

So Joel, blending the events of the Messianic age into one picture with the near and the distant painted like mountain peaks and ranges seen from a distance, does not portray for us the valleys of centuries of time between the mountain-top-events. This is what is called the "shortened perspective" of prophetic literature. It should caution us to pay more attention to what the prophets preach of the fundamentals of faith and practice and much less to what prophecy may seem to say about "times and seasons."

In the Messianic age God intended to bless all who would answer His call in Christ Jesus with "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." For it was in the New Testament dispensation that He "set forth in Christ . . . a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth." It is in Christ that men of all races "have heard the word of truth, the gospel of . . . salvation, and have believed in him, and were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit . . ." Yes, Ephesians, chapter one, is the completed revelation of that which Joel wrote in long ages past!

QUIZ

1. When did the pouring out of the Spirit of God on all flesh take place? Is it still taking place?
2. Does this promise of Joel mean that all Christians should expect to prophesy, receive revelations by dreams, and have visions? Why not?
3. What and when are the "wonders in heaven and on earth?"
4. How does God "call" the remnant?
5. Why do we say it is not important that men should attempt to force these great mountain-top events into a rigid schedule of times and seasons?
6. How is Ephesians I a completed revelation of this section of Joel?

GOD'S VICTORY OVER THE ENEMIES OF HIS PEOPLE FUTURE BLESSINGS (cont'd)

TEXT: 3:1-15

- 1 For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,
- 2 I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for

REPENTANCE -- FUTURE BLESSINGS 2:32—3:15

- my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land,
- 3 and have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink.
- 4 Yea, and what are ye to me, O Tyre, and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? will ye render me a recompense? and if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompense upon your own head.
- 5 Forasmuch as ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly precious things,
- 6 and have sold the children of Judah and the children of Jerusalem unto the sons of the Grecians, that ye may remove them far from their border;
- 7 behold, I will stir them up out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompense 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 men of Sheba, to a nation far off: for Jehovah hath spoken it.
- 9 Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir 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 Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah.
- 12 Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about.
- 13 Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; 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 Jehovah is near in the valley of decision.
- 15 The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining.

QUERIES

- a. When are "those days . . . when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,"?
- b. How will God "gather all nations . . . into the valley of Jehoshaphat"?
- c. What war does the prophet tell the nations to prepare for?