, whose physical stature and military prowess and armaments would be superior to those of the native Israelites. The Pastor correctly gave the antitype as the Lord’s Great Army at this end of the age, but an in-between experience helps us to see certain other points.

Joel 2:3 A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

Riots, accompanied by looting and lawlessness, that have occurred in some of our cities give us

an idea of how “a fire” can devour. Some of the people even destroyed the homes they lived in. People who get wild in their demands and desires can self-destruct in certain situations. Thus we get a little clue as to what humanity can do to itself.

For another example, Napoleon said that an army travels on its stomach. Many armies have followed a scorched-earth policy of destruction, meaning they took everything before them to feed themselves and then burned the land behind them to prevent a future uprising.

Joel 2:4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.

Verse 4 continues to draw an analogy with the locust plague of the first chapter. “The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run [or charge]” and not break ranks. An army would come and devour so that the land would be like the “garden of Eden before them” and barren after them. That which was literally a locust plague in Joel’s day was to be replaced by another type of plague—a plague of man’s inhumanity to man—as pictured initially by a near coming invasion of the land back there by a barbarous enemy speaking a hard, crude language. As in the locust plague, the army would be like horses and would travel without a division of their ranks; nothing would be able to stop them. It has been said of a locust plague that when people dig trenches and build fires, the locusts just continue on, putting out the fires and filling up the trenches with their dead bodies. Then other locusts march over their backs and keep going. The sheer numbers of locusts defeat any effort to stay them from despoiling what is in their path.

Joel 2:5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.

A noise is attached to a locust plague. Depending on what stage of locust is being considered, the scrunching of their mandibles can be heard when the insects are eating grass. The noise of the wings in flight can also be heard and has been likened to the sound of a forest fire, to the sound of crackling flame in the distance. The locusts can be so thick in the sky that they obscure the sun like a cloud or an eclipse. Depending on the season of the year and if circumstances are unusual, the swarms can cover a hundred miles square.

“On the tops of mountains shall they leap.” Nothing deters the locusts or is an obstacle—not fire, trenches, poison, or mountainous terrain. This was figuratively true of the armies that devastated the land of Israel back there, and it will also be true at the end of this age. When God’s judgment is due, nothing stops it.

Joel 2:6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.

From the perspective of the victim, the picture was dark indeed with the opposing force coming down. The Hebrew word for “gather blackness” can also mean “turn pale.” The translation depends on context, for faces become darkened in time of famine, and fright causes color to drain from the face.

Joel 2:7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:

Like the locusts, the armies have a determination and a continuity of purpose.

Q: Will the Lord’s Great Army be an organized host or a combination of individuals from various sources?

A: Guerrilla warfare is organized, even though the bands operate in a roughshod manner. There is a certain degree of agreement. What we believe to be the unifying factor of Gog and Magog will be their hatred of Israel and starvation—the desire to get food. Their hunger will drive them on. They will think that after these two primary desires are satiated, Israel will be an ideal strategic location in the navel of the earth. Those comprising the Lord’s Great Army will no longer be loyal to a particular country.

From a human standpoint, the picture is dark indeed, but thank God, there is a way out. Otherwise, we would not want to study these prophecies but would want to immerse ourselves in pleasure.

Joel 2:8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.

Comment: The Revised Standard Version has, “They do not jostle one another, each marches in his path; they burst through the weapons and are not halted.”

Joel 2:9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

In a plague, the locusts run to and fro and come in the windows. Similarly, nothing will deter the Lord’s Great Army of the future, which the Pastor spoke about in the *Fourth Volume*. There will be no secret or safe place of refuge from them. Thus Joel was advising that nothing could stop this trouble but praying to the merciful Almighty God for help. If the nation would not pray, then individuals should do so.

Joel 2:10 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:

The earth and all authority—the heavens, the sun, the moon, and the stars—will lose their influence. Along another line, the Book of Revelation takes some of these verses almost verbatim, including verse 4 about the horses and this verse about the sun, moon, and stars. Here Joel was discussing the practical and natural effect; i.e., without the light of the sun, moon, and stars, both day and night are dark. There will seem to be no recognition of authority and leadership. Conditions will be dark and gloomy. Joel was saying that this judgment was of God to bring the people to their knees. At the end of the age, the people will get down on their knees in the realization that if the trouble is not cut short, no flesh will be saved. For one to be among the survivors, the repentant attitude will be more lasting than in the past. The great Time of Trouble on the world will be trouble along natural (or earthly) lines in a very real and practical fashion.

Joel 2:11 And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

The question “Who can abide it [the day of the LORD]?” is very meaningful. Conditions sound hopeless. No one will be able to abide that day except God be the Deliverer. Joel was talking to natural Zion back there, and that will also be the responsibility of Jacob when its final holocaust comes. At that time, God will hearken to the Holy Remnant, the right-hearted Jews.

The answer to the question “Who can abide it?” is given in Psalm 24:4, “He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.”

David was speaking along natural lines, showing that the unconsecrated must straighten out their affairs. As any of the consecrated get nearer and nearer to that day and find they are not of the Little Flock, they will have the responsibility to help others see the situation as it really is.

Joel 2:12 Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:

First, we will give a little perspective of the books of the Bible. While we have spoken in the past about contemporary prophets like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, we are now in another time slot with the Book of Joel. The Period of the Kings was 513 years, and the Minor Prophets starting with Hosea were approximately the midpoint of the 513 years. (We are purposely giving rough figures so that we can retain the sequence.) About halfway down the Period of the Kings, which extended from Saul to Zedekiah, the Minor Prophets came into play. We will mention the prophets who were contemporaries, some for many years and others for only a few years. Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Micah were contemporary prophets, and after their decease came a blank period of prophecy, mostly during the reign of King Manasseh, when much evil occurred. During that time, not many prophetic books were written that we know of, until the Major Prophets came along. In between the contemporaries Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel and the Minor Prophets already mentioned were Obadiah, Zephaniah, Jonah, and Nahum, whose prophecies were very brief and specialized. For example, the whole story of Jonah pertains to his mission to Nineveh, and the burden of Nahum was also to Nineveh.

Now we will continue with the study of the Book of Joel, which, in round numbers, was written in 800 BC. In verse 12, Joel was advising those he addressed in his time period to turn to the Lord with their whole heart, accompanied with fasting, weeping, and mourning. They were to turn to Him with sincerity, rending their hearts and not their garments.

Q: Does this verse indicate that the judgment of 606 BC could have been averted if there had been genuine repentance?

A: Yes, that is true, especially before the conflict became irrepressible, for in time, the judgment on the nation could not be averted. In other words, the 70 years' desolation had to be fulfilled, for the land had to have its sabbaths. However, Joel was speaking earlier, about 800 BC.

Joel 2:13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

God is "gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil"; that is, it is possible for God to change His course of conduct toward the sinner *if the sinner turns to Him with a truly contrite and repentant heart*. However, for national judgment to be averted, the repentance has to be done *collectively*, not individually. If judgment is coming on a nation, the people themselves would have to representatively, in a collective fashion, manifest repentance in order to avert a national disaster. On an individual basis, repentance has been acceptable all along, for the Lord has had His people throughout all ages as individuals.

Joel 2:14 Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?

This question was asked about the *national* situation. If the sincere repentance and heart contrition were a large enough majority in being representative of the nation, then who knows but that God would change His mind regarding the punishment He had said He would inflict? Since the *nation* was involved, not an individual, the result was questionable in regard to

repentance.

The literal locust plague of chapter 1 was a past event, but it prefigured an invasion of the army from the north. Therefore, Joel's prophecy occurred between these two events, and he was saying, "God is determined to visit a judgment upon Israel, and if you thought the suffering under the locust plague was bad, the enemy coming from the north will have no compassion. The desolation he will reap will be similar to what the locust plague did in a literal fashion."

Joel 2:15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:

Joel 2:16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

Joel was admonishing the people that whether or not this judgment would be averted depended on a wholesale confession of the nation, and he directed his warning to different strata, starting at the bottom with the common people and going on up to the leadership. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders." In addition, "gather the children, and those that suck the breasts." Not only people of responsible age but also infants were to come to this fast. In other words, mothers were not to stay home to nurse their infants. Minor children also had to attend the solemn assembly, for if they stayed behind, their mothers would be with them. There would be no excuse for not attending this assembly to be gathered in the Temple. Even newlyweds were to separate themselves and attend: "Let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet." There would be no excuse for nonparticipation in the fast. (We are reminded of what happened in the days of Ezra, but that occurrence took place several hundred years later.)

Joel 2:17 Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

"Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them [as prefigured by the locusts]." The invading army from the north was now the counterpart of a literal plague that had occurred earlier. Even this army, which eventually came down, was in itself another picture—a picture of what Joel was bringing up, little by little, of what will happen at the end of the Gospel Age. When Joel advised the people to "weep between the porch and the altar," he was referring to a judgment back there. However, the prophet's advice prefigured what the nation of Israel should do at the end of the present age. If, in the near future, the nation followed Joel's advice as best they could in lieu of the fact there is no Temple and went to the Wailing Wall and showed sincere national repentance, a national disaster would be averted in connection with Jacob's Trouble. Some modifications are involved, as will be seen in the third chapter, but the lesson is true: God is gracious, slow to anger, and forgiving. First, however, conditions have to be met. Certain things have to be done by those who need correction before He can manifest His mercy and kindness in deeds on their behalf.

The account does not say here whether all of the people gathered for this solemn assembly and fast. It would be interesting to know if they followed through. In the case of Ezra, the people did obey, for their obedience is recorded as a historical fact.

Comment: The implication is that the Israelites did not "sanctify a fast" (verse 15).

Reply: The northern ten-tribe kingdom was taken away, but Judah was another situation. Joel advised the Israelites to come between the Temple and the altar, so perhaps those in Judah responded favorably. Those in the ten tribes probably counted the cost of what was involved in going to Jerusalem for a national mourning and then declined to go. Therefore, the judgment did come on the ten-tribe kingdom but not on the two-tribe kingdom until 606 BC.

Joel 2:18 Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people.

Joel 2:19 Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen:

Joel 2:20 But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things.

Verses 18-20 tell what God would do if the advice given through Joel were followed. God would remove far off from Israel the northern army that was coming down. In other words, verse 18 was conditional based on verses 15-17. With a proper response to the prophet's advice to go to the Temple and have a sincere national mourning with a rending of the heart, the Lord would be merciful. In this case, Judah might well have so responded but not the ten tribes. When the northern army (the Assyrians) came down in the time frame of Joel, it was not defeated, but the ten tribes were. And when the northern army of Babylon came down to Judah a couple of centuries later in 606 BC, it still was not defeated. Therefore, Joel was building up to the picture at the end of the age, when the northern army of Gog and Magog will come down against Israel and be defeated. We are being eased into the third chapter, which focuses on Jacob's Trouble.

Verse 19 was not fulfilled in Joel's day, and even though Judah was not taken captive, the reproach was never really lifted. It took two or three years for the Israelites to fully recover from the literal locust plague of the first chapter because the locusts not only ate every green thing but also debarked fruit-bearing trees and shrubs. The people had to live very miserly with the food they had in storage. The restoration of the corn, wine, and oil took place with the two-tribe kingdom in that they were given some relief and were spared the harshness of the judgment that came on the ten tribes. However, the statement "I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen" is again hinting that this information is valuable in regard to conditions at the end of the current age. The implication of Joel's advice, as applying to the Jews in our day, was, "Study this advice closely, for it will be helpful to those living at the very end of the Gospel Age." When the Holy Remnant of Israel is delivered at that time, the Jews will no longer be a reproach, and that lasting security will initiate Messiah's Kingdom.

Next we will consider the literal aspect of verse 20. "But I [God] will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea [the Dead Sea], and his hinder part toward the utmost sea [the Mediterranean Sea], and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he [God] hath done great things." When Gog and Magog come down, that host will eventually be defeated. The northern army was not defeated either earlier with the ten tribes or later in the two-tribe desolation of 606 BC. But the northern army of Gog and Magog will be defeated, as described in verse 20. When the host of Gog comes down and God saves His people as He did in the days of old, there will be so many corpses that a big "stink" will be in the land, requiring seven months for burial (Ezek. 39:12). Thus chapter 2 is leading up to Jacob's Trouble and Israel's deliverance. The "great things" are the awesome acts that the Lord will exercise at that time.

Comment: The face of the enemy host will be toward the Dead Sea. An earlier study suggested that verse 20 was alluding to the fleeing of the Holy Remnant through the split Mount of Olives when the tremendous deliverance comes. The loss of life will be great at that time.

Reply: Yes, that is right.

Q: The account states that the northern army will be driven “into a land barren and desolate.” Is the reference to the burial of the corpses in the desolate land of Edom?

A: We think the burial place will be going down toward Jericho. The earthquake that Zechariah speaks of will open up a horizontal fissure or divide, from west to east, causing the Mount of Olives to move north and south (Zech. 14:4). When we look at the Mount of Olives today and then go down to Jericho and the Dead Sea, we travel on a road that weaves and curves around and goes between two higher elevations. The suggestion in verse 20 is that this terrain will open up, and the army of Gog and Magog will pursue the Jews fleeing to Azal, their front facing Jericho as they go down toward the Dead Sea (Zech. 14:5). However, the Lord will make sure that five-sixths of the enemy die, leaving exposed, unburied corpses (Ezek. 39:2). A great number of fatalities will be involved. The mention of Azal is significant, for the Jews who flee there will be saved as part of the Holy Remnant.

Joel 2:21 Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.

Joel 2:22 Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

Joel 2:23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

Joel 2:24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

The restoration of the land that took place after the locust plague had to do particularly with Judah, which is approximately half of all Israel. The northern kingdom was very populous, but the southern half was essentially all Judah, for Benjamin had only a little footprint, relatively speaking. Under Joshua, Simeon was given certain cities in Judah but did not have the land. The other tribes received special territories.

“Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice.” There is a proper paragraph break at verse 21. The locust plague occurred in Judah, but the northern army that came down took only the ten tribes captive to Kir (called Kars in modern terminology). The sparing of Judah was evidently effective. Not only was the threat of the northern army removed, but henceforth the people of Judah noticed that crops, fruit, grains, etc., were beginning to sprout miraculously in spite of the locust plague. Hence Joel was saying in effect, “God has heard your prayer. By your compliance with the advice given, things are now prospering, and the land will be restored.” However, the people of Judah should have kept in mind that the conditions which brought the judgment on the ten-tribe kingdom were just as applicable to them. God’s mercy to Judah should have caused them to walk anew.

God “hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.” Many who study the Bible both in and out of the Truth movement know that the rains in Israel are beginning to increase. They

will return in fullness when God establishes His Kingdom. At that time, the whole land will be blessed in a lasting way.

Joel 2:25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

“I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten.” The locust plague had so denuded the land that the people had no hope of getting fruit for several years, but what happened? New growth was beginning to sprout, and God was making His face shine on them for a while. The recovery from this unprecedented plague in Judah was miraculous.

The implication is that when Jacob’s Trouble occurs, Jews who look back on history for lessons will see that repentance can bring forgiveness. If they truly repent and rend their hearts, the Lord can forgive and restore them. If the repentance is lasting and sincere, then not only will the refreshment and blessing be permanent along temporal lines, but also Israel will have no more enemies, as promised in God’s Word. The great day of Messiah will have a lasting benefit and blessings for those who respond properly.

Joel 2:26 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

Joel 2:27 And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

When the people of Judah saw their temporary recovery after the locust plague, they took verse 27 to say that God’s blessings were permanent. They forgot that the blessings were conditional on not just a momentary repentance but on a sincere and lasting return to God.

For example, as Christians, we consecrate and give our heart to the Lord, but the act of consecration is no guarantee that once saved, we are always saved. However, once one is saved at the end of the time period allotted for his calling, that is another matter. Another example is the Ancient Worthies, who made their calling and election sure. That age is past, so when they come forth from the grave, their blessings will be lasting. When the door of the high calling in the Gospel Age is closed and the Church is complete, those who have proven faithful will be faithful forever. At the end of the Millennium, the calling of mankind will be over, and those who pass the test of the Little Season and go into the ages of ages will be like the holy angels and not die anymore (Luke 20:35,36).

But the repentance and blessings of Judah in Joel’s day were only temporary. The people did rend their hearts and their garments, and there was a miraculous recovery of crops. However, they forgot that their blessings were still conditional—as they will be in the Kingdom of Messiah.

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Joel 2:29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

Verses 28 and 29 are used in the New Testament (Acts 2:16-18). However, when Peter quoted these verses as having a fulfillment, he was referring to verse 29, “And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.” He also quoted verse 28, but

his point was that the “handmaids” represented the calling of the Church in the Gospel Age. Verse 28 applies to the calling in the next age, when God will bless Israel at the setting up of the Kingdom. In other words, to confuse the subject until the due time for understanding, the Holy Spirit purposely put the verses in reverse order. Marvelous things will happen after Jacob’s Trouble, for God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh. That pouring will start with natural Israel, particularly in the Holy Land, and then work outward until it embraces the other nations.

Q: What was just stated is the usual explanation, and it does fit in the Book of Acts. However, if we consider verse 29 here in context in the Book of Joel, can we leave the verses in the order given? Couldn’t the servants and handmaids apply to those who will cooperate with Israel in the Kingdom? For instance, couldn’t the Gentiles who will help in the construction of the Temple be considered “servants” and “handmaids”?

A: Yes, that is true. Of course, Peter quoted these verses with the aid of the Holy Spirit, but the application at that time was only a *partial* fulfillment. For a fuller understanding of these verses, it is necessary to read verses 30-32, as follows.

Joel 2:30 And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

Joel 2:31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

When Peter quoted these verses and gave a very convincing lesson, the fulfillment was partial in the sense that signs in nature occurred while Jesus was on the Cross and also at the time of his resurrection. Effects in nature in our day help us to understand some of these natural phenomena. For example, a large earthquake in Mexico in recent years exploded a mountain, causing a dark ash cloud that lasted for a long, long time. Not only were sunsets unusually red because of the ash, but also the moon appeared red for a short time. At the time of Jesus’ death, the darkness was not caused by an eclipse but by an ash cloud from an earthquake. That dust cloud obscured the sun for the three hours from 12 noon until 3 p.m. We know that an earthquake occurred, for the Temple veil was rent. Moreover, some came forth from their graves and three days later appeared to many in the city (Matt. 27:51-53). Thus phenomenal signs occurred that were timed to coincide with Jesus’ agony and death on the Cross.

From 9 a.m. to noon, Jesus was carrying the Cross and impaled, but he was not raised up in public view until 12 noon. From then until 3 p.m., the darkening came, that is, while he was on the Cross. Imagine such a sudden and strange dark foreboding for three hours on a sunny day! In his sermon, Peter used these signs in nature as an evidence that the Jews had crucified the Messiah, the Son of God. Thus natural signs and wonders accompanied the Crucifixion.

Joel prophesied, “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.” From the Jewish standpoint, the people of the first century thought that “the great and the terrible day” was AD 69-70. As the Jews looked back on their experience at that time, they considered the trouble to be very momentous. In fact, the Diaspora is dated from that time onward. Nevertheless, Peter’s application was only a partial fulfillment. The full fulfillment is still future in regard to Jacob’s Trouble and the great Time of Trouble on the nations as a whole. The indication is that when Jacob’s Trouble and deliverance come at the end of the age, they will be accompanied with phenomena of nature. Incidentally, the Pastor mentioned the dark day of 1780 and the falling stars of 1833 as premonitory signs of the end of the Gospel Age.

Q: Along the lines of these literal signs in nature, the word “before” in verse 31 seems to be

significant. The natural signs and wonders will happen “before the great and the terrible day of the LORD.” Therefore, shouldn’t we expect some literal fulfillment between now and Jacob’s Trouble as well?

A: Yes.

Q: Could one such sign be an earthquake along the rift going from Egypt up to Jerusalem that will cause the Construction Chambers of the Great Pyramid to fall?

A: Yes. If our surmise is correct, then just as there was an earthquake at the First Advent when Jesus died and made his calling and election sure, so a similar event will occur at the end of this age when the Church has finished its course. We have suggested that the split in the ceiling blocks of the King’s Chamber is providential and that the only thing holding up that ceiling is friction thrust. In other words, the fracture occurred, but the ceiling did not collapse because friction is holding it in place until an earthquake happens in that geographical location. As the veil in the Temple was rent when Jesus died, so an earthquake will destroy the interior of the Great Pyramid when the Church is complete. That sign will happen *before* Jacob’s Trouble.

Joel 2:32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Notice what verse 32 is saying. The verse is both *conditional* and *individual*: “Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered.” Repentance based on the subject matter earlier will have to be a rending of the heart, a true contrite spirit. Those individuals who respond *wholeheartedly*, directing their heart to the God of Israel, *will be delivered*, “as the LORD hath said, and [even] in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.” (The Hebrew word rendered “and” should be “even.”)

Let us read verse 32 again: “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, *even in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.*” This verse is referring to the Holy Remnant, to those whose names are written in the book of survival (Dan. 12:1; Isa. 4:3).

Q: Is the thought that *one* class will be delivered in “mount Zion and in Jerusalem”?

A: Yes. However, a distinction could be made in the sense that the supervision of this deliverance will be spiritual. For instance, Obadiah 21 reads, “Saviours [plural] shall come up on mount Zion” to rescue Israel (that is, the Holy Remnant) out of Jacob’s Trouble. Those whom God deems the true Israelites at that time will be rescued, but The (glorified) Christ will bring about the deliverance. Thus, out of or from the spiritual phase of Zion will come deliverance in the vicinity of Jerusalem, which will be center stage at the very end of this age.

Joel 3:1 For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

Joel 3:2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

Verses 1 and 2 sound like Zechariah chapters 12 and 14, which show that God’s purpose will be this closing drama at the end of the age. To “bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem” means that those Jews who were previously in captivity to Gentile powers—those who were

subject to the whims and fancies of the Gentiles while in exile—will be brought back to Israel, their homeland. God will reverse the situation for the Jew.

Psalm 68:18 reads, “Thou [Jesus] hast ascended on high, thou hast led *captivity captive*.” The expression “*captivity captive*” is used to indicate that Jesus will bring up out of the grave those who are now captive in the tomb.

“I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people ... Israel.” What is the “valley of Jehoshaphat”? Is it a particular *literal* valley, a previous historical event, or a *condition* yet future? The term alludes to the historical event in which King Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah were given a miraculous victory. They went out unarmed and with singers in front to meet the enemy. God had told them, “I will fight this battle and defeat the enemy.” That experience corresponds to Jacob’s Trouble in the near future when God will gather the nations and go forth and fight for His people as He did in the “day of battle” (Zech. 14:3).

The account in 2 Chronicles 20:1-27 is as follows:

“It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

“Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee ... and, behold, they be in ... En-gedi.

“And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

“And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD...

“And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court,

“And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

“Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?

“And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

“If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.

“And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt ... [now] come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

“O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.

“And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

“Then upon Jahaziel ... a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation;

“And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God’s....

“Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you.

“And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD....

“And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

“And ... he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever.

“And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, ... and they were smitten.

“For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

“And when Judah came toward the watchtower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.

“And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, ... and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

“And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the LORD: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day.

“Then they returned ... to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.”

When Ammon, Moab, and Edom were confederate against Judah, their combined forces so *greatly outnumbered* the armed forces under King Jehoshaphat that the people were very frightened. However, God said He would do the fighting. First, Moab and Ammon had a falling out with Edom (Mount Seir). After defeating Edom, they fought among themselves until there was not a single survivor—just corpses. In other words, they killed one another without Judah’s having to lift a finger.

Comment: 2 Chronicles 20:26 mentions Berachah, which means “blessing.” Thus the valley of defeat and devastation to the enemy was the valley of blessing to Judah. Again there is a correspondency to the end of the age. God’s deliverance of Israel will be the downfall of Gog and Magog.

It is interesting that this confederacy against Judah by Ammon, Moab, and Edom began from En-gedi, which was only about three or four days on foot from Jerusalem. During this time, King Jehoshaphat gathered the people together, even with babies in their arms, to pray and

fast to know what to do. Jahaziel, an obscure Levite, was moved by the Holy Spirit to speak *with authority*, giving the answer from the Lord: “This is *my* battle; I will do the destroying.” Thus Judah went out to meet the enemy unarmed, unprepared for battle, with singers in front. The account even tells the words that they sang.

In looking at the counterpart of the Valley of Jehoshaphat down here at the end of the age, we notice certain things. The thought is not that every detail in the incident with King Jehoshaphat will be duplicated in the future fulfillment, but in reading that account and other Scriptures pertaining to the end of the age, we see that several details will again occur. Surely a choir will not go out to greet Gog and Magog, for the Jews will be experiencing great fear, but the following will happen. (1) The Jews will be far outnumbered. (2) God will cause a great slaughter. (3) For part of the slaughter, every man’s hand will be against his neighbor, against his own brother. (4) Dead bodies, corpses, were all around in the type, and after God delivers the Holy Remnant out of Jacob’s Trouble, the number of enemy corpses will be so great that it will take seven months to bury them. (5) Just as there were precious jewels and much spoil in the type, so in the future, after the slaughter, Israel will be converting the weapons of the enemy into agricultural implements for seven years. As in the type, there will be a wealth of spoil for Israel. Thus we can see that the future battle in the “valley of Jehoshaphat” alludes to the battle back in Judah’s history when God performed a great victory for King Jehoshaphat.

Next we will again consider Joel 2:20, “But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east [Dead] sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost [Mediterranean] sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things.” The “valley of Jehoshaphat” in Joel 3:2 can also have an allusion to *where* this past incident with King Jehoshaphat took place, that is, the *Valley of Berachah*, the Valley of Blessing. The enemy will have his face toward the east—that is, he will be facing that direction—when he is destroyed. Zechariah 14:5 also implies that Gog will be facing east when defeat comes. “And ye [the Israelites] shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.” The earthquake that splits the Mount of Olives will open up a valley through which the people will flee to Azal. They will be fleeing from Gog, the pursuing enemy, whose face will be toward the east. The Mount of Olives will move to the north and to the south, opening up a west-to-east cleft through which the Israelites will flee with the enemy behind them. The Holy Remnant in front will be saved, and the enemy behind them will perish, leaving a sickening “stink,” or stench, from the rotting corpses. The cemetery, or place where those corpses will be buried, will be called Hamon-gog (Ezek. 39:11).

Q: Is Megiddo the same as the Valley of Jehoshaphat?

A: No, Megiddo is roughly up near Haifa. The term “Armageddon,” the hill of Megiddo, is mentioned in Revelation 16:16. Since Revelation is a spiritual book, the interpretation of “Armageddon” is along spiritual lines, signifying a *place of decision*. Another incident of the past took place in the Valley of Megiddo, whereas the battle with Jehoshaphat was a separate incident that will have a *literal* future fulfillment with Gog and Magog. Incidentally, the Pastor’s articles explaining Joel chapter 3 all give a spiritual interpretation. For example, he applied the Valley of Jehoshaphat to the whole world. However, in this third chapter, Joel was referring to Gog and Magog in Jacob’s Trouble where God will fight for His people Israel. To repeat: the center stage is *Israel*.

Q: How will this northern host come down into Israel? What route will the enemy take?

A: There are three ways of coming down from the north to Jerusalem. One route is along the

coastline, and another goes from the Sea of Galilee down to near Jericho. However, Gog will probably come down along the spine, or hilltops, of the land through Nablus and Samaria. Then Gog will arrive on the north side of Jerusalem, the city's most vulnerable spot. When Gog besieges Jerusalem, the Israelites will flee down the valley that opens up as a result of the earthquake.

Comment: Gog will enter Jerusalem toward the Jaffa Gate and exit at the Golden Gate, heading down toward Jericho. With the earth being cleft, the host of Gog will pursue the Israelites through the valley and be defeated.

Reply: Yes, that is true in general terms, but the theater of action will be in the vicinity of Jerusalem. A great victory will result for Israel. Just as Jehoshaphat felt overwhelmed and inadequate when he viewed the confederation coming against him, so the nation of Israel will be overwhelmed by the tremendous host of Gog.

Q: What is the geographical relationship of the Valley of Jehoshaphat to the Kidron Valley?

A: The Valley of Jehoshaphat starts with the Kidron Valley, but it will divert off down toward Jericho when the earthquake cleft occurs.

Q: In the type, where did the enemy of King Jehoshaphat enter the land?

A: The army was on the far side of the Dead Sea, so they entered Israel on the road to Jericho and then started up to Jerusalem. In that area was the Valley of Berachah, where the enemy was soundly defeated.

Q: Will the Jews who flee through the valley in Jacob's Trouble be a mixed company or just the Holy Remnant?

A: Some of the Holy Remnant will flee to Azal, but other Jews in other places in the vicinity of Jerusalem will also be part of the Holy Remnant. In other words, the Holy Remnant comprises those Jews who are marked for survival in various places.

Q: Will the great number of corpses include the Jews who die in Jacob's Trouble, that is, those who are not part of the Holy Remnant?

A: We believe there will also be a very large casualty list of Jews at that time, but they are not mentioned in the Gog and Magog account in Ezekiel 38 and 39. Inferentially, if only a very small remnant of Jews will be handpicked for survival at that time, a lot of deaths will occur. Isaiah 10:22 reads, "For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet [only] a [small] remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness." After the deliverance of the Holy Remnant, the people will go out to find the bones of the enemy and mark them for burial in the Valley of Hamon-gog. Information in some of the other Minor Prophets, a little here and a little there, shows that the bones of Jews will be taken elsewhere.

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.

Joel 3:4 Yea, and what have ye to do with me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? will ye render me a recompense? and if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompense upon your own head;

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

Joel 3:6 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.

Joel 3:7 Behold, I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompense upon your own head:

Joel 3:8 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, to a people far off: for the LORD hath spoken it.

Verses 3-8 should be set off with a paragraph mark, for they are a *separate* theme. As proof that these verses are a separate thought, we can say with certainty that when Jacob's Trouble occurs, the Gentiles will not be selling a boy for a harlot's services and the children of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks.

Since Joel wrote around 800 BC, when did verse 3 take place? Generally speaking, the wrath of the Arabs was against the men; they killed the men and usually spared the women and sometimes the children. In verses 4-8, Joel prophesied of the retribution that would come on Tyre and Zidon (Sidon), which are in Lebanon, for what they had done against God's heritage, Israel.

When the ten-tribe kingdom was defeated, non-Jews took advantage of the Jews who were taken captive to Kir (or Kars) in Assyria. Arabs looted Israel's possessions and sold the Jews for money. They capitalized on the situation for their own gain—even though they were brethren. Although the Arabs are not of Isaac's seed, they are not wholly Gentiles in the sense of other peoples, for they have a background from Keturah, Ishmael, and Esau. Also, in addition to Abraham, Terah had two other sons, and all three were of the Shem line from Noah.

Because of that relationship (which we might call half brethren), the acts of the Arab peoples in that area were especially obnoxious in the Lord's sight. For them to take advantage of their fellow kinsmen was doubly reprehensible. Here Joel was saying that God had taken note of the situation and would recompense the Arabs, reversing the situation.

Tyre and Sidon took advantage of the ten tribes when Assyrian kings carted off Jewish captives to the land of Assyria. In time, the Samaritans were put in the land vacated by the ten tribes, but in the interim, the Arabs looted and profited from a slave trade of Israelite women and children. Not Jews, the Samaritans did not originate in Israel but were a people transferred and implanted into northern Israel after the inhabitants of the ten tribes were removed.

Since Tyre and Sidon are the two main objects of retribution in this context, we have to think when they were taken captive. Following a big void in history, one of the last kings of the Persian Empire captured and destroyed Sidon but not Tyre. About 20 years later Alexander the Great captured both cities. Thus, in a relatively short period of time, judgment came on these two peoples.

Under the Persian Empire, the Jews had periods of both oppression and favor. Even when they were placed in other lands, the Persians gave them rather nice places, such as up on the Caspian Sea and the Elephantine area of Egypt. Alexander the Great showed favor to the Jews because he was impressed when they called attention to Isaiah's prophecy of his success. Moreover, the high priest came out of the city of Jerusalem dressed in all his glory garments,

and with the people unarmed, to meet him—just as in a vision God had previously given to Alexander the Great.

As retribution, 30,000 of Tyre's inhabitants were sold into slavery on the open market. By inference in what we are reading here, the Jews purchased many of these slaves and resold them for a profit to the Sabeans (children of Keturah and Ishmael) on the far side of the Dead Sea. Rich Sabean merchants, who sold spices and incense and had gold, bought the slaves.

Verse 6 states, "The children also of Judah and ... Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians." Jews from the captured two-tribe kingdom were sold to the Greeks.

Verses 3-8 are sandwiched in between verses 1 and 2 and verse 9, which reverts back to the theme of gathering the nations to Jacob's Trouble in the future. The insertion helped to lock the meaning of this prophecy until the due time for it to be understood. However, a logical question is, Do verses 3-8 have any vague application to the end of the age? Certainly details like giving a boy for a harlot and selling a girl for wine (verse 3) would not be applicable, but Israel will possess Lebanon including Tyre and Sidon. The land up to a segment of the river Euphrates will mark the northern boundary of Israel as part of the promised deed. In fact, those peoples will become captive to Israel under the New Covenant. When the New Covenant is made, Gentile peoples, including Arabs, will have to humble themselves and recognize that God is dealing with Israel through Messiah, that Jerusalem is the capital of the world, and that they have to obey orders. The scales will be reversed—the Jews were taken captive by the Arabs in the past, and in the Kingdom, the Arabs will become captive to Israel.

There seems to be a hint or vague allusion in verses 3-8 along the lines of Psalm 83 and the Arab confederacy that will occur against Israel shortly before Jacob's Trouble. In Israel's astounding victory, Tyre and Sidon will be captured. The scales will be reversed from the Intifada, which is going on at present. Arabs in the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as some in Iraq, are included in Psalm 83.

Joel 3:9 Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

Verse 9 reminds us of some of the other Minor Prophets, for portions of their message touch on this theme of preparation for war and gathering the nations to Israel at the end of the age. Zephaniah 3:8 reads, "My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Zechariah 14:2 states, "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle." Nahum 2:3 says, "The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken." Just as all of God's holy prophets speak of the "times of restitution" and tell of the Kingdom Age and of restoration and healing, so many of the prophets speak of the trouble that is to come at the end of the age (Acts 3:21).

Here in verse 9, God is speaking in a sarcastic vein to the Gentiles: "Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up." God is calling to the "mighty men" who are sleeping, "*Wake up and come to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, to the battle of Armageddon!*"

Joel 3:10 Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

"Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears." Instead of making

agricultural machinery such as tractors, the nations produce tanks, armaments, and weapons.

Comment: Ultimately the *opposite* situation will occur: “And he [God] shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks” (Isa. 2:4).

“Let the weak say, I am strong.” The sarcasm continues. The “weak” from *God’s* standpoint will think they are “strong” from their *own* standpoint. In other words, the “mighty men” (verse 9) are not mighty in the final analysis.

Comment: Some of the small or Third World countries that we would not expect to have much of an impact on the world will flex their muscles, especially if they get nuclear weapons.

A preparing of munitions is being described. Technology, instruments, machinery, etc., are all required for today’s warfare, even in countries like Iraq. To create a nuclear bomb or a missile with nuclear capabilities necessitates a lot of preparation. Such preparation drains the resources of the various nations—resources that would normally be used for agricultural purposes and the benefit of the people. For example, to rank as a superpower in armaments, Russia deprived its people of the luxuries of life for many years. Verse 10 is talking about the very end of the age when the nations and peoples are unknowingly preparing for the final holocaust.

Q: Will the fighting be on a personal level with hand-to-hand combat, rather than the type of warfare that is waged today with planes and modern technology?

A: That will be true in Jacob’s Trouble, when Gog comes down as a land invasion from the north, rather than as an invasion of air space. The tremendous army will have land machinery and will consist of foot soldiers.

Two cataclysmic events will take place. First, Israel will war with its Arab neighbors and have a decisive victory. The warfare will probably be confused with Jacob’s Trouble, which will occur subsequently and involve a much greater conglomeration of people. That very last battle will be more along the lines of hand-to-hand combat, but prior to Jacob’s Trouble, regular warfare methods will continue. In Jacob’s Trouble, technology and electronic instrumentation will break down and fail. For example, a little cog missing from a wheel can halt machinery. To wage nuclear warfare requires technicians, money, etc. Hand-to-hand combat is another matter, and the fighting will be on this lower level in Jacob’s Trouble. Isaiah 10:28-32 describes the route Gog will take in coming down from the north, going from city to city and approaching closer and closer to Jerusalem.

Joel 3:11 Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD.

Comment: The NIV has, “Come quickly, all you nations from every side, and assemble there. ‘Bring down your warriors, O LORD!’”

Comment: The words “come down” in the King James imply north-to-south movement. Also, the term “mighty ones” sounds like the Lord’s Great Army of Joel 2:11.

Reply: Yes, probably they are the same as the “mighty men” of Joel 2:7 and 3:9. However, the “mighty ones” can also be considered the glorified Church.

The literal locust plague prefigured an invasion that would come from the north. The analogy of the locusts in different stages of development changes to horses as an invading force from

the north (Joel 2:4). There was a partial fulfillment in the past subsequent to the writing of this prophetic message. The locust plague occurred prior to Joel's message, for he was telling about something that had already taken place. He told the people to repent because an invasion was about to happen. As stated earlier, Judah must have repented because only the ten tribes were taken captive by the northern Assyrian host shortly after this prophecy was written. However, that invasion is a picture of the northern army of Gog and Magog, which will come down at the very end of the age. Ezekiel 39:2 says that God will cause Gog "to come up from the *north* parts ... [down] upon the mountains of Israel." Joel 2:20 confirms the thought of a northern army: "I [God] will remove far off from you the *northern* army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate." The forces of Gog and Magog will come from the north, but they will be destroyed in a valley. Earlier we suggested that the valley is down in the vicinity of Jericho. By taking the road from the top of the Mount of Olives down toward the Dead Sea, one sees a lot of desolate, arid, unoccupied land. We believe the host of Gog will be strewn as corpses in that valley, with their faces toward the Dead Sea and their hinder parts toward the Mediterranean.

Q: A wadi goes in that direction. Is that the area?

A: Yes, but it will open up more.

Ezekiel 39:11 is the same reference as Joel 2:20. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog." The term "valley of the passengers" should be the "valley of the passers [or travelers] through." The NIV is helpful: "On that day I will give Gog a burial place in Israel, in the valley of those who travel east toward the Sea. It will block the way of travelers, because Gog and all his hordes will be buried there. So it will be called the Valley of Hamon Gog." In other words, if we were on the west side of the Jordan River, and we crossed the river to the east side, that whole area is the "valley of the passers through *toward* the east [Dead] sea." Most translations are confused on this point, but a comparison of Ezekiel 39:11 and Joel 2:20 shows that the valley will be occupied in part but not on the opposite side. The valley is toward the east but not on the east.

King Jehoshaphat's experience in the Valley of Jehoshaphat is another picture. The king realized that Ammon, Moab, and Edom were confederate and that they were starting to march toward Jerusalem. They had gotten to En-ge-di when the king was alerted to the fact that this great enemy host was coming. With En-ge-di being only a three- or four-day walk from Jerusalem, Jehoshaphat did not have time to muster all Israel for defense. Therefore, he went down to meet the enemy, and when those of Judah "came toward the watchtower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped" (2 Chron. 20:24). In other words, Jehoshaphat left Jerusalem and went up to the crest of the Mount of Olives, and from a place called the "watchtower," he could see the Dead Sea and the whole valley below. (Although the Dead Sea was a distance away, nothing obstructed his vision.) As the king and those with him looked down, they saw that the valley *was filled with corpses. Not one person was alive, yet cattle were standing and nothing was disturbed.* The corpses were the result of internecine struggle, in which the enemy forces slew one another.

Q: When, in the future, Israel is divided into parallel land strips, where will Hamon-gog be? In that land division, will Hamon-gog be part of the east-west strip that includes the "holy oblation" (Ezek. 48:20,21)?

A: Yes, but in regard to the occupancy for the prince and the Levites, the thought is not that their settlement will be on the east bank of the Dead Sea. However, that space had to be

preserved because the land for all of the tribes will go from east to west, extending over into Transjordan.

Comment: If the bodies are in that area, a lot of bones will be found because the distance is not that far.

Reply: A footnote for Ezekiel 39 in the Amplified Old Testament reads as follows: “The number of dead bodies left after the great catastrophe which God will send upon Gog and his host, as here described, would necessarily amount to several millions. Their graves would naturally interfere with the traffic on the interstate highway. The dead will not be slain in battle. God will slay them by a great cosmic catastrophe.... And not some but all of Gog’s multitude will die then. Before they have had a chance to use their weapons, they will be struck from their hands according to verse 3. That one-sixth of the horde from the north will be left alive as the King James Version says in verse 2 is, without noted exception, conceded to be a mistake in translation by all authorities of modern times.” However, we think that “sixth part” (one-sixth) is a *proper* translation because the other translations do not have an alternate suggestion. They criticize the King James but do not have a proper alternative.

Comment: The thought of “sixth part” does not fit in with their theology.

Thus the dead of the Gog forces will number several million, and they will be strewn all along the wadi (or valley), on the lower end, on this side of the Jordan River but facing the Dead Sea.

Q: Will the corpses be near where the Mount of Olives splits?

A: The site will not be far from where the Mount of Olives separates. The mass burial will occur there in the valley in an official cemetery that is of some proportion. The burials will be orderly and on one side so that when the people go through the valley, they cannot help but see the cemetery. The Hebrew even suggests that the cemetery will constrict what previously was a wider avenue. In other words, the cemetery will occupy so much space that the normal west-to-east corridor will be constricted, but not completely blocked.

Comment: When the Ammonites and the Moabites slew each other in Jehoshaphat’s day, the corpses must have been very numerous.

Reply: Yes, there were several hundred thousand, but Gog will be several million.

Comment: To keep track of several million dead individuals and get them off the face of the earth where the odor is coming up and stinking, the people will have to operate efficiently.

Reply: Yes. The stink will be great, and the burial will take seven months (Ezek. 39:11-16). Then, after the seven months, a grave-digging crew will be employed to pick up the remnant corpses and bones. In other words, the first seven months will be used for *mass* burial. After that will come people of “continual employment” who will pick up bones that are spotted and take them down to Hamon-gog, the official graveyard. Any travelers who see a bone are to put a marker there for the buriers to find.

Thus the “valley of Jehoshaphat” (Joel 3:2) will be a location not called by that name at present. Three pictures speak of this *one* place:

1. 2 Chronicles 20:1-27 regarding King Jehoshaphat
2. Ezekiel 39:11-16
3. Joel 2:20 and 3:2,12,14

The terminology used is Valley of Berachah (Blessing), Valley of Jehoshaphat, Valley of

Hamon-gog, and Valley of Decision/Threshing. These are relatively synonymous terms viewed from different perspectives.

Q: Will one end of the Valley of Jehoshaphat be the Kidron Valley?

A: No. The valley will end up in wadis south of Jerusalem. Off of the Kidron, there is a wadi that goes down to the Dead Sea, but not the Kidron itself. From Jerusalem, the route of flight will start with the Kidron Valley, but when the Holy Remnant turns to go down to the Dead Sea, the valley will be farther along on that branch, which will become a main artery later.

Joel 3:12 Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.

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

With the wording of verse 13 being very similar to that of Revelation 14:18-20, we can see why many confuse the two pictures and think the two winepresses correspond. However, these Scriptures are talking about two different time periods. The Revelation 14 citation pertains to the destruction of *spiritual Babylon*, whereas Joel 3:13 refers to the destruction of the *natural host (or multitude) of Gog*.

Q: To whom does the pronoun “ye” refer? “Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.”

A: To answer that question, we have to go back to verse 11, which has a double application: the Lord’s Great Army down here and the glorified Church. Not only will there be the Lord’s “army” down here, but God will have his spiritual “army.” “Thither cause thy *mighty ones* to come down, O LORD.... Put ye in the sickle.” The italicized words pertain to the *glorified Church* destroying the *natural ones (Gog)* down here. “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer [The Christ]” (Rom. 11:26). “Saviours [plural] shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau” (Obadiah 21). “Saviours” will come to rescue Jacob; they will put in the sickle to destroy the enemy. Thus the “mighty ones” and the pronoun “ye” are part of the *spiritual* rescue effort.

Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

Verse 14 is where the thought of millions of corpses comes from: “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.” Ezekiel 38:1-6 tells of the different peoples who will come down from the north; various powers, or nations, will comprise the Gog host. (In contradistinction, the Arab enemies enumerated in Psalm 83 will be much farther south.)

Q: Why is the term “valley of *decision*” used?

A: It is *God’s* battle. Gog will be prepared with slaughter weapons, but the weapons will be knocked out of their hands. The bulk of the host will die in connection with the method God uses to destroy them. However, some of the Gog host (one-sixth) will be allowed to escape so that they can return to their homelands to give eyewitness testimony of the miraculous deliverance of Israel. The remnant will be *randomly* spared; that is, they will be chosen not because they are holy but because they can give eyewitness testimony. Their testimony will be *too numerous* to be negated.

Comment: For the term “valley of decision,” a Bible note says, “Where God will decide about men, not where men will decide about God.”

Q: How will the sixth part of Gog randomly survive?

A: We do not think they will be part of the host who go down into the valley that opens up from the earthquake. To our understanding, all of those who go into the valley will die. A large part of those who are occupied in doing other things will be left as eyewitnesses. In other words, five-sixths of the Gog host will die. Some Scriptures are beginning to coalesce and become a little clearer. We have a suspicion as to how another part of the destruction will come about and as to what the motivation will be.

Comment: For the “valley of decision,” *Strong’s Concordance* translates “decision” figuratively as “determination.”

Reply: It is the valley of *God’s* determination, judgment, and decision on the Gentiles.

Gog will come down from various nations in *unbelievable numbers* as a representative group. The judgment will be on these peoples, or nations, through their representatives. (Entire nations will not come down, but a sizable portion of people as a jihad, a holy crusade, in the truest sense of the word from the perspective of the enemy. Their determination will be to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. Having to deprive themselves of all comfort will not deter them. (Of course, they will pillage on the way down.) Such an invading army will suffer privation, but their motive will drive them on in their purpose. The same was true of the Holy(?) Crusades that came from Europe. *Many* died en route, but they kept on for the Holy Grail and their determination to rescue Jerusalem.

People can starve to death within 72 hours, but those who are determined and pace themselves can live a month or longer without food. *Fear* unnerves and weakens one, whereas *controlled* emotions enable a person to live longer. Hate is a *powerful* negative force.

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

Joel 3:16 The LORD also shall roar 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.

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 pass through her any more.

Q: Since Joel was speaking of Jacob’s Trouble, does verse 15 have a literal application in harmony with Zechariah 14:6,7? “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.”

A: Certainly, as elucidated in Zechariah chapters 12 and 14, literal signs will occur in the heavens at the time of Jacob’s Trouble, particularly when the Holy Remnant is fleeing through the split Mount of Olives.

In addition, Joel 3:15-17 has a spiritual connotation. In other words, spiritual and literal applications are mixed. For instance, verse 17, in which God speaks of “my holy mountain” and of Jerusalem as “holy,” is getting down to a natural level. But sandwiched in between, verse 16 tells that Jehovah will “roar [like a lion] out of Zion.” While indignation will be initiated in the

spiritual phase of the Kingdom, the “Zion” of this verse will be focalized in natural Jerusalem.

Q: Does Amos 9:13-15 tie in with Joel 3:15-17? Verse 13 tells about the plowman overtaking the reaper, and “the treader of grapes him that soweth seed”; verse 14 talks about God’s bringing “again the captivity” of His people Israel; and verse 15 prophesies that God “will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land,” which He has given them.

A: Verses 14 and 15 are coming down to the natural picture, but verse 13, in speaking about the plowman, the reaper, the treader of grapes, and the sowing of seed, is a spiritual picture.

Q: Does Joel 3:15 about the sun and the moon being darkened and the stars withdrawing their shining pertain to when the feet members are taken?

A: Joel 3:15 pertains to the establishment of the Kingdom, whereas the fall of Babylon will take place several years earlier. There will be a time period of 3 to 3 1/2 years from the fall of Babylon to Jacob’s Trouble and the deliverance of the Holy Remnant. When Papacy’s lights go out at the time of its fall, the papal sun, moon, and stars will certainly be darkened; they will be extinguished. However, some additional Scriptures give a perspective the other way; that is, they speak of the perplexity and confusion of mankind with regard to what the true light is. From that unfavorable standpoint, the nominal heavens will be darkened.

We will return to Joel 3:13 for a moment. “Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great.” Although the reference is specifically to Jacob’s Trouble, the whole period of time from the fall of Babylon through Jacob’s Trouble—a period of 3 to 3 1/2 years—is likened to *the* Time of Trouble upon the world. During this time, mystic Babylon will fall, the governments will lose control over the masses, and Jacob’s Trouble will occur. The sickling of Revelation 14:15,18-20 treats the spiritual picture only, whether it refers to the true harvest of the earth or to the harvest of the false vine of the earth; that is, the sickling of those verses does not refer to natural Israel at all. In the Old Testament, there is an added complexity. For instance, when the Book of Ezekiel talks about conditions at the end of the age, there is a double picture, that is, both spiritual and natural. In some respects, the Book of Joel is like Ezekiel.

When God roars like a lion out of Zion and the valley of decision is near, a separating work will be taking place against (1) His enemies who come down from the north and (2) those among His people who are not in the proper or fit condition for identification with the divine government to be instituted in Jerusalem. The main thrust of Joel 3:9-16 is the natural picture. However, the Time of Trouble will effect a thorough housecleaning of both the nominal *spiritual* house and the nominal *natural* house. Mystic Babylon will cease, but a remnant (the Great Company) will escape. The same will be true in the Israel setting. The multitudes who go down to Israel will be flattened, but a remnant (one-sixth of Gog) will survive to return to their homelands as eyewitnesses. Although the purging of natural Israel is not mentioned here, a (holy) remnant will be saved. We believe that the proportion of Jews who will be spared is approximately one out of ten. For nine-tenths of the Jews to die in Jacob’s Trouble will be catastrophic.

Q: Does the thought of a one-tenth Holy Remnant go back to tithing under the Law and passing under the rod (Lev. 27:32; Ezek. 20:37,38)?

A: Yes, that is true. The main emphasis is that the tithing was to the Lord. When tithes were paid, the animal or gift was not necessarily perfect because the Israelites perfunctorily gave tithes. However, the Ezekiel citation refers to a *purged* tenth, not a perfunctory tenth. That class

in Israel will be acceptable to the Lord at the end of the age. Their names having been written in the book for survival, they will pass under the rod (Dan. 12:1; Isa. 4:3). The reason we think the tenth may be somewhat literal is the contrast of “multitude” with a tenth. The slain of Jehovah will be many and in all countries on the tops of the mountains, beginning with the “host of heaven” being “rolled together as a scroll” and the subsequent fall of Babylon (Isa. 34:2-4; 66:16). In the vision the prophet had, he saw multitudes of dead bodies in the mountains (kingdoms). The worldwide great Time of Trouble will result in many, many fatalities.

Q: Is Isaiah 6:13 the supporting Scripture about a “tenth” of the Jews being spared in Jacob’s Trouble? “But yet in it shall be a *tenth*, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the *holy seed* shall be the substance thereof.”

A: Yes. The word “eaten” sometimes, as here, means “accepted”; that is, the Holy Remnant will have God’s acceptance. The altar is pictured as God’s mouth, and when an offering is properly presented on the altar—for example, a lamb without spot—it is acceptable when burned. In other words, when the offering was consumed, it was acceptable to God, and it was spoken of as being “eaten.” Jesus said, “Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53 paraphrase). Thus the word “eat” can convey different thoughts depending on context, and we view the Holy Remnant as the “holy seed.”

Comment: The context of Isaiah 6:13, starting with verse 11, reads, “Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, And the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a *tenth*....”

The fall of Babylon is the beginning of the spectrum, whereas what Joel described here in the third chapter is the end of the spectrum. In the saving of the Holy Remnant in Israel, God’s fury will be directed against those who incur His displeasure. In this purging process, in this climax in Israel, God will manifest His decision.

The type of Samson’s pulling down the two pillars of the Temple of Dagon shows the beginning of the fatalities. Several thousand Philistine lords perished in that one incident. We have made five distinctions with regard to the Time of Trouble because otherwise, the term is too nebulous. There will be a “time of trouble” on (1) the true Church, (2) the nominal Church, (3) the Great Company, (4) Israel, and (5) the world. However, Scriptures which speak of that time in a less distinct fashion refer mostly to either nominal Churchianity or just the worldly element.

Q: Will the time of God’s roaring “out of Zion” and the uttering of “his voice from Jerusalem” (verse 16) be the time when Michael stands up (Dan. 12:1)?

A: Yes, Michael will stand up and speak with authority at the conclusion of Jacob’s Trouble, taking unto himself his great power and reigning. God will first allow Jacob to have trouble, and during that trouble, the Jews will not know where they stand, that is, not until God saves the Holy Remnant.

Comment: God will “roar,” but Jesus will act on His behalf.

Reply: Yes, Jesus acts as the representative of the Father. The picture of Moses at the time of the burning bush illustrates this principle (Exod. 3:2-4). The “angel of the LORD [God]” spoke to Moses, yet the account also says, “God called unto him [Moses] out of the midst of the bush.” In other words, the one who declared himself and acted as if he were Jehovah was

actually an angel representing Him and speaking with authority. The same principle is illustrated when our government, in negotiating a treaty with a foreign country, sends its highest representative under the President to speak in the name of the United States. It is known that the representative gets his instructions from the White House. Along another line, the Roman Catholic Church has a high-ranking theologian put the imprimatur on its version of the Bible, thus certifying that it is true Catholic doctrine. Therefore, when the Bible states that God will speak in Jacob's Trouble, Jesus will actually do the speaking as God's representative.

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.

The New Covenant will go out from Israel. "The mountains shall drop down new wine [doctrine]." The new doctrine will be related to the instruction of the New Covenant and all of its ramifications. "The hills shall flow with milk." Notice the contrast between "mountains" and "hills," and between "new wine" and "milk." From the large perspective, when the New Covenant is made, the inhabitants of Africa and countries such as China, Malaysia, and Madagascar will be fed with the milk of the Word because the vast majority have had no instruction during the Gospel Age. They will be nurtured on pure milk, whereas the Western world will receive a little more advanced doctrine because of their prior schooling in the Old and New Testaments. In other words, instruction will be adapted according to the capability of a people.

Comment: Revelation 22:1 reads, "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."

Reply: That text emphasizes only the spiritual with regard to the trees and the source of the pure water. Joel 3:18 pertains to the world's instruction under the New Covenant.

The mountains dropping new wine and the hills flowing with milk show that the wine and the milk have to do with truth—but truth adapted to the capability of the recipients who are involved. The clause "all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters" indicates that truth in the Kingdom will go out from Israel. Thus the New Covenant will be an Israelitish covenant. The people will have to "take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you"; they will have to become proselytes to the new order (Zech. 8:23). For "all the rivers of Judah ... [to] flow with waters" means there will be a *purged* element, a *clean and holy* nucleus. With the Ancient Worthies, who were tried and proven faithful in previous ages, coming forth perfect to be princes in all the earth, Israel will be more knowledgeable in things of the Lord than any other people. Israel will *overflow* with "waters," with *truth*. Their joy, enthusiasm, and capabilities will be very noticeable. With 144,000 Ancient Worthies coming forth from the tomb at one time and working in conjunction with the Holy Remnant, Judah will indeed flow with waters.

"A fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim." The "house of the LORD" is pictured in Ezekiel chapters 40-47 as the *literal* Third Temple, which will be built on top of a plateau. When the structure is fully constructed, water will issue forth from underneath it and come out and go down to the Dead Sea. In addition, water will come from the Mediterranean Sea. In other words, water will go to the Dead Sea from both the Temple and the Mediterranean. There will be two rivers from two different sources. The fountain that comes forth "of the house of the LORD ... shall water the valley of Shittim," that is, the Dead Sea. The area occupied by the Dead Sea was a valley or plain at one time, that is, before it filled up with water. "Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the [well-watered] plain of

Jordan,” but the earthquake that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah closed up the bottom end of the plain so that it began to fill up like a reservoir, thus forming the Dead Sea (Gen. 13:10). Prior to the earthquake, that land was called the Arabah. We do not think of the Arabah today as being underneath the Dead Sea. Rather, we think of (1) the waters of the Jordan River as they enter the Dead Sea at its north end and (2) the dry wadi at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Therefore, we have to make a distinction. At the north end, the river Jordan enters the Dead Sea as a little trickle. At the south end of the Dead Sea, a dry wadi extends quite a long distance down to Eilat and empties into the Red Sea, or the Gulf of Eilat (or Aqaba).

The point is that the water going down to the “valley of Shittim” in *this* context is speaking of water going toward the Dead Sea and fructifying it. As a result, the waters of the Dead Sea will be sufficiently diluted with fresh water to sweeten, or lower, the salt content so that saltwater fish can live in it. However, the southern end of the Dead Sea will continue to be given to salt.

Thus the “house of the LORD” will be the *literal* Ezekiel’s Temple, and the “valley of Shittim” is a *literal* valley. In addition, both the Temple and the valley have symbolic representation. For example, when the Dead Sea empties into this valley, it represents the “dead sea” of humanity. The double symbol is as follows. This valley of death, which is now filled with water and is called the Dead Sea, is not only a literal body of water but also a symbol of the dead sea of humanity because no fish can currently live in it. However, fish will be able to live in the northern portion in the future. If, spiritually speaking, the Dead Sea represents the dead sea of humanity, then the water coming from the Temple will come from The Christ.

Q: Where is the formation in the Dead Sea that is supposed to be Lot’s wife?

A: It is at the southern end of the Dead Sea.

Joel 3:19 **Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.**

Verse 19 can be applied from both the natural and the spiritual standpoint. Here spiritual Egypt is the world of mankind, and spiritual Edom is the nominal Christian world.

What will happen to Egypt? The Aswan Dam will literally break so that men will be able to walk over the Nile riverbed dry-shod. When the dam breaks, it will wreak terrible havoc, causing a flushing of the waters like an emetic. The Aswan Dam is still not filled to capacity because 300 years are needed to completely fill it with water. In the meantime, sluices control the flow, but if the dam ruptured with an earthquake, the whole basin of that large body of water would empty quickly—perhaps within a day. Both sides of the Nile would flood, and for the most part, the people of Egypt live along the couple hundred yards of fertility on both banks, that is, except for the Delta region. Up above, in southern Egypt, the flood waters from a ruptured dam would obliterate everything in their path. When the flood comes, terrible desolation will result. Only in the Delta region will some of the people be able to escape because the flood waters will follow the path of the three streams that presently exist. Other Scriptures also touch on this prophecy with regard to the Aswan Dam and the Nile River.

Israel would like to destroy the Aswan Dam, but we believe that an earthquake will accomplish the destruction. The setting of Zechariah 14:17,18, which mentions that there will be no rain in Egypt for a time, is after the inauguration of the Kingdom. Egypt will be an object lesson so that when other nations see the withholding of rain, they will more readily listen to the message of the Kingdom.

When the dam breaks, rainfall will be essential, for the water of the Nile will empty into the

Mediterranean Sea. For centuries, the amount of annual rainfall in Egypt has been negligible. Prior to the dam, the rains of Ethiopia, Uganda, Lake Victoria, etc., emptied into the Nile and flooded its banks each year. However, if the dam breaks, it will take time for the Nile to fill up to its former level. Similarly, but on a much smaller scale, when the Israelites crossed the Jordan River under Joshua, an earthquake and landslide temporarily stopped the river so that they could go over dry-shod. But in time, the pressure of the river behind the backup caused the water to work its way through, and the Jordan returned to its normal level.

“Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.” In the Kingdom, Edom will be a perpetual wilderness as a picture of the permanent destruction of the nominal Church systems of Christendom. Today Edom is quite desolate with no large cities, but it will be even more desolate in the Kingdom. For instance, Petra is only a tiny village. Edom will be visited in the Kingdom, but it will remain desolate as an everlasting lesson.

Q: Will Edom be established in any way in the future?

A: No Scripture so indicates. There will be no nation of Edom, just a plot of ground, showing that it will be insignificant forever. However, Egypt will be restored.

Joel 3:20 But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.

Joel 3:21 For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the LORD dwelleth in Zion.

Israel will be cleansed and purged at the end of Jacob’s Trouble, leaving a holy nucleus, the Holy Remnant, on center stage when the Kingdom is set up.

“For the LORD dwelleth in Zion.” We are reminded of the ending of the Book of Ezekiel: “The name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there” (Ezek. 48:35).