



Micah 1-3

Tape #7360
Micah 1-3
By Chuck Smith

He begins by declaring...

The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morashthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, the kings of Judah (1:1),

So basically we realize that he is a contemporary to Isaiah the prophet, prophesying during the time that Isaiah was prophesying to Hezekiah the king. Micah's prophesies were mostly centered on the northern kingdom of Israel, yet he does bring in Jerusalem, and Judah into the prophesies too.

the things which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem (1:1).

But as we mentioned, the majority of the prophesies will be towards Samaria.

Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, [So actually he begins by a very broad prophecy not limited to just Samaria and Jerusalem, but now all of the inhabitants of the earth! "O earth,"] and all that therein is: let the Lord God be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. [God has a case against the world.] For, behold, the Lord cometh [he cometh] forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth. The mountains shall be molted [or melted] under him, the valleys will be cleft, and wax as wax before the fire, and the waters that are poured down a steep place (1:2-4).

Great cataclysmic judgment of God is coming upon the whole earth. This is a looking forward to the future, to the great tribulation period, and the cataclysmic judgements of God that are described in Revelation, chapter six through eighteen.

For the transgression of Jacob is all of this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. But what is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem (1:5)?

So the capitals. Samaria was the capital of the northern kingdom, Jerusalem the capital of the southern kingdom, and in these cities which were the centers of government, the Washington D.C.'s so to speak, of the nation of Israel, and the nation of Judah. There in the capital, among the rulers, there was corruption. There was a turning away from the truths of God. Thus the corrupt government opens the door for the corruption of the nation. So he is speaking out against the centers of government, which should be the areas where there is the seeking and the pursuing of the preservation of that which is good.

That's really the purpose of government. To see that the good is preserved, but the government has been corrupted by bribes and by the lust for power, and thus they were not really serving the people any longer. As the result, the calamity is going to come, not only upon Samaria and Jerusalem, God's judgment is gonna come upon the whole earth.

Therefore I will make Samaria as a heap of the field, [It'll just become a mound, like a heap of the field, just a, you might say, a Tel, which Samaria has become.] and as the plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof (1:6).

The city will be raised down to the foundations. The stones of the city will be rolled down into the valley. It'll be a place where they'll just plant vineyards. Today, most of the sight of Samaria is covered by olive trees. But it's uh, it's ruined, it's desolate. You can go there, and you can see the valleys filled with rocks that were once the great buildings of the city of Samaria. But the judgment of God upon it because of their transgressions.

And the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and the hires thereof shall be burned with fire, and all of the idols thereof will I lay desolate for she hath gathered it of the hire of a harlot, [or prostitute] and they shall return to the hire of a harlot (1:7).

So God's destruction upon Samaria announced by the prophet. Now the reaction of the prophet over the vision that God gives him, the destruction of Samaria, his reaction just, it hasn't yet happened. It's about

to happen, but his reaction is that of...

I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and a mourning like the owls (1:8).

Seeing the destruction. You remember Jeremiah wept over the judgment of God that was, uh, that befell Jerusalem. Here, he sees the vision of the destruction of Samaria, and it is so graphic, it is so real that the prophet is, is wailing, weeping, because he can see the desolation. It is much as Jesus, when He was on the mount of Olives, and He was looking down at Jerusalem, and He foresaw the judgment as the result of the Roman armies. He said, "O Jerusalem thou that killest the prophets and all that have been sent by God unto thee, how often I would've gathered you, as a hen that gathereth her chicks, but you would not. But now your city is gonna be laid desolate". He described how the children were gonna be dashed in the streets, and how the, the city was to be destroyed, and Jesus wept over the destruction that was going to come. Knowing that it would happen because of the path that leads to destruction.

So the prophet Micah sees the desolation that will be coming upon Samaria, the city will be destroyed, the walls taken down to the foundations, the buildings down to the foundations. It will be a place where, just a heap in the ground, where vineyards will be planted in time to come. Thus, he wails, and howls over the destruction of this glorious, beautiful city of Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom.

For her wound is incurable (1:9);

There comes a place of no return. The Proverbs speaks of, "He that hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed", and that without remedy. No return, no remedy. Here, the wound is incurable.

for it is come unto Judah; [Now he turns from the northern kingdom of Samaria, and looks now at Judah.] he is come to the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem (1:9).

A reference to the Assyrian king who conquered the northern kingdom, and destroyed Samaria, but will actually come to the very gates of Jerusalem. Of course we know from history, and the prophesies of Isaiah and all, that when they came to Jerusalem, God intervened and destroyed the Assyrian army.

But declare ye it not at Gath, weep ye not at all: in the house of Aphrah roll thyself in the dust (1:10).

Now the prophet gets here using an interesting form of, of language, that doesn't translate into English, into our King James. But let me sort of give it to you, a, a literal kind of a translation of these names. Because it's a play on words, as he speaks of the names of these various places that are to be destroyed. The coming disaster is not to be published in Gath. That is the Philistines are not to hear of it. There is a remarkable play on words. It may be literally rendered as follows, "Weep not in weep town". Actually the Aphrah, or Gath, is, is weeping, and so, "weep not in weep town". Aphrah means dust, and so, "In dust town, roll thyself in the dust".

In [beauty town] Saphir [means beauty] be in nakedness and in shame: and in [march town, the meaning of] Zaanen march not forth; The inhabitant of Maroth waited anxiously for good: but evil came from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem (1:11-12).

Maroth means bitterness, so in the Assyrian cylinder, known as Taylor cylinder, Sennacherib mentions the great gate of Jerusalem, and thus the bitterness there. Then, follows the call to...

Lachish [to escape] bind the chariot with the swift beast (1:13):

Lachish was the fortified city of the northern kingdom, way up in the area near mount Hermon that was taken by Sennacherib. Another play on words for the original, Lachish means horse town, so it can be translated, "Bind the chariot to the horse, O inhabitant of horse town". It's been suggested that the sin mentioned in connection with Lachish was that the horses of the sun in connection with idolatry, were kept there. So he plays on words. Roll in the dust, dust town, and the weep in weep town, and all. Yet in verse fifteen, in spite of the fact that they were to be destroyed, the judgment of God was to come by way of the Assyrian army.

Yet I will bring an heir unto thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah (1:15):

Here now is the prophecy of Jesus Christ, and the future. As we have said, prophecy never ends in the darkness, the final chapter's always glorious light. That's comforting to know. You may be going through a trial but God doesn't intend to leave you in the darkness of that trial. It may be a hard experience

that you're going through. But God has no intention of leaving you in the hard place. He always brings us out to the light on the other side.

So you go through the book of Revelation, from chapter six to eighteen, and those are dark days of great tribulation. But the book of Revelation doesn't end in chapter eighteen. As you go on it gives you the glorious description of heaven, and the eternal glory of God's kingdom, and God's people. Never leaves you in the darkness, the great tribulation, but takes you on to the glorious future that God has for each of us. So he is pronouncing this judgment, the devastation that is going to come, but then he moves beyond it to the glorious day of the Lord, and that which the Lord is going to do. The heir. "O inhabitant of Mareshah."

he shall come to Adullam with the glory of Israel. So make thee bald, and poll thee for the delicate children; enlarge your baldness as an eagle; for they are gone into captivity from thee (1:15-16).

The baldness, the shaving of the head was done at the death of a loved one, and there's going to be death and devastation but, the future will hold, really. The glory of Israel will come.

Chapter 2

Woe to them that devise iniquity, that work evil on their beds! and when the morning is light, they practice it, because it's in the power of their hands (2:1).

People who spend the night devising, scheming, how they're going to maneuver and outwit, and how they're going to cheat, and how they're going to act. You know it's interesting how that during the night hours, so many times, you'll lie there just thinking about your problems, and ways by which you're going to deal with situations. I have spent a lot of nights in, in, in working through certain problems, and situations. So here the woe pronounced to those who would devise iniquity. Even as, as many times you might be there devising ways by which you can accomplish certain tasks, there are people who lie there just figuring out ways to cheat, ways to steal, scheming in how they can destroy. "And when the morning is come, they practice it, because it's in the power of their hands."

They covet fields, and then they take them by violence; and houses, and take them away (2:2);

You know there, there are those who are, are, are really charlatans, that do things just like this! They take a person who is going through financial problems, and they will come and offer to take your property, and they'll you know, take over your property, you're about to lose it, and, "Oh we'll take it over for you", you know. Then they will go ahead and take your property, but they'll not complete the transaction. They will rent it out, and collect the rent, and try to borrow a second against it. Then they'll let the whole thing foreclose, and it's still on your head! You're in worse trouble but they, they, they think up these awful schemes! I mean there are so many ways by which people are seeking to take your money from you. To rip you off, and, and, it's just very common today. There are so many rip off schemes. That was what was happening. This was what God was opposed to. God was opposed to those who would rip off others, take advantage of others. "And they covet a person's field, take them by violence, their houses they take them away."

and they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his family (2:2).

They, but they had no heart, it seemed. They had no conscience on these things.

Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which you shall [remove your neck, or] not remove your necks; neither shall you go haughtily: for this [is, for this] time is evil. And in that day shall one take up a parable against you, and lament with doleful lamentation, and say, We are utterly spoiled: he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed it from me! turning away he has divided our fields. Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot [for the congregation of the Lord, or,] in the congregation of the Lord (2:3- 5).

"You're gonna lose your land. There'll be no more surveying of the land", that is the casting of the lot to set the borders for the property. "This won't be happening anymore because you're gonna be taken out of the land, the land that God gave to you, and divided to you by lot under Joshua, is now going to be taken away from you, because of your corrupt practices." But now that he is prophesying these things, the evil that is going on, exposing the evil, a false prophet speaks up and says...

Don't prophecy: they shall not prophecy to them, that they shall not take shame (2:6).

So he was commanded not to prophecy by the people. "Don't talk to us about these things!" They were filled with evil practices, but they didn't want to be rebuked for them. "Leave us alone! Let us do our dirty deeds! Don't try to put a guilt trip on us!" They refused to take shame. They were not ashamed of the things that they were doing. I have met people like this. Pathological liars. Guys that rip off people, make their living by ripping people off. They're not at all ashamed of what they do! In fact, they brag about what they've done, boast of their evil! That was how far down this society had gone, where they were boasting of their evil. They were parading their evil. So the prophet said to them...

O thou that are named the house of Jacob (2:7),

The irony there, "That's what you are named, that's what you call yourself, the house of Jacob, but there's no relationship between you and Jacob. In reality, you are not like your father Jacob at all, who had faith and trust in God, who was blessed of God, who honored God. You have, you have the name of the house of Jacob, but you don't have the spirit of Jacob."

is the spirit of the Lord straitened (2:7)?

"Are you gonna control the Spirit of the Lord, what He has to say? Are you gonna try to dictate to God what you will hear? Will you try to set limits on the work of the Spirit? Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? Are you able to control what the Spirit says?"

are these his doings (2:7)?

"These rip offs and all that you are guilty of, are these His doings? Is this of God?" Of course we know the answer is no! God wants us to be honest, God wants us to be upright, He wants us to be pure. These things are not of God, this cheating, the coveting of fields, taking them by violence, taking houses. That's not of God. These are not His doings.

do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly (2:7)?

If you are walking uprightly, the word of God is good to you. The Bible says that, "The authorities are not a terror to the evil doers". You know, if you are a good, upright person, obeying the law, you don't fear when you see a policeman. In fact you're sort of comforted! "Well, good to have a little patrolling in this neighborhood of ours!" But if you're an evil person, if you've got a record, and if you're wanted, then man, terror every time you see a black and white! You, you, you have that fear and terror.

The word of God to the upright is good. If you're living in accordance to it, you enjoy it, you love it. If you're not, then you say, "Oh don't tell me about that. I don't want to hear it! Don't tell me I'm wrong, don't tell me I'm sinning, I don't want to hear it!" But to the upright, the word of God is good. As we gather tonight, and study the word of God, it's good to us because we want to walk in His path, a life that is pleasing unto Him. The prophet said...

Even of late [And literally, that is, yesterday.] my people is risen up as an enemy: and you pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war (2:8).

There was the outer garment, and of course there was the uh, robe was the outer. It would wrap around, and people would actually use it as a blanket at night, and then the tunic that was near the body. Now you could not keep a, as a pledge, some of you borrow, loan money to someone, they give their robe as a pledge, you couldn't keep it overnight, because then he'd be cold, and if he was freezing, not having his robe, he might curse you. So, you weren't to keep the pledge over night. You could keep the tunic, but not the pledge, uh, not the, not the robe. Now, here they were taking both as perhaps, for pledges. The robe and the tunic, or someone else has suggested, other commentators have suggested that when the refugees of war, from the northern kingdom of Samaria, fleeing the advancing Assyrian troops, as in war you always have the refugees who are fleeing from the war, and as they were passing down through Judah, fleeing from the advancing armies of the Assyrians, that the people were ripping them off. Taking whatever they were bringing, the, the possessions that they had, what precious possessions they were able to flee with, that as they were coming into Judah, they were being ripped off from these possessions.

Taking advantage of the hardship of another person. Enriching yourself over their hardships. What an evil thing! Here's a person in real trouble, and there are those that look upon them as a prey. "Ah! An opportunity to rip them off!" How evil can you get? People fleeing from the advancing troops of the Assyrians, and, and they come through with what valuables they could take and carry, and then they are

there ripping them off of those valuables. That was going on at that time. The Hebrew is “yesterday”, and it continues, it was a continuing thing among them.

The women of my people have you cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have you taken away my glory for ever (2:9).

The women were coming as refugees, but they were actually enslaving them, and taking their children.

Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, and it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction. If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood, and lying, saying, I will prophesy to you of wine and strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people (2:10-11).

So they were setting up prophets, who would tell them things they wanted to hear. The Bible speaks about the last days, and people with itching ears heaping unto them, those who would just entertain them, those who would just not really preach the word of God to them, but tell them pleasant things that they want to hear. That it's alright to sin, that it really doesn't matter how you live. God is loving and forgiving, and thus it really doesn't hurt to do a little wrong, a little evil. Those who are condoning and encouraging evil. That's the kind of prophets these people were looking for. Those that could talk to them about fine wine, those that would encourage them to strong drink. But God promises to the faithful remnant...

I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make a great noise by reason of the multitude of men (2:12).

God promises the day is gonna come, when He's gonna restore the nation of Israel. His hand will be upon them, and they will be restored to their land.

The breaker is come up before them: and they have broken up, and passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them (12:13).

The breaker going before to break up the walls, and to make passage for them. So that they can pass through the gate, and go in and out by it. Their king, Jesus Christ, will pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them. Jehovah leading.

Chapter 3

And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment? [“Should you not know the laws of God, the heads of the nation, the rulers, the princes?”] Who hate the good, and love the evil (3:1-2);

What a tragic time for a nation, when the leaders, and the lawmakers of the nation, hate the good and love the evil! I mean, a nation cannot exist or continue very long, once this happens, when a leadership becomes so corrupt that they hate the good, and love the evil. I wonder just how far we are from that being applicable to our nation today, and the leadership of the nation. When I read of some of the laws that are being enacted, and some that are being proposed, it would appear that those that are in power hate the good, and love the evil.

You see, you are the bad one, because you object to the breakdown of the family, you object to what's going on, on TV. You object to the types of movies that are being produced. You object to pornography, you object to the killing of innocent babies, so you're evil. They are the good ones. They believe in the freedoms, and you're the one that's trying to restrict, and restrain people from their own freedoms, and thus, you are the evil and they are the good. Laws are being made to protect the evil, and to punish the good.

These laws concerning discrimination, these laws that are designed to give those who are living perverted lifestyles special privileges. They are being considered now, in the United States government, national, federal laws, that would grant to the homosexual community special rights, as a minority group. Rights against discrimination, what does it mean? In Minnesota, where there is this kind of law.

There were two ladies, young ladies, who were renting an apartment, and advertised for a roommate, that is, someone to share the apartment, they had room for one more, and they wanted to divide the expenses. A lesbian came and applied for a room, but when she announced the fact that she was a lesbian, they said,

no, they didn't want to rent the room to her. She took them to court, the judge ordered that they both pay her a thousand dollars, and they had to go to school, by court order, to study the lesbian lifestyle.

That's what the laws mean, and that's what the laws will bring! People say, "Oh you're objecting to you know, you want to discriminate!", and all. You see, you're the bad one! But when these become laws, and that's what was happening in Israel. The princes, the rulers of the land were not really bringing forth good judgments at all! They should know what was right, they should know the laws of God. But they hate the good and they love the evil. They are using their position to rip the people off. Like a shepherd that is only interested in his sheep for his own benefit, ripping off the skin.

filleting the skin off of them, breaking the bones; chopping them in pieces to make soup, as flesh with the caldron, and they eat the flesh of my people (3:3).

The rulers were living high lifestyles, taxing more and more the people. Imposing more and more taxes on them. Destroying the people, taking advantage of the people. The Lord speaks against this. Now, I happen to agree with the Lord! I think these things are evil. I think it is wrong. I think that it is wrong to be self-serving in a position of government and power. To use that position to enrich yourself, and to take advantage of people. Now in the time of the calamity, when the judgment of God begins to come upon them...

They shall cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings (3:4).

Comes a time, when God will not listen. You may cry, you may plead, I won't listen. Because of your actions, because what you've done." "When the day of the judgment and calamity comes, you may cry unto the Lord, but He, but He won't hear." To me, that's sort of a warning. Because a lot of people think, "Well, I'll just live in rebellion against God, the word of God. I'll do my own thing. Then when you know, I see that car jump the divider, and heading towards me, just before the impact, I'll say, 'O God forgive me of everything I've ever done! Ooh!', and I'll be saved". But you don't have a guarantee that He will hear you. Here when the judgment comes, God said, "They'll cry unto me, but I won't, I'll hide my face from them".

You have no guarantee that God will hear that death bed prayer. You may have gone so far, that God will say, "When they cry on the day of calamity, I won't, I won't hear. I will hide my face from them". So don't depend upon a death bed repentance kind of thing. I believe it can happen, but don't depend on it, because you can't be sure that God is going to listen in the day of calamity, because it may be that He has brought the judgment upon you, because of your continual rejection of Him, and His ways. So, "They will cry unto the Lord, but He will not hear them", tragedy.

Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets (3:5),

These false prophets, of which the world has always been filled, men who tell you that the Bible doesn't really mean what it says. "For the Bible isn't really the inspired word of God in totality. There are portions of the Bible that are questionable." And, they, they try to modify the things that God has said, to make people feel more comfortable in sin. They espouse evil causes. You know it is always upsetting to me when the newspaper reporters want to do an article on some evil within the society. They can always find some guy with a Reverend on his name, to give some off handed, stupid remark like, "Well, you know God created everything. He created drugs, and so a little controlled use of drugs can be beneficial to some people". And they, they will espouse the uh, making drugs illegal, you know, they, they will espouse removing the illegality of drugs. They can always get some minister somewhere around the country to give a favorable kind of comment, concerning evil that people want to do. They call themselves liberals. But Jesus said, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to eternal life. Few there be that find it". You might want to take the broad way, but be careful, the Lord says it leads to destruction. So these prophets...

that make my people to err (3:5),

God interesting, is still calling them His people. At this time, I would've said, "those people", ha, ha! "They make my people"...

that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him (3:5).

Even prepare war against God, crying, "Peace". But there is no peace with God. They're at war with

Him.

Therefore night shall be unto you, and ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, [Now, night and darkness are always associated with evil.] and you will not divine (3:6);

“You will seek the word of God, you’ll seek the knowledge of God, the help of God, but it won’t come. God will refuse to speak any longer.”

the sun will go down on these prophets, and the day will be dark over them (3:6).

The sun is going down on the opportunities for people to get right with God. Days of darkness are coming, great darkness. A literal darkness, according to the book of Revelation. God is declaring that these false prophets will come to their doom. The day is gonna be dark over them.

Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there shall be no answer from God (3:7).

A day when God is not speaking any longer, and then the, the shame that comes to them. But in contrast to the false prophets, here Micah declares...

But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord (3:8),

What a glorious statement to be able to say! “I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord”. Jesus said to His disciples, “And you shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit has come upon you”. That kind of power is what Micah was experiencing. That power of the Holy Spirit in his life. That is the kind of power that we need to experience, that dynamic, that power of the Holy Spirit. How desperately we need that! How desperately the church needs that! We have sought to substitute other things for the preaching of the word, under the power of the Holy Spirit.

Many churches in endeavor to be relevant to the modern age, and to adapt the gospel to the present day, like the gospel is just sort of a waxed nose. You just reshape it to fit every new generation. They try to be relevant in the message, and thus forsaking the teaching, and the preaching of the word of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit. They seek to draw people by drama, by entertainment, the most expensive organ in America. The greatest choir in America, and all kinds of entertaining devices. But they can’t really say, as did Micah, “Truly I am full of power by the Holy Spirit, by the Spirit of the Lord”. Because, they have denied the power of the Spirit of the Lord. A tragic day, when a person relies upon himself, rather than upon the Spirit of God, for the teaching of the word, or the preaching of the word. “I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord.”

but also of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin (3:8).

“God has given me the power of His Spirit to declare His truth. The judgment that is going to come, to speak out against the transgressions, and against the sins of Jacob and Israel.”

Hear this, [he said] I pray you, you heads of the house of Jacob, [“You rulers over God’s people.”] you princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity (3:9-10).

“You are building your houses, your beautiful public buildings, with the blood money from the people, that you have exacted and taken from them! The people are destitute! You’re exacting too much, you’re building up these great monuments and all, but it’s money that people have worked for, labored for.”

The heads thereof judge for reward (3:11),

They are ready to take a bribe, they’re ready to give favors for those who will support their campaigns, and those who have supported their campaigns. I heard the other day of the figure of how many million dollars, the homosexual community devoted to Clinton’s campaign, in order that he might promote the gays in the military, and the legislation that gives them special privileges. That’s what was happening in Israel. The prophet is speaking out against it.

the priests thereof teach for hire (3:11),

If you want counseling, they’ll charge you. If you want to know what the word of God has to say well, “Cross my hand with a dollar, and we’ll give you the word of God”.

and the prophets divine for money (3:11):

Everything has been turned into monetary gain. No real serving of God, no real feeling of a servant

of God, but I'm a hireling, I want to be paid.

yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? because God is with us no evil can happen (3:11).

They, they felt that somehow the temple was magic, and as long as they had the temple, God was dwelling with them, and as long as the temple was there, no evil could harm them. They felt that it would be sort of like a rabbit's foot, or, or a magic amulet, that would somehow amulet, that would somehow protect them from evil. So, though they were corrupt, horribly corrupt, mercenaries, "Is not the Lord still here? Got His temple. No evil will come upon us".

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed like a field (3:12),

"The city is going to be destroyed, and it will become a wasted area, and mount Zion will be plowed like a field." Up until just the last few years, the area of mount Zion, was just a, a hillside. Now it's covered quite a bit with houses, but even there still, there's a lot of barrenness there. But it was, it was just fields of some of the earlier writers of the history, or writers of, of the land, of the book, describe back in the 1800's, going to Israel, they describe mount Zion as, as the fields that were cultivated on the side of mount Zion. Once the great city of God, but plowed like a field.

and Jerusalem shall become heaps, [Just piles of debris.] and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest (3:12).

"The desolation is going to come, though you might be trusting that the temple is still there, it's not gonna preserve you from the judgment of God, because of the evil practices, and the corruption of government. God's judgment will surely come." What a lesson that is for us, in this day in which we live. What an incentive as the prophet will say in the next chapter. "He is showing you O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." It's in chapter six. This is what God requires. This is what God wants. "Just be fair, do justly, love mercy. Be forgiving, be kind, be considerate, be compassionate upon those that are going through difficulty, and walk humbly with your God, not in proud arrogance. That's what God wants, and that's all God wants. Just do justly, love mercy, walk humbly. They weren't doing that. They were haughty and proud. They had set themselves against God. They weren't doing justly. They had perverted justice and judgment. They were exacting tolls against people that were not even owed. They didn't love mercy, but they were exacting heavy tribute from the people, and God was not pleased. Thus, the pronounced judgment would come.

There comes a time in a nation, when it's gone the cycle, and it's come to the end. So it was with Israel, so it was with Judah. Nations that were once known as the people of God. Nations that had experienced the blessings of God, the goodness of God, had been prospered by God, but now have turned their backs, and have sought to put God out of their national life. Sought to remove God from the consciousness of the children. Those nations always fall. Not necessarily from an outside foe, but many times are toppled because of the rottenness within. It just collapses on itself. The whole economy collapses, the whole value system collapses and, and really anarchy sets in. It's ruled by gangs, and by factions, such as Somalia, the war lords, and the people suffer. God help us, God help us, we're getting close.

Father, we pray that you will cause us not to just sit back in comfort, watching our TV's. But Lord, may we become very serious concerning the things of the Spirit, concerning our nation, and the things that are happening. Father, may we pray and join together in prayer, for those who are in leadership over us. Stir our hearts Lord, that we might hold up our nation before You, in Jesus' name, Amen.