

UNCOMPROMISING FAITH

... the just shall live by his faith Habakkuk 2:4



ZEPHANIAH

Faith In His Promise

Promise of Restoration

Zephaniah 3:1-20

Lesson 3

Background Information

Judgment is coming, beginning with God's people and including the rest of the world, but Zephaniah changes his tone at the end of the book with the promise of restoration. The day of the Lord is seen as having two components: judgment that results in the destruction of Judah by foreign armies, but also salvation, restoration and hope for the people of God.

The city of Jerusalem is the center of the day of the Lord. It has become the center of oppression, rebellion, and apostasy. God's response to the wickedness of Jerusalem is to declare His judgment. He would use other nations to punish the city for its rebellion, but then in turn punish those who punished Israel. The expression of grief is reflective of God's own heart.

The punishment of Judah's neighbors should have brought the people to their senses, however the leaders in Jerusalem would not listen to God's servants or heed God's warnings when God corrected them. The prophet then looked ahead to the last days when the remnant of Israel will be regathered redeemed and restored to their land. They will call on Him, serve Him and worship their God.

God's promise is to make all things right! Those who are enemies of God's truth will be gathered and removed: God's remnant will be restored.

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." Hosea 14:4

Treasures of the

The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; You shall see disaster no more. Zephaniah 3:15



What does it say?

The first step is getting the lay of the land. **Carefully observe the text** looking to see where you might dig to find hidden treasure. **Mark your text** looking for repeated words, contrasts or similarities. Look for answers to, Who? What? When? Where? Why or How?

Zephaniah 3:1-4

1 Woe to her who is rebellious and polluted, To the oppressing city! 2 She has not obeyed [His] voice, She has not received correction; She has not trusted in the LORD, She has not drawn near to her God. 3 Her princes in her midst [are] roaring lions; Her judges [are] evening wolves That leave not a bone till morning. 4 Her prophets are insolent, treacherous people; Her priests have polluted the sanctuary, They have done violence to the law.



Digging Deeper

Dig deeper using other resources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps and cross-references. Notate where you found it to share with the group. Look for commands to obey or questions to be answered. **What does God want you to know about Himself?**

Zephaniah 3:5-8

5 The LORD [is] righteous in her midst, He will do no unrighteousness. Every morning He brings His justice to light; He never fails, But the unjust knows no shame. 6 "I have cut off nations, Their fortresses are devastated; I have made their streets desolate, With none passing by. Their cities are destroyed; [There is] no one, no inhabitant. 7 I said, 'Surely you will fear Me, You will receive instruction'--So that her dwelling would not be cut off, [Despite] everything for which I punished her. But they rose early and corrupted all their deeds.

8 "Therefore wait for Me," says the LORD, "Until the day I rise up for plunder; My determination [is] to gather the nations To My assembly of kingdoms, To pour on them My indignation, All My fierce anger; All the earth shall be devoured With the fire of My jealousy.



Zephaniah 3:9-13

9 "For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, That they all may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him with one accord. 10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, The daughter of My dispersed ones, Shall bring My offering. 11 In that day you shall not be shamed for any of your deeds In which you transgress against Me; For then I will take away from your midst Those who rejoice in your pride, And you shall no longer be haughty In My holy mountain. 12 I will leave in your midst A meek and humble people, And they shall trust in the name of the LORD. 13 The remnant of Israel shall do no unrighteousness And speak no lies, Nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; For they shall feed [their] flocks and lie down, And no one shall make [them] afraid."



Zephaniah 3:14-20

14 Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all [your] heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! **15** The LORD has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy. The King of Israel, the LORD, [is] in your midst; You shall see disaster no more. **16** In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Do not fear; Zion, let not your hands be weak. **17** The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet [you] with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing." **18** "I will gather those who sorrow over the appointed assembly, Who are among you, [To whom] its reproach [is] a burden. **19** Behold, at that time I will deal with all who afflict you; I will save the lame, And gather those who were driven out; I will appoint them for praise and fame In every land where they were put to shame. **20** At that time I will bring you back, Even at the time I gather you; For I will give you fame and praise Among all the peoples of the earth, When I return your captives before your eyes," Says the LORD.



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What does it mean?



What lesson can I draw from my observations? Ask yourself, “**What was the intended meaning of the original author?**” Is there a command to obey, or a warning to heed? An example to follow or avoid? **State each lesson in a simple sentence that you could share with someone else.** (aim for 10 words or less).

Zephaniah 3:1-4 _____

Zephaniah 3:5-8 _____

Zephaniah 3:9-13 _____

Zephaniah 3:14-20 _____

How can I apply it?



Ask yourself, “What course of action do I need to take to apply each lesson?” How should it change me? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? (aim for 10 *words* or less)

Zephaniah 3:1-4 _____

Zephaniah 3:5-8 _____

Zephaniah 3:9-13 _____

Challenge: Use cross-references to find correlating scripture that backs up a main point of the chapter. Summarize your findings in your own words.

Zephaniah 3:14-20

What **D**id **G**od **S**ay?

See if you can discover what God wants us to understand. What does He want us to understand about His ways? Which of His attributes is He displaying? When we are questioning the circumstances that surround us, understanding Who God is helps us trust Him when we don't see Him working. **Simply state what God is trying to communicate about Himself and how it affects your thinking.**

What words or phrases are repeated? Repeated words help us discover the main point.

Define three words: **does it supply any added meaning to the text?**



Getting The Point

See if you can boil down the meaning of **each section** into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try) Did you catch the vision?

Zephaniah 3:1-4 _____

Zephaniah 3:5-8 _____

Zephaniah 3:9-13 _____

Title State the main **point** of the passage in the form of a title.

Flex Your Muscles Can you discover an N.T. example of this O.T. truth?

Zephaniah 3:14-20 **Radiating His Truth...**

If we delight in the Lord and obey Him, He delights in us and shares His best with us. If we sin, He will chasten us in love. If we turn to Him in repentance, He will forgive us and restore our joy and peace

Warren Wiersbe

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