November 30–December 6: Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah "He Delighteth in Mercy"

Introduction

Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, while Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah were contemporaries of Jeremiah and Lehi.

Micah Calls Israel to Repentance

Micah condemns Israel for oppressing the poor.

Micah 2:1-2,9
1 Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.
2 And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.

9 The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever.
10 Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.

What does this passage teach us about the consequences of using wealth and power to take advantage of others?

(they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses
they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.
The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses)

Spencer W. Kimball
"To me that means, woe unto them who will rationalize, who will explain away their errors in these matters, who justify their oppressions. Farm hands, domestic help, and unprotected people are often oppressed, when economic circumstances place them in the position where they must accept what is offered or remain unemployed. And we sometimes justify ourselves in underpaying and even boast about it." (CR, Oct. 1953)

Micah warns those who are wealthy.

Micah 6:12-16
12 For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.
13 Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins.
14 Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied; and thy casting down shall be in the midst of thee; and thou shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver; and that which thou deliverest

will I give up to the sword.
15 Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine.
16 ¶ For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people.

How would the lives of the rich and powerful be affected by their dishonesty, violence, and disobedience to the Lord?

(I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate
Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied
Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap
I should make thee a desolation
ye shall bear the reproach of my people)

Micah gives us a simple summary of how to live a life of obedience to the Lord.

Micah 6:6-8
6 ¶ Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?
7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

What does Micah's description of extravagant sacrifices teach us about our inability to earn salvation through our own efforts?

(Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams... for the sin of my soul?)

Dale G. Renlund
"Micah satirically wondered whether even exorbitant offerings might be enough to compensate for sin, saying: 'Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten [thousand] … rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for … the sin of my soul?'

"The answer is no. Good deeds are not sufficient. Salvation is not earned.... Not even the vast sacrifices Micah knew were impossible can redeem the smallest sin. Left to our own devices, the prospect of returning to live in God's presence is hopeless.

"Without the blessings that come from Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, we can never do enough or be enough by ourselves. The good news, though, is that because of and through Jesus Christ we can become enough." (CR,

Oct. 2020)

What matters more to the Lord than the quantity or value of our outward acts of worship?

(do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God)

Dale G. Renlund
"Micah's direction on turning our hearts to God and qualifying for salvation contains three interconnected elements....

"To be Christlike, a person does justly.... A just person is civil in words and action and recognizes that differences in outlook or belief do not preclude genuine kindness and friendship. Individuals who do justly 'will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably' (Mosiah 4:13.)

"To be Christlike, a person loves mercy. People who love mercy are not judgmental; they manifest compassion for others, especially for those who are less fortunate; they are gracious, kind, and honorable. These individuals treat everyone with love and understanding...

"To be Christlike, a person chooses God, walks humbly with Him, seeks to please Him, and keeps covenants with Him. Individuals who walk humbly with God remember what Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have done for them." (CR, Oct. 2020)

Zion can only be established through righteousness.

Micah 3:9-12
9 Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.
10 They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.
11 The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.
12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest

What does this passage teach us about the consequences of unrighteous leadership and misplaced confidence in the Lord's protection?

(abhor judgment, and pervert all equity
The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money)

John Taylor
"Men generally, although very particular about financial matters, and things

pertaining to time; although very careful about the acquisition of wealth and desirous of knowing which is the best way to invest it after they have obtained it; although desirous to obtain honor and fame and wealth; yet in regard to religious matters.... they have a hireling priesthood whom they pay to take care of their souls.... Religion is not a thing, according to the estimation of a great many, that everybody ought to be dabbling with: it belongs to the priests, teachers, etc., who are paid for teaching their dogmas, theories, creeds, and opinions." (JD, 14:250)

The Gathering of Israel in the Last Days

Micah describes the opposition that will arise against the restoration of the gospel in the latter days.

Micah 4:10-13
10 Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon; there shalt thou be delivered; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemie
11 ¶ Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion.
12 But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel: <u>for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor.</u>
13 Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and <u>I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the Lord</u> of the whole earth.

What does the Lord promise to do for Zion when the nations gather against her seeking to destroy her?

(he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor
I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the Lord)

Charles W. Penrose
“I know by the revelation of the Holy Spirit that the Lord has commenced the great work of the latter days spoken of by the prophets. I know it will remain, and will prevail; though all the world rise up against it—as they will do some day, not only this nation, but others—and will say, ‘Let her be defiled.’ But they know not the Lord, neither do they understand the counsels of his will…. Though all nations oppose, this work will roll onward to completion; for the power of God will be in our midst and we shall be able to accomplish with greater ease and facility everything we are directed to do. This kingdom will prevail, and this work will roll on and accomplish everything predicted. … The purposes of God will be developed and his kingdom roll on, while the kingdoms of this world, with all their

pomp and splendor, will be brought low." (JD, 21:45)

Nevertheless, the gospel will be restored, and many will seek to embrace it.

Micah 4:1-2
1 But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.
2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

What do you think is meant by the phrase "the mountain of the house of the Lord"?

Gordon B. Hinckley
"Ever since the Salt Lake Temple was dedicated, we have interpreted that scripture from Isaiah, repeated again in Micah as applying to this sacred house of the Lord. And of this place, since the day of its dedication, an ever-increasing number from across the world have said in effect, 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He might teach us of His ways, that we might walk in His paths.'

"I believe and testify that it is the mission of this Church to stand as an ensign to the nations and a light to the world. We have had placed upon us a great, all-encompassing mandate from which we cannot shrink nor turn aside. We accept that mandate and are determined to fulfill it, and with the help of God we shall do it." (CR, Oct. 2003)

What do you think is meant by the phrase "out of Zion shall go forth the law"?

Harold B. Lee
"I have often wondered what that expression meant, that out of Zion shall go forth the law. Years ago I went with the brethren to the Idaho Falls Temple, and I heard in that inspired prayer of the First Presidency a definition of the meaning of that term "out of Zion shall go forth the law." Note what they said: "We thank thee that thou hast revealed to us that those who gave us our constitutional form of government were men wise in thy sight and that thou didst raise them up for the very purpose of putting forth that sacred document [the Constitution of the United States - D&C 101]..."'
(Improvement Era, Oct. 1945)

Harold B. Lee
"With regard to the political turmoil among the nations, we would earnestly pray that if this and other nations would be constrained to live by and adopt governmental systems where civil and political liberties are secure, we

could then hopefully look for the fulfillment of the ancient prophecy of the prophets Isaiah... 'that out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' When that day comes, the blessings and freedoms of the free world will then be realized." (CR, Oct. 1972)

What is "the law" that shall go forth?

Micah describes how the Restoration and the gathering of Israel will ultimately bring peace.

Micah 4:3-7
3 ¶ And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.
4 But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.
5 <u>For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD</u> our God for ever and ever.
6 In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted;
7 And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.

What do these verses teach us about the relationship between the gathering of Israel, the reign of the Lord, and world peace?

(For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD)

Erastus Snow
"What reason have we to expect other than a literal fulfillment of the next part of the same prophecy,… that the Lord will rebuke strong nations afar off, and that the nations will beat their swords into ploughshares, their spears into pruninghooks, that they will live at peace and learn war no more, and the Lord will reign over them, from henceforth, even forever?

"Such a mighty revolution as is here indicated by the Prophet can never be effected upon the earth without the voice of God, without Prophets and Apostles, and the power of the Holy Ghost working mightily among the sons of men." (JD, 16:200)

Micah prophesied of the great last battles through which Israel, under Christ, will at last triumph over all enemies

Micah 5:8-15
8 ¶ And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many

people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.
9 Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.
10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots:
11 And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds:
12 And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers:
13 Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands.
14 And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee: so will I destroy thy cities.
15 And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

Christ quoted these verses, with some changes, to the Nephites when He appeared to them after His Resurrection. You can compare Micah's words with 3 Nephi 21:12–21.

After the Lord quotes Micah to the Nephites He says:

3 Nephi 21:22-25
22) But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;
23) And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.
24) And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.
25) And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.

What does the Lord promise the Gentiles if they repent, hearken to His words, and enter into His covenant?

(I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob,
they shall assist my people... that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.
they assist my people that they may be gathered in
the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst)

Micah reminds Israel that these great blessings will come to pass because of God's

great mercy.

Micah 7:18-20
18 Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.
19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.
20 Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

What do these verses teach us about the Lord's desire to show mercy and forgive those who repent?

Marion D. Hanks
"He waits to be gracious! He loves to be merciful! The prophets call him 'the Father of mercies' (2 Cor. 1:3). They speak of his 'abundant mercy' (1 Pet. 1:3), and declare that 'whosoever repenteth, and hardeneth not his heart, he shall have claim on mercy' (Alma 12:34). They declare his 'wisdom… mercy, and grace. (2 Ne. 9:8). And crowning all of this is the testimony that our Father 'delighteth in mercy' (Micah 7:18).

"The specialty of the Father is mercy.

"The specialty of the Savior is mercy." (CR, Oct 1981)

The Wickedness and Fate of Judah's Enemies

God's power over nature and how He uses that power over the enemies of Judah

Nah 1
2 God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.
3 The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.
4 He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.
5 The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.
6 Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.

15 Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.

Even though Assyria is thought to be as fierce and powerful as a lion it will be destroyed for Judah's sake

Nah 2
8 But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back.
9 Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture.
10 She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness.
11 Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion’s whelp, and none made them afraid?
12 The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin.
13 Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.

The wickedness of Assyria is plainly detailed. Despite it's power God will destroy it

Nah 3
1 Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not;
2 The noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the pransing horses, and of the jumping chariots.
3 The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear: and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases; and there is none end of their corpses; they stumble upon their corpses:
4 Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.
5 Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame.
6 And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazingstock.
7 And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?

Assyria will be destroyed just as equally wicked and powerful nations before it have been

Nah 3

8 Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea?
9 Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite; Put and Lubim were thy helpers.
10 Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity: her young children also were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets: and they cast lots for her honourable men, and all her great men were bound in chains.
11 Thou also shalt be drunken: thou shalt be hid, thou also shalt seek strength because of the enemy.

Habakkuk speaks of the wickedness and power of the Chaldeans. The Chaldeans (Babylon) eventually overthrow the Assyrians

Hab 1
5 ¶ Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you.
6 For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs.
7 They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.
8 Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat.
9 They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand.

Habakkuk wonders why to Lord doesn't act more quickly to destroy them and stop the persecution of Judah

Hab 1
2 O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!
3 Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.
4 Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.

12 ¶ Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction.
13 Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

The Lord admonishes Habakkuk to be diligent and patient in waiting for deliverance from God

Hab 2
1 I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.
2 And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.
3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.
4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

> Sidney B. Sperry
> "[Verse 4] is one of the great passages of the Old Testament. It means essentially this: There is a moral and spiritual distinction between the Chaldeans and the people of Judah. The Chaldeans, puffed up and arrogant, priding themselves in their wealth and power and deceptive in their dealings with other nations, do not possess the moral and spiritual elements which alone can insure permanence and stability. The people of the Lord, on the other hand, [should] possess moral integrity, fidelity, and spiritual insight which insure for them a future. 'The future belongs to the righteous.' When the prophet says that 'the righteous shall live by his faith' he implies permanency." (Voice of Israel's Prophets, pg. 371–72)

Habakkuk recognizes God's power of deliverance and trust that He will do so again

Hab 3
1 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth.
2 O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.
3 God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.
4 And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power.
5 Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet.
6 He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.

8 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.
19 The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.

Zephaniah speaks of the wickedness and destruction of neighbors of Judah who have always been there enemies

CHAPTER 2
4 ¶ For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up.
5 Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the LORD is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.
6 And the sea coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.
7 And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the LORD their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity.
8 ¶ I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border.
9 Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.
10 This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the LORD of hosts.
11 The LORD will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.
12 ¶ Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword.
13 And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.

Destruction and captivity of Judah

Zephaniah speaks of the wickedness of Judah that will cause it to be destroyed

Zeph 3
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.
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.
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.

The destruction of Judah

Zeph 1
4 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests;
5 And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham;
6 And them that are turned back from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor inquired for him.

12 And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.
13 Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.
14 The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.
15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.
17 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

The Last Days

Finally Zephaniah speaks of the restoration and gathering in the last days

Zeph 3
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.
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.
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.

> Sidney B. Sperry
> "Zephaniah saw our day and beyond. In it he both suffered and rejoiced. He suffered in spirit because of the desolation and destruction which he saw, but he was able to use this as a warning and threat to his own people. In the redemption and final blessings of Israel he saw a ray of hope to extend to Judah. No prophet has written more clearly or vigorously of the Day of the Lord. Zephaniah must be added to the list of prophets who give us a grave warning of disaster." (The Voice of Israel's Prophets, pg. 388)