

## Commentary on Joel 3, by Chuck Smith 3.6.24

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**March memory verse Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV)** Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

## Commentary on Joel 3, by Chuck Smith 3.6.24

Now in those days and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem ([Joe 3:1](#)),

That is, in the days--we're getting close now, for God has returned again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem.

That I also will gather all nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat ([Joe 3:2](#)),

Now where is the valley of Jehoshaphat? We don't know. It is a valley that is only spoken of here, and as far as we know it is close or related to Jerusalem--some say the Kidron Valley. But we remember that Zechariah tells us that when Jesus comes again in power and great glory with all of His saints He's gonna set His foot on Mount Olives, and Mount Olives is gonna split in the middle and a new valley is gonna be formed in that rift. And there will be a new river that'll spring forth from under the altar there in Jerusalem and will flow through this new valley down to the Jordan Valley to the Dead Sea. And when the waters of this river come into the Dead Sea, the Dead Sea will be healed. The new valley that is formed by the coming again of Jesus Christ and by the splitting of the Mount of Olives could very well be the valley of Jehoshaphat. They'll have to give it a name and Jehoshaphat is as good a name as any. And this, I believe, will probably be the valley of Jehoshaphat, that new valley formed at the severing or the spitting, the rift that is created when the Mount of Olives splits in two.

Now we know from Matthew chapter 25 that when Jesus returns He is going to gather together the nations of the earth for judgment. Here it is told in Joel the same thing. He will gather all of the nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.

and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel ([Joe 3:2](#)),

You remember when Jesus brings the nations together for judgment? He will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats and He'll say to those on His right side, "Come ye blessed of the Lord. Inherit the kingdom that's been prepared for you from the foundations of the earth. For I was hungry and you fed Me; thirsty and you gave Me to drink. I was sick and you visited Me. I was naked and you clothed Me." "Lord, when did we see You hungry? When did we see You thirsty? When did we see You naked?" And He said, "Inasmuch as you did it unto the least of these My brethren," referring to the Jews, "you've done it unto Me." To those on His left He will say, "Depart

## Commentary on Joel 3, by Chuck Smith 3.6.24

from Me you workers of iniquity into the everlasting fire that was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, you didn't feed Me; thirsty, you didn't give Me to drink; naked, you did not clothe Me; distressed and sick and you didn't visit." "Lord, when did we see You?" "Inasmuch as you did it not unto the least of these My brothers."

And so the nations are to be judged for their treatment towards Israel. And that is why I believe that the United States should remain a strong supporter of the nation of Israel. It'll go easier for those people from the U.S. who stand in judgment in that day if we will keep strong pro-Israeli ties and support. It's important. The nations will be judged for the way they have treated God's people, the Jews.

For notice:

I will plead with them for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and have parted my land. And they have cast lots for my people; they have given a boy for a prostitute, they've sold a girl for wine, that they may drink ([Joe 3:2-3](#)).

The terrible treatment that the Jews have received from the people throughout the world, the ill treatment, even up until the Holocaust in Hitler's day. God's people, and yet the world has treated them so terribly and the world will stand in judgment before God.

Yes, and what have you to do with me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and all of the coasts of Palestine? will ye render to me a recompense? if you recompense me, swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense upon your own head ([Joe 3:4](#));

Now, this scripture is interesting to me because he's talking about Palestine and all rendering an evil against Israel, but God returning and retaliating speedily and swiftly. To me it is interesting the tact that the Jewish people have taken towards terrorists. How that they immediately respond by a counterattack more vicious than the attack that was against them. Almost as if they were fulfilling this verse in Joel.

The Lord said,

Because you've taken my silver and gold, and you've carried away into your temples my goodly pleasant things: The children of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have been sold to the Grecians, that you might remove them far from their border. Behold, I will raise them out of the place where you have sold them, I will return your recompense upon your own head ([Joe 3:5-7](#)):

When Rome finally conquered Israel in 70 A.D., it is estimated that one million six hundred thousand Jews were put to death at that time. They took about six hundred thousand Jews, as captives. Of these, all of the boys and girls under seventeen were sold as slaves, sometimes for as little as a bushel of barley. The others were used for the Roman sports and fed to the lions in the various arenas around the world. They kept only the tallest and the strongest for the triumphant march into Rome when Titus made

## Commentary on Joel 3, by Chuck Smith 3.6.24

his triumphant march and the arch of Titus was erected. Only a small portion, just a few thousand of the tallest and strongest were used in that display of Roman power parading their captives through Rome. But the rest of them were horribly treated, even as the scripture here describes.

But God said, "I will raise them out of the place where they've been sold. I will bring them from the places in the world where they've been scattered. And I will return your recompense upon your own head."

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 has spoken it. Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare for war ([Joe 3:8-9](#)),

Now here's the call to the battle of Armageddon, actually, "Prepare for war." And say, the Gentiles are surely responding to that, aren't they? You hear what's happening to the defense budget? How many trillions of dollars are designated for the war chest in the next few years? Russia's prepared for war, now we're having to prepare.

Prepare for war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong ([Joe 3:9-10](#)).

Now Isaiah and Hosea both see that future day when the Lord establishes His kingdom and they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks and will study war no more. But that isn't now, and any politician that tries to tell you of the Golden Age that he will usher in if you elect him and he'll bring in an age of peace and prosperity and will beat the swords into plowshares and all, don't listen to him. He's premature. Man will not do that by politics. That will not be done until human governments are destroyed by the rock that comes out of the mountain. It is only then that we will beat the swords into plowshares and the spears into pruninghooks. But right now the call for the preparation, as the nations will be gathered into that great final conflict.

Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, gather yourselves together round about: thither cause your mighty ones to come down, O LORD. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all of the heathen round about. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the vats are overflowing; for the wickedness is great ([Joe 3:11-13](#)).

[Revelation 14](#), parallel passage, as he speaks about the cup of the indignation overflowing, wrath of God.

Multitudes, multitudes in this valley of decision ([Joe 3:14](#)):

That is, the valley where they are to be judged.

## Commentary on Joel 3, by Chuck Smith 3.6.24

Multitudes, multitudes: for the day of the LORD is near in this valley of judgment. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, the stars shall withdraw their shining. 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 ([Joe 3:14-16](#)).

Another reference to the Lord roaring out of Zion. In the tenth chapter of the book of Revelation we have a very graphic description of the return of Jesus Christ, the coming again, this mighty messenger of God, the angel, clothed with a rainbow with a scroll in His right hand that is open. Setting one foot upon the earth and one upon the sea saying that the kingdoms of this world have now become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. And in Revelation it says, "And He shall roar as a lion." And there are several prophecies. The next one you'll come across is in [Amos 3:8](#). But here in [Joel 3:16](#), "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion."

As a lion that has conquered its prey stands over the fallen prey and lets out this blood-curdling roar, it's a roar of absolute mastery and victory. So when Jesus comes again, there's going to be an earth-rending roar as the lion of the tribe of Judah proclaims His absolute mastery and victory to reign over the earth. His foes subdued and defeated and He begins His glorious reign. I can hardly wait to hear that roar. I always like to hear lions or elephants and all roar out and ahh. When our Lord shall roar out of Zion, all right. "Utter His voice from Jerusalem. The heavens and the earth will shake, but the Lord will be the hope of His people."

So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy ([Joe 3:17](#)),

Now these people say, "The Lord's already come and established His kingdom. You know, you're living in the Golden Age. The Lord came already in 1914. We're living in the Kingdom Age. Isn't this glorious? Blessed kingdom." Boy, I'm disappointed. I was hoping for much better than this. No, these events have not yet taken place. Don't let them deceive you as though the day of the Lord has already come. When He comes it won't be to some secret chamber. Every eye shall see Him. It's gonna be the most publicized and well-known event that has ever taken place in the history of the world. Every eye shall see Him, every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Lord.

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 stranger pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that when the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all of the rivers of Judah shall flow with water, that a fountain shall come forth from the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of acacias ([Joe 3:17-18](#))

So this fountain that comes forth from the house of the Lord will develop into a stream according to the prophecies in Ezekiel, and also Zechariah prophesies this, and will flow

## Commentary on Joel 3, by Chuck Smith 3.6.24

down to the Dead Sea. A branch of it will break off and go to the Mediterranean. And so here again, it'll water the valley of the acacia trees.

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. But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the LORD is dwelling in Zion ([Joe 3:19-21](#)).

So Joel takes us forward to that glorious day, the return of the Lord is reigning upon the earth there in Zion and the glory of the Lord, once again, covering the earth even as the waters do cover the sea. And how we as the children of God look forward with eagerness to that day.

Now, it is interesting that there are people today that still get upset when you talk about God's future blessing upon the nation of Israel. There are people who still get highly emotionally involved over race and ethnic differences. But as a Christian, race shouldn't bother me at all. I should not even be conscious of it. As a Christian, I cannot be anti against any race of people. As a Christian, I am a whole new race. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation" ([II Corinthians 5:17](#)). And as a Christian, I am one with every other child of God no matter what his ethnic background may be. And as a true Christian, you should be able to embrace any other fellow Christian no matter what his ethnic background should be and no matter... there's just no difference. We are all one in Christ Jesus. And there is no favored nation status as far as Christians are concerned. We have a whole new relationship with God--a closer, deeper relationship through Jesus Christ where we are the sons of God by our faith and trusting.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God. It doesn't yet appear what we're going be" ([I John 3:2](#)), but as a son of God I have such a close relationship with God. But it is a relationship that is open and available to men of every race. Now I don't go on as our government and include creed, because it isn't open to man of every creed. It is only open to those who believe and trust in Jesus Christ. But every man who believes and trusts in Jesus Christ is my brother and I should be able to embrace him and love him freely. And if I am a true child of God, I do. There is no room for prejudice in the heart of the child of God. I am appalled that in some churches, and in some church institutions there still does exist prejudice. Sometimes anti-Semitism, sometimes the almost fascist Anglo superiority attitude, the Arian race. God help us. These cannot and do not reflect a true Christian or his experience.

Thank God for that oneness that we have in Christ. I'm so glad that I just belong to the family of God. I belong to this new nationality in Jesus Christ that makes me a son of God and makes me a brother to each of you. I love it. We all have that equal footing and equal standing before God, for Christ is our common denominator. And if you're a true child of God, those will also be your true feelings. You can't be anti-Semitic and really be a true child of God. He'll take that away; He'll give you a love for those whom He loves.

## Commentary on Joel 3, by Chuck Smith 3.6.24

Shall we pray.

Father, we thank You for the glorious hope of that day of the Lord. Our hearts, O God, are trembling for the events that must transpire to bring the day to pass. But Lord, looking around at the world, we realize that You can't let it go on much longer. Man is about ready to destroy himself. The power brokers of the world are bringing us to a face-off with the super weapons and, God, man is just about ready to do himself in. We see the preparations for war and, God, we wonder what will it lead to. And we're so thankful that our hope is in Christ. Our trust is in You. And Lord, we know that our lives are in Your hands and because they are, come what may, You are our God and You will keep us and You will sustain us and we shall dwell with You, world without end. Thank You, Lord, that even though there is darkness before us, You have shown us the light on the other side, and thus we have a hope. Whereas the world looking at the darkness that is before them can only despair and cry out in utter hopelessness. Yet, Lord, we, born again by the Spirit of God, look for that new day, the new heaven, the new earth, the new kingdom wherein dwells righteousness. O Lord, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth even as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Shall we stand.

Next week, we start the book of Amos. And, again, this fig picker, sycamore fruit, fig tree has a lot of interesting things to share with us. Not only of the conditions of the land in his day, but he also has insight into things of the future, and thus becomes very challenging to us today as we put the Word of God next to the newspaper and we see God's Word coming to pass before our eyes.

Now may the Lord be with you and bless you. May He give you a good week. May you just experience more and more the grace and the fullness of our Lord. As you yield your lives to Him may you discover God's blessed plan that He has in mind for you. And may you not come short in any spiritual gift. May you abound in all things in Christ Jesus as we wait for the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. May the Lord be with you and the Lord bless you.