

# **JOEL: THE JUDGMENTS OF THE DAY OF THE LORD**

## **VI: God's Final Restoration Of Israel**

**(Joel 3:18-21)**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. "The Day of the Lord," a term used of the time when God administers judgment on sin and delivers His people, can be applied to an event in Israel's past as well as to end-time events.
- B. In the concluding section of Joel's prophecy, God promised a glorious future for the upright remnant in Israel, and Joel 3:18-21 tells of God's final restoration of Israel. We view the passage for our insight and application:

### **II. God's Final Restoration Of Israel, Joel 3:18-21.**

- A. The prophet Joel began to predict the "day of Messiah's reign in His earthly millennial kingdom" in Joel 3:18a. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Joel 3:18)
- B. That "day" will be characterized by great contrast in material blessings among the nations, Joel 3:18b-19:
  - 1. It will be an era of great material blessings for the nation Israel, Joel 3:18b,c,d,e:
    - a. In the Kingdom, the "grape harvest will be so bountiful that wine will seemingly drip from the mountains" and the hills flow with milk in God's agricultural blessing, Joel 3:18b; Bible Know. Com. O. T., p. 1423.
    - b. "The seasonal streams" or "ravines," (*'iphiq*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 67) the wadis in southern Judah's wilderness that ran with water only during the rainy season would "no longer run dry," Joel 3:18c; Ibid., Bible Know. Com. O. T.
    - c. In fact, a fountain will send out a stream from the Lord's temple that will flow down to the Jordan Valley to the east and water the valley of Shittim near the northern end of the Dead Sea, Joel 3:18d; Ibid., Ryrie.
  - 2. In vast contrast to God's great material blessings for Israel, the lands of Israel's enemies as represented in the nations of Egypt and Edom will be infertile because they had committed violent acts against the people of Judah and slain their innocent people, Joel 3:19; Ibid.
- C. This great contrast between Israel's future material blessings and the lack of blessings for her Gentile enemies is explained in terms of God's dealing with sin in His people and in the Gentiles, Joel 3:20-21:
  - 1. In addition to God's future material blessing of Israel, the nation's security and prosperity predicted in Joel 3:18 will persist without the interruption of oppressions by Gentile foes, with Judah and Jerusalem being settled and inhabited for all future generations, Joel 3:20; Ibid.
  - 2. The explanation of this blessing is seen in God's dealing with sin in His people and in her Gentile foes:
    - a. Joel 3:21 is difficult to interpret, but it may well begin with the rhetorical question by the Lord, "'And shall I leave their bloodshed [the Judean blood shed by the nations] go unpunished? I will not.'" (Ibid., citing Leslie Allen, The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah, NICOT, 1976, p. 117)
    - b. This interpretation fits the context of God's prediction of richly blessing Israel while predicting His punishment of the Gentiles who had mistreated his people by committing violent acts against them and shedding their innocent people in Joel 3:18-20.
  - 3. Thus, Joel's explanation for God's having finally dealt out vengeance on the Gentiles who had mistreated His people is that He will then be dwelling in Zion with His people, Joel 3:21. If God will dwell with His people, He will have forgiven their sins so that He will have reversed their fortunes and the fortunes of their Gentile oppressors in keeping with the Mosaic Covenant:
    - a. Deuteronomy 28:1-14 of the Mosaic Covenant taught that were Israel to have obeyed God's Law, the nation would have enjoyed blessing and victory in war without being afflicted by Gentile nations.
    - b. However, Deuteronomy 28:15-68 taught that were Israel to sin, she would suffer divine punishment, with one of those punishments being God's letting wicked Gentile nations oppress His people.
    - c. Nevertheless, Deuteronomy 30:1-10 promised that after divine punishment for the nation's sins, that were the people of God to repent and turn to Him, God would reverse their misfortunes and curse their enemies.

***Lesson:*** *In accord with His Word, God in His future Kingdom will reverse the fortunes of His afflicted people Israel so that He will dwell in their midst and richly bless them forever while punishing Israel's Gentile oppressors. This reversal of fortunes will occur because Israel will have repented of her sin that had led to God's allowing wicked Gentiles to afflict her in punishment.*

***Application:*** *If we suffer a lot of mistreatment from other even ungodly people, God may be allowing it to punish us for sin, so may we examine our lives in view of Scripture and confess any sins we may have committed.*