Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 454 – Woe To Her Through Turn Back Captivity (Zephaniah 3:1-20)

1. What was going on within the oppressing city?

"(1) Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! (2) She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God. (3) Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. (4) Her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law" (**Zephaniah 3:1-4**).

- The oppressing city, the city under consideration throughout this book, is Jerusalem (**Zephaniah 1:4**; **1:12**; **3:14**; **3:16**).
- The city of the Lord was given to oppression (**Isaiah 5:7**, **Isaiah 59:13**, **Jeremiah 6:6**, and **Micah 2:1-2**).
- Disobedience (**II Chronicles 36:14-16**, **Jeremiah 7:23-28**, and **Jeremiah 22:21**).
- Refused correction (**Jeremiah 2:30**).
- Did not trust in the Lord (**Isaiah 30:1-3**).
- Faked drawing near to God (**Isaiah 29:13**).
- The leaders of the people were horrible (**Isaiah 1:23**, **Isaiah 3:12**, **Isaiah 9:16**, **Jeremiah 5:31**, and **Micah 3:1-4**).

2. Were the unjust able to come to a point of shame for their actions?

No: *"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"* (**Zephaniah 3:5**).

- In contrast to the leaders of the people, the Lord is just (**Deuteronomy 32:1-4** and **Isaiah 45:21**).
- No shame (**Jeremiah 6:15** and **Jeremiah 8:12**).

3. When the Lord cut off the nations, what did He desire to come about?

Fear and obedience: *"(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. (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"* (**Zephaniah 3:6-7**).

- **Isaiah 13:1-36:22** and **Jeremiah 25:15-38**
- To bring about fear (**Acts 5:1-11**).
- For fear can bring about a willingness to begin learning (**Psalms 111:10**, **Proverbs 1:7**, **Proverbs 9:10**, **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**, and **Philippians 2:12**).
- BUT… (**Jeremiah 2:19** and **Jeremiah 5:12-13**).

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4. What did the Lord set forth as reasoning to wait upon Him?

"(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. (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. (10) From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. (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. (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. (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" (**Zephaniah 3:8-13**).

- It would have been good for them to wait upon the Lord (**Lamentations 3:25-26**).
- The figure of speech of the earth devoured with fire (**Deuteronomy 32:21-22**).
- A pure language [lip; Strong's # 8193], that they may call upon the Lord (**Psalms 34:13-16**).
- Serve Him with one consent [shoulder; back; as the place of burdens Strong's # 7926]. It appears, that the Lord is trying to get them to see they will have one Master, one whom they carry the burden upon their shoulders. To look at Him as a Psalm states: **Psalms 123:1-4**
- The word "suppliants" means worshippers (Strong's # 6282). God intended to bring His dispersed worshippers home to Him (**Isaiah 27:12-13**).
- Not being ashamed here is because of their salvation (**Isaiah 45:17**).
- The proud and haughty removed (**Proverbs 16:18** and **Ezekiel 16:50**) that incorrectly trusted in the holy mountain of God (**Jeremiah 7:1-16**).
- Repentance and restoration requires humility (**James 4:6-10**).
- The poor and afflicted (**Isaiah 14:32**, **Luke 6:20**, and **James 2:1-13**).
- The remnant (**Isaiah 1:9**, **Isaiah 10:20-22**, and **Romans 11:1-5**) shall do no iniquity (**Isaiah 60:1-22**).

5. What was the reason for there to be singing in Zion?

The end of their captivity: *"(14) Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. (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. (16) In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. (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. (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.*

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(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. (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" (**Zephaniah 3:14-20**).

- Singing for a reason (**Psalms 14:7** and **Psalms 126:1-6**).
- Sing and shout is reminiscent of their departure out of Egypt (**Exodus 15:1-19**).
- Consider the Lord's thinking when turning away the judgments of His people (**Hosea 1:7**, **Zechariah 1:14-16**, and **Zechariah 10:6**).
- Fear not, He would save them (**Zechariah 8:13-15**).
- He was in the midst of them (**Isaiah 12:6**) and would save them (**Psalms 69:35**).
- The gathering (**Jeremiah 23:3**) of the sorrowful (**Jeremiah 31:24-25**).
- The undoing of all that afflicted them (**Jeremiah 30:16**).
- Making them a name (**Isaiah 62:11-12**).
- Turning back their captivity (**Jeremiah 29:14**).

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