

NOVEMBER -28-DECEMBER 4, 2022

# Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

“HIS WAYS ARE EVERLASTING”

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**Summary:** *Nahum 1. Nahum speaks of the burning of the earth at the Second Coming and of the mercy and power of the Lord.*

*Nahum 2. Nineveh will be destroyed, which is a symbol of what will be in the latter days.*

*Nahum 3. The miserable downfall of Nineveh is foretold.*

*Habakkuk 1. When Habakkuk learns that the Lord will raise up the Chaldeans to overrun the land of Israel, he is troubled that the wicked can be thus employed.*

*Habakkuk 2. The Lord admonishes patience and promises that the just will live by faith—The earth will be filled with knowledge about God—Idols have no power.*

*Habakkuk 3. In his prayer Habakkuk trembles at the majesty of God.*

*Zephaniah 1. The destruction of Judah is symbolic of the Second Coming—It is the day of the Lord’s sacrifice, a day of wrath and trouble.*

*Zephaniah 2. Seek righteousness; seek meekness—Judgment will come upon the Philistines, the Moabites, the children of Ammon, the Ethiopians, and the Assyrians.*

*Zephaniah 3. At the Second Coming, all nations will assemble to battle—Men will have a pure language—The Lord will reign in their midst.*

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## Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

### How do I get “good” out of “gloom and doom?”

Amid prophesying the doom of the world, the prophet Nahum used

“opposites” to teach us about the Lord. The, he gave us a key to understanding. “The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him”. **(Nahum 1:7)** “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.” **(Nahum 1:15)** Another prophet, Isaiah, knew the mountains of Judah, and he also knew the Lord combining the majesty of both in teaching us about the Savior. “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” **(Isaiah 52:7)** Looking at the sacred event that redeemed us from the sins of

life, bruises of experience, captivity of conscience, blindness of bigotry, hurt of hearts broken, poverty of stinginess and the imprisonment of self-pity, we are drawn to the Mount of Olives. Two thousand years ago, He sank below all things, experiencing deeper depths than we would ever reach so that we would never have to. Bleeding from every pore of His body, he was stained for us. How beautiful upon the Mount of Olives are the feet of Him who brings good tidings.

### How did Nahum teach us to take the Lord’s name upon us?

As the Lord prepared the atonement for us (on the day before the High-Day of Passover, the day of preparation) He bled at from every pore. Red is the color of Jesus’-stained clothing at Gethsemane. Nahum uses the color of red, referring to the Savior when he tells us, “The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation . . .”

**(Nahum 2:3)** The invitation to take the Lord's name upon us is the Old Testament Priestly Blessing: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." **(Numbers 6:22-27)**

### **How do Lions play a role as Temple Cherubim?**

Several ancient temple sites have been found in Israel with lions guarding their entrances. As well, the characterizations of a sword with flames have been found in temple sites. Nahum may have used the temple lion metaphor. "Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding place of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?" **(Nahum 2:11)** Note, that although Jesus is called the Lamb of God **(John 1:36)** to show His gentleness and willingness to be the sacrifice for our sins. Yet, He is also called the Lion of the tribe of Judah **(Revelation 5:5)** "The lion is one of the most frequently mentioned animals in the Bible, which would indicate its former abundance in Palestine. Its favorite haunts were the bushy environments of the Jordan . . . caves and thickets . . . in general the woods . . . and the desert . . . (and) as an element of decorative art the figure of the lion entered into the design of the brazen Laver in the Temple of Solomon. **(1 Kings 7:29)**. The name of the lion is applied to God, Israel, and the Temple." <https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/10001-lion> Jesus is called the Lamb of God **(John 1:36)** to illustrate His gentleness and willingness to be the sacrifice for our sins. However, He is also called the Lion of the tribe of Judah **(Revelation 5:5)**

### **How did Nahum show that the first fruit is Symbolic of the first coming?**

"All thy strong holds shall be like fig trees with the first ripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater." **(Nahum 3:12)** Fig trees in Israel present their first fruit in the spring. Then the leaves grow, and in the fall,

the trees give their second fruit. After the triumphal entry of Jesus, cursing the fig tree, four days before the Passover that year, was more than an historical account. Jesus was teaching, that if the first fruit failed, there wouldn't be a second fruit. His first coming must succeed to prepare for the second coming!

### **How can suffering and seeing misery around us teach us faith in the Lord?**

The Jews have described suffering as follows: "One of the most serious challenges to religion is the problem of suffering. If God is all-powerful and good, as Judaism claims He is, how is it possible that He allows His creatures to suffer? This is not a new problem. The Bible is aware that suffering and pain are characteristic of human existence and many of the books of the Bible are concerned about the theological issues involved. The Book of Habakkuk, when it deals with one of the aspects of the problem, says that "the righteous man must live by his faith." This seems to mean that it is beyond the ability of human intelligence to understand the question and that man must have faith that God is doing the right thing . . ." **(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)**

### **How does Habakkuk teach us about gospel training?**

The two catches of fish in the New Testament seem to echo Habakkuk. The first time Jesus invited the Disciples to "cast their nets on the other side" before he called and taught them. "For he (Peter) was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: **(Luke 5:9)** and then they left everything, forsaking their professions. "And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him. **(Luke 5:11)** The second time was after three years of training, the atonement and resurrection of the Savior. "And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." **(John 21:6)** This second time the Apostles were instructed – after three years of training and experience – to continue in the Lord's work instead of returning to their professions. "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep, feed my sheep." **(John 21: 15-17)** Habakkuk used a similar metaphor in saying: "They take up all of them with the angle (hook), they catch them in their net, and gather them in

their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad.” (Habakkuk 1:15) And, the Prophet Habakkuk continues with the same symbolism, “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” (Habakkuk 2:14) That knowledge comes through training and experience.

### **How can I better understand the terms “light rays” and “horns?”**

The pronunciation of the word rays or beams in Hebrew is *karen* which is similar to the word horns. Remember that Michaelangelo (1475-1564) depicted Moses with horns both in his art and sculpturing of Moses (in San Pietro, Vincoli, Italy). Habakkuk is expressing this: “And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: . . .” (Habakkuk 3:4) “It is interesting to note that there is always a light or candles called the *Nir Tamid* that is by every torah bearing ark in the synagogues. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has every functional temple lighted in the dark times. Habakkuk continues the temple imagery by saying: “The Lord God is my strength, . . . and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.” (Habakkuk 3:19) High places is another name for the house of the Lord.

### **How did Zephaniah express the coming of the atonement?**

“Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God: for the day of the Lord is at hand: for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice . . .” (Zephaniah 1:7) As all prophets of the Lord are witnesses of the Savior, he prophesied the Gethsemane experience. “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,” (Zephaniah 1:15) Both in former days and in latter-days the promise of peace in our souls abounds with the Lord despite the evil around us. His spirit will be within us as well as ultimately His presence shall be on earth again with us all. “Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. 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 anymore. (Zephaniah 3:14-15)