

## JESUS' TEACHING ON THE BOOK OF JOEL IN THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

### I. JESUS' TEACHING ON THE BOOK OF JOEL IN THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

Matthew 24-25 contains Jesus' teaching on the end-times. It is often referred to as "the Olivet Discourse." Matthew 24-25 consists of prophecy (24:4-31) and seven parables (24:32-25:46). In the final parable Jesus drew from the prophecy in Joel chapter 3 concerning the final judgment on the nations at the end of the Age.

*31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'*

*41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' 44 Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' 45 Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

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### II. THE PROPHETIC IMPLICATIONS OF MATTHEW 25:31-46

Much of this paragraph (the numbers) is hypothetical. The Throne of Glory judgment (Mt. 25) will include all the king who survive the Great Tribulation as well as the others in their nation. The numbers will be vast. If there are approximately 8 billion people at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, about one half will die (add the 1/4 in Rev. 6:8 plus another 1/3 in Rev. 9:15) totaling 4 billion deaths. Probably one billion will be raptured at the Second Coming. That will leave 2-3 billion left. Most will have taken the mark of the Beast. Imagine 2-3 billion reprobate people with the mark of the Beast plus several hundred million unregenerate rebels who resisted Jesus and the Antichrist. They are the ones who will be judged at the Throne of Glory. Some will be sheep and others goats. All will be evaluated in the Lord's judicial system. And this evaluation system revolves around the Jewish people.

- A. This is not a comprehensive categorizing of every type of judgment of every action, but it is the primary criteria highlighted after the Lord returns.
- B. People will express their relationship to Jesus by obeying Him in His sovereign plan to bless Israel. This will be a very big issue in the generation that the Lord returns. It will be the litmus test of faith at that time. To neglect to stand with the Jews means that one has made many other wrong decisions before that.
- C. Jesus emphasized six criteria that will determine obedience to His leadership in the End-Times. They all concern how we relate to His brethren when they are **hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick** and in **prison**. All six are issues related to being refugees or in prison camps. In Mt. 25, Jesus does not mention the context of Israel's plight as refugees and prisoners in the End-Times. This theme is prominent in the OT prophets. We must compare Scripture with Scripture to understand this passage.
- D. These are six requirements that will show forth one's faith and obedience. They will all be well known because they will be preached for years before and during the Tribulation. Jesus will make them clear after His appearing. This is an important criteria of how God evaluates obedience to His will throughout all history, but particularly during the Great Tribulation and immediately after.
- E. The primary two nations in which most of the Jewish suffering is said to occur: Egypt and Ancient Assyria (Isaiah 11:11, 16; 27:12-13; Hos. 11:10-11; Mic. 2:12-13; 5:6; 7:12-15; Zech. 10:10-11). It is there from where the Lord promises to deliver Israel from their captivity (Isa. 42:6-7, 16, 22; 49:9-12, 19-21, 24-25; Jer. 31:1-23; Ezek. 39:25-29; Amos 9:8-15; Zeph. 3:17-20).
- F. Isaiah spoke of this hour of Jewish suffering and their subsequent restoration and exaltation more than any other prophet:

*"Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations, and raise my signal to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens*

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*your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you, and lick the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord; those who wait for me shall not be put to shame.” (Isaiah 49:22-23)*

*“Can the prey be taken from the mighty, or the captives of a tyrant be rescued? For thus says the Lord: “Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken, and the prey of the tyrant be rescued, for I will contend with those who contend with you, and I will save your children. I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh, and they shall be drunk with their own blood as with wine. Then all flesh shall know that I am the Lord your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.” (Isaiah 49:24-26)*

***“Foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for in my wrath I struck you, but in my favor I have had mercy on you. Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut, that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall be utterly laid waste. The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, the cypress, the plane, and the pine, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons of those who afflicted you shall come bending low to you, and all who despised you shall bow down at your feet; they shall call you the City of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.” (Isaiah 60:10-14)***

### III. AN OVERVIEW AND OUTLINE OF JOEL CHAPTER 3

Joel chapter 3 describes the final battle for the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem as well as the consequent judgment of the nations who take part.

The primary message of Joel 3 is this: God will use the issue of the land and the people of Israel to test the hearts of all men at the end of the age whereby He will judge the nations. God has chosen Israel as a sort of litmus test to expose who among the nations is for Him and who is against Him.

The chapter has two sections; each having three parts:

#### **The Assault on Israel and the Judgment of the Nations (3:1-16)**

The Assault on the Land of Israel (3:1-3)

God's Challenge to the Nations Who Level the Assault (3:4-14)

God's Protection of Israel and Judgment of Her Enemies (3:15-16)

#### **The Restoration of Israel (3:17-21)**

The Restoration of the People (3:17)

The Restoration of the Land (3:18)

The Avenging of the Blood of the Jews (3:19-21)

**The first section** (3:1-16) focuses on the devastation of the land as God gathers the nation to Israel to judge them. It is one of the most graphic descriptions of God's fury against rebellious people in Scripture. God is described as mocking the nations who seek Israel's annihilation and

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beckoning them to make war with Him. These passages emphasize God's zeal to defend the people and the land of Israel and to utterly destroy His enemies.

***1 In those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives and restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem 2 I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land, and have cast lots for My people and traded a boy for a prostitute, and have sold a girl for wine and have drunk it. (Joel 3:1-3)***

**The second section** (3:17-21) focuses on the restoration of Israel after the Day of the Lord when Jesus destroys Israel's enemies and settles them in the land permanently never again to be threatened by violence. These verses emphasize the avenging of Jewish blood on the heads of Middle Eastern nations who take part in the final assault on Israel.