

JOEL

STUDY I

Joel (“the Lord [*Jehovah*] is God”), the son of Pethuel (‘vision/mouth of God’) prophesied in Judah, - the southern kingdom, - most probably during the reign of King Joash who came to the throne when he was only seven years old (835 BC), and reigned for almost forty years until 796 BC. (There is another Joash who was king of the northern kingdom of Israel, and he reigned 798-782 BC which overlapped slightly with the reign of King Joash of Judah).

... King Joash of Judah **II Kings 12:2** ... did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him. ... He began his reign well, under the tutelage of the wise and Godly Jehoiada. One of Joash’s greatest achievements was to make repairs to the temple (II Kings 12:4-16), and another was when he managed to dissuade King Hazael of Syria from attacking Jerusalem (II Kings 12:17-18). *However*, after Jehoiada the priest died, King Joash came under the influence of ungodly and wicked advisors who led him to revive the worship of Baal and Asherah (II Chron. 24:17-19).

God sent prophets to warn Joash, but to no avail, - he would not listen. Finally, Jehoiada the priest’s son (Zechariah) appealed to Joash, but Joash ordered him to be stoned to death (II Chron. 24:19-22). As a consequence, **II Kings 12:3** the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places. ... King Joash came to an abrupt end when his own **II Kings 12:20** servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo ... Those were the measure of the times during which Joel prophesied.

To these disobedient people, and Joel pleaded on the Lord’s behalf, **1:1** The word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. **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? **3** Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. **4** That which the palmerworm [*caterpillar/locust*] hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm [*locust/grasshopper*] eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. **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. **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. **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. **8** Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. **9** The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the

house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn. ¹⁰ The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. 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. 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. 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. 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, ¹⁵ Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. ¹⁶ Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? ¹⁷ The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. 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. 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. 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.

... Two aspects can be particularly highlighted here, - the 'locusts' and 'the day of the Lord'. We notice how the *locusts* feature in this prophecy ... The 'locusts' in chapter one could legitimately and textually refer to either literal or metaphorical 'locusts'. What I mean is ... They might well have been an actual plague of locusts, - similar to the plagues in Egypt [*if you want to live like the ungodly, God says, I'll treat you like the ungodly*]. ... On the other hand, the locusts could also have been a metaphorical reference to the false spirituality of the priests and how their corrupted religion was *devastating* the people. ...

Whether the reference to the locusts was literal or not ... or both, it was to such a dire condition Joel pleaded, ^{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. ... He was warning the people about the *immediate* 'day of the Lord'. It was *upon* them, *at hand*! God was and would judge them and declare their nation as 'wasted' and 'dried up' (v.10), the harvest is perished (v.11), and ... ¹⁵ the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a *destruction* from the Almighty shall it come.

But also, from beyond the borders of Israel and Judah, the terrifying mighty nation of Assyria was 'swarming' like locusts to introduce a further 'day of the Lord'. The Assyrian armies were ominously preparing to 'sweep down'

upon God's people. ... This particular 'day of the Lord' had not happened yet, but it was *soon* to happen, - it was inevitable. ... Whereas what was taking place in Israel and Judah was *immediate*, the threat of Assyria was *imminent* ... And, in the light of such drastic times, the theme of Joel's prophecy was clearly presented, **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: **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. ... **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 ... **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? ... **31** The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. ... It's coming! God's judgment ... and He is using the cruel godless armies of Assyria, and **2:4** The *appearance* of them is *as the appearance* of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. **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. ... **7** They shall run *like* mighty men; they shall climb the wall *like* men of war. ...

In the first mention of 'the day of the Lord' (1:15), the 'locusts' have already descended, - whether literal locusts or symbolical, - upon the people ... In the second mention (2:1), they are described symbolically as a cruel army being prepared to *attack* the people, - that is the second reference to 'the day of the Lord' ... And in fact, the term 'day of the Lord' is used nineteen times to describe God's wrath and judgment upon His people, at various stages in their history, cf. Is. 2:12; 13:6,9; Ezek. 13:5; 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1,11,31; Amos 5:18 (twice),20; Obadiah 15; Zeph. 1:7,14 (twice); Zech 14:1, and Mal. 4:5. ... As is often the case in prophecy, though, the near fulfilment is an historic event *already* fulfilled, which points ahead to the complete fulfilment. ... The earlier is the shadow of what will come ...

And that is the case in the latter half of Joel's prophecy where the third reference anticipates the *future* "day of the Lord" in terms of hope, promise, and restoration, **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.. ... Whereas the previous two aspects related to the *immediate* and the *imminent*, - and were already in the past, - the third "day of the Lord" relates to the *ultimate*! ... In the *ultimate* 'day of the Lord' the locusts will *not* be seen as they were previously, and yet, they will be *more* at work than during any earlier occasion!

They will be determined to eradicate God's people, but He gives the children of Israel a great promise of protection and restoration ... and that is what the apostle Peter was referring to in Acts 2:16-21 when he preached his sermon on the Day of Pentecost from this passage. ... It is an important study on its own, so we shall return to it next time, but we shall just mention it very briefly now, **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: **29** And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. **30** And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. **31** The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. **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.

In the third chapter, despite the Judah's unfaithfulness, the Holy Spirit will be poured upon His people (Joel 2:28), which is followed by the nations being told to prepare for judgment, **3:1** For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, **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. **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. **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 recompence? and if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompence upon your own head; **5** Because ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly pleasant things: **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. **7** Behold, I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompence upon your own head: **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 Sabaeans, to a people far off: for the LORD hath spoken it.

The same ungodly nations are then instructed to prepare for war, - God is sovereign over *all* nations ... even those who will not recognise Him, - **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: **10** Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. **11** Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. **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. **13**

Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats 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 the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

Joel 3:16 spells their defeat, 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. ... And after those times, God promises Israel ...

1. a holy city (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 anymore.)
2. a restored land (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. 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.)
3. a cleansed people (²⁰ But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. ²¹ For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed), and
4. a glorious King (²¹ ... for the LORD dwelleth in Zion).

What a way to finish, for the LORD dwelleth in Zion! It is how many of the prophets conclude their prophecies. There is no sign of God giving up, but every indication His Son will return to make good and restore that which His own.

Yes, His promises relate initially to the children of Israel, - the Jews, - but by His grace, His promises also include those from out of Gentile nations, whom He has grafted and will graft in, ... ^{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. ²⁴ And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil. 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. 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. 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.

STUDY II

One of the portions in Joel's prophecy which sometimes causes controversy is related to Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, where he quoted from Joel 2:28-32. ... Let's read from both portions ... and we shall try not to import anything that is not there ... We shall allow Scripture to speak for itself so we can conclude that what it says is what it means ...

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: **29** And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. **30** And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. **31** The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. **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.

Acts 2:16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; **17** And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: **18** And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: **19** And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: **20** The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: **21** And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Joel chapter 2	Acts chapter 2
	16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel
28 And it shall come to pass <i>afterward</i>	17 And it shall come to pass <i>in the last days</i> ,
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:	<i>saith God</i> , I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:
29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.	18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; <i>and they shall prophesy</i> :
30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.	19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:
31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the <i>terrible</i> day of the LORD come.	20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and <i>notable</i> day of the Lord come
32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered:	21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.
for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.	

Joel 3:1 καὶ ἔσται μετὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἔκχεω ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα καὶ προφητεύσουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν καὶ αἱ θυγατέρες ὑμῶν καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ὑμῶν ἐνύπνια ἐνυπνιασθήσονται καὶ οἱ νεανίσκοι ὑμῶν ὄρασεις ὄψονται

Joel 3:2 καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς δούλας ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκεῖναις ἔκχεω ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου

Joel 3:3 καὶ δώσω τέρατα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς αἶμα καὶ πῦρ καὶ ἀτμίδα καπνοῦ

Joel 3:4 ὁ ἥλιος μεταστραφήσεται εἰς σκότος καὶ ἡ σελήνη εἰς αἶμα πρὶν ἔλθειν ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῆ

Joel 3:5 καὶ ἔσται πᾶς ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται ὅτι ἐν τῷ ὄρει Σιων καὶ ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ ἔσται ἀνασωζόμενος καθότι εἶπεν κύριος καὶ εὐαγγελιζόμενοι οὗς κύριος προσκέκληται

Acts 2:16 ἀλλὰ τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ εἰρημένον διὰ τοῦ προφήτου Ἰωήλ·

Acts 2:17 Καὶ ἔσται ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις λέγει ὁ θεός ἔκχεω ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα καὶ προφητεύσουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν καὶ αἱ θυγατέρες ὑμῶν καὶ οἱ νεανίσκοι ὑμῶν ὄρασεις ὄψονται καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ὑμῶν ἐνύπνια ἐνυπνιασθήσονται·

Acts 2:18 καὶ γε ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους μου καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς δούλας μου ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκεῖναις ἔκχεω ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου καὶ προφητεύσουσιν

Acts 2:19 καὶ δώσω τέρατα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω καὶ σημεῖα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κάτω αἶμα καὶ πῦρ καὶ ἀτμίδα καπνοῦ·

Acts 2:20 ὁ ἥλιος μεταστραφήσεται εἰς σκότος καὶ ἡ σελήνη εἰς αἶμα πρὶν ἢ ἔλθειν τὴν ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῆ

Acts 2:21 καὶ ἔσται πᾶς ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται

Now, it is abundantly clear Joel was anticipating the literal arrival of the Jewish Messiah on earth to reign in a period described in terms of *afterward/the last days*. There was a certain determined order to the proceedings ... *Before [i.e. in advance of] the ‘great and notable [illustrious]day’ (Acts 2:20), - ‘the great [in intensity and dimension] and the terrible [frightening, dreadful] day of the Lord’ (Joel 2:31) ... God’s severest judgment will be the precursor.*

This is Joel’s specific prophecy concerning the hope awaiting a restored Israel, with particular emphasis on the coming of the Messiah to establish His Kingdom, and it is preceded with a time of great judgment, - that is the context into which this aspect is introduced within the text. ... And Peter would have been taught this explicit and literal Jewish tradition in the synagogue, and it would also have been confirmed to all the disciples during those forty days following the Saviour’s resurrection, until His ascension, **Acts 1:1** *The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ² Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: ³ To whom also he shewed*

himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God ...

This was obviously, - and understandably, - one of the most appealing subjects to the disciples, and that is why they could not keep from asking with great eagerness, ⁶ Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? ... And also, why the angels told them, - when Jesus had gone up into Glory, - ¹¹ this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. ... And all this lay behind the preaching of Peter on the Day of Pentecost from this passage in Joel ... And the Jews who were listening to him would have understood the Scriptures to which he was referring.

Let's establish a few basics ... The Jews knew from the Old Testament prophets, the Messiah was coming to the world to rule, and when the Messiah *would* come, judgment would be inevitable upon the whole earth, for example, ^{Is. 2:4} And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people ... ^{11:4} But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. ... Since this has not yet happened, it, therefore, lies in the future when the Messiah, - Jesus, - will return to this world to establish His earthly Kingdom ... a Kingdom which Rev. 20 indicates will last for one thousand years, a *millennium*. ... According to Joel 2:28-32, this is speaking specifically about a period which begins with the coming of the Holy Spirit and ends with the destruction of the world.

... Now, the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost ... and He came upon the *saved* Jews in Jerusalem. ... Notice though, the very common and yet extremely significant phrase, ^{Acts 2:17} And it shall come to pass *in the last days*. ... That means Peter was looking further ahead, within that specific period, *in the last days*, - they had not arrived yet, in Peter's time.

"We are in the last days" ... Yes, but take it slowly so we understand correctly the Jewish reasoning ... for the Bible is a Jewish book and Peter was a Jew preaching to Jews in Jerusalem.

That term, - 'the last days', - as far as the Jews were/are concerned, without exception, points ahead to the events surrounding the coming of the Messiah. Within the context of the Jews, there was no concept of the Christian Church or the dispensation/age of grace as we know it, - it simply did not feature ...

As far as the Jews were concerned, God was the God of Israel ... He was not the God of the nations for they had their own ‘gods’. ... Looking from our perspective, the Old Testament was regulated by the law of Moses, for the Jews ... whereas in the New Testament it was regulated through grace ... and grace and law are two very different concepts. ... *Therefore*, the Jewish mind would have had no concept of grace ... and as far as the Jews were concerned, they saw themselves as God’s *only* people. Christians were of no relevance.

Yes, in the last days, people from many nations, - outside of Judaism, - will go to Jerusalem, - that is what they believed, **Is. 2:2** all nations shall flow unto it ... **Zech. 14:16** And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts. ... God had always made Himself known to outside nations, and sometimes He dealt in mercy towards them, for example, the people of Nineveh who repented as a result of Jonah’s preaching (Jonah 3) ... and Rom. 11 explains how and why many from out of the Gentile nations will ultimately be saved, but He, - *God*, - was still the “Holy One of Israel” (Is. 12:6), **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 that is how Peter and his audience saw the future ... the Messiah coming to reign over *them* in His Kingdom, - the King of the Jews, - established and reigning from Jerusalem, **Is. 9:6** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. **7** Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this ... **Micah 5:2** But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. ... The Jews simply saw a child being born who would become the reigning king over his people ... and that was/is as far as they considered the subject. ... They had nothing in-between, for that was the only information they accepted when it came to the subject of the Messianic reign ... That was what lay behind the incident in Galilee which followed the feeding of the multitudes in Galilee, - **Jn. 6:14** Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. **15** When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, *to make him a king*, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. ... And that was also why they jubilantly gathered at the

gate to welcome Him, **Mk. 11:9** ... saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: **10** Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

They, - the Jews, - had no concept of anything taking place in between the child being born and the king coming to reign ... and *that* explains why Paul described the Church as a *mystery*, - a secret and hidden revelation they had no concept of, **Eph. 3:2** If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: **3** How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, **4** Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) **5** Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; **6** That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel ... Such a thing, i.e. the salvation and inclusion of the Gentiles in God's plan would not have entered the mind of the ordinary Jew! ... This *present* dispensation of grace, - for us Gentile Christians, - was not on their theological or prophetic radar!

One thing, though, they did and *do* expect is for the gathering and the regathering of *Israel* to their own land, **Joel 2:18** Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people. **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 ... **21** Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things. ... **25** And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm ... **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. **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. ... **3:1** For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem ... **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. **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. ... And that is the context from which Peter was preaching this message to the Jews, from Joel 2:28-32 for he believed, as he wrote in I Peter 1:20, these were the days in which he lived, *[Jesus Christ]* Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was *manifest in these last times for you* ... and that means the period known as 'last times' *began* when Jesus entered this world the *first* time, **I Peter 4:7** But *the end of all things* is at hand. It is the same as the writer to the Hebrews wrote, **Heb. 1:1** God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the

prophets, ² Hath in these *last days* spoken unto us by his Son ... ^{9:26} For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but *now* once *in the end of the world* hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ... and the same as the apostle John, ^{I Jn. 2:18} Little children, it is *the last time*: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, *even now* are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is *the last time*. ... And that is the *context* in which Peter spoke on the Day of Pentecost. We have to understand it as *he* understood it.

Therefore, - as the Jews would have understood it, - we are *in* the ‘last times’ for the ‘last times’ began when Jesus first came into this world. ... *However, not all* that Peter described has come to pass yet, - not all of what he prophesied has been fulfilled for the ‘last days’ continue ... “Ah but Peter was only speaking metaphorically and allegorically” ... No, he wasn’t ... Peter was speaking very plainly and directly. Keep all he said in context ... His message concerning Christ was not hidden for he preached Christ *literally* ... crucified, dead, buried, and risen again, ^{Acts 2:22} Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: ²³ Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: ²⁴ Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. ... So, he did not on one hand speak literally, and then on the other hand introduce some kind of a secret symbolical code! ... He was teaching and preaching prophecy from the Old Testament prophet and he was showing how some of the aspects of that prophecy had already been literally fulfilled, but there also remained aspects of the same prophecy yet to be fulfilled ... and that prophecy yet to be fulfilled will be fulfilled when Jesus comes again to reign on this earth.

Basically, when Jesus first came, it was the beginning of the end, the beginning of the last days ... Remember, a thousand years to Him is as a day (Ps. 90:4; II Peter 3:8) ... and Peter was showing the people in Jerusalem that what they were seeing and experiencing was a glimpse of what would be completely fulfilled when Jesus Himself returned. ... Remember, he was explaining the reports about what had happened to the Christians in the upper room, ^{Acts 2:2} And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. ... ⁶ Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

⁷ And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold ... ¹¹ ... we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. ¹² And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? ¹³ Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

... And that was a glimpse of what will happen when Christ returns, - that is what they are looking forward to at the *parousia* ... No, no, no, says some ... This prophecy has already been fulfilled! ... No, it has not for Acts 2 has not met the full and complete conditions of Joel 2:28 or Acts 2:17 ... Both those verses state clearly and plainly, - Acts *explicitly* repeats Joel, - **I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh** ... Remember ... the Word of God says what it means and means what it says! ... The Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out upon *all* flesh, just a select number gathered in the upper room ... but in the future, - when Christ returns, - God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh!

... And what does that mean? It means what it says, **Joel 2:28 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: ²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.** ... But, how *will* the Holy Spirit be poured upon all flesh? Well, this is speaking about when the Kingdom on earth will be established ... and how will it be established? It will be inaugurated when the Church meets Christ in the air, - when He comes with the saints, - and then the Church will return with Him at their head ... and that is when this prophecy of Joel will be fulfilled in its totality, - that is the *mystery* about it, - ... He will institute His visible reign on earth. ...

Presently, we have a taste of the Kingdom for, of course, Jesus Christ reigns today from Heaven. He reigns among His people, the Church. He is our Judge, our Ruler, our King ... and the Holy Spirit makes these things known to us ... But when Christ literally returns, **I Jn. 3:2 it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.** ... No more shall we be looking through the glass darkly, but then, we shall see Him face to face (I Cor. 13:12) ... the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6)!

So, preached Peter, on this Day of Pentecost, people of Jerusalem and Jews from afar, you have experienced at the *beginning* of the last days a *taste* of what is to come, for Joel prophesied, **Joel 2:28 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,** - God's going to communicate directly with His people in the manner by which He communicated directly with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the great saints and prophets of the Old

Testament. ... That is when Christ returns, ²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. ... I cannot say I understand what this will be like, but it is what the Word teaches ... and the Word clearly teaches it will happen *when Christ returns* ... Yes, but what about ‘prophets’ today? Well, *they* have to answer before God for what they claim ... but as far as God’s Word is concerned, true God-inspired prophecy will be revived when Christ returns.

And how important was it for these people at Pentecost to receive what Peter was saying? Well, it was *all-important* because escaping the judgment of God depended upon it ... ^{Joel 2:30} And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come [*i.e. the day of His judgment*]. ... That is like what Jesus said, ^{Mt. 24:29} Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: ³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And do you see why Peter was led to use Joel 2:28-32 to preach the Gospel on this Day of Pentecost? ... He was showing these Jewish people gathered from across the ancient world how the Word of God tells them there is a fearful day coming in which their sin must be dealt with, and the only way it can be escaped is to *call on the name of the LORD*. ... Christ only, ^{Joel 2:32} And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered/saved ... and that was Peter’s message, as he preached his sermon from Joel chapter two.

It was a powerful sermon which resulted in the salvation of thousands of souls. He didn’t, however, include the final part of Joel 2:32 ... but again, it is indicative of this short passage for what was expressed in Acts 2:16-21 is merely a taster of what will one day be experienced in reality, ^{Joel 2:32} for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

... That is yet to come ... and it will come, for other prophecies have come ... And that is the conclusion of God’s message to Israel through His servant Joel, for that is how He planned it in eternity, ^{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. 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. ²⁰
But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. ²¹ For I
will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the LORD dwelleth in Zion.