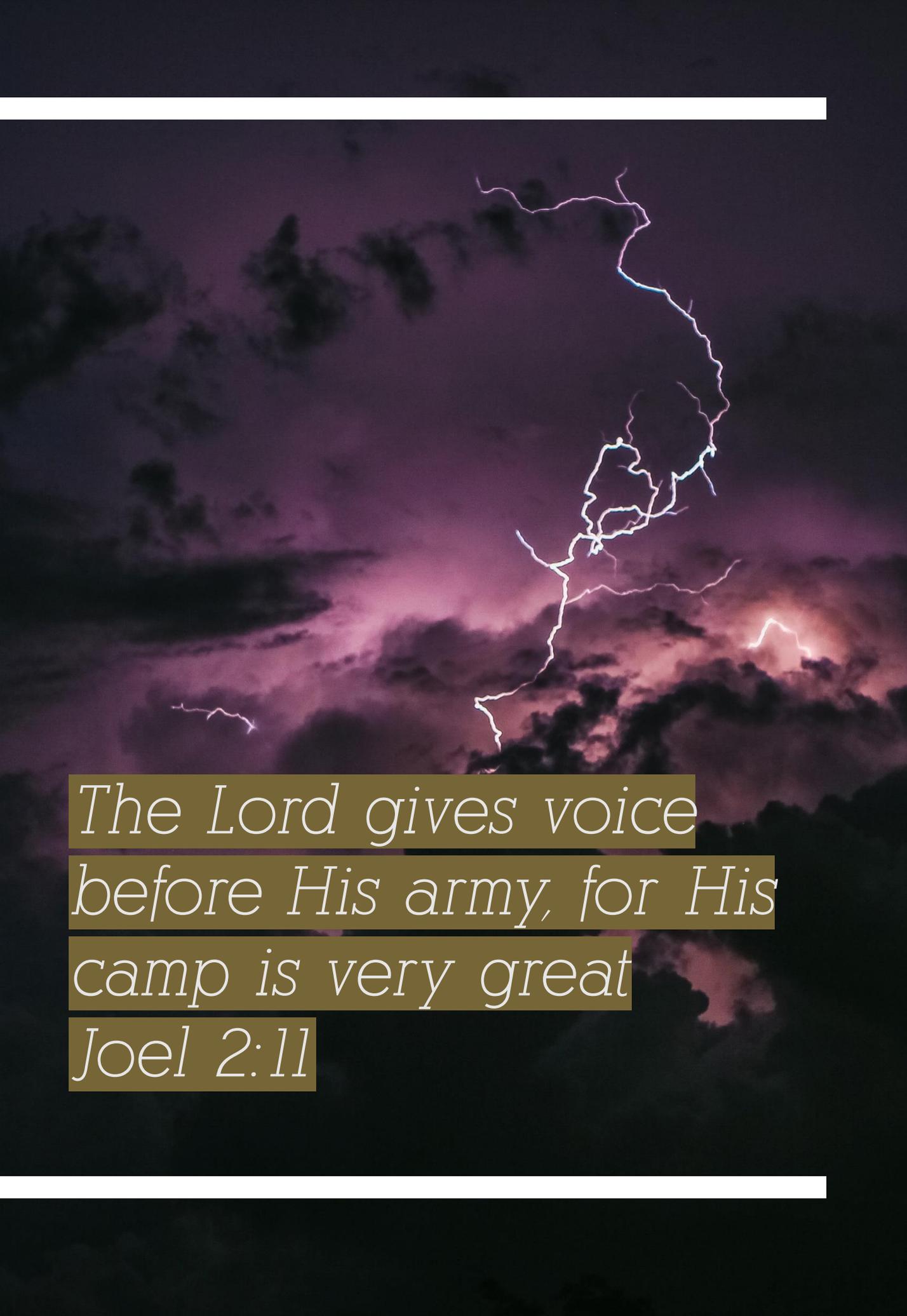




The Babylonian Empire

The Evil Babylonian Army - a foreshadow of what is to come



*The Lord gives voice
before His army, for His
camp is very great
Joel 2:11*

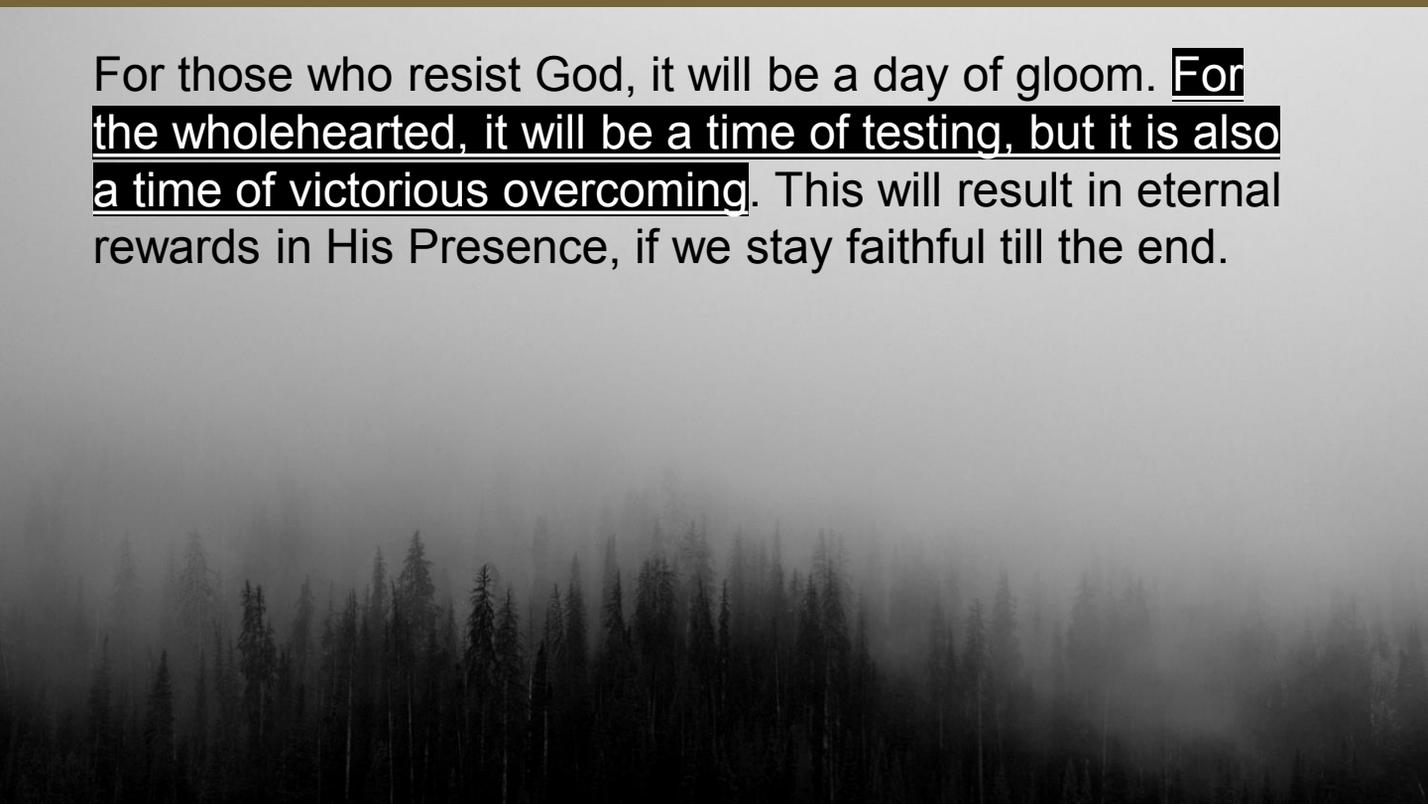
Joel took great pains to share with us details concerning the Babylonian army. This is to give us a picture of how **overwhelming and devastating** this army is. Through the Book of Joel, God is giving the End-Time Church a picture of the destructive nature of the Antichrist and his army in the days before Jesus' return.

There are seven descriptions of this evil Babylonian army, which is a foreshadow of the End-Time army led by the Antichrist:

A Day of Darkness (Joel 2:2a)

Joel describes this day in very frightening language: darkness, gloominess, clouds, and thick darkness. These words convey how overwhelming the coming judgment will be. The darkness is related to a military invasion at the hands of an evil empire. As God did so in Joel's day, He will do it again in a greater measure in the End Times.

For those who resist God, it will be a day of gloom. **For the wholehearted, it will be a time of testing, but it is also a time of victorious overcoming.** This will result in eternal rewards in His Presence, if we stay faithful till the end.





Like Morning Clouds

(Joel 2:2b,c)

Joel compares the looming army to morning clouds over the mountains. Like the dawning of the sun in the morning, the **rising of the Antichrist army is inevitable** and no man can alter its rising. **Like a sunrise**, no eye will miss it. Just as the morning sun's intensity increases gradually until it fills the sky with its brightness as the noonday sun, the day of gloom will **grow stronger and stronger**. By the time it reaches its fullness, **it will be all-consuming**. Like the way morning clouds spread over the mountains, the imminent army will be irrepressible and vast!

A People Great and Strong

(Joel 2:2d – g)

Joel continues to describe this army. **Their enormity and might is unsurpassed.** This army will be completely unprecedented in size and aggression. Joel describes them as the northern army which in Joel's day was the army of Babylon (Joel 2:20). The coalition of evil nations led by the Antichrist in the End Times will also come from the north of Israel (Ezek. 38 – 39).

This military force is great and strong. Its greatness is due to numerical strength, strength in economics and in the occult. Many nations will unite to resist God's purposes for Israel. It will be the largest military force assembled in all of human history. By exerting control via "the mark of the Beast," this evil empire will have an unsurpassed economic monopoly (Rev. 13:17). The leadership of this evil empire will be characterized by supernatural signs and wonders that are empowered by the forces of darkness (Rev. 13:13 – 14). Its demonic powers will be beyond anything yet seen in the history of mankind.





A Fire Devours before Them (Joel 2:3)

Unprecedented desolations by raging fires will precede and follow this great army. This happened in the Babylonian invasion, in the Roman invasion and it will happen again at the End of the Age. Before they show up, fire precedes them. This speaks of tremendous bombardment before and after the invasion. Nothing will escape its destruction.

Their Appearance is like... (Joel 2:4 – 6)

Joel prophesied of a coming evil regime of **unmatched swiftness and speed**. It will be a military advance that suddenly breaks in and within a few weeks, nations will be destroyed and conquered. This swiftness and suddenness of the destruction will characterize the Antichrist army.



This is a brutal and wicked army that runs like mighty men and marches in formation without breaking ranks. They are trained, disciplined, and seasoned, not chaotic or in any way disordered. All will be impacted by this worldwide assault. The Antichrist's coalition of evil nations will assault all other nations out of the desire to control the globe.

This army will be uncontainable and overpowering. They will encounter resistance, but God is the only one who will be able to stop them.

Supernatural signs (Joel 2:10)

Supernatural signs will precede and follow the evil army that is coming. The earth and the heavens will shake, the sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will dim in brightness. *Cosmic supernatural signs demonstrate the tremendous mercy of God as they assure us of the utter impossibility of missing the final hour of natural history.* The evidence will be clear to anyone who is watching.

Through the signs and wonders, God demonstrates His total control and full awareness of everything that is going on. Every detail has been orchestrated. Seeing that He has authority over the stars in the heavens, we will be reminded that He has absolute power over the armies on the earth.

Another one of God's purposes in these displays of power is to give His Church the assurance that He is demonstrating His power on their behalf. He wants His people to have the assurance that the power that He has to move the stars in the heavens is the same power that He will exercise to keep us through this strategic hour of history.

If God can administrate the heavenly realm with such power and wisdom, He, our sovereign and perfect leader, can effortlessly direct every event in the earthly realm.



God is really the One behind all the events taking place. He is leading with tremendous attentiveness. The drama He has orchestrated is so brilliant. It will bring the righteous into greater depths of love for Him and the wicked will be fully repaid for their evil.

As we see the greatness of our God – the sovereign omnipotent King who is merciful and kind, may our hearts develop full confidence and trust in His leadership over the earth and in every detail of our lives!



Readings and Prayers for the week

Readings for Week 30

- Read Joel 2:1-11 as well as Rev.13. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how devastating the Antichrist and his evil army will be. What are the things we can do to prepare ourselves so that we will not be fearful when things unfold?
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Prayers for Week 30

- Use Col 1:9-10 to pray that the Church will have understanding of the times and know what we ought to do.