

Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas
Fredericksburg Bible Church
107 East Austin
Fredericksburg, Texas 78624
830-997-8834 jthomas@fbgbible.org

**C0814 – April 9, 2008 – Joel 3:9-17 – The War Of Armageddon -
Part 2**

Verse 15, **For the day of the LORD** and remember, the context is the great and terrible day of the Lord from 2:31, the day of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, that day is **near in the valley of decision**. Hold your place and turn to Isa 34 for another look at the destruction. This is why I always say Jesus Christ is the greatest Killer and the greatest Savior. There is Judgment and Salvation. There is a final separation of Evil from Good and it doesn't come by political negotiation at the EU or the UN. It comes by war. Some people say there is no such thing as a just war. That's directly contradicted by Rev 19:11, "in righteousness He judges and wages war." Judgment means to cut, to make a decision, to divide. And God gives every person revelation of Himself and if that is rejected then there is nothing left to do but judge, separate the chaff from the wheat. So every person has a choice either to submit to God, trusting in His provision of salvation or rebel against God, rejecting His provision of salvation. But it's one or the other. Let's start in verse 2, "For the LORD'S indignation is against all the nations, And *His* wrath against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to slaughter. ³So their slain will be thrown out, And their corpses will give off their stench, And the mountains will be drenched with their blood. ⁴And all the host of heaven will wear away, And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, Or as *one* withers from the fig tree. ⁵For My sword is satiated in heaven, Behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom And upon the people whom I have devoted to destruction. ⁶The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, It is sated with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, With the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah And a great slaughter in the land of Edom. ⁷Wild oxen will also fall with them And young bulls with strong ones; Thus their land will be soaked with

blood, And their dust become greasy with fat. ⁸For the LORD has a day of vengeance, A year of recompense for the cause of Zion.” Alright, talk about a judgment, talk about separation of good and evil. Let’s go back to Joel. Verse 15, **The sun and moon grow dark And the stars lose their brightness.** This is another blackout. There are several blackouts in the Tribulation. I take it that this blackout is the last of these. It occurs on the day of the Second Coming. Turn over to Matt 24 to see this. People wonder what the sign of Jesus’ Second Coming is. People speculate a cross in the sky or something, it’s nothing like that. The sign is given in verse 30 but the backdrop of the sign is given in verse 29. In other words the stage has to be set in order to see the sign. And here’s the stage in verse 29, “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT,” alright, so it’s a blackout, that sets the backdrop just as Joel predicted, verse 30, “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn,” so obviously they see something, something that is greatly distressing. What do they see? Is it the glory of God against a black background? It has to be some kind of light phenomena since its dark. Is it the Shechinah Glory of God? I think it’s very reasonable to conclude that it is because the Shechinah Glory was the star leading the wise men to the Messiah at Bethlehem at His first coming and now it’s Shechinah Glory introducing the Messiah at His Second Coming. And then he says, “they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.” Then in v 31 you have the regathering of the nation of Israel. But let’s turn back to Joel 3, verse 16 and while you do think about the fact that these truths are all over the Bible. It’s not just in Revelation or something. It’s all over the OT, it’s all over the NT. Almost a third of the Bible was prophetic when written. So Joel is talking about the blackout on the day of the Second Coming and then verse 16, **The LORD roars from Zion And utters His voice from Jerusalem, And the heavens and the earth tremble.** Ooh, people don’t like this because they like to think of Jesus as a little lamb, and that’s one side of the equation, He was like a lamb led to slaughter as Isa 53 says. He did not say a word. Ever wonder why didn’t He say a word? Why didn’t Jesus utter a word? Because His voice causes ripples in the space-time continuum. His voice affects the whole cosmos. Remember the time when they came to arrest Him at night and they found this group of Jewish men and asked, “Are you Jesus of Nazareth?” and He said, “I am” and what happened to the Roman soldiers. Blam, they just fell down. He didn’t hit them with anything, He just spoke,

that's the voice of God, that's what the voice of God can do. The entire cosmos is controlled by the tip of His tongue. So He didn't say a word because He had a mission to accomplish, a mission for you and me, to be a lamb led to slaughter. His language is controlling the physics of the universe. But when He comes a second time He's not a silent Lamb. You have to remember the other side of the equation. And the other side is that He's a roaring Lion. He's the Lamb slain but the Lion victorious. The days of the little Lamb are over; the time of the Lion of God has come. Be listening for His roar because when He **utters His voice from Jerusalem the heavens and the earth tremble** (cf Hag 2:6-9). It's like a sound wave goes forth that causes the fabric of space-time to vibrate. Remember, this is the same voice that created the universe in Gen 1. This is the same One whose voice, when it reaches you via Scripture is the power of God unto salvation, to generate a new creation, the regenerative work of God and now this is the voice that roars from Zion causing a cosmic disturbance. That's what we mean by God's language, God's voice, God's word. It's powerful. Talk about the impotence of uniformitarian natural law. Can natural law do that? I don't think so. **But** and here's the contrast, **But the LORD is a refuge for His people And a stronghold to the sons of Israel.** While the entire cosmos is undergoing reconstruction via His audible voice He is a haven for Israel, a stronghold for them. Powerful words, omnipotent words, cosmic shattering words, these are the words that will cause in Phil 2 every knee to bow and every tongue to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil 2:9-11). When He roars people bow. And note the perfect discrimination. We say this is a truth that always accompanies judgment/salvation. And here's perfect discrimination between Israel and the nations (Nah 1:7). Israel will find refuge in the Lord. Verse 17, **Then you, Israel, will know that I am YHWH your Elohim,** What did we say is the big theme of Joel? What does Joel's name mean? Yah-el, short for Yahweh-elohim, that Yahweh is God. And the book makes clear that when the fabric of space-time is disrupted, when the Jewish people find refuge in Him then they will know that He and He alone is YHWH. Forget all this idolatry they kept getting into. Idols are counterfeits of God. They promise refuge. They promise stability but they can't deliver. This is what Israel struggled with, this is what we struggle with, idols that vie for our allegiance. And it happens subtly because Satan is subtle. He doesn't walk in with horns on saying, "Hey, I'm the deceiver." Paul says he's an angel of light, he looks like the truth but while he's got you distracted over here he's slipping you a fast one over here. And our idolatry tends to start in our imagination. The

imagination is powerful and Satan knows that and he plays on that. Do you ever start playing out certain behaviors in your mind?" Then all of a sudden it's deep seated in your life and it starts affecting your behavior. It's very dangerous. So you've got to be on your toes. John says, "guard yourselves from idols," (1 John 5:21) that means you have to actively exert yourself, expend energy to keep yourself out of it. There's a great book by a guy in the 70's named Schlossberg called *Idols for Destruction* and he thought this through and it's a great study on the idols of American culture; the idols of humanity; humanitarianism, guilt and the poverty issue, idols of mammon; inflation, materialism, inheritance taxation; idols of nature; philosophic materialism, human reason; idols of power, the state, government education, globalism; the idols of religion; liberation theology, revolution and the list of idols goes on and on and on. There's a reason the first of God's Ten Commandments warned against idolatry. There's a reason the first commandment Israel broke was idolatry. And it's because idolatry is at the heart of our carnal hearts. Why do you think the greatest commandment in the Bible is "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength?" Because the tendency of all men is to replace God. To exalt something or someone to undue proportions and enshrine them or that as our ultimate loyalty. Who or what is your ultimate loyalty? Is it something inside creation or is it the Creator. You're going to have to dive into the Scriptures, check out Schlossberg's book, he'll give you some ideas of some idols you may have hidden away in a dark closet somewhere. In fact, we're going to do a study on that someday. I've already decided, a class strictly on idolatry. I've never seen that but I realized it's a much neglected subject because it permeates every page of Scripture. How does it do that? It does that by standing in opposition to God. If God is on every page of Scripture and He is. He is the most important subject, person and if we look at idolatry we realize we're talking about false gods, things that mimic Him then we have to come face to face with our own selves. Both Israel and the Church have found this to be their greatest stumbling block. So, this verse says that Israel will finally, at long last get out and stay out of idolatry. But it won't happen until the Second Coming.

Then you will know that I am YHWH your Elohim. By virtue of what He does in history (Exod 6:7), literally obliterating all Israel's enemies, He demonstrates that He is faithful (Ezek 20:44). Faithful to His covenant promises to Israel. Faithful to you and me as well. This is the fulfillment of

the Abrahamic Covenant; the Land, the Seed, the Worldwide Blessing amplified in the Land Covenant, the Davidic Covenant and the New Covenant. They will all be fulfilled to Israel and to Judah in the Kingdom when the Messiah returns.

Then he says, **Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain.** The Messiah will dwell personally, physically, literally as the King of kings and Lord of lords in His resurrection body in Jerusalem. **So Jerusalem will be holy,** Turn to Isa 4, Jerusalem and everything in Jerusalem will be **holy** in the Kingdom. This is a stupendous passage. Verse 2, “In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth *will be* the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel. ³It will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem. ⁴When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, ⁵then the LORD will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, even smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory will be a canopy. ⁶There will be a shelter to *give* shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm and the rain.” So, that’s the physical description of Jerusalem and the vicinity in the Millennium with this dome, so to speak over it, like a great sports stadium and obviously the Shechinah Glory, the fire and the flame. **And strangers will pass through it no more.** No foreigners, the land will be totally Israel’s land.

In conclusion what have we said. That there’s going to be a war, the War of Armageddon. That three demonic spirits which proceed from the counterfeit trinity; Satan, Antichrist and the False Prophet, will go forth to gather all the soldiers of the nations for the War. They will beat their plowshares into swords, their pruning hooks into spears. The weak will be deceived into thinking they are mighty. They will hasten together at Har-Mageddon to exterminate Israel. But at the same time the Lord is preparing His mighty angels to fight against the nations in a human-angelic conflict. Verse 12 the nations will come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, Kidron Valley where the nations will be judged in a great extermination of the nations who go up against Israel such that the blood runs thick, four feet deep and 200 miles long from Armageddon to Bozrah. Multitudes of the nations in the valley of decision. In that day you will have the final blackout and then the Lord will

roar from Zion causing a cosmic disturbance that restructures the whole universe. But the Lord will be a refuge for His people Israel and they will know that Yahweh is God. So God will fulfill all His covenant promises to Israel and they will inherit the land eternally. The question we all have to face is who is our refuge? Who is our stronghold? Have we placed our confidence in Christ as the sole way of salvation or are we still trusting in ourselves, our good works, money, fame, popularity or something? Christ alone is a refuge and a strength? In Him alone is salvation.

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