

Job 3:9-11

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/joel/joel-3/joel-39-11/>

The prophet Joel invites the Gentile nations to assemble for battle. He urges the LORD to bring His army down to defeat the nations.

This passage begins with the voice of the prophet Joel calling the nations to battle and urging the Suzerain God to bring down His warriors to fight against the nations (vv. 9-11). As the prophet issued his call, he said, *Proclaim this among the nations*. To *proclaim* is to make an announcement. This verb is a technical term for introducing what a prophet has to say (Jeremiah 3:12; 7:2). The demonstrative pronoun *this* refers to the command that will follow. This command concerned the *nations*, the Gentile people groups who in this instance appear to have refused to serve the LORD and acknowledge Him for who He is.

The ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy could occur during what Jesus referred to as the time of great tribulation (Matthew 24:21) in the seventieth week of Daniel (Daniel 9). John's Revelation describes a future time when a lawless anti-christ will lead the earth in a full rebellion against God, and Jesus will lead a heavenly army to destroy and judge those gathered in Israel to rise against the Lord and His people (Revelation 15:14-16; 19:11-21). It appears that this will be a gathering of all the nations (Revelation 19:15, Zechariah 14:16-21).

Joel then stated the command, *Prepare a war*. The verb translated as *prepare* is “*ḳādhēsh*” in Hebrew. It means “to set something apart” or “to consecrate something” (Exod. 28:3). In the previous chapter, the people of Judah were called to “consecrate a fast” (Joel 2:15). Here in our passage, the Gentile nations were called to consecrate or *prepare a war* that they could not win. This war could refer to the gathering of the nations in a valley in Israel called “Armageddon”. This means in Hebrew “the hill of Megiddo.” Megiddo was a significant city in the Valley of Jezreel in northern Israel. It had substantial value to its owner, since it was near two major trade routes connecting Egypt and the East, meaning it had great potential to benefit from the trade industry and from tariffs. Accordingly, it was a property often fought over in the ancient world, and the site of many battles. It appears that the armies of the nations will assemble in this valley in preparation for an assault on Jerusalem at the end of the age (Revelation 16:16; 14:20).

The preparation for the battle continued. Now the prophet said to the Gentile nations, *Rouse the mighty men! Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up!* To *rouse* means to stir up, to awake someone or something. The Hebrew term translated as *mighty men* is “*gibbôr*.” It refers to someone valiant, one whose strength surpasses ordinary strength. Likewise, the Hebrew term for *soldiers* means “men of war” or “warriors.” It describes the one who knows how to use the various weapons of war such as swords, spears, javelins, bows, and arrows, in combat (1 Sam 17:4–5). All the valiant men will arouse from their inactivity of peace to get them ready for the final assault.

The prophet Joel continued his mobilization for war and said, *Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears*. The word *plowshare* is an agricultural instrument, probably

the metal tip of the plow that breaks up the earth and scratches out a furrow. *Pruning hooks* are the small knives used to remove leaves and new shoots from the grapevines (1 Kgs. 18:28). Joel called the nations to be ready to face God in a holy war. As such, even the cultivators will turn their farming implements into weapons, as in 1 Samuel 13:20–21.

In the books of Isaiah and Micah, the order of this sentence is reversed because these texts speak about the time when the LORD will restore peace on earth. “He [the LORD] will judge between the nations and will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war” (Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3).

In the book of Joel, however, the context suggests a military warfare. This text foresees a universal cataclysm before the inauguration of the messianic reign, when all the nations will assemble to face the LORD’s judgment. Nobody will be exempt. Even those who are physically weak will say, *I am a mighty man*. They will feel that they are physically fit to fight this great battle. Unfortunately, they will not win. The LORD will have victory because He is all-powerful. He is the great warrior who never loses His power.

If this prophecy includes the last great assault upon Jerusalem of the armies of the nations that were assembled in Armageddon, it would indicate that there will be a period of human warfare prior to Jesus’ descent from heaven on a white horse, leading a heavenly army (Revelation 19:11).

Joel concluded his command by saying, *Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, and gather yourselves there*. The nations are called to hurry up and assemble themselves in the place where the LORD will judge them (the valley of Jehoshaphat, as v. 2 indicates). This battle is urgent. The nations must be judged because they have committed great sins against the true God. The prophet then addressed God, saying, *Bring down, O Lord, Your mighty ones*. He wanted God to bring His army down to judge the wickedness of the nations.

Biblical Text

**⁹ Proclaim this among the nations:
Prepare a war; rouse the mighty men!
Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up!**
**¹⁰ Beat your plowshares into swords
And your pruning hooks into spears;
Let the weak say, “I am a mighty man.”**
**¹¹ Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations,
And gather yourselves there.
Bring down, O Lord, Your mighty ones.**