

Zephaniah ~ Part 4

Plans For Restoration

⁸ Therefore, wait for me," says Adonai, "for the day when I rise to witness against you, when I decide to assemble nations, to gather kingdoms together, to pour on them my indignation, all my furious anger; for all the earth will be consumed in the fire of my passion.

The prophet transitions from the historical invasion of **Y'hudah** by **Babylon** to the future day of the **Lord**. He speaks of the **Great Tribulation**, when the **Lord** gathers all the nations for **Judgment**. The faithful remnant, presumably the meek of **Zephaniah 2:1-3**, are exhorted to wait for Him to carry out His judgment.

The following sections unveil the blessings of the restoration of **God's** people and His nations.

⁹ For then I will change the peoples, so that they will have pure lips, to call on the name of Adonai, all of them, and serve him with one accord. ¹⁰ Even from beyond Ethiopia's rivers, they will bring those who petition me, the daughter of my dispersed, as my offering.

The phrase *they will have pure lips* may reflect a reversal of the **Babel** motif (cp. Isaiah 2:2-4; 19:18-25) or international worship without language barriers. But its meaning apparently also involves genuine worship of **Adonai** without deceit (Zephaniah 3:13-14; cp. Revelation 14:5). Verse 10 describes dispersed Israeli's joining the nations in worship.

¹¹ When that day comes, you will not be ashamed of everything you have done, committing wrongs against me; for then I will remove from among you those of you who take joy in arrogance; you will no longer be full of pride on my holy mountain. ¹² I will leave among you a poor and afflicted people, who will find their refuge in the name of Adonai." ¹³ The remnant of Isra'el will not do wrong, nor will they speak lies, nor will there be found in their mouths a tongue given over to deceit; for they will be able to graze and lie down, with no one to disturb them.

In 3:5, they had no shame because they had no conscience and no repentance. Here, they have no shame because they are forgiven and purged of sin. Pride had been at the base of **Isra'el's** sinfulness. Humility, then, is the preeminent characteristic of the righteous remnant, who are finally ready to seek *refuge* in the **Lord's** name. The primary behavioral characteristic of the remnant is their truthfulness, and their reward is peace.

Joy Of Salvation

The **Messianic** era of the millennial blessing and restoration is described in these last two topics.

¹⁴ Sing, daughter of Tziyon! Shout, Isra'el! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, daughter of Yerushalayim! ¹⁵ Adonai has removed the judgments against you, he has expelled your enemy; the king of Isra'el, Adonai, is right there with you. You no longer need to fear that anything bad will happen.

Nothing could be more different from the pronouncement of "woe" in 3:1 than this hymnic call to praise in verse 14. The point of verse 15b is that *once again* **Isra'el's** king was in their midst, and the result was the chasing away of fear. The **Apostle Yochanan** prefaced his announcement of the coming king in Yochanan 12:15 with "fear no more."

¹⁶ On that day, it will be said to Yerushalayim, "Do not fear, Tziyon! Don't let your hands droop down. ¹⁷ Adonai, your God, is right there with you, as a mighty savior. He will rejoice over you and be glad, he will be silent in his love, he will shout over you with joy."

Again, it is the call not to be afraid, followed by the exhortation not to *let your hands droop down*.

Honor For the Redeemed

¹⁸ "I will gather those of yours who grieve over the appointed feasts and bear the burden of reproach [because they cannot keep them]. ¹⁹ When that time comes, I will deal with all those who oppress you. I will save her who is lame, gather her who was driven away, and make them whose shame spread over the earth the object of praise and renown. ²⁰ When that time comes, I will bring you in; when that time comes, I will gather you and make you the object of fame and praise among all the peoples of the earth - when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes," says Adonai. ¹

God will act on behalf of all His flock who suffered under exile, taking steps to *save the lame* (Micah 4:6–7) like a shepherd. God's far-flung people will face restoration at the hand of their King. Instead of being justifiably shamed for their sin, they will be *the object of fame and praise* (Deuteronomy 26:19) because of the gracious salvation of **God**.

In your interactions around town or during community events, let Zephaniah 3:8-20 inspire you to be a voice of hope. Make an intentional effort to approach those who appear isolated or discouraged. Engage them in conversation, share a kind word, or offer your help. By actively embodying the love and restoration that **God** promises, you can become a beacon of light, showing others that they are valued and loved by **God**, regardless of their circumstances.

In our next post, we will begin exploring **Haggai**.

¹ Zephaniah 3:8–20.