

Book of Joel

Joel: Introduction

The name Joel literally means —YaHuWaH is Aluhym, and it therefore has the same meaning as the name Elijah, — Aluhym is YaHuWaH, but in reverse order. The major thrust of this prophecy involves reminding Israel and teaching all other nations that the Aluhym of Israel, YaHuWaH, is Aluhym. The principal theme of this book is the Day of Yahuwah—the day when all nations learn who Yahuwah is. Due to the placement by the Jews of his prophetic material as the second of the Twelve Prophets, it is most likely that Joel was a contemporary of Hosea, writing at some point between 790 and 740 B.C.

Joel: Chapter 1

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

Author

The prophecy begins by clearly identifying its source. The name of Joel's father, Pethuel, means —The vision of Yahuwah. The material recorded by Joel is composed of at least one vision from Yahuwah.

Day of Yahuwah

Verses 2-4 emphasize the mind-boggling destructiveness of the events which compose the Day of Yahuwah.

1:2 Hear this, you elders, and give ear, all you inhabitants of the land! Has anything like this happened in your days, or even in the days of your fathers [NIV: forefathers]?

Concerning the prophecy he is about to relate, Joel calls attention to the fact that there has never been any calamity of this magnitude during the existence of the nation of Israel. This warning is similar to the prophecy in Daniel, to which Amanuwal made reference regarding the events which conclude the present age in the Olivet Prophecy:

DAN 12:1 —...there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time...

MAT 24:21 —For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

1:3 Tell your children about it, let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.

Yahuwah will require that every generation that follows the cataclysmic end-time events be taught what happened during the Day of Yahuwah; it must never be forgotten.

1:4 What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; what the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; and what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.

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These —locusts seem to be symbolic of the steps that will be taken to bring a state of famine among the nations. Yahuwah refers to accomplishing a punishment by the use of four forms of destruction or judgment in several places (for example, JER 15:3; EZE 14:21). Since the purpose of the first four Trumpet Plagues is to bring about the destruction of one-third of the foodstuffs of the nations (REV 8:7-12), it is possible that these —locusts symbolize those destructive processes. Their —eating of whatever was left could also symbolize the almost total desolation that the Day of Yahuwah will bring to all the earth.

Prelude

Verses 5-15 describe the situation in the land of Israel leading up to the Day of Yahuwah.

1:5 Awake, you drunkards, and weep; and wail, all you drinkers of wine, because of the new wine, for it has been cut off from your mouth.

Since the focus of the prophecy is the time of the Day of Yahuwah, it is important to remember what group is generally viewed as being drunk during that period—all who are associated with Babylon the Great:

REV 17:1-2 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, —Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

1:6 For a nation has come up against My land, strong, and without number; his teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he has the fangs of a fierce lion.

A Nation Against My Land

The nation that will occupy Israel will be Babylon the Great, led by the Beast.

DAN 11:40-41 —At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. He shall also enter the Glorious Land...

JER 6:1 —O you children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee from the midst of Jerusalem! Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a signal-fire in Beth Haccherem; for disaster appears out of the north, and great destruction.

Babylon was symbolized by a lion with the wings of an eagle in one of Daniel's visions (DAN 7:4). Yahuwah gives a further comparison of Babylon the Great to lions in the prophecy of Nahum (NAH 2:11-13).

1:7 He has laid waste My vine, and ruined My fig tree; he has stripped it bare and thrown it away; its branches are made white.

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My Vine

Yahuwah represented Israel as His vineyard and foretold its destruction due to the failure of the nation to produce good fruit.

ISA 5:1-6 —Now let me sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: my Well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. He dug it up and cleared out its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, and also made a winepress in it; so He expected it to bring forth good grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Yahuwdah, judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; and break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned or dug, but there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain on it.

My Fig Tree

The nation of Yahuwdah was symbolized by a fig tree in a parable of Amanuwal in Luke 13.

1:8 Mourn like a virgin in sackcloth grieving for the husband of her youth. (NIV)

Mourn

Once the Beast power subjugates the land of Israel, the Israelites who will be displaced will be powerless to regain the land; they will only be able to grieve over their loss.

1:9 The grain offering and the drink offering have been cut off from the house of Yahuwah; the priests mourn, who minister to Yahuwah.

Offerings Cut Off

Since the sacrificial system will be reinstated shortly before the land of Israel is conquered by Babylon the Great, offerings according to the Levitical laws will be made. However, once the land is taken, the sacrificial system will be shut down.

DAN 12:11 —And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

It is important to note here that the continual burnt offering, which was offered twice each day, consisted of one lamb, a grain offering and a drink offering (EXO 29:38-42).

The House of Yahuwah

Prior to the building of the temple by Solomon, the —house of Yahuwah was the tabernacle.

1:10-12 The field is wasted, the land mourns; for the grain is ruined, the new wine is dried up, the oil fails. Be ashamed, you farmers, wail, you vinedressers, for the wheat and the barley; because the harvest of the field has perished. The vine has dried up, and the fig tree

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has withered; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree—all the trees of the field are withered; surely joy has withered away from the sons of men.

Agricultural Desolation

This passage describes the condition created when the army of the beast enters the land of Israel; Yahuwah refers to that army as —the abomination that makes desolate.

*MAT 24:15-16 —Therefore when you see **the abomination of desolation**‘ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the kadosh place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.*

LUK 21:20 —But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.

Due to the destruction of their crops and the treatment they will suffer under the rule of the beast, the Jews who are allowed to remain in the land of Israel (ZEC 14:2) will have no reason for rejoicing.

1:13 Gird yourselves and lament, you priests; wail, you who minister before the altar; come, lie all night in sackcloth, you who minister to my Yahuwah; for the grain offering and the drink offering are withheld from the house of your Yahuwah.

Priesthood

Once the continual burnt offering is stopped by the beast, it will not be restarted throughout the duration of the events leading up to and including the Day of Yahuwah. With no duties to perform, the priesthood is directed to consider the plight of the land and assess what action they should take.

1:14 Consecrate [CJB: Proclaim] a fast, call a sacred assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into [NIV: to] the house of Yahuwah your Aluhyn, and cry out to Yahuwah.

Fasting

The purpose of fasting is to draw closer to Yahuwah in order to better understand what He desires of us. The priests are instructed to initiate a movement among the Jews left in the land of Israel—a movement toward seeking Yahuwah and repenting of their failure to live up to their claim of being Yahuwah’s chosen people.

1:15 Alas for the day! For the Day of Yahuwah is at hand; it shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

Parallel Scripture

This is almost identical to the descriptions given by Isaiah:

ISA 13:6 —Wail, for the Day of Yahuwah is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty...

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ISA 13:9 —Lo! The Day of Yahuwah is coming with pitiless fury and wrath, to make the earth a desolation, to wipe out the sinners upon it. (TNK)

At Hand

Amanuwal revealed to the apostle John that the Day of Yahuwah will begin after the opening of the Seventh Seal:

REV 6:17 —For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?

REV 8:1-2 When He opened the seventh seal...I saw the seven angels...to them were given seven trumpets.

Overview

From this point through Joel 2:20 is an overview of the Day of Yahuwah.

1:16-17 Is not the food cut off before our eyes, joy and gladness from the house of our Yahuwah? The seed grain shrivels under the clods, storehouses [TNK: granaries] are in shambles; barns are broken down, for the grain has withered.

Food Cut Off

The remnant of Jews in the land of Israel assesses the destructive results of the coming of the Beast power and the beginning of the Day of Yahuwah.

1:18-19 How the beasts [NRS: animals] groan! The herds of cattle are restless [NAS: wander aimlessly], because they have no pasture; even the flocks of sheep suffer Your punishment. O Yahuwah, to You I cry out; for fire has devoured the open pastures, and a flame has burned all the trees of the field.

Groaning and Suffering

The grazing animals are denied green pastures due to the first of the seven Trumpet Plagues:

REV 8:7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

1:20 The beasts of the field [CJB: wild animals] also cry out to You, for the water brooks are dried up, and fire has devoured the open pastures [TNK: pastures in the wilderness].

Water and Fire

In addition to the drying effect the fire of the First Trumpet Plague will have on streams of water, the Third Trumpet Plague will make one-third of the water brooks bitter and unsafe to drink:

REV 8:10-11 Then the third angel sounded: and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water...and a third of the waters became wormwood; and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.

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Joel: Chapter 2

2:1-2 Blow the trumpet [CJB: shofar; TNK: horn] in Zion, and sound an alarm in My kadosh mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the Day of Yahuwah is coming, for it is at hand: a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, like the morning clouds spread over the mountains...

The Trumpet

The focal point of the events of this trumpet will be in the land of Israel during the Day of Yahuwah.

ZEP 1:14-16 The great Day of Yahuwah is near; it is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the Day of Yahuwah is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm against the fortified cities and against the high towers.

A Day of Clouds and Thick Darkness

One reason the Day of Yahuwah is characterized as —a day of clouds and thick darkness is the huge volume of debris that will be thrust into the atmosphere by the detonation of nuclear weapons and by the fires that will burn in the aftermath of the war. In addition to these sources of atmospheric pollution, there will also be volcanic activity (NAH 1:5).

2:2 (cont.) ...A people come, great and strong, the like of whom has never been; nor will there ever be any such after them, even for many successive generations.

A People

Yahuwah does not state that there will never be another army greater in number than this, but that there will never have been, and —after them, there will never be —a people...the like of this one, unique in being so —great and strong. In the book of Revelation, Yahuwah tells us that a more numerous army—but not an army in possession of such powerful and destructive weapons—will later be gathered. However, that will not occur until after many successive generations have elapsed. Certainly, many successive generations will unfold during the Millennium. Once the thousand years are ended, Yahuwah will allow a confederation of nations known as —Gog and Magog to arm and come against Jerusalem.

REV 20:7-8 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.

According to the prophetic outline of end-time events, the combined armies of the nations that will oppose the Antichrist will assemble at the Euphrates River and will be unleashed at the Sixth Trumpet.

REV 9:13-16 Then the sixth angel sounded: and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before Yahuwah, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, —Release

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the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates. So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million, and I heard the number of them.

JER 50:41-42 —Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation and many kings shall be raised up from the ends of the earth. They shall hold the bow and the lance; they are cruel and shall not show mercy. Their voice shall roar like the sea; They shall ride on horses, set in array, like a man for the battle, against you, O daughter of Babylon.

2:3 A fire devours before them, and behind them a flame burns; the land is like the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; surely nothing shall escape them.

Once the Sixth Trumpet is blown, a world war will begin; after the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet (REV 11:18 the nations were angry), the massive army assembled at the Euphrates (REV 9:14-16) will move southward to engage the armies of the beast, destroying everything in its path.

DAN 11:44 —But news from the east and the north shall trouble him [the beast]; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.

2:4 Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; and like swift steeds [NAS: war horses], so they run.

War Horses

Joel is attempting to describe his vision of modern warfare with the only comparisons he knew during his time; horses represented the swiftest mode of travel known to him. Hundreds of years later, the apostle John still knew of nothing that could transport a man faster than a horse could.

REV 9:17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone.

2:5 With a rumble like that of chariots they leap over the mountaintops, like crackling flames devouring stubble, like a mighty horde in battle array. (CJB)

Rumbling and Crackling

Joel now describes the sounds of the mechanized instruments of modern warfare: planes, helicopters, tanks, etc.

NAH 2:3 The shields of his mighty men are made red, the valiant men are in scarlet. The chariots come with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the spears are brandished.

2:6 Before them the people writhe in pain; all faces are drained of color.

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Writhing and Pallid

Those who will be massacred by this massive army will be terrified.

2:7 They run like mighty men [CJB: Like warriors they charge], they climb the wall like men of war; every one marches in formation, and they do not break ranks.

An Orderly, Disciplined Army

No obstacle will thwart their rapid advance.

2:8 They do not jostle each other; each marches straight ahead. They plunge through defenses without breaking ranks. (NIV)

Due to their numbers, energy, momentum and total co-ordination, they are unstoppable.

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

They will plunder and spoil the towns and cities they encounter as they advance toward the south.

2:10 The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble; the sun and moon grow dark, and the stars diminish their brightness.

The trembling of the heavens above is a sensation experienced when the earth shakes below. The loss of the light of the heavenly bodies will be due to all of the debris collecting in the atmosphere (verse 3).

2:11 Yahuwah thunders at the head of His army; His forces are beyond number [NKJ: His camp is very great], and mighty are those who obey His command. The Day of Yahuwah is great; it is dreadful. Who can endure it? (NIV)

Yahuwah's Army

The army of Ha'Mashyach will be assembled in heaven after the First Resurrection and completion of the Marriage Supper; the saints will then follow Him into battle at the time the Seventh Bowl Plague is poured out.

REV 19:14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

2:12-13 —Now, therefore, [TNK: Yet even now] says Yahuwah, —Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to Yahuwah your Aluhym, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm.

Turn to Me

This instruction is to the remnant of Yahuwdah living in the land of Israel at the time of the end.

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2:14 Who knows if He will turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him—a grain offering and a drink offering for Yahuwah your Aluhym?

When the Jews turn to Yahuwah and finally acknowledge Amanuwal as the Savior, they will at last realize the fulfillment of the continual burnt offering.

2:15-16 Blow the trumpet [CJB: shofar; TNK: horn] in Zion, consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders [TNK: Bring together the old], gather the children and nursing babes; let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, and the bride from her dressing room.

Blow the Trumpet

Shortly after the Seventh Trump, an earthquake will kill 7000 men in Jerusalem; then all the rest will be afraid, and will acknowledge Yahuwah (REV 11:13).

2:17 Between the portico and the altar, Let the priests, Yahuwah's ministers, weep and say, —Oh, spare Your people, Yahuwah! Let not Your possession become a mockery, to be taunted by nations! Let not the peoples say, Where is their Aluhym?' (TNK)

Weeping

The beast will leave Jerusalem, moving northward to meet the armies that oppose him after being released from the Euphrates River at the time of the Sixth Trumpet Plague. The Levitical priests will then plead for Yahuwah's mercy.

2:18 Then Yahuwah will be zealous for His land, and pity His people.

Pity His People

ZEC 12:8-11 —In that day Yahuwah will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like Dawid, and the house of Dawid shall be like Yahuwah, like the Angel of Yahuwah before them. It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour on the house of Dawid and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem...

2:19-20 Yahuwah will answer and say to His people, —Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil, and you will be satisfied by them; I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations. But I will remove far from you the northern army [TNK: northerner; NLT: armies from the north], and will drive him away into a barren and desolate land, with his face toward the eastern sea and his back toward the western sea; his stench will come up, and his foul odor will rise, because he has done monstrous things.

The Northern Army

Both the army of the beast and the vast horde which will assemble at the Euphrates prior to the Sixth Trumpet Plague will enter the land of Israel from the north. Therefore, the removal of the

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—northerner can be inclusive of both groups. The manner in which Ha'Mashyach will remove them is through their slaughter in the Jezreel Valley. An army approaching Jerusalem from the north, through the Jezreel Valley, would have its back to the Mediterranean in the northwest, and would have its face toward—be moving in the direction of—the Dead Sea in the southeast.

Monstrous Things

At the time Ha'Mashyach leads the resurrected saints into battle, the two opposing armies will have united in an attempt to prevent Him from establishing His kingdom. Their attempt will be utterly futile against the power of Yahuwah.

REV 19:19-21 And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

2:21 Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice, for Yahuwah has done marvelous things!

A Change of Focus

Verses 21-29 are descriptive of the millennial reign of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

Fear Not, O Land

As in several other places, Yahuwah symbolically speaks to the land of Israel. The marvelous things will include healing the land and returning all of the descendants of the tribes of Israel back to the Land of Promise.

EZE 36:8-11 —But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come. For indeed I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do better for you than at your beginnings. Then you shall know that I am Yahuwah.

2:22 Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field; for the open pastures are springing up, and the tree bears its fruit; the fig tree and the vine yield their strength.

The desolation caused by the end-time plagues will be reversed; the land will become productive, providing food for all animals.

2:23 Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in Yahuwah your Aluhym; for He has given you the former rain faithfully, and He will cause the rain to come down for you—the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month [REB: the autumn and spring rains, as of old].

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Rejoice in Yahuwah

The —former rain refers to the rains in late autumn, which are essential for establishing the grain crops. The —latter rain refers to the early spring rains, which are critical for fully developing the grain. Israel will never again be faced with famine or scarcity.

2:24-25 The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. —So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you.

The curses that will befall the land of Israel at the close of the age will be replaced with blessings after the coming of Ha'Mashyach.

2:26 —You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of Yahuwah your Aluhym, Who has dealt wondrously with you; and My people shall never be put to shame.

EZE 36:12, 15 —Yes, I will cause men to walk on you, My people Israel; they shall take possession of you, and you shall be their inheritance; no more shall you bereave them of their children...Nor will I let you hear the taunts of the nations anymore, nor hear the reproach of the peoples anymore, nor shall you cause your nation to stumble anymore, says Yahuwah Aluhym.

2:27 —Then you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Yahuwah your Aluhym and there is no other. My people shall never [CJB: never again] be put to shame.

In the Midst of Israel

The presence of Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach in the land of Israel will be known by all nations (ISA 2:2-4).

2:28 —And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;...

On All Flesh

After dealing with the nation of Israel, Yahuwah will then begin working spiritually with all nations—making the same proposition to them that He will with Israel.

EZE 36:26-28 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your Yahuwah.

JER 31:31-33 —Behold, the days are coming, says Yahuwah, —when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Yahuwdah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says Yahuwah. —But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Yahuwah: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their Yahuwah, and they shall be My people.

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2:28 (cont.) —...your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions;

Prophecies, Dreams and Visions

Prophesying is impossible without the presence of Yahuwah's Ruwach. Moses wished that all of Yahuwah's people could have Yahuwah's Ruwach and be prophets (NUM 11:29). Yahuwah reveals Himself in visions and speaks in dreams; they are the avenues He uses in establishing prophets (NUM 12:6).

2:29 —And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Ruwach in those days.

Menservants and Maidservants

There is no class distinction with Yahuwah—even the poor and servants will be offered Yahuwah's grand gift.

Pour Out My Spirit

The apostle Peter quoted this section (ACT 2:17-21), beginning with verse 28 and ending at the midpoint of verse 32; he applied it to the coming of the Ruwach Ha'Kadosh on the Day of Pentecost in the year of Ha'Mashyach's death and resurrection. The spirit had never been given in that manner prior to that time. However, the focus of the prophecy here in Joel is millennial; what happened on the Pentecost when the New Testament Assembly began was only a type of what is yet to be. All that Peter quoted and applied has not continued from then until now.

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

Another Change of Focus

Verse 29 concludes the millennial discussion; verse 30 begins a new section dealing with events pertinent to the Day of Yahuwah.

Wonders

This is a summary of the Sixth Seal and the seven Trumpet Plagues.

2:31 —The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Yahuwah.

This is a clear reference to the events of the Sixth Seal:

REV 6:12-14 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

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2:32 —And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of Yahuwah shall be saved...

Meaning

This statement may have more than one meaning. The alert, watchful ones in THE WAY, who call on the name of Yahuwah, will be physically saved from the horrors of the tribulation (REV 3:10; 12:14). The second part of the verse indicates another way it may be understood.

2:32 (cont.) —...For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as Yahuwah has said, among the remnant whom Yahuwah calls.

2:32 (cont.) —...on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be a remnant as Yahuwah has promised, survivors whom Yahuwah calls.(REB)

As indicated earlier, the Jews who survive the earthquake in Jerusalem after the Seventy Trump will be ready to turn to Yahuwah (REV 11:13), and Yahuwah will extend deliverance to them (ZEC 12:8-10).

The reference to —as Yahuwah has said probably comes from PSA 14:7 and PSA 53:6. PSA 53:6 Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When Yahuwah brings back the captivity of His people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.

Joel: Chapter 3

3:1 —For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back [KJV: again] the captives of Yahuwdah and Jerusalem,

Bringing Back the Captives

The next verse establishes the occurrence of this event toward the close of the age. In order for the pivotal prophecies of the end time to be fulfilled, it has been necessary for Yahuwah to assemble and bring back to the land of Israel a significant population of the descendants of the Jews and Levites who were sent into exile by the empires of Babylon and Rome. Many of those who were removed from the Southern Kingdom by the Babylonians in the sixth century B.C. chose to remain living outside of the land of Israel after Cyrus overthrew Babylon and allowed them to return. Most of the descendants of the Jews and Levites who did return were later exiled from Judea by the Romans; some were forced out after the Jewish revolt against Rome in A.D. 70, but the vast majority of those that remained were expelled after the Bar-Kokhba Revolt was crushed in A.D. 135.

The KJV suggests an end-time repetition of what Yahuwah did after Babylon was conquered by Cyrus in 539 B.C. Although Jews have lived in Jerusalem and the land of Israel almost continually since the Roman Diaspora, their numbers have always remained very small. However, a significant number began returning in the early part of the twentieth century, especially after Jerusalem was taken from the Ottoman Empire by the British during WWI. Jewish immigration to Israel increased dramatically in the aftermath of WWII and following the establishment of the state of Israel by the United Nations in 1948. In the 1968 war, the Jews

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conquered the part of Jerusalem known as the new city; then, in the 1973 war, took the rest of Jerusalem. Without Jewish control of Jerusalem, the prophecies of DAN 12:11-12 could not be fulfilled.

3:2 —I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment [TNK: contend] with them there...

Gathering the Nations

There will be two gatherings of nations in the land of Israel. The first occurs 1290 days before the Seventh Trumpet; this gathering includes all nations that support the Beast in wresting control of Jerusalem away from the Jews.

ZEC 14:2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

This is the event to which Amanuwal referred in the Olivet Prophecy:

LUK 21:20-24 —But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The second gathering, to which Joel 3:2 refers, will occur after the Seventh Trumpet, when the armies staged at the Euphrates move down into the land of Israel, intending to engage the armies of the Beast.

REV 16:13-14 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of Yahuwah Almighty.

Valley of Jehoshaphat

Since there is no historical record of a valley named Jehoshaphat, it is necessary to focus on the meaning of the name itself. —Jehoshaphat means —Yahuwah will judge. Yahuwah will bring all nations to a valley where He will exact judgment on them. That place is —Armageddon (REV 16:16), which is the Greek form of the Hebrew —har megiddo, referring to an area in the vicinity of the town of Megiddo, located at the head of the Jezreel Valley. (The meaning of —Jehoshaphat will be emphasized again in Joel 3:12.)

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The armies of the nations will meet in the Valley of Jezreel and the Plain of Megiddo, intending to fight each other. However, due to the influence of the devil, they will join forces in an attempt to repel Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach.

3:2 (cont.) —...on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land.

The Reasons Why

Yahuwah gives two reasons for entering into judgment with all nations: the way they have treated His people, and the way they have treated His land.

Granted, Yahuwah will allow the Beast to invade the land of Israel and conquer the Jews, to compel them to consider their failure in properly representing Him.

ISA 10:5-6 —Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation. I will send him against an unholy [KJV: hypocritical] nation, and against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, to seize the spoil, to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

Although Yahuwah allows the Beast to conquer the Jews living in the state of Israel, the Beast, filled with vanity and ego due to Satan's influence, will not be satisfied with what Yahuwah grants him. He will also claim Yahuwah's land; then, establishing his dominion from there (DAN 11:45), he will take many of the Jews as slaves.

3:3 —They have cast lots for My people, have given a boy in exchange for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink.

Slaves

The Jews who will be taken captive when Jerusalem falls to the armies of the Beast will be used as property for bartering; since their conquerors will have such low regard for their lives, a Jew will be worth no more than the cost of satisfying a temporary physical craving.

REV 18:11-13 —And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: merchandise of gold and silver...and bodies [NAS: slaves] and souls of men.

3:4 —Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia?...

Locations

The territories of ancient Tyre and Sidon are located on the Mediterranean coast within the boundaries of modern Lebanon; the coasts of Philistia make up much of the Gaza Strip. These are the two areas where the majority of attacks have been launched against Israel in modern times. Yahuwah calls to account the enemies of Israel that live in those territories.

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3:4 (cont.) —...Will you retaliate against Me? But if you retaliate against Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head;3:4 (cont.) —...Are you paying Me back for something I did? If you're paying Me back for something I did, then easily, quickly, I'll pay you back right on your own head. (CJB)

Retaliation?

The constant attacks on Israel, in an attempt to destroy the country, are actually attacks against Yahuwah, because Yahuwah put it into the hearts of many of the Jews to return to that area. Yahuwah expresses His displeasure with all of those who are now working to thwart His declared purpose (verse 1), and announces that He will punish those who conquer and mistreat His people and His land.

3:5 —because you have taken My silver and My gold, and have carried into your temples [TNK: palaces] My prized possessions.

My Silver and Gold

When Israel is subjugated by the Beast, the wealth of Yahuwah's land and people will be taken as spoil and used by both the Beast in his — Christian religion and the Islamic neighbors of Israel in their worship of the moon goddess.

3:6 —Also the people of Yahuwdah and the people of Jerusalem you have sold to the Greeks, that you may remove them far from their borders.

Removed from Their Borders

Yahuwah gave the land to Jacob and drew a large portion of Yahuwdah's descendants back to that land. Since Yahuwah placed them there and nowhere indicates He has given any people the right to remove those He has planted, the act of selling them as slaves meets with His disapproval.

3:7 —Behold, I will raise them out of the place to which you have sold them, and will return your retaliation upon your own head.

3:8 —I will sell your sons and daughters to the people of Yahuwdah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, a nation far away. Yahuwah has spoken. (NIV)

Selling to A Nation Far Away

After Ha'Mashyach returns and Yahuwah restores the descendants of the tribes of Israel to the land promised to Jacob, Yahuwah's threatened retaliation will occur.

ISA 14:2 Then people will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of Yahuwah; they will take them captive whose captives they were, and rule over their oppressors.

3:9 Proclaim this among the nations: —Prepare for war! Wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up.

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Prepare for War!

This is a call to the nations to assemble in the land of Israel for the final battle of this age. In order for this assemblage to converge, the Sixth Bowl Plague will be required.

REV 16:12 Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

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

Yahuwah challenges the nations to convert their productive tools into destructive weaponry, but because of the strength of the One they will desire to oppose, the additional weapons they will have will still be insufficient and their numbers will be inadequate; their attempted resistance will be to no avail.

3:11 —Assemble and come, all you nations, and gather together all around....Gather Together

All of the armies of mankind that are still functional are drawn to this location, so that none will remain after the battle ends.

REV 16:14, 16 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of Yahuwah Almighty...And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

The miracle-working demons actually go out earlier to draw the nations to the Euphrates. The outpouring of the Sixth Bowl represents the time when the assembly of the armies is finalized.

3:11 (cont.) —...Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O Yahuwah.

Mighty Ones

Although John records angels carrying out judgments during the Day of Yahuwah, those actions are symbolic. The mighty ones of Yahuwah are the resurrected and changed saints, all of whom follow Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach into the final battle.

3:12 —Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.

I Will Judge

Yahuwah reiterates that He is the one who will be rendering the judgment on the armies of the nations.

3:13 —Put in [TNK: swing] the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow—for their wickedness is great.

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Harvest is Ripe

Like a vineyard that must be harvested due to the ripeness of the grapes, so the nations are due for harvest; they cannot be allowed to remain intact any longer.

REV 14:17-20 Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, —Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of Yahuwah. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

These angels symbolize what will happen when Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach meets the armies of the nations in the Valley of Jezreel.

REV 19:15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty Yahuwah.

3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the Day of Yahuwah is near in the valley of decision.

Multitudes, Multitudes

The repetition of —multitudes emphasizes the vastness of the armies assembled. Even if one-third of the army of 200 million is destroyed during the events of the Sixth Trumpet, there will remain more than 133 million, plus whatever remains of the armies of the Beast, to congregate in the Valley of Jezreel.

3:15 The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness.

Darkness

This may represent the effects of the Fifth Bowl Plague.

REV 16:10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain.

It is also possible that this may indicate that the heavenly lights will be utterly outshone by the appearance of Ha'Mashyach in His glory:

HAB 3:11 Sun and moon stood in their places; they went away at the light of thine arrows, at the radiance of thy gleaming spear. (NAS)

3:16 Yahuwah also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake;...

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Roar and Shake

This first part of verse 16 can refer to two separate events:

1. When Amanuwal leads the saints out of heaven (verse 11) into the battle in the Jezreel Valley; and
2. When Amanuwal calls for the return of the tribes of Israel to the land of Israel.

To properly understand how this can relate to Amanuwal when He leads the resurrected saints into battle, it is important to remember that Zion and Jerusalem have counterparts in the spirit realm:

HEB 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living Yahuwah, the heavenly Jerusalem...

PSA 50:1-3 The Mighty One, Yahuwah Aluhym, has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun to its going down. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, Yahuwah will shine forth. Our Yahuwah shall come, and shall not keep silent; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him.

Ha'Mashyach will engage and slaughter the armies assembled against Him, shedding so much blood that it will reach up to the horses' bridles, and be compared to the grape juice flowing from a winepress, as described in REV 14:18-20. This is also alluded to in:

JER 25:30-31 Now prophesy all these words against them and say to them: —Yahuwah will roar from on high; He will thunder from His kadosh dwelling and roar mightily against His land. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, shout against all who live on the earth. The tumult will resound to the ends of the earth, for Yahuwah will bring charges against the nations; He will bring judgment on all mankind and put the wicked to the sword, declares Yahuwah. (NIV)

The judgment will produce a vast river of blood because of the way Amanuwal will wield the sword that comes out of His mouth.

ZEC 14:12 And this shall be the plague with which Yahuwah will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.

Immediately after this slaughter, Amanuwal will stand on the Mount of Olives, causing a devastating earthquake (ZEC 14:4-5), possibly the one associated with the Seventh Bowl that completes Yahuwah's wrath.

REV 16:17-21 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, —It is done! And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before Yahuwah, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. Then every island fled

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away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail from heaven fell upon men, every hailstone about the weight of a talent. And men blasphemed Yahuwah because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.

The second possible application of this part of verse 16—when Amanuwal calls for all the descendants of Israel to return to the land He promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—requires that the battle in Jezreel be ended and He will have established His presence in Jerusalem.

HOS 11:10-11 —They shall walk after Yahuwah. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, then His sons shall come trembling from the west; they shall come trembling like a bird from Egypt, like a dove from the land of Assyria. And I will let them dwell in their houses, says Yahuwah.

In reference to this second application, the shaking of the heavens and earth would seem to be metaphoric, referring to the mental and emotional effects upon the nations of the earth—their being filled with the fear of Yahuwah.

3:16 (cont.) ...but Yahuwah will be a shelter [CJB: refuge] for His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

The last part of verse 16 continues with the outcome of the second event, also described in:

ISA 54:14, 17 —In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you...No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of Yahuwah, and their righteousness is from Me, says Yahuwah.

3:17 —So you shall know that I am Yahuwah your Aluhym, dwelling in Zion My kadosh mountain....

You Shall Know

All nations will become aware of Amanuwal, Ha'Mashyach and King of kings, ruling from Jerusalem.

ISA 2:2-3 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of Yahuwah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, — Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahuwah, to the house of the Aluhym of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Yahuwah from Jerusalem.

3:17 (cont.) —...Then Jerusalem shall be kadosh, and no aliens shall ever pass through [MOF: invade] her again.

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No Invasions

Throughout the duration of the first thousand years of Ha'Mashyach's reign, war will not be allowed.

ISA 2:4 He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Although Yahuwah will allow the land of Israel to be invaded some time after the 1000 years have concluded, He will not allow the city of Jerusalem to be entered.

REV 20:9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from Yahuwah out of heaven and devoured them.

3:18 And it will come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drip with new wine, the hills shall flow with milk,

New Wine and Milk

The millennial reign of Ha'Mashyach will be a time of great abundance of every type of food (AMO 9:13), as well as physical and spiritual prosperity.

3:18 (cont.) ...and all the brooks of Yahuwdah shall be flooded with water; a fountain shall flow from the house of Yahuwah and water the Valley of Acacias.

Water, a Fountain

There will be healing waters that issue from Ha'Mashyach's millennial temple to heal the land from the ravages of the Day of Yahuwah.

EZE 47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar.

Valley of Acacias

As Acacias normally grow in extremely dry soil, this reveals that areas which are presently starved of water will receive a steady, sufficient supply during Ha'Mashyach's reign.

3:19 —Egypt shall become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, because of the violence done to the people of Yahuwdah, in whose land they have shed innocent blood.
(NRS)

Desolation

Egypt will not escape the fury of the Beast when he invades the land of Israel (DAN 11:41-42). In addition, Egypt will be a recipient of the plagues poured out during the Day of Yahuwah.

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A Desolate Wilderness

Edom, the territory originally given to Esau, will become uninhabited by Esau's descendants. In fact, it is indicated that all adult males of Esau's descendants will be killed and the rest will be removed from all territory belonging to Israel.

OBA 9, 18 —Your warriors shall lose heart, O Teman, and not a man on Esau's mount shall survive the slaughter...The House of Jacob shall be a fire, and the House of Joseph flame, and the House of Esau shall be straw; they shall burn it and devour it, and no survivor shall be left of the House of Esau — for Yahuwah has spoken. (TNK)

There are two reasons for such drastic measures: Esau's violent hatred and his descendants' attempts to steal the land Yahuwah gave Israel.

OBA 10, 15 —For your violence against your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever...For the Day of Yahuwah upon all the nations is near; as you have done, it shall be done to you; your reprisal shall return upon your own head.

EZE 35:5 —Because you harbored an ancient hatred and handed the people of Israel over to the sword in their time of calamity, the time set for their punishment— (TNK)

EZE 35:10 —Because you have said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess them, ' although Yahuwah was there,

EZE 35:14 —... 'Thus said Yahuwah Aluhym: When the whole earth rejoices, I will make you a desolation.' (TNK)

3:20 —But Yahuwah shall abide forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.

Yahuwah and Jerusalem

Unlike Egypt and Edom, the descendants of Yahuwah will remain in the territory allotted to Yahuwah in the land of Israel for as long as physical nations continue. The reason Yahuwah and Jerusalem will receive their permanency is related in the next verse.

3:21 —For I will acquit [CJB: cleanse] them of bloodguilt, whom I had not acquitted [CJB: cleansed]; for Yahuwah dwells in Zion.

Timeframe

This is the time when Yahuwah makes a New Covenant with the house of Israel:

JER 31:33-34 —But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Yahuwah: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their Yahuwah, and they shall be My people...For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

The time of their acquittal is when Ha'Mashyach comes:

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ROM 11:25-27 ...hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so [REB: once that has happened] all Israel will be saved, as it is written: —The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My Covenant with them, when I take away their sins.

Joel: Conclusion

Clearly, the Day of Yahuwah—the time when all nations learn who Yahuwah is: —YHWH is Aluhym, the meaning of the name —Joel—is the primary focus of this book. All nations will learn that truth through the severity of the events they will suffer during that Day, and by the mercy that Yahuwah will extend to them after those events have come to an end.