



Empowering People to Change the World

## **Marks of the Last Days Church Pt. 5**

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## Marks of the Last Days Church

### The Lions Roar

Joel 3:1-21

- When we look at what's happening in Israel today—the bombing, the settlement questions, the two nation treaty, Hamas, Hezbollah, surrounded by nations who want them slaughtered...
- It's hard to imagine much better than what one Jewish leader said, "If we are God's chosen people, we wouldn't mind if you chose someone else."
- A Jewish proverb: "No misfortune avoids a Jew."
- But the tables will turn and God's people will not be forgotten and there is a day coming when God will pay back Israel for all of the injustice done through the centuries—the holocaust, the wars, the enslavements—a day coming of judgment upon the nations and justice for Israel.

Joel 3:1

***"For behold, in those days and at that time,  
When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem,  
2 I will also gather all nations,  
And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;  
And I will enter into judgment with them there  
On account of My people, My heritage Israel,  
Whom they have scattered among the nations;  
They have also divided up My land.***

- God will judge the nations and bring justice to Israel.
- There will be a great outpouring of the Spirit on Israel, in preparation for the coming of the Lord.



**Romans 11: 25**

***“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; 27 for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”***

Jeremiah prophesied of that day:

In those days Judah will be saved,  
And Jerusalem will dwell safely.  
And this *is the name* by which she will be called:  
THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (33:16)

God is not only going to bring a great revival in Israel, He is going to judge the nations who have been evil toward His people.

**Joel 3:3**

***“They have cast lots for My people,  
Have given a boy as payment for a harlot,  
And sold a girl for wine, that they may drink.  
4 Indeed, what have you to do with Me,  
O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia?  
Will you retaliate against Me?  
But if you retaliate against Me,  
Swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head;  
5 Because you have taken My silver and My gold,  
And have carried into your temples My prized possessions.  
6 Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem  
You have sold to the Greeks,  
That you may remove them far from their borders.  
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.  
8 I will sell your sons and your daughters  
Into the hand of the people of Judah,  
And they will sell them to the Sabeans,  
To a people far off;  
For the Lord has spoken.”***

- The valley of Jehosophat is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible!
- In verse 14 it is called the valley of decision.
- **Jehosophat** means “the Lord judges” and this is probably symbolic of the plain of Esdraelon where the final battle of Armegeddon will take place.
- Joel mentions the many sins that have been committed against Israel:
  - Scattering them among the nations.
  - Selling them into slavery.
  - Treating them like cheap merchandise for which people have cast lots.
  - Plundering their land and taking their wealth
- Of course many of the tragedies that have come upon the Jews have been the discipline of the Lord, but nonetheless, God is going to exact a judgment upon these nations who have abused Israel.
- Nations have gone beyond discipline to exploitation! Justice will prevail.
- **Isn't that good news—God will bring justice. We may get no justice in this world, but there is a judgement coming. The righteous Judge is coming to judge the living and the dead.**
- God has preserved the Jews as His special people—the holy land is still His land. The nation of Israel is still made up of His people.

**Joel is pronouncing: “Nations, prepare for judgment” and now he is proclaiming, “Nations, prepare for war.”**

**Joel 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.***

***10 Beat your plowshares into swords***

***And your pruning hooks into spears;***

***Let the weak say, ‘I am strong.’”***

***11 Assemble and come, all you nations,***



***And gather together all around.  
Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O Lord.  
12 Let the nations be awakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;  
For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.  
13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.  
Come, go down; for the winepress is full,  
The vats overflow—  
For their wickedness is great.  
14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!  
For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.  
15 The sun and moon will grow dark,  
And the stars will diminish their brightness.”***

- This is the battle of Armageddon!
- See Zechariah 12-14.
- The nations gather to attack Israel and the remnant of believers.
- Joel compares this great battle to the harvest fields. You see a similar imagery in Revelation 14, where he compares the final days as a like a sickle reaping a harvest, and the crushing of grapes as God's judgment on the nations.
- Frightening signs will accompany this final battle. Jesus also spoke of them in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.
- A war is coming; a final great battle is being set up.

Joel:

- Nations, prepare for judgment.
- Nations, prepare for war.
- And now, “Nations, prepare for defeat.”

**Joel 3:16**

***“The Lord also will roar from Zion,  
And utter His voice from Jerusalem;  
The heavens and earth will shake;  
But the Lord will be a shelter for His people,  
And the strength of the children of Israel.”***

- The name Armageddon is only mentioned in Revelation 16:16, referring to the Plain of Esdraelon, where many major battles were fought in Old Testament times.
- Revelation 16 informs us that Satan, through his demonic powers, gathers the nations together to fight against God at Jerusalem. But the invasion will fail because Jesus will return in glory and power, and slaughter the enemies of God, turning the whole battle into a supper of flesh for the scavengers of the earth. (Revelation 19)
- Like a fierce lion, God will roar from Zion! Like a fierce lion protecting her own, Jesus will roar from Zion to protect His people and destroy the sinful nations!

But now Joel speaks of the blessings upon the righteous nations, the wholehearted disciples, the people of God who have remained faithful through the tribulation, for the overcomers.

#### **Joel 3:17**

***“So you shall know that I am the Lord your God,  
Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain.  
Then Jerusalem shall be holy,  
And no aliens shall ever pass through her again.”***

- Today the Jews have no Temple but a mosque stands there. But God is promising He will restore Zion and His glory will once again be there!

#### **Isaiah 51**

***“For the Lord will comfort Zion,  
He will comfort all her waste places;  
He will make her wilderness like Eden,  
And her desert like the garden of the Lord;  
Joy and gladness will be found in it,  
Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.”***

- Jerusalem is called the holy city at least 8x in scripture and many of us still call it the holy city today.
- In the last days, there will be a day when Israel in general and Jerusalem in particular shall be fully cleansed and the glory of the Lord will be there.

**Joel 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,  
And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water;  
A fountain shall flow from the house of the Lord  
And water the Valley of Acacias.  
19 Egypt shall be a desolation,  
And Edom a desolate wilderness,  
Because of violence against the people of Judah,  
For they have shed innocent blood in their land.  
20 But Judah shall abide forever,  
And Jerusalem from generation to generation.  
21 For I will acquit them of the guilt of bloodshed,  
Whom I had not acquitted;  
For the Lord dwells in Zion.”***

- Over the years Israel has been ravished by wars, famines, droughts, the invasion of nations, the invasion of locusts, but there is a day coming when the land will be like the Garden of Eden again.
- The beauty of the Garden of Eden will be restored in the new Israel.
- In the first chapter of Joel, the people are wailing but now they are rejoicing!
- Jerusalem is one of the only cities in antiquity not built on a river.
  - Rome had the Tiber.
  - Ninevah was built near the Tigris.
  - Babylon on the Euphrates.
  - And the great Egyptian cities on the Nile.
- But Jerusalem was not built on a river, but in the new kingdom, God will produce a river that flows from the temple of God.
- We will move into Revelation next and as Joel was an introduction of the “Last Days Church” we will now enter into “The Apocolypse” the unveiling of the great mysteries of the universe.
- Read ahead. Begin reading Revelation on you own, prepare your heart.



- Let me conclude with C.S. Lewis on the Second Coming of Christ:

C.S. Lewis writes,

. . . Precisely because we cannot predict the moment, we must be ready at all moments. Our Lord repeated this practical conclusion again and again; as if the promise of the Return had been made for the sake of this conclusion alone. Watch, watch, is the burden of his advice. I shall come like a thief. You will not, I most solemnly assure you, you will not, see me approaching. If the householder had known at what time the burglar would arrive, he would have been ready for him. If the servant had known when his absent employer would come home, he would not have been found drunk in the kitchen. But they didn't. Nor will you. Therefore you must be ready at all times. The point is surely simple enough. The schoolboy does not know which part of his Virgil lesson he will be made to translate: that is why he must be prepared to translate any passage. The sentry does not know at what time an enemy will attack, or an officer inspect, his post: that is why he must keep awake all the time.