

*Friends, don't get me wrong. By no means do I count myself as an expert in all of this, but I've got my eyes on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.*

Philippians 3:13-14 MESSAGE BIBLE

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First Love Ministries, Inc.

Prayer Study #224

## **THE BOOK OF JOEL: CHAPTER TWO, VERSES 1-11**

- 1. Blow 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 near at hand.** The trumpet spoken of here in the King James is actually rendered in Hebrew the *shofar*. The shofar was blown as a warning or call to war or for a religious convocation, such as a fast and solemn assembly. The rabbis also believed that when the shofar was blown, all the promises of Jehovah God were released and miracles took place. The natural blowing of the shofar or trumpet in the natural represents prophetic utterance in the spiritual. Remember that Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:46, "first the natural, and then the spiritual."

This chapter has as its central theme *The Day of the Lord*, and it begins with a call to alarm and most likely to some future time. The appropriate response to this day is fear. The holy mountain and Zion, I believe, symbolizes the genuine people of faith and more specifically the remnant company of the Last Days.

God, knowing all the way from the beginning to the end, caused the writing of the Bible to be done in such a way that many of the people, places, offices, institutions, and events were meant to be viewed as anticipatory of what was to come. I believe that He is calling today a Zion company of genuine believers who will be the overcoming, fired-up, passionate, willing to lay down their lives believers, who give their lives for the sake of the Gospel.

What are some of the characteristics of Zion, as laid out in scripture?

- Holy Place-Psalm 2:6
- Dwelling of the Lord-Psalm 9:11, 74:2, 76:2
- Glory of the Lord-Psalm 102:16
- Rod of His Strength-Psalm 110:2
- Place of His Blessing-Psalm 128:5
- Place of Singing-Psalm 137:3

- g. Place of Joy-Psalm 149:2
- h. Place of Shouting-Isaiah 12:6
- i. Place of Quick Answer from the Lord-Isaiah 30:19
- j. Place of the fire of the Lord-Isaiah 31:9
- k. Place where sinners and hypocrites are full of fear-Isaiah 33:14
- l. Place of salvation-Isaiah 46:13
- m. Place of joy, gladness, and the comfort of the Lord-Isaiah 51:3
- n. Place where the Redeemer shall come-Isaiah 59:20
- o. Place where the sons of those who have afflicted you and despised you shall bow down at your feet and call you, *The Zion of the Holy One of Israel*-Isaiah 60:14
- p. Place of beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness-Isaiah 61:3
- q. Place of quick work of the Spirit, *For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children*-Isaiah 66:8
- r. Place of restoration of the backsliders-Jeremiah 3:14
- s. Place to blow the trumpet, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly-Joel 2:1 & 2:15
- t. Place of the former and latter rain-Joel 2:23
- u. Place where the Lord will restore what the enemy has taken-Joel 2:24
- v. Place of deliverance-Joel 2:32, Obadiah 17
- w. Place of hope and strength-Joel 3:16
- x. Place of travail and birthing-Micah 4:10

Let's go up to Zion!!! How do we get there? Zion is a place of being In God, a place where praise to the Lord is perfected, a place of His Presence. I believe in my own heart that we will corporately come unto Mount Zion when we enter into a new place of Worship and Praise that is devoid of competition, performance, fear of man, disunity, self-gratification, etc. I also believe the verses in Hosea give us a clue: *Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy, break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you* (Hosea 10:12), and *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; His going forth is prepared as the morning, and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth* (Hosea 6:3). But there is also His timing, which I wait expectantly for and which is beyond our control. We are to make ourselves ready and available, and we are to be expectant, but He is in control and has a plan, and it is His perfect

timing that we pray for. The right thing at the wrong time is disaster, much in the same sense as a baby being born prematurely, who has to struggle for years to catch-up. This very significant time in history when the Lord is doing a new thing and preparing us for His coming, is not the time for us to struggle for years to reach the maturity of the Bridal company without spot of blemish. The urgency in my Spirit and my desire for you and me to be a part of the Zion Company and the Bridal Company that He longs for, leads me to believe that we are living in a kairos time and will soon see a quick and unprecedented outpouring of His Spirit upon His Zion Company of Believers.

The Jews divided all time into two ages. William Barclay explains their position: “There was *the present age*, which was utterly evil and doomed to destruction, and there was *the age to come*, which would be the golden age of God. Between the two, there was to be *the day of the Lord*, which was to be the terrible first signs of the new age, often described in the same way as labor pains before a birth. It would come suddenly like a thief in the night; it would be a day when the world would be shaken to its very foundations; it would be a day of judgment and of terror. All over the prophetic books of the Old Testament and in much of the New Testament are descriptions of that day. Typical passages are Isaiah 2:12, 13:6; Amos 5:18; Zephaniah 1:7; Joel 2; 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:2; 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:10.”

- 2. A day of darkness and of gloominess; a day of clouds and of thick darkness, like the morning spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after, even to the years of many generations.**
- 3. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth; the land is like the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.**
- 4. The appearance of them is like the appearance of horses and like 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, like a strong people set in battle array.**
- 6. Before their face the peoples shall be much pained; all faces shall gather blackness.**
- 7. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war, and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks.**

8. **Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path, and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.**
9. **They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall; they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.**
10. **The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark and the stars shall withdraw their shining.**
11. **And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army; for His camp is very great; for he is strong who executeth His word; for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?** Darkness and gloominess symbolize in scripture judgment and destruction. This army was said to be more awesome than any that had ever come or would come. The greatest mystery in this book, for me, is who is this army.

Is it Gog, the northern army, a group of many wicked nations, but especially Russia, who are sent by the Lord to drive his people from the midst of Babylon and to punish the backslidden, sleeping, "whorish" church and the Apostate church? Some believe this army will take out America and emboldened with this success will come against natural Israel to destroy it, but Jesus will return with His army of overcomers at Armageddon and will drive out and destroy Gog's army.

Is the army a Satanic force which God allows loose to punish the inhabitants of earth for their rejection of Him? It is what He will use to discipline His people so that they will open their hearts in full repentance?

Is it, as many modern prophets suppose, an endtime saints movement which will do exploits and bring a revolution to the world in the name of Jesus?

Is it the Remnant Company of the Last Days which will do battle against the forces of evil on the earth? Remember Revelation 12:17 which says, *And the dragon was angry with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.* Is the fire before them the spirit-quicken word?

Or is it, as Finis Dake, says a supernatural army of angelic beings with Jesus leading them? He gives 7 reasons to support his opinion:

1. There have never been before any like them appearing on earth (Joel 2).
2. Nor will there be any like them again for many generations-until the end of the Millennium when Satan and his angels and demons will appear on earth in an effort to take it over, at which time God will send this army of heaven against them (Isaiah 24:22, Revelation 20:7-10).
3. A fire will devour before them (v.3; Exodus 38:17-21; 2nd Thessalonians 1:7-10)
4. They will be riding horses or chariots (v.4; This is repeatedly pictured several times in scripture of God's army-2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 2:11-12; Zechariah 1:7-11; Revelation 14 & 21)
5. They will not be hurt even if they fall on a sword (v.8).
6. Different from men, they are able to climb walls; they will climb upon houses and enter the windows like a thief (v.9).
7. They are the Lord's army and He will be leading them personally (v.11). His army is definitely spoken of as being all the holy angels and the resurrected saints from heaven (Zechariah 14:4-5; Matthew 16:27; 24:31; 25:31; 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14-15; Revelation 19:11-21).

I have not clue. The Holy Spirit has not revealed this to me yet. I do lean more to some of these opinions than I do others, but I simply do not know. The whole imagery set forth in Chapter One indicates that the locust invasion was but a foreshadow of this more awful event, which is to come. No one can endure this day, which is coming, without walking in the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 26:20-21 says, *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation is past. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth, for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain.* I believe the Lord speaks of the Day of the Lord here, and we must hide ourselves by dwelling *in the secret place of the Most High* and abiding *under the shadow of the Almighty* Psalm 91:1.