

Zephaniah Three

Transcribed from tape of Jeremiah using *The Authorized Version* of the Holy Bible.

Verse 1:

Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!

Now the city represents an organization; she is filthy or polluted because everything that does not stem from YAHWEH, everything that does not founded in love, justice, wisdom and power, everything that is not holy is filthy and polluted. And this is true of the devil's organization; the operation of the devil's organization does not forward the attributes of YAHWEH first. It is a selfish organization, and the people are just merely used.

Verse 2:

She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God.

Now this means that after she has heard the message, this is the result. She didn't obey the voice, and this means that the voice had been spoken. The word had been spoken and she did not obey.

Verse 3:

Her princes within her [are] roaring lions; her judges [are] evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.

Or as some translators say "they long not for morning." In other words, all their works are done in darkness. They love darkness because their works are evil, they don't want to be seen. "They love not the morning." They don't want to see the daylight shine because it will reveal, or expose their works. And especially the righteous day, the Day of YAHWEH. They would love to keep everything hidden in the darkness, and not have anybody realize what is going on. Their works are evil, and they want to keep them hidden. "Her princes are roaring lions, her judges are evening wolves."

Verse 4:

Her prophets [are] light [and] treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.

Or reckless and treacherous persons. This could only happen because the people just don't care. These rulers just don't care. They are not trying to follow YAHWEH, they are not prayerfully considering the will of YAHWEH, they are not trying to further HIS Purpose to see that the people are treated justly and with love. They are there for themselves, they are there to magnify themselves, their position, and get glory and honor and wealth and to be looked up to by others because of their position, and the wealth they are able to attain. Well these are a stench in YAHWEH'S nostrils because HE just can't stand this type of people. HE did not create man to be this way, HE created man in HIS own image and we are supposed to be like our Father YAHWEH, like our GOD. We are supposed to conduct ourselves as though we are true children of GOD, we are supposed to reflect HIS image, to go forward in love, justice, wisdom and power. We are supposed to be righteous. HE says "be ye holy even as I am holy." (Lev. 11:44; 20:26). Well, holy is someone pure, without fault, devoted to righteousness. Sure, we are imperfect, but we should direct our interests toward what is right.

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Verse 5:

The just LORD [is] in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

Now this brings out the that the truth is here; the Bible is here, the message is spoken. Even though we know they don't understand the Bible, we know they are going to against things that they do understand, and they ignore it completely. The very fact that HE says "He will gather all nations and destroy them." Shows that they don't pay any attention. HIS anger is directed against all nations (Is. 34:1,2). But it makes no difference to them, they still try to say that this is a christian country, and that YAHWEH will bless this nation, or that nation, that GOD is with us here, and with us there. This, again, is because they don't care, they just want to further their own interests. So HE says "the unjust knoweth no shame." They are not ashamed, they are going ahead with their own interests, and they don't care what YAHWEH says. But they certainly will be put to shame, when the time of visitation comes.

Verse 6:

I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

Now here towers are her battlements HE brings out. Again the prophecy goes over to the final end and HE says "I have cut off the nations." In other words, this is a promise from YAHWEH that the nations of this world will go down. So when you have any individual that supports these nations, who is patriotic, we are not condemning, we could say that he doesn't understand the scriptures, the truth, the word of YAHWEH, he is in darkness, but these people must be instructed in order to find the truth. And we know that the publicity will give everyone a fair opportunity because it is going to resound from one end of the earth to the other. Now you know how much people know by what comes out of their mouth.

Verse 7:

I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, [and] corrupted all their doings.

Moffatt's is clearer:

Surely now, I thought she will fear me, she will take correction, she will never lose sight of my orders. But all the more they gave themselves to sheer depravity.

So no matter what HE does they continue in the same way, or even get worse. So there is certainly a class of people that YAHWEH can do nothing with, these are created in YAHWEH'S image the same as anyone else, but they themselves, being free moral agents, decided that they will be selfish, and serve themselves and ignore the will of the Almighty GOD, and ignore all other people. They want to be supreme themselves, they want to trample on everybody else. They just don't care. They do this willfully on their own, they have no conscience whatsoever, no justice. They don't employ the attributes of justice that YAHWEH created in them. They have no time for it.

Verse 8:

Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination [is] to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to

pour upon them mine indignation, [even] all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

Again HE brings this out, that HE is going to "gather all the nations and assemble the kingdoms to pour upon my indignation, all my fierce anger." Now how does HE gather the nations? Well, HE doesn't put them all in one place; they couldn't possibly survive there, there would be chaos. But what HE actually does is gather them in a place of opposition to HIM. Now this they do themselves because YAHWEH shows the right way, they oppose HIM. So they are "gathered at His left hand." (comp. Matt 25), or HIS place of disfavor, you might say. They judge themselves, and they are ready for destruction.

Verse 9:

For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.

Now HE did bring out that "I will give you pastors and they will feed you with knowledge." (Jer. 3:15) The pure language is the truth, the knowledge of the Living GOD and HIS Purpose for mankind. All "all those who serve Him with one consent." indicating that these who are left are the LORD'S People, that they will understand the truth, and that these are willing to do what is right. HE says "My people will be willing in the day of my power." (Ps. 110:3, *A.V.*) So these are HIS People, these are not the devil's people, but are those who want to do what is right.

Verse 10:

From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, [even] the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

Suppliants are worshippers. This means those who serve HIM. Now bringing HIS offering, the offering represents worship, so in other words, from all over the world, they will come and worship YAHWEH, "worship Him in spirit and in truth," or obey HIM.

Verse 11:

In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.

I will read this from the *Moffatt's* translation, which is clearer:

But on that day you need have no despair for all your misdeeds of rebellion; for I will clear out from your midst the arrogant and haughty men- no more vaunting on my sacred hill!

In other words, everything, you might say, that the Israel of old has done, but this is actually referring to the faults of the Israel of Promise. They also have faults and YAHWEH says, "you don't have to despair" because everyone has done wrong, but their sins are covered.

"For I will clear out from your midst the arrogant and haughty men, and no more vaunting on my sacred hill." This means YAHWEH is going to cleanse Israel, HE is going to purify them and refine them. HE will also gather the wicked out of Israel so that that which is left will be a pure people who will honor the name of the Almighty GOD, who will do HIS will.

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Verse 12:

I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.

Afflicted, or humble and poor people. These are the ones who are not haughty, who don't put themselves first. These are the meek and lowly who become submissive to YAHWEH, who realize that YAHWEH is everything, and that we are really nothing and if you are going to get any blessings it is going to come from the one who has everything. "The earth is the LORD'S and the fulness thereof." (Ps. 24:1) When HE says "the earth he will give to the children of men," (Ps. 115:16) it shows that HE gives it to them because it is HIS, and they are not just going to take it for themselves. So the people of understanding are meek and humble and lowly and they wait for YAHWEH'S blessing. And this pleases YAHWEH because they don't step ahead of HIM. So these will be elevated to the highest heights, they will be elevated over all other creatures. And the most humble is Israel because they begin to be submissive in the very beginning.

Verse 13:

The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make [them] afraid.

The remnant of Israel, are those who are left, who make up the Israel. These will be corrected, they will not do iniquity, like they did in the past. They will not go and serve other gods, they won't ignore YAHWEH, they will not disobey. They will do nothing like the israel of old because the Israel of Promise is really the true Israel. And YAHWEH has promised that these people will come through; they will live up to HIS standards, and they will please HIM, and they will receive HIS blessings.

Verse 14:

Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Now you notice how HE mentions Israel, "Sing, O daughter of Zion, shout O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem." Where does HE say anything about christianity? Or christian nations? Never, never, never. 2,421 times it is Israel. And the name christian got there through the heathen. Now how would YAHWEH name HIS People through the mouth of a heathen or a pagan? One who didn't even understand HIM. HE would never do this. If HE names HIS People, HE would name them, or HE would give the command to a prophet, to one of HIS trusted and devoted men. But we find that the name christian came through the heathen. So it was not the will of YAHWEH. But over and over HE mentions the blessings of Israel and it is Israel that HE restores. Now this is going to be the shocking truth to this world, that the christians are not the LORD'S People. This will come as a shock, this is a message from another world. That there is no such thing as christianity in YAHWEH'S eyes, it is just Israel.

Verse 15:

The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, [even] the LORD, [is] in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

"The LORD hath taken away thy judgements." Or opponents, as other translations say. Who is HE the king of? HE is the king of Israel. It was then and it is now, the same thing; HE is the king of Israel and Israel are HIS People.

Verse 16:

In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: [and to] Zion, Let not thine hands be slack.

In other words, do not be afraid. Not letting your hands be slack indicates that you must go forward and do HIS work. The ones whose hands are slack are those who are uncertain; they don't know which way to go, they are not sure if this is YAHWEH'S will or not. But when they are convinced, they will get to work with real enthusiasm. There will be no slack of hands in any of YAHWEH'S People.

Verse 17:

The LORD thy God in the midst of thee [is] mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

This means that YAHWEH will be in the midst of HIS People, and HE will save HIS People and bring joy; everlasting joy and love and rest to HIS People. This is a promise of blessings that HE gives to HIS People over and over again.

Verse 18:

I will gather [them that are] sorrowful for the solemn assembly, [who] are of thee, [to whom] the reproach of it [was] a burden.

I will read this in *Moffatt's*:

**18 I will take off your disgrace, I will remove your reproach;
19 I will deal with all your oppressors, and gather your outcasts, rescue the lame, lifting them out of their shame to world-wide praise and fame,**

The outcasts, or those who have been reproached, are the weak, the sick and the lame. These are the ones that the selfish cattlemen or shepherds would discard. But being a GOD of love, HE is going to gather all these that have been mistreated, and unjustly judged, and unjustly made to suffer. YAHWEH will see that all the weak, all the sorrowful ones are gathered.

Verse 19:

Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.

These are people who have been trampled upon, and these are people who have tried to do right, who have had to live in this unjust organization. And today we are still in it, and we don't fully realize the injustices that we have to put up with. As the understanding becomes clearer, and as you see the blessings of YAHWEH magnify, you will wonder how in the world you ever stood it, because this is a horrible system compared to what YAHWEH is going to do for HIS People. When HE sets you free, you will truly be free indeed.

Verse 20:

At that time will I bring you [again], even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.

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Or when I restore your fortune other translations say. Now HE is referring to Israel. These are the ones who will be honored throughout eternity because they took the lead and had faith in the Almighty GOD, they believed HIS word even though there was no proof. And this Daniel supports when he says "and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever." (Dan. 12:3) This is Israel that turns many to righteousness. And not only do they gather themselves, but they are able to convince one third of the earth's population, and the stranger class (the regular ones) will forever look up to Israel as the blessed seed of YAHWEH, the inheritance of YAHWEH. And YAHWEH is gathering Israel now.

Questions

I: (verses 1,2): Isn't this referring to Jerusalem, as those who claim to be the LORD'S People?

A: No, it is referring to the organization of the devil; these are the ones who disobey. And it is not only the religious organization; it is the whole organization. When HE says "she obeyed not the voice, she received not correction." and "Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, the oppressing city." Now primarily the biggest blame goes on religion, it is true. She actually is the cause of it because she has supreme law, she should turn the people away from the world, and denounce this wicked system. But she just sits back and allows them to be deceived, and even goes as far as to instruct followers to support this satanic system. If she raised her voice, and protested and denounced politics, and commerce, things would be a lot different in the world today. But she doesn't, so she is the greatest cause of the present world situation..