

Zephaniah Chapter 3

V: 1 God has dealt with Nineveh, He's dealt with the Philistines, dispensing judgment from the North to the South - now He again turns His attention to Jerusalem - the rebellious and oppressive city.

Isaiah 30:12-13 “¹²Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel: because you despise this word, and trust in oppression and perversity, and rely on them, ¹³Therefore this iniquity shall be to you like a breach ready to fall, a bulge in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly in an instant.”

“Woe to her who is rebellious and polluted.”

- “Rebellious” / “filthy” KJV - meaning defiled; speaking of both Jerusalem at this time, and sadly the church as well.

Isaiah 1:10 “Hear the Word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah.”

V: 2 She / Jerusalem haven't obeyed, received correction, trust in the Lord, or drawn near to Him.

- Going in exactly the wrong direction on every issue!

Leviticus 26:14 / Deuteronomy 28:15 “If you do not obey Me...”

Proverbs 1:24-26 “²⁴Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out My hand and no one regarded, ²⁵because you disdained all My counsel, and would have none of My rebuke, ²⁶I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes.”

Jeremiah 32:33 “And they have turned to Me the back, and not the face; though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not listened to receive instruction.”

Proverbs 13:13 “He who despises the Word will be destroyed...”

V: 3-4 All the leadership of the nation is corrupt, all their institutions have gone astray.

- Princes, judges, prophets, priests - all the people you would look to for answers, or for an example to follow.
- Characterized as lions, wolves, insolent, and polluted.

Ezekiel 22:25-27 “²⁵The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they have devoured people; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in her midst. ²⁶Her priests have violated My law and profaned My holy things; they have not distinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. ²⁷Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, to shed blood, to destroy people, and to get dishonest gain.”

- They have done violence to the Law - they've twisted it, they've misused it to their advantage.

2 Peter 2:1-3 “¹But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. ²And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. ³By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.”

V: 5 Contrary to that - “*The LORD is righteous in her midst!*”

“*He will do no unrighteousness*” He never does, because He is good! Everything He does is good. He is not just righteous, He is righteousness!

Psalm 145:17 “The LORD is righteous in all His ways, Holy in all His works.”

- He is “**Jehovah Tsidkenu**” - the LORD our righteousness.
- The unjust, the wicked know no shame: they flaunt their wickedness.

Jeremiah 8:12 “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; in the time of their punishment they shall be cast down, says the LORD.”

- We are often un-just and un-faithful - but God is always just and He is always faithful:

2 Timothy 2:13 “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”

V: 6-7 As God brought judgment upon them, there was the thought that they would learn their lesson, that they would see the error of their ways - but they didn't, they refused. They doubled down and got up early to do the same wickedness - totally un-repentant.

Isaiah 1:4-6 “⁴Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward. ⁵Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints. ⁶From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed or bound up, or soothed with ointment.”

Proverbs 4:16 “For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall.”

V: 8 Wait on the Lord - He will rise up to make things right:

Romans 12:19 “Beloved, do not avenge yourself, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.”

Isaiah 49:23 “... For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me.”

- He’s going to gather the nations for plunder, for judgment, to pour out His wrath and indignation - this is speaking of the not only the coming judgment upon Jerusalem, but upon the world - “kingdoms” - he’s talking about the yet future great tribulation to be followed by the Millennial kingdom of our Lord.

V: 9-10 During the Millennial kingdom of our Lord He will bring us back to one pure language (Hebrew?), all nations will call on the name of the LORD and serve Him with one accord.

Isaiah 18:7 “In that time a present will be brought to the LORD of hosts from a people tall and smooth of skin, and from a people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation powerful and treading down, whose land the rivers divide (Egypt) to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, to mount Zion.”

Isaiah 19:18 “In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by the LORD of hosts;...”

- They will bring Him offerings.

V: 11-12 The proud will have been removed, the proud will have been humbled - and only the humble will remain in His holy mountain.

1 Corinthians 1:29 “... no flesh should glory in His presence.”

James 4:6 “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

- God will deal with the proud and preserve the humble.

Psalm 37:40 “And the LORD shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in Him.”

V: 13 This sound like the reign of righteousness to me.

- No un-righteousness, no lies, no deceit - Sounds pretty good to me!
- The remnant of Israel, those who have survived the great tribulation where $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Jews are killed.

Zechariah 13:8-9 “⁸And it shall come to pass in all the land, says the LORD, that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one third shall be left in it: ⁹I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, this is My people; and each one will say, The LORD is my God.”

- Feeding their flocks and lying down is an indication of peace, which along with righteousness are two of the main descriptors of the Millennial Kingdom of our Lord.

Ezekiel 34:15 “I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD.”

V: 14-16 That will be a time of rejoicing - dwelling in His presence, living in true peace.

Psalm 100:1-2 “¹Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! ²Serve the LORD with gladness; come before His presence with singing.”

Isaiah 12:5-6 “⁵Sing to the LORD, for He has done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. ⁶Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!”

- The Lord has taken away their judgments; they have been purged.

Zechariah 8:13-15 “¹³And it shall come to pass that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, So I will save you, and you shall be a blessing. Do not fear, let your hands be strong. ¹⁴For thus says the LORD of hosts: Just as I determined to punish you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath, says the LORD of hosts, and I would not relent, ¹⁵So again in these days I am determined to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear.”

- No more crime, no more disasters... hard to imagine.

Amos 9:15 “I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them, says the LORD your God.”

V: 17-18 The LORD has always wanted just this, to be in our midst, among us - in fellowship with His creation, with those who love Him.

Leviticus 26:11-12 “¹¹I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. ¹²I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.”

Zechariah 2:10 “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst, says the LORD.”

He will rejoice over us with singing.... He will sing to us?!

V: 19 He will deal with Israel adversaries:

Genesis 12:3 “I will bless those that bless you, and I will curse him who curses you...”

Isaiah 49:26 “I will feed those who oppress you with their own flesh, and they shall be drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine. All flesh shall know that I, the LORD, am your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”

- He will once again show Himself strong on their behalf.

V: 20 He will bring them back, He will gather them together. He will give them favor among the nations, praise even among all the peoples of the earth.

- He will return their captives before their eyes - the world will see it.
- We're starting to see it now in a way as the nation is formed, as the Jewish people make their way back to Israel, back to their land.

Isaiah 11:11-12 “¹¹It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam, and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. ¹²He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”

- What a contrast to how they are being treated now. God will give them fame and praise among all the peoples of the earth!
- The glorious hope of a glorious future!

Overview:

Chapter 1 Describes the judgment of Israel.

- Practical point / application: God judges His people when they deliberately disobey His word.

Hebrews 10:31 “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.”

Chapter 2 Describes the judgment of Israel’s enemies.

- This demonstrates that God’s promise to Abraham is still in effect.

Genesis 12:3 “I will bless those that bless thee, and I will curse him who curses you.”

Chapter 3 Describes and demonstrates the grace of God the mercy of God, the love of God - and that His Word is true!

Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withers, flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever.”