

#34 Northside Natter

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Today, I'm taking a brief look at the **Valley of Decision**.

The Valley of Decision is mentioned only once [Joel 3]. You may know it by another name: the Kidron Valley through which runs the Kedron Brook. This valley sits east of the old temple site between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives; both now behind the walls of the old city of Jerusalem. It is a short walk from the Garden of Gethsemane and can be seen on the map as running alongside Jericho Road. It's just a narrow tract abutted by a cemetery on its eastern side. The valley, also known as the valley of Jehoshaphat [meaning *the judgement of Yahweh*], actually stretches for twenty miles through the Judean wilderness (to the south) to the Dead Sea, yet is only visible as a thin piece of green land today.

Why is this seemingly insignificant valley named the Valley of Decision?

Joel 3:11-12

Assemble yourselves and come all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be awakened and come up the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.

This judgement seems to follow Armageddon which will be launched from the valley of Megiddo (the Jezreel Valley). Megiddo is 124km north-west of Jerusalem and the trip takes about 1.15 hours to drive. It is a large valley that falls under the jurisdiction of the Megiddo Regional Council, and as of 2018, Megiddo had a teeny population of 855 people.

Many nations will gather their armies together in the Jezreel Valley of Megiddo where they will set up their camps and from where they will deploy their troops; perhaps 200 million men or more. Their target is Jerusalem and the distance from the Jezreel Valley is easily crossed.

Zechariah 14:1-2

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

This may refer to an earlier prophecy that has already been fulfilled, but it was a the forerunner of what is yet to come.

Zechariah 14: 3-4

*Then shall the LORD go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the **mount of Olives** shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north and half of it toward the south.*

The judgement, to take place in the Valley of Jehoshaphat [aka *valley of Decision*], seems to be aimed at the heathen who mistreated God's people. They shall be *awakened*; possibly

to have their eyes opened at last? This will only become clear on the day. They shall stand before the Lord in the valley of Decision and receive their just rewards for the atrocities committed against God's chosen people.

Joel 3:13-14

Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down for the press is full, the fats overflow for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

Revelation 14:20

And the winepress was trodden without the city [Jerusalem], and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs [200 miles].

Joel goes on to say that the sun and moon shall be darkened, the stars shall withdraw their shining, and the Lord will roar out of Zion, uttering his voice in Jerusalem. The heavens and the earth shall also shake.

Joel 3:16

... But the Lord will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel.

Imagine multitudes and multitudes of people marching to the Lord's judgement seat in the valley of Decision where they will stand before him to be judged. How far will that queue stretch? All the way to Megiddo? Yet the Lord will widen the valley immensely to gather them all in when he cleaves apart the Mount of Olives.

Zechariah 12:9-10

*And it shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplications: and they shall look upon me **whom they have pierced** and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.*

To realise who they have crucified and refused to follow will create such wailing and gnashing of teeth. They will rue the day they believed the lies of this world.

The enemy in the battle of Armageddon has a punishment in store.

Zechariah 14:13

And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbour and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

This plague will also affect all the beasts corralled by the invading armies. Some believe it to be brought on by an atomic bomb followed by radiation poisoning from the fall-out. Perhaps. This will also become clearer on the day.

This will not be the first time that the Lord causes an army of allies to turn upon each other. The army of Gideon won the battle against the Midianites without lifting a sword. [read about it in **Judges 7**].

The scriptures are full of incredible stories and predictions for our future. Whenever we come across something, it's always a good idea to look into the other books of the bible to see where it all leads. What we will find is the bigger picture and we'll gain a clearer understanding of our part in it. We are told these things because the Lord does not want us to be unprepared for what is coming. We know what we have to do to be saved. We also know we have to save souls. We know there will be a Great Tribulation and we know that the Lord will shorten those days for the sake of his elect lest no flesh be saved. The exhortation now is to built ourselves up in our most holy faith and to strengthen our steadfastness in the Lord.

We have tough times ahead: flood, fire, pestilence (e.g. disease, viruses), earthquake, volcanic activity, war and rumours of war. We've lived through many already and we know they are increasing around the globe. We have no time to rest on our laurels when the Lord's work is to be done and our faith is to be made impenetrable.

We now stand in our own valley of Decision. The decision to hear *'well done thou good and faithful servant'*, or to hear *'cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness'* [**Matt 25**]. It is easy to know which one we prefer to hear. It is another thing to do what is necessary to hear it. We must strengthen our faith and put our convictions into action. This will take courage, motivation, inner strength and a lot of relying on the Lord. We can't put off making good choices for we don't even know what tomorrow will bring. What is our lifespan? We are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. [**James 4:14**].

Time is quickly running out for all of us. If we're not on track yet, or have slipped off the path, let's get back on it now and move forward. Today is the day of salvation, not tomorrow or any other day. It's now.