

ZEPHANIAH 3

“MY DETERMINATION IS TO GATHER THE NATIONS.”

IN THE FIRST SEVERAL VERSES OF CHAPTER 3 the prophet Zephaniah sees the corruption, the oppression, the wickedness and the evil in Christendom in this end time.

Verse 1 reads: “*Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!*” A city here does not refer merely to some local city – it refers to the religious, political and economic systems. When he speaks of “*her*” he is speaking to a nation and people who are officially Christian.

Verse 2: “*She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God.*” This is the condition of Christendom as a whole. We have not received correction in spite of all the judgment that has been poured upon us. Neither have we drawn near to the Lord nor turned to His Word.

Verse 3: “*Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.*” In other words, the condemnation is upon the leadership. God does not condemn the people but rather the leadership in Christendom. He condemns the princes and the judges for the iniquity, oppression and wickedness in the realm of religion, politics and economics.

Verse 4: “*Her prophets* (that is, the clergy or preach-

ers) *are light and treacherous persons:* (They are neither students of Bible prophecy nor diligent men in the Word of God) *her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.*” And certainly this generation of preachers has done violence to the law by teaching that there is no national message and that God’s laws set forth through Moses for civil administration are not for us today. Just the opposite is true – they were given primarily for us today.

We read in verse 6 as God speaks through the prophet, “*I have cut off the nations . . .*” Scores of nations in our lifetime have actually been cut off. Their rulers, dynasties and administrators have been overthrown as the Communists have taken over one nation after the other.

Continuing with this verse we read: “*their towers are desolate . . .*” In other words, their defenses crumbled; they were not adequate. Nation after nation has found itself unable to stand against the hammer and the sickle, God’s judgment upon the wickedness and corruption in Christendom today.

The verse further says, “*I made their streets waste . . .*” And He certainly did. One thinks of the cities of Germany and Great Britain and other nations – they certainly were made waste and desolate and were destroyed.

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.*” This has been our reaction. In spite of Korea and Vietnam, in spite of all the judgments, distress, anxiety and trouble that the nations of Christendom are in, we are not receiving instruction. We are not turning to God; we do not see the hand of God; we do not see His purpose because we will not study the Scriptures