

Swords into Plowshares



Micah 4:1–5 · This week: He Delighteth in Mercy, Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 49, “He Delighteth in Mercy,” on Gospel Library**

START

Micah saw a day when people from many nations would say to each other, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord” (Micah 4:2).

READ TOGETHER

Micah came from the countryside of Judah and preached in the same years as Isaiah (Micah 1:1; Isaiah 1:1). Isaiah recorded almost the same prophecy (Isaiah 2:2–4).

MICAH 4:2–4

²And 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. ³And 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. ⁴But 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.

WHAT IT TEACHES

“The mountain of the house of the Lord” is a temple (Micah 4:1). People go there so that “he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths” (verse 2). The temple is a place to learn how to live.

People who learn the Lord’s ways stop fighting. “They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and

their spears into pruninghooks” (verse 3). A plowshare is the metal blade of a plow, and a pruninghook trims grapevines. Weapons become tools for growing food.

Then every man will sit “under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid” (verse 4). Peace means a family can sit outside their own home without fear. The Savior will bring that peace to the whole earth when he comes again, and he brings it now to homes that follow him.

Verse 5 ends with a choice. Other nations walk in the names of their gods, and “we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.” We took his name upon us when we were baptized.

TALK ABOUT IT

What would it look like in our home to beat a sword into a plowshare? What is one argument or habit we could turn into something that helps?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Micah saw people from every nation going up to the Lord’s house to learn his ways. When we learn his ways, swords become plowshares, in the world and in our homes.

Out of Bethlehem

Micah 5:2–4 · This week: He Delighteth in Mercy, Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me** lesson 49, “He Delighteth in Mercy,” on Gospel Library



START

Bethlehem was a small town a few miles south of Jerusalem. About seven hundred years before Jesus was born, Micah named it as the birthplace of Israel's ruler (Micah 5:2).

READ TOGETHER

Bethlehem was King David's hometown (1 Samuel 16:1). Micah called it “little among the thousands of Judah.”

MICAH 5:2

² But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

MICAH 5:4

⁴ And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

WHAT IT TEACHES

The ruler born in Bethlehem would be someone “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2). A baby would be born in a small town, and he had lived long before his birth. Jesus Christ is Jehovah, the God who gave Israel the law, born as a child (3 Nephi 15:5).

When wise men came to Jerusalem looking for the newborn King of the Jews, King Herod asked

the chief priests where the Christ would be born. They answered, “In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,” and then quoted Micah (Matthew 2:1–6).

Micah 5:4 tells what this ruler would do. “He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord.” He would be a shepherd king, and his greatness would reach “unto the ends of the earth.”

The name Bethlehem means house of bread in Hebrew. The child born there grew up to say, “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35).

TALK ABOUT IT

Micah named Bethlehem about seven hundred years before Jesus was born there. What does that tell us about the way the Lord keeps his promises?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Micah named little Bethlehem as the birthplace of a ruler whose goings forth were from everlasting. Jesus Christ, the God of Israel, was born there as a baby.

Walk Humbly with God



Micah 6:1–8 · This week: He Delighteth in Mercy, Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

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START

In Micah 6, the Lord takes his people to court. The mountains are the jury, and the Lord asks, “O my people, what have I done unto thee?” (Micah 6:1–3).

READ TOGETHER

The Lord reminded Israel that he had brought them out of Egypt and sent them Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (Micah 6:4). Then the people asked what offering could ever make things right (Micah 6:6).

MICAH 6:6–8

⁶Wherewith 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? ⁷Will 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? ⁸He 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 IT TEACHES

The offers keep getting bigger. First come calves, then thousands of rams, then “ten thousands of rivers of oil,” and at last even a firstborn child (Micah 6:6–7). None of it could take the place of what the Lord was asking for.

“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?” (verse 8). The Lord asks for a way of living, every day of the week.

Elder Dale G. Renlund explained how the three parts fit together. “To do justly means acting honorably with God and with other people. We act honorably with God by walking humbly with Him. We act honorably with others by loving mercy.”

Elder Dale G. Renlund, “Do Justly, Love Mercy, and Walk Humbly with God,” General conference, October 2020

The Savior lived all three. He treated people fairly, he forgave freely, and in Gethsemane he prayed, “not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).

TALK ABOUT IT

Which one is hardest for you right now, doing justly, loving mercy, or walking humbly with God? What is one way to practice it tomorrow?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Israel wondered whether rivers of oil would please the Lord. He asked them to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God.

He Delighteth in Mercy



Micah 7:7–20 · This week: He Delighteth in Mercy, Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 49, “He Delighteth in Mercy,” on Gospel Library**

START

Near the end of his book, Micah asks, “Who is a God like unto thee?” (Micah 7:18). His own name, in Hebrew, asks the same question.

READ TOGETHER

Micah had spent his book warning Samaria and Jerusalem. In the last chapter he speaks for the people, admitting their sin and trusting the Lord anyway (Micah 7:7–9).

MICAH 7:8

⁸Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.

MICAH 7:18–19

¹⁸Who 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. ¹⁹He 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.

WHAT IT TEACHES

“When I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me” (Micah 7:8). Everyone falls in this life. We can get up again because the Lord gives us light to see by.

Verse 18 gives this week’s title. The Lord pardons iniquity, and “he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.” Mercy is what the Lord enjoys giving.

“Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (verse 19). In Micah’s day, anything dropped into the deep sea was gone for good. Forgiven sins go where no one can pull them back up.

Micah’s last verse ties mercy to the covenant. The Lord will “perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham,” as he promised long ago (verse 20). His mercy is a promise he made to our fathers, and he keeps it.

TALK ABOUT IT

Micah said the Lord delights in mercy. How does it change the way you pray or repent to know that he enjoys forgiving?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Micah asked, “Who is a God like unto thee?” The Lord delights in mercy, and he casts forgiven sins into the depths of the sea.

A Strong Hold



Nahum 1 · This week: He Delighteth in Mercy, Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

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START

More than a hundred years after Jonah, Nineveh had gone back to its cruel ways. Nahum saw in vision that the city would fall (Nahum 1:1; 3:1).

READ TOGETHER

Assyria had conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and attacked the cities of Judah (2 Kings 17:6; 18:13). Nahum’s name means comfort, and his message comforted the people Nineveh had hurt.

NAHUM 1:3

³The 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.

NAHUM 1:7

⁷The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Nahum shows two sides of the Lord in one verse. “The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked” (Nahum 1:3). He is patient, and he is also just. Nineveh had been given a long time to change.

Verse 7 says, “The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them

that trust in him.” A stronghold was a fortress with thick walls where people ran for safety. The same power that humbled Nineveh protects the people who trust him. Helaman called Jesus Christ the rock we build on, so the devil’s storms cannot pull us down (Helaman 5:12).

Verse 15 sounds like Isaiah (Isaiah 52:7). “Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!” For Judah and everyone else Assyria had crushed, the news of Nineveh’s fall was good news.

TALK ABOUT IT

What makes a place feel safe to you? How can the Lord be a strong hold for our family in a day of trouble?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Nahum’s name means comfort. The Lord who is slow to anger is also a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knows everyone who trusts him.

Though It Tarry

Habakkuk 1–3 · This week: He Delighteth in Mercy, Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

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START

Habakkuk begins his book with a complaint. “O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!” (Habakkuk 1:2).

READ TOGETHER

Habakkuk lived in Judah when violence and injustice were everywhere (Habakkuk 1:3–4). The Lord answered that Babylon would come and punish Judah, and that troubled Habakkuk even more (Habakkuk 1:5–6; 1:13).

HABAKKUK 2:1–3

¹I 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. ²And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. ³For 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.

HABAKKUK 3:17–18

¹⁷Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: ¹⁸Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Habakkuk brought his questions to the Lord and then waited for an answer. “I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me” (Habakkuk 2:1). Joseph Smith cried out with the same kind of question in

Liberty Jail, and the Lord answered him too (Doctrine and Covenants 121:1–8).

The Lord told him to write the vision plainly, “upon tables,” so that whoever read it could run with the message (Habakkuk 2:2). “Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come” (verse 3). In the meantime, “the just shall live by his faith” (verse 4).

Elder Gerrit W. Gong taught what trusting God can do with our hardest trials. “When we trust God and His love for us, even our greatest heartbreaks can, in the end, work together for our good.”

Elder Gerrit W. Gong, “All Things for Our Good,” General conference, April 2024

Habakkuk’s book ends in praise. Even if the fig tree does not blossom and the fields yield no food, “yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation” (Habakkuk 3:17–18). Some of his questions were still open, and his trust in the Lord was settled.

TALK ABOUT IT

Habakkuk asked the Lord hard questions and then waited for the answer. What question would you like to bring to the Lord, and how can we wait with faith?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Habakkuk asked how long, and the Lord said, “wait for it; because it will surely come.” Even with empty fields, Habakkuk chose to rejoice in the Lord.

Joy over Thee



Zephaniah 2:3; 3:9–20 · This week: He Delighteth in Mercy, Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah

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START

Most of Zephaniah’s book warns of the day of the Lord. Near the end, the Lord rejoices over his people with singing (Zephaniah 3:17).

READ TOGETHER

Zephaniah preached in Jerusalem in the days of King Josiah, before Babylon came (Zephaniah 1:1). He warned that “the day of the Lord is at hand” and told the people how to be ready (Zephaniah 1:7).

ZEPHANIAH 2:3

³ Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’s anger.

ZEPHANIAH 3:17

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.

WHAT IT TEACHES

“Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth” (Zephaniah 2:3). The meek are teachable and gentle, and they let God lead. The proud in Zephaniah’s day told themselves that the Lord would do nothing at all, good or evil (Zephaniah 1:12).

Verse 14 calls the people to celebrate. “Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and

rejoice with all the heart.” Verse 17 gives the reason. The Lord is “in the midst of thee,” and “he will rejoice over thee with joy.”

The Lord promises to “save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out” (Zephaniah 3:19). To halt is to limp. He gathers the ones who struggle to keep up and the ones who were pushed away.

When the risen Savior visited the Nephites, he prayed for them, blessed their children one by one, and said that his joy was full (3 Nephi 17:20–21). The Savior rejoices over the people he saves.

TALK ABOUT IT

Zephaniah says the Lord rejoices over his people with singing. How does it feel to know the Lord is glad about you? What can we do today to share that joy?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Zephaniah ends with the Lord in the midst of his people, rejoicing over them with singing. The Savior finds joy in each person who comes to him.