

## NATIONS IN THE BALANCE

Text: Joel 3:1-16

**Key Word:** War

**Key Thought:** The Nations of the World Are Being Weighed in God's Balance to Prepare for the Battle of Armageddon.

Acts of aggression will continue to take place. Jesus told His disciples . . .

*“Watch out that no one deceives you.*

*5. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.*

*6. You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.*

*7. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.*

*8. All these are the beginning of birth pains.”*

*Matthew 24:4-8*

In the wake of all the continuing grim international news reports we've had to pray that the nations of the world do not retaliate in a manner **of attempting to overcome evil with evil.** It is a time when the wisdom of Solomon is needed to do what was right - not what appears to be right. **Man's wisdom has never resolved these types of crisis.** It takes an act of God to overcome these continued and growing acts of terrorism.

Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February 2022. The attack has been internationally considered a war of aggression while Russian president Vladimir Putin called it a "**special military operation**" to "**demilitarise and denazify**" Ukraine. It triggered Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II. As of Apr 7<sup>th</sup> there have been more than 4,316,928 refugees with most ending up in Poland.

The invasion marked a major escalation of the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict, which began in 2014 following the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity. Russia subsequently annexed Crimea, and Russian-backed separatists seized part of south-east Ukraine, starting the war in Donbas.

In 2021, Russia began a large military build-up along its border with Ukraine, amassing up to 190,000 troops along with their equipment. Putin espoused his dictatorship views by questioning Ukraine's right to statehood. Putin said the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had threatened Russia's security by expanding eastward since the early 2000s.

Multi-pronged offensives were launched from Russia, Belarus, and the two occupied territories of Ukraine (Crimea and Donbas). Four major military invasion fronts developed: the Kyiv offensive, the Northeastern Ukraine offensive, the Eastern Ukraine offensive, and the Southern Ukraine offensive. The Russian military has also carried out air and missile strikes far into western Ukraine. Russian forces have approached or besieged key settlements, but met stiff Ukrainian resistance and experienced logistical and operational challenges that hampered their progress.

The invasion has been widely condemned internationally. The **United Nations General Assembly** adopted a resolution which condemned it and demanded a full withdrawal. **The International Court of Justice** ordered Russia to suspend military operations, and the **Council of Europe** expelled Russia. Many countries imposed new sanctions, which have affected the economies of Russia and the world, and provided humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine.

Protests occurred around the world; those in Russia have been met with mass arrests and increased media censorship, including banning the terms "**war**" and "**invasion.**" Numerous companies withdrew their products and services from Russia and Belarus, and Russian state-funded media were banned from broadcasting and removed from online platforms. The **International Criminal Court** opened an investigation into allegations of Russian military war crimes in Ukraine.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022\\_Russian\\_invasion\\_of\\_Ukraine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022_Russian_invasion_of_Ukraine)

All of this points to the final stages of preparation before the great and final war of the ages. **The nations of the world are being weighed in the balanced. I believe that these attacks will test to see where the nations will eventually align their forces.** Lets take a few minutes to consider the events that are soon to take place upon this earth.

### **What Did Joel Prophecy to Take Place at the End of the Ages?**

**I. THE FORTUNES OF JUDAH AND JERUSALEM WILL BE RESTORED (Joel 3:1)**

**II. THE NATIONS WILL BE GATHERED**

**TO THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT (Joel 3:2-6)**

**III. THE WAR OF ALL WARS WILL TAKE PLACE (Joel 3:7-16)**

**I. THE FORTUNES OF JUDAH AND JERUSALEM WILL BE RESTORED (Joel 3:1)**

Jerusalem has continued to see car bombs, suicide bombers, missiles and many forms of acts of aggression in their escalation of war between the Palestinians. God's chosen people have been victimized by many nations of the world. **These nations are not allowing truth to hinder their devious goals.** Yet they have not recently been able to win a war against Israel.

## **I. THE FORTUNES OF JUDAH AND JERUSALEM WILL BE RESTORED (Joel 3:1) (Contd.)**

The bloody mess in the Middle East was competently predicted by several "forceful" articles in the Times of London (GB) way back in 1947. If you were to ask anyone in Israel what would be their top priority for their nation today, I'm sure it would be **peace in the middle east**. Most of the Jewish people are not looking for fortunes. **Our materialistic mind has warped the idea of what truly is of value today.**

Jesus told those who had gathered to hear His sermon on the mount,

*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth,  
where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break  
in and steal.  
20. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,  
where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves  
do not break in and steal.  
21. For where your treasure is, there your heart will  
be also.”*

*Matthew 6:19-21*

Jesus answered an individual who approached Him from a crowd one day asking Him to intervene and get his brother to divide the inheritance with him.

*“Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of  
greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance  
of his possessions.”*

*Luke 12:15*

He then went on to tell **The Parable of the Rich Fool** who built bigger barns and lived a life of eating, drinking and merriment.

*“You fool! This very night your life will be demanded  
from you. Then you will get what you have prepared  
for yourself?  
21. This is how it will be with anyone who stores up  
things for himself but is not rich toward God.”*

*Luke 12:20,21*

## **I. THE FORTUNES OF JUDAH AND JERUSALEM WILL BE RESTORED (Joel 3:1) (Contd.)**

I believe the greatest riches we can have on earth cannot be bought or sold. We are at a loss to gather enough resources to ensure peace and safety. The United States boasts about being the “land of the rich and the free.” I wonder after the 9/11 terrorist attack that placed them in as vulnerable a position as any weak nation in the world whether they felt their fortunes had been depleted a little?

Judah and Israel will see the prophet’s words fulfilled by “*bringing [them] back from captivity*” in the days to come after the Rapture of the Church and the 7 years of Tribulation. They are to dwell in their land with peace and safety.

*“Never again will foreigners invade her  
(Jerusalem/Zion)  
18. In that day the mountains will drip with new wine,  
and the hills will flow with milk; all the ravines of  
Judah will run with water.” A fountain will flow out of  
the LORD’s house and will water the valley of  
acacias.”*

*Joel 3:17,18*

**God has recently pulled back the veil to show us just a small portion of Judah’s vast material fortunes.**

“The off-shore Levant gas field could eventually provide Israel with 50 to 200 years of gas at current levels of use, encouraging the construction of a gas pipeline to Europe. When it comes to oil, Israel has one of the world’s largest deposits of shale oil, with a potential of some **250 billion barrels in the Shfela basin**. Israel’s mining sector extracts minerals from the Dead Sea (for export via Israel’s southern port of Eilat) and **extracts millions of tons of aggregate** from Judea & Samaria for the building industry . . .

Following thousands of years of evaporation, the Dead Sea now contains some 45,000 million tons of salts rich in minerals (**magnesium, bromides, phosphates, potassium, calcium and chlorides of sodium**) . . . Israel’s mining and quarrying sector supplies about 50 million tons of raw material per year for building and road construction. There are vast amounts of **gold and silver**. It leads the world in diamond cutting, polishing and trade.

Joseph was to be blessed with ‘*precious things from the deep lying beneath*’ (Deuteronomy 34.13), Asher was to ‘*dip his foot in oil*’ (Deuteronomy 34.24) and Zebulun and Issachar were to find “*hidden treasures in the sand.*”

*“For they shall partake of the abundance of the seas  
and of the treasures hidden in the sand”*

*Deuteronomy 33:19*

## **I. THE FORTUNES OF JUDAH AND JERUSALEM WILL BE RESTORED (Joel 3:1) (Contd.)**

The tribe of Zebulun would live at the seashore and go out in ships to engage in trade and make a profit. Today, this trade is clearly going to be natural gas and shale oil.

**Rain:** Egypt has the Nile and Iraq has the Euphrates but Israel has no large replenishing rivers like this. Apart from modern desalination plants, Israel (and the River Jordan) is largely dependent upon natural provision from the sky – rain. Israel is dependent on “the heavens” in a very real and practical way.

It seems that God chose this dry land so that the people of Israel (His chosen people) had to look to Him for such provision. The apostle Paul acknowledged that God provided Old Testament Israel with “*rain from heaven*” for their crops (Acts 14.17). Similarly, when it comes to the future (Millennial Israel), the God of Israel promises literal showers of blessings from heaven so that abundant crops will grow:

*“I will cause showers to come down in their season;  
there shall be showers of blessing. Then the trees of  
the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield  
her increase*

*Ezekiel 34.26,27*

<https://www.factsaboutisrael.uk/israels-natural-resources/>

All of these fortunes though CANNOT compare with the greatest combination of resources that God has promised to His people - **peace, safety and prosperity**. They have not yet reached what God has promised to them.

“We are free not because we claim freedom, but because we practice it.”

William Faulkner

## II. THE NATIONS WILL BE GATHERED TO THE VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT (Joel 3:2-6)

The timing of many recent worldwide meetings are marking the beginning of God aligning the nations to gather them to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The name “*Jehoshaphat*” means “*The LORD judges.*” A historic battle took place in 896 BC. in the valley that bore the name of Judah’s king.

It was in this valley that Moab and Ammon were defeated in a very unusual manner. When King Jehoshaphat heard news of the approaching armies, he called his people to a time of prayer and fasting (II Chronicles 20:1-30). The Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel and he prophesied,

*“Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s.”*

*II Chronicles 20:15*

God told the people that He would fight the battle for them.

*“You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.”*

*II Chronicles 20:17*

This message of exhortation brought about a tremendous time of worship and prayer unto the LORD. They gave thanks to the LORD because His love endured forever (II Chronicles 20:21). At the beginning of this time of praise and worship, God set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir. God brought such confusion among these enemies that they literally turned their swords on each other. Not one of them was left standing when the battle ended. Yet not one sword of Israel had been raised because God fought on their behalf.

*“I will gather all nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. 3. Then the LORD will go out and fight against the nations, as he fights in the day of battle.”*

*Zechariah 14:2,3*

## II. THE NATIONS WILL BE GATHERED TO THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT (Joel 3:2-6) (Contd.)

*“Then they gathered the kings to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.”*

*Revelation 16:16*

*“Come quickly, all you nations from every side, and assemble there. Bring down your warriors, O LORD!  
12. Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all nations on every side.”*

*Joel 3:11,12*

## III. THE WAR OF ALL WARS WILL TAKE PLACE (Joel 3:7-16)

It wasn't many years ago that the U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell appeared to change his stance on how a nation should react in the face of terrorism.

*"I think when you are attacked by a terrorist and you know who the terrorist is and you can fingerprint back to the cause of the terror, you should respond," Powell told a news conference Wednesday.*

Prior to that, Powell repeatedly had called on Israel to act with restraint following acts of Palestinian terrorism, saying retaliatory attacks escalate the cycle of violence and don't end the conflict. Isn't it interesting how reactions change when the shoe was placed on the other foot during the 9/11 terrorist attack in New York City.

Yet the greatest war of all the earth is still to take place. I wonder what will take place to change the minds of military leaders to make them want to enter into the war of all wars?

*“Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.  
15. The sun and moon will be darkened and the stars no longer shine.  
16. The LORD will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the sky will tremble. But the LORD will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.”*

*Joel 3:14-16*

*“For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now – and never to be equalled again.”*

*Matthew 24:21*

### III. THE WAR OF ALL WARS WILL TAKE PLACE (Joel 3:7-16) (Contd.)

*29. Immediately after the distress of those days 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'*"

*Matthew 24:29*

*"This is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.*

*13. On that day men will be stricken by the LORD with great panic. Each man will seize the hand of another, and they will attack each other."*

*Zechariah 14:12,13*

*"I will turn you around and drag you along. I will bring you from the far north and send you against the mountains of Israel.*

*Then I will strike your bow from your left hand and make your arrows drop from your right hand.*

*4. On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your troops and the nations with you. I will give you as food to all kinds of carrion birds and to the wild animals."*

*Ezekiel 39:3,4*

War is not something to delight in. General Douglas MacArthur saw the ugliness of war first-hand and knew better than to ever glorify it. He said,

"A soldier, above all other people, prays for peace, for he must bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

Even though we know that this war of all wars is going to take place - we all hope we never see it in our lifetime. We need to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit across our land that God would reap the greatest harvest of souls before this day arrives. The nations of the world are being weighed in a balance. The day of reckoning is fast approaching. There will be no escape for those living with the Mark of the Beast upon the earth at the end of the 7 years of tribulation.



**INVITATION:**

Are you ready for the return of Jesus Christ?  
Have you confessed your sin to Him?  
If you died today do you know without a shadow of doubt  
that you would go to be with the LORD?  
Make sure you know today what your future holds in store for you!

C:\WPWin(2021)\Sermons.22\Rapture Ready\Joel 3:1.16.wpd

C:\WPWin(9.0)\Sermons.01\Revival\Joel3\_1.16.wpd

Date: May 1 & 15/22

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Date: Sept 23/01

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Way Maker - D

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**INTRODUCTION:** *Matthew 24:4-8*

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**II. THE NATIONS WILL BE GATHERED TO THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT (Joel 3:2-6)** - *II Chronicles 20:15,17, 21; Zechariah 14:2,3; Revelation 16:16; Joel 3:11,12*

**III. THE WAR OF ALL WARS WILL TAKE PLACE (Joel 3:7-16)** - *Joel 3:14-16; Matthew 24:21,29; Zechariah 14:12,13; Ezekiel 39:3,4*

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