

THE FINAL BATTLE

IF WE DO A GENERALIZED OVERVIEW OF THE WESTERN BODY OF CHRIST TODAY, WE SEE ALL KINDS OF DENOMINATIONAL POCKETS WHEREIN EVERYONE BELIEVES THEIR CAMP IS THE MAIN ONE. I BELIEVE, IN THE DAY OF THE LORD, ALL OF THESE CAMPS WILL BE PROVEN TO BE MYOPIC AND ANEMIC. THERE IS PROFOUND TRUTH IN ALL OF THESE CAMPS BUT EACH OF THEM BY THEMSELVES ARE DEFICIENT. THE BOOK OF JOEL THROWS A GRENADE INTO THE MIDDLE OF OUR LITTLE DENOMINATIONAL THEOLOGICAL CAMPS AND “BLOWS UP” THESE THINGS.

I. JOEL 2:28-32 AND JOEL 3 REFERS TO THE END OF THE AGE

- A. vs 28: there is an interpretation that Joel 2:28 was fulfilled in the early church at Pentecost in Acts 2 and that it's done and over with because Peter said, “This is fulfilled in your hearing today.”
- B. vs 30: by the time we reach this verse, all our camps are being affected because Joel is saying that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is coming; prophecy is coming; signs and wonders are coming. But the context of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the end of the age is blood, fire, and smoke - meaning military conflict and tribulation.
- C. vs 31: in the days of Pentecost, we did not see blood, fire and smoke. We saw the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Peter was saying this is the same outpouring of the Holy Spirit that Joel talked about, but it's not the fulfillment of the eschatological fullness of it. Its final, end time fullness is yet to come; and the fullness of that will be distinct from the day of Pentecost in that it will be accompanied by, or in the context of, blood, fire, smoke, judgment, and crisis on the earth and cosmic disturbance in the sky.
- D. Joel 2:28 is what happens when we say “Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.”
- E. vs 32 & Romans 10:13: the context of these verses is the Day of the Lord at the end of this age when there's blood, fire, smoke, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1) our radiance as the body and bride of Christ at the end of the age is going to be forged by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; by the spirit of prophecy; by dreams; by visions; by signs and wonders; and by the pressures brought upon us through the blood, fire, smoke, and disturbances in the sky and on the earth. This is to move the nations, the church, and Israel towards this climactic Maranatha cry - because all who call on His name shall be saved
 - 2) the end time Maranatha cry that Joel is talking about is in context to the need for survival in Jerusalem when the blood fire, smoke, and signs and wonders happen in the context of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit

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- 3) when we say “maranatha,” we are asking God to hasten the day of the outpouring of His Spirit in Jerusalem - which will be in the context of an age-ending time of trouble that will push the issue of survival to the forefront of those in the land
- F. [Joel 2:28-Joel 3](#) is an Israel- and Jerusalem-specific prophecy. And if the Holy Spirit is being poured out in Jerusalem, and if there’s judgment in Jerusalem, and if there’s crisis in Jerusalem and people are calling on the name of the Lord in Jerusalem; that will also be happening all around the world in lesser degrees of intensity.
- 1) Jerusalem is the center of this whole thing. While there will be chaos and carnage in New York City, it will pale in comparison to Jerusalem. Why? Because God intends to dwell with man in and from Jerusalem, which means Jerusalem will become the center of divine and demonic focus
- G. There is a difference between being grieved by something and rejecting it. There are many people who love the state of Israel and the Jewish people who reject a future time of trouble for Jacob. Not only is it unbiblical, it’s also very unloving because it is out of touch with reality, encouraging blindness and ignorance concerning what God is doing.
- H. [vs 1](#): this verse is about the restoration of Israel. The Scripture, in light of the picture in the previous verses, commands us to stand with Jerusalem when it is being bludgeoned.
- 1) why is Jerusalem relevant to us if we’ve never been there and we’re never going to go there? Because Jesus is going to dwell there. And if Jesus is going to dwell there, devils are going to rage
- 2) there are those who rejoice in the coming judgment of Israel, but that is an ungodly way to steward the message
- 3) when the nations rage around the issue of Jerusalem and attempt to hurl it into the sea, that will have profound ramifications for Gentile nations in the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, Asia, Africa, the West, etc.
- I. [vs 2](#): human trafficking is not disconnected from the bigger picture of what will be taking place before the Lord returns, and Joel mentions the role of human trafficking of Jewish children in the time of Jacob’s trouble. This is going to be taking place right up unto the end. This doesn’t mean we give up on combating human trafficking; rather, it informs how we labor as we oppose it.
- 1) we need to have a bigger vision than our little passions. The Maranatha cry helps give us the fortitude required to oppose things until the Lord’s return without getting jaded or burned out
- J. [vs 13](#): describes the nations being crushed under the judgments of God
- K. [vs 14](#): “[multitudes in the valley of decision](#)” has nothing to do with an evangelistic campaign; it has everything to do with the nations deciding whether they will oppose Jesus’ passion for Jerusalem or honor it
- L. [vs 14](#): “[the valley of decision](#)” refers to where you stand on the issue of Jerusalem
- 1) yes, God will judge the world based on Jesus, but who is Jesus? He’s the Son of David who sits on the throne of David, in the dynasty of David, in the city of David, according to the prophecies of David. If you reject that plan, you reject that Man ([vs 16](#))
- M. [vs 17, 20](#): this is where the [Revelation 21](#) language of God dwelling among men forever from Jerusalem comes from.

