

Assurances and Joy for the Faithful

Key Verse: “Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.”
—**Zephaniah 3:14**

Selected Scripture:
Zephaniah 3:10-14,20

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER IS

a God of order. According to the Scriptures, in the orderly arrangement of his plan, following the great “time of trouble,” referred to in Daniel 12:1, he will fulfill his promise made to Abraham so many centuries ago. God told him, “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless

those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”—Gen. 12:2,3, *New International Version*

Part of the preparation for this future time of blessing is the regathering of the Jews to their land and their reestablishment as a nation. We have seen these events unfold during the past century, and the Scriptures indicate that further regathering of Jews to Israel is to take place. The Prophet Ezekiel foretells of a time when Israel will seem to “dwell safely” in “unwalled villages.” This, however, will tempt nations from the “north parts” to come and “take a great spoil” and “take a prey” from the people and land of Israel.—Ezek. 38:1-16

There will be partial success for the invaders of Israel, but the power of God will then be manifested: “Then

shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations.” (Zech. 14:1-3; 12:1-9) In their hour of deepest darkness, Israel will recognize their Messiah. “They shall look on him whom they pierced,” and “mourn for him,” who they crucified. God will accept them again into his fellowship and “pour upon” them “the spirit of grace and of supplications.” (John 19:37; Zech. 12:10) In harmony with this, Jeremiah prophesied, saying, “That day is . . . the time of Jacob’s [Israel’s] trouble; but he shall be saved out of it,” and “they shall serve the LORD their God.”—Jer. 30:7,9

Following Israel’s acceptance of their Messiah and God’s victory on their behalf, Christ’s earthly kingdom will be established. Not only Israel, but all mankind, will then have the opportunity to turn their hearts to God. The forces of evil that are in the world through Satan, the author of sin, will be done away with, for he will be bound. (Rev. 20:1-3) There will be a resurrection of the dead, as Jesus promised: “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth. . . and they that hear [attend to] shall live.” (John 5:28,29,25) Paul adds, “Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (I Cor. 15:21,22) The thought is that those “that hear,” and are “in Christ,” will come into heart obedience to the righteous laws of the kingdom. All such will “be made alive” and “shall live,” having attained a full resurrection, or restanding, before God. What a blessed opportunity awaits mankind!

Zephaniah’s prophecy closes with a theme of rejoicing and praise. (Zeph. 3:14-20) Our Key Verse says that the “daughter of Zion” shouts. This seems to refer to Israel and the rest of mankind—the earthly children of the kingdom. They are “glad and rejoice for ever” . . . “and the former [troubles] shall not be remembered nor come to mind.”—Isa. 65:17-22 ■