



**So, You Want to Be in Leadership?  
God Holds All Leaders Accountable  
Because He Keeps His Promises  
Zephaniah 3**

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Everyone wants to be in charge. Have you ever noticed that? By the way, that desire has been adversely impacted by the fall in Genesis 3. Rather than leading others to help them achieve the goals of the Lord in their lives, leadership has been turned into being all about me and my acquisition of power at your expense.

Jesus modeled leadership for us, by washing the feet of His disciples.

Servant leadership is the Biblical standard, yet churches have even been impacted by the latest management theories touted by business schools. I was in that business world for decades and the theories just kept changing every year.

I have worked for managers who were all about the quick buck at any cost including lying. Their expectation was that you would do the same because we all were in it for the buck. But if they would lie for the buck, would they also lie to me and my colleagues in order to make a buck?

I have also worked for managers who curried favor but tended to forget the objective. Everyone liked them, and since a new manager was assigned every two years, get in and get out before you are held accountable for the problems you just never seemed to get around to fixing.



After working in that environment for years, I concluded that the bungee boss concept doesn't work all that well.

Then there is so-called ownership, we are all in this together, unless I can make it all your fault. Then we aren't in this together.

Unfortunately, there are more who wind up leading today by getting to the position they desire by walking all over those who may or may not have been rivals for the position. Competition is the name of the game and I intend to win at all costs. They never seem to see all the bodies they leave around them.

But that's only in the business world, right? Hardly. The climbers, as I like to call them, leaving a trail of bodies behind them exist in government, business, education, and the church. Everywhere, because of Genesis 3.

Not everyone is like that, the Lord still is in the blessing business and Godly men and women do wind up catching the attention of the world.

But we love to turn "successful" leaders into rock stars, adulating them and hanging on the words of wisdom dripping from their mouths. That is idolatry. Excuse me while I go through my latest series of business books and throw some of them away.

Again, not what Jesus taught, or the Torah either.

Yes, the problem could be the leader, but it could also be the one assessing the leader and attributing wisdom where there is none.

As Zephaniah concludes here in chapter 3, he is going to touch on some of those misguided managers and leaders in Judah who are following the latest ideas from the Jerusalem Business Review rather than the Torah. They have arrived, they are the one's calling the shots, and that is the problem. God holds leaders accountable. Always.

That idea is scary enough, but surely that can't be the case, right?

Ezekiel 34:2

“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them—to the shepherds: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not shepherds feed the flock?’” (NET 2nd ed.)

Surely this idea changed in the New Testament, grace, right? Paul talks about business place relationships in Colossians. Substitute employee in the place of slave and employer for master.

Colossians 3:22–4:1

“Slaves, obey your earthly masters in every respect, not only when they are watching—like those who are strictly people-pleasers—but with a sincere heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you are doing, work at it with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not for people, because you know that you will receive your inheritance from the Lord as the reward. Serve the Lord Christ. For the one who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there are no exceptions. Masters, treat your slaves with justice and fairness, because you know that you also have a master in heaven.” (NET 2nd ed.)

What exactly is YAHWEH's attitude toward Jerusalem and how does He diagnose the source of the problem?

And how can managers, rulers or religious leaders, breaking bad, wind up taking down an entire people?



Simple, by rewarding bad behavior, lying, finger pointing, and gas lighting others on a consistent and constant basis. In other words, the world being the world.

The manner in how Zephaniah does this is something that is a characteristic of the prophets. They discuss the sin of and the necessary judgement coming to a commonly despised enemy, and then keep on talking like that is who they are still talking about, but somewhere in there, they are no longer talking about the bad guys, but they have started talking about Jerusalem, or Judah. Zephaniah does that here. He goes from talking about Assyria and the nations, to talking about Jerusalem, but those in Judah who are listening have not picked up on the change yet. The city he talks about is not named.

Zephaniah 3:1–4

“Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled, The oppressive city! She obeyed no voice, She accepted no discipline. She did not trust in the LORD, She did not approach her God. Her leaders within her are roaring lions, Her judges are wolves at evening; They have no bones to gnaw in the morning. Her prophets are insolent, treacherous men; Her priests have profaned the sanctuary. They have done violence to the Law.” (NASB2020)

YAHWEH begins by outlining the sin of Jerusalem in verse 1. There are three charges He levels at them. But they do not know it is all about them till the very end of verse 2.

As he begins, those listening think this is still all about Nineveh. The statements as they are made are made in a way to reflect that this is simply what the city is. It is a state of being for this city. People from this city are known for this.

### **The Charges**

1. The unnamed city is rebellious.
2. The unnamed city is defiled by their own sin.
3. The unnamed city is oppressive.

Everyone listening would be nodding their agreement. Yep, that’s Nineveh. They are the definition of the wicked city. When you look it up in the dictionary, wicked city is simply defined – Nineveh. The zinger is still coming.

Zephaniah continues with four statements of what the behaviors of the rebellious city are.

First, this city refused to listen to any authority and obeyed no one.

They would think Nineveh, but this is really about Jerusalem. God chose this nation, the Jews, to be His. He revealed Himself to them and they were privileged to have His Word.

They had wonderful promises made to them contingent upon them remaining faithful. But they refused to listen to God, His prophets, and His written word. They were unrepentant. They obeyed no voice.

Second, this city rejected discipline. YAHWEH had not only informed His people of the promises they could look forward to for obedience, but He also told them, in advance, of the curses that would take place in and to the nation if they refused to listen to Him and refused His discipline.

At this point, those listening would probably look up and wonder what that meant.

With the third point, Zephaniah moves a bit further away from the Nineveh narrative. The reasons for point one and two were, due to point three, the city does not trust in YAHWEH. By using the covenant name of God at this point, all doubt has been removed, but there still may be some who think this is still about Nineveh. Why is that, why would they not trust God? Simple, they had stopped approaching Him.



Now Zephaniah is meddling.

That is the fourth point, as a people, they had decided that following YAHWEH was old fashioned and not up to speed in the modern world.

They simply ceased going to Temple, it was too heavy of a burden on them. And since they really did not know what was in the Torah anyhow, they had no idea what this was this all meant to them, personally. These four steps sound deeply familiar to what we have been watching take place in our culture over the past few years. God got kicked out of school back in the 50's and early 60's. The idea of accountability to anyone much less God became passé at the same time. Yes, there was a revival that took place, just like in Judah.

I was saved as part of this revival in the late 60's. God did a mighty work, one which still can be heard today. But like the revival about to be experienced by Judah under King Josiah, it only lasts for a while. It is our responsibility as the church to be about His business of making disciples, when we do that, we see revival taking place all around us every day. Changed hearts and lives are contagious in the culture, but what happens when we simply stop talking about Him outside our four walls?

Satan does to us as he did to Judah, he convinces them to go internal.

During the revival of Josiah, most of the nation did not bother to hand down their faith to the next generation. They had been moved from belief to idolatry for over 50 years and what was needed was a multigenerational commitment to restore faith among that next generation. We see the success with Daniel, Ezekiel, and others, but most of the nation simply went back to the status quo.

Satan does the same today, the culture wants to keep us quiet. If we buy into the culture and their definitions, then we will cease being witnesses. This has become visible post Jesus Movement in the culture.

Within 20 years though, the downward slip became more pronounced as more modern ideas began to take hold. The idea of accountability to God was old fashioned and out of date. And we began to vote for and place in power those who had "more progressive" ideas. Natural disasters and reversals in the conduct of day-to-day business of the nation began to become more obvious, but just like Judah, the west had long ago rejected the notion that God was someone they were accountable to. This has been seen in the move away from the Lord in the public square, the marginalizing of those who are faithful, and the complete rejection of God in the culture.

I, for one, really believe we need to pay a bit more attention to Zephaniah than we may want to, since he is talking right to us, just as he was talking to the citizens of Jerusalem as well.

By now, for those listening to Zephaniah, there should be no doubt. He has told them the city in question does not trust YAHWEH and has rejected Elohim. And if those names don't give them a heads up, wait till he talks about those who are their leaders.

Jerusalem, rather than being God's faithful, covenant city in contrast to her pagan neighbours, is in fact one with them in her sinfulness and unfaithfulness (cf. Isa. 1:21). (Baker 1988, 110)

It is Jerusalem that had become morally impure to the point of being foul. Oppression was everywhere, business, government and religion were all to blame, and that becomes obvious as Zephaniah continues.

Zephaniah 3:3-4

"Her leaders within her are roaring lions, Her judges are wolves at evening; They have no bones to gnaw in the morning. Her prophets are insolent, treacherous men; Her priests have profaned the sanctuary. They have done violence to the Law." (NASB 2020)



YAHWEH sets out four different layers or classes of leadership that have failed within Jerusalem. There were specific requirements for each that they were to follow per the Law, but that was no longer the standard and had been rejected for a more pragmatic approach to life.

The leaders are roaring lions. They are predators looking for their next kill while they vigorously defend their territory. The picture is of a governing elite that takes great pleasure in destroying those who are “beneath” them. They are stalking their prey looking for a weak spot so they can move in and take down another business or individual under the color of the law. When you see injustice like that, you immediately consider the judiciary, they should make things right.

No, it appears they too have become predators as well. Unlike the rulers, they are more thorough and leave nothing for others.

The picture being drawn is one of a predator who is so thorough, that there is nothing left of the kill from the previous day forcing them to move to a new kill daily to maintain their voracious appetite. And one other thing, they operate just like a pack of wolves would, jointly and together. Just imagine, a culture where the judges work with each other to defraud their victims. One agrees with another, and justice is no longer possible.

Surely the religious leadership of the day will bring this all to light. The prophets or the priests will condemn this, and it will stop.

Again, remember what we have just been told, this is a people who no longer trust in the Lord, nor do they follow God, and those who would have been charged with changing that, are now no better. The prophets are not performing as watchmen on the wall. They are not warning about what is going on in the culture and they are staying away from any discussion about curses for faithlessness.

The Jerusalem Post has the blessing of the day in every issue from them. No reminder of the law and no reminder or call to repent. They will though give you good news, for a price.

Those who are “the prophets” have presumed to talk in the name of the Lord, but none of them have been in His council. They are no longer speaking on behalf of God, and they must be destroyed.

Deuteronomy 18:20

“But if any prophet presumes to speak anything in my name that I have not authorized him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet must die.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Zephaniah does not tone anything down in his conversation about the false prophets. “The epithets used imply a wanton disregard of Yahweh and his moral requirements.” (Powis Smith, Ward and Bewer 1911, 239)

Then there are the Priests. These are the same guys who can’t seem to keep up with the Law. Worse than that, they have not managed to keep themselves holy either and they seriously misinterpret the law.

How bad was it?

“One of the priestly functions, according to Lv. 10:10, was “to make a distinction between the holy and the common and between the unclean and the clean.” There is no reason to suppose that this function was not one of the earliest assumed by or assigned to the priests. Zephaniah probably refers here to ritualistic irregularities which reflected a criminal carelessness of the requirements of Yahweh on the part of the priests.—They have done violence to instruction] An important priestly function was that of delivering the judgment of Yahweh in cases of doubt and dispute; cf. Dt. 17:8–12, 21:5. This was called tōrah, i.e. ‘teaching’ or ‘oracle,’ and constituted a decision by the court of last resort. The priests evidently sold the decision to the highest bidder and so brought the priesthood of Yahweh into disgrace in the eyes of all



right-minded men. They prostituted their highest and most sacred powers to the accomplishment of selfish and base ends.” (Powis Smith, Ward and Bewer 1911, 239-240)

Revival was needed in the Priesthood and under King Josiah, he attacked this problem head on.

2 Kings 23:4–9

“Then Josiah ordered the High Priest Hilkiah, his assistant priests, and the guards on duty at the entrance to the Temple to bring out of the Temple all the objects used in the worship of Baal, of the goddess Asherah, and of the stars. The king burnt all these objects outside the city near the valley of the Kidron, and then had the ashes taken to Bethel. He removed from office the priests that the kings of Judah had ordained to offer sacrifices on the pagan altars in the cities of Judah and in places near Jerusalem—all the priests who offered sacrifices to Baal, to the sun, the moon, the planets, and the stars. He removed from the Temple the symbol of the goddess Asherah, took it out of the city to the valley of the Kidron, burnt it, pounded its ashes to dust, and scattered it over the public burial ground. He destroyed the living quarters in the Temple occupied by the temple prostitutes. (It was there that women wove robes used in the worship of Asherah.) He brought to Jerusalem the priests who were in the cities of Judah, and throughout the whole country he desecrated the altars where they had offered sacrifices. He also tore down the altars dedicated to the goat-demons near the gate built by Joshua, the city governor, which was to the left of the main gate as one enters the city. Those priests were not allowed to serve in the Temple, but they could eat the unleavened bread provided for their fellow-priests.” (GNB)

The picture is indeed grim. All of those the people would rely on for guidance, spiritually, economically and civilly; were on the take. The apostasy was deep, and the picture being drawn for us is grim.

Government for the elites, judges for the elites while explicitly oppressing the people under the color of the law, and a religious leadership that was completely defiled and in it for the buck.

And we think Zephaniah does not have anything for us today. This is a picture that historically has shown up more than once on the west and is clearly visible in various areas across the globe today.

So, what does YAHWEH do with this assessment? He distances Himself from the leadership.

Zephaniah 3:5

“The LORD is righteous within her; He will do no injustice. Every morning He brings His justice to light; He does not fail. But the criminal knows no shame.” (NASB 2020)

YAHWEH distances Himself from all of those who presume to speak in His name, but in reality, do not. God is nothing like them. The same goes for the church today, there are many who presume to speak on behalf of the Lord, but when you marginalize the Bible and turn from Him, God distances Himself.

It is a disaster when church leaders speak from their own imaginations rather than teaching the revealed word of God in the Bible, or when they act immorally and refuse to live by God’s word. There are many leaders of the church today who deny substitutionary atonement, denying the saving death of Jesus on the cross. Or they deny Jesus’ resurrection from the dead, explaining it away as a ‘myth’. (Pakula 2014, 183)

Here at Calvary, we teach the Bible chapter by chapter and verse by verse. Our intent is to teach the full council of God and to make disciples.

As a people, we need to be listening to His word and taking action based on what we hear. Stop and think about it, there is no reason to not have, read or know God’s word. Our app has 5 English translations and 1 Spanish on it. You can read it, or the app will read it to you. We have Christian radio, television, streaming platforms, podcasting, you name it. He is righteous, not like any of our leaders.



In Judah, it is God Himself who is behind the curtain in the Holy of Holies. He is righteous. His expectation of those who lead is to reflect Him. Servant leadership as shown to us by Jesus Christ. God always does what is right, leaders, managers, government, etc. Not so much.

The problem in Judah though, those who were in leadership, knew no shame. They were unfaithful and unashamed of their performance and proud of their lifestyles based on theft from the people.

So, what is God going to do?

Zephaniah 3:6–8

“I have eliminated nations; Their corner towers are deserted. I have laid waste their streets, With no one passing by; Their cities have been laid waste, Without a person, without an inhabitant. I said, ‘You will certainly revere Me, You will accept discipline.’ So her dwelling will not be eliminated In accordance with everything that I have stipulated for her. Instead, they were eager to corrupt all their deeds. Therefore wait for Me,” declares the LORD, “For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, To assemble kingdoms, To pour out on them My indignation, All My burning anger; For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal.” (NASB 2020)

It is clear now, this is Jerusalem, not Nineveh and God is preparing to judge the city. Indeed, His decision is to judge all nations, not just His people in Jerusalem. God wants to make it very clear to the people, He is the one who has eliminated nations.

Immediately those listening, and some are descendants of those who ran to Jerusalem to escape, recall the destruction and exile of Israel. They know that Israel, is gone, Syria is gone, and Jerusalem had some unwanted visitors that only God could get rid of. God is telling them that if you have been north recently and were amazed at the destruction, well I am the one who did that.

They should learn from history and repent. That is His expectation.

Zephaniah 3:7

“I said, ‘You will certainly revere Me, You will accept discipline.’ So her dwelling will not be eliminated In accordance with everything that I have stipulated for her. Instead, they were eager to corrupt all their deeds.” (NASB 2020)

Instead of repenting, they went even deeper into their sin. These are a radically depraved people. God, in His love and grace, extends discipline to call them back to Him, and yet they reject Him and chase after their own desires. (Fries, Rummage and Gallaty 2015, 32)

The nation has seen, and they know firsthand what has happened to the other nations. But they were confident that it would not happen to them.

Instead, “they were eager to corrupt all their deeds,” “instead of repenting, the people have only shown themselves still more zealous in evil deeds.” (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 456)

Moses had expected the nation would eventually become totally corrupt.

Deuteronomy 31:29

“For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands.” (ESV)

This is amazing news. God had done everything He could to let the people know and yet they had walked away, in fact they were eager to do so. Apostasy had taken over Judah. The revival would halt it, for a while, but then it would come back with people who were eager to walk away from the Lord.



Because of this blatant rejection over the top rejection, in the face of all that He had given to them and revealed to them, God promises judgement. Of course, they should know about the consequences.

The Bible says that God is angry with the wicked every day (Ps. 7:11) and that the wicked are an abomination to Him: "For all who do such things, all who act dishonestly, are an abomination to the LORD your God" (Deut. 25:16). He rages against sin and gives this warning to all the unrepentant who would presume upon His love: (Lutzer 2018, 194-195)

Romans 2:5

"But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed." (ESV)

Yes, God loves His people, but there is a point where His love and justice dictate that His discipline, or His wrath be exercised against those who have presumed on His grace.

Judah has arrived at that point. YAHWEH moves to the point in time where He will deal with all nations to include Judah. Now He turns to address those of the remnant.

Zephaniah 3:8–11

"Therefore wait for Me," declares the LORD, "For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, To assemble kingdoms, To pour out on them My indignation, All My burning anger; For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal. For then I will restore to the peoples pure lips, So that all of them may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him shoulder to shoulder. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, My dispersed ones, Will bring My offerings. On that day you will feel no shame Because of all your deeds By which you have rebelled against Me; For then I will remove from your midst Your proud, arrogant ones, And you will never again be haughty On My holy mountain." (NASB 2020)

Coming very soon, Jesus will remove His church, and then the day which Zephaniah has talked about, the Day of the Lord, will begin.

YAHWEH goes back to addressing those who are part of the remnant. He began with encouraging them to seek the Lord in Zephaniah 2:3, now that He has clearly made the case for judgement, He calls on the remnant to wait for Him.

Jerusalem indeed shall be included in this Day of destruction. But when the city of God itself is judged, the final day for all the nations will have come. Universal calamity must accompany the devastation of this city. (Robertson 1990, 325)

The remnant, those who are seeking the Lord, wait in the faith and trust that the day will indeed come. The Day that will sum up and end the rule of sinful man and being the rule of Messiah.

We can also get a sense of the finality being encouraged by the Lord for the remnant to wait for, in the Hebrew construction of this verse. "According to the Massoretic scholars, who labored faithfully on the text of the Old Testament, verse 8 is the only verse of the Old Testament in which all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, even the final letters, occur." (Feinberg 1990, 233) The beginning and the end, all wrapped up God's declaration to His remnant of what to wait for, the Great Tribulation.

"To wait" for God means to expect him to act, whether in blessing (Isa. 40:31) or, as here, in judgment. God's Day of wrath comes when he rises up as a witness in his court case against his earth. God's attempts to guide and correct and warn his people have failed. Judah, like all the earth, is defiant and polluted (rebellious and defiled, v. 1). (Achtmeier 1986, 82)





Now begins encouragement for the remnant. There has been the presentation of the case against Judah, the surrounding nations, and the planet. Now for those who do wait on the Lord, what is they will experience.

Despite the judgement outlined in this book, God is a God of love and now He lays out for those of the remnant what they can look forward to. He begins with a reversal of the events that took place because of the rebellion at Babel. A complete reversal of Genesis 11:1-9.

Zephaniah 3:9

“For then I will restore to the peoples pure lips, So that all of them may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him shoulder to shoulder.” (NASB 2020)

What are we talking about here. When Christ returns there will be a lot of changes, one language would make sense, what language is it?

We get a hint from the pseudepigraphal book of Jubilees. “In Jubilees 12:25–27, the claim is put forth that Hebrew was the original language of creation and that when God called Abraham out of Ur he needed to be supernaturally enabled to understand it.” (Heiser 2018, 158)

Jubilees 12:25-27

Then the Lord God said to me, “Open his mouth and his ears to hear and speak with his tongue in the revealed language.” For from the day of the Collapse it had disappeared from the mouth(s) of all humanity. I opened his mouth, ears, and lips and began to speak Hebrew with him—in the language of the creation. He took his fathers’ books—they were written in Hebrew—and copied them. From that time he began to study them, while I was telling him everything that he was unable (to understand). He studied them throughout the six rainy months. (VanderKam 2020, 52)

“This passage along with other elements in Jubilees suggests that the original language in Eden was Hebrew. In fact, the author of this work apparently believed “God used Hebrew to call the universe into existence [and] every living creature originally spoke Hebrew.” This included animals: on the day God expelled Adam and Eve from Eden, “the mouth of all the beasts and cattle and birds and whatever walked or moved was stopped from speaking because all of them used to speak with one another with one speech and one language” (Jubilees 3:29). The implication is that angels, as created beings in service to God, therefore spoke Hebrew.” (Heiser 2018, 159)

Zephaniah seems to lock that down for us. The planet, under the administration of King Jesus, will speak one language, Hebrew. The folks living in Qumran sure thought so.

#### **Dead Sea Scroll 4Q464**

3 [...] servant 4 [...] in one 5 [...] confused 6 [...] to Abraha{ra}m 7 [...] for ever, for he 8 [...] ... the holy language 9 [... Zeph 3:9 I will make] the peoples pure of speech 10 [...] Blank (Martinez and Tigchelaar 1997-1998, 943)

Zephaniah 3:10–11

““From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, My dispersed ones, Will bring My offerings. On that day you will feel no shame Because of all your deeds By which you have rebelled against Me; For then I will remove from your midst Your proud, arrogant ones, And you will never again be haughty On My holy mountain.” (NASB 2020)

The remnant, which has experienced the shame caused by their fellow Jews, will not have to deal with that ever again. As the beginning of the Millennium sees His people coming to worship from far away, the proud, they will discover, are not there any longer.



The vision of the prophet is still a universal one in which people of foreign nations will come and worship and bring or send sacrifices to honour YHWH. (Snyman 2020, 133)

The status quo that has existed in the past in Jerusalem, is gone forever.

Zephaniah 3:12–13

“But I will leave among you A humble and lowly people, And they will take refuge in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel will do no wrong And tell no lies, Nor will a deceitful tongue Be found in their mouths; For they will feed and lie down With no one to frighten them.” (NASB 2020)

This is the Jerusalem that the remnant has been longing for, the one they have waited for.

Zephaniah 3:14–20

“Shout for joy, daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, Israel! Rejoice and triumph with all your heart, Daughter of Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away His judgments against you, He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; You will no longer fear disaster. On that day it will be said to Jerusalem: ‘Do not be afraid, Zion; Do not let your hands fall limp. The LORD your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will rejoice over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.’ “I will gather those who are worried about the appointed feasts— They came from you, Zion; The disgrace of exile is a burden on them. Behold, I am going to deal at that time With all your oppressors; I will save those who limp And gather the scattered, And I will turn their shame into praise and fame In all the earth. At that time I will bring you in, Even at the time when I gather you together; Indeed, I will make you famous and praiseworthy Among all the peoples of the earth, When I restore your fortunes before your eyes,” Says the LORD.” (NASB 2020)

The command now is to rejoice, and the reason is God has redeemed His people. In the scripture, the appropriate response to the redemptive work of God is for His people to throw a party.

The remnant is told to shout for joy, to shout in triumph, to rejoice and party down, and to do so loudly. “What’s more, this is not just a momentary celebration. The understanding here is that this is their new way of life.” (Fries, Rummage and Gallaty 2015, 40)

Around the clock worship and praise in and around Jerusalem. The exciting news, the judgments have been taken away, all the enemies are gone, and the King now lives with them.

With the events of Zechariah 14 and Revelation 19 now in the past, Messiah is on the throne. He returned with His armies and there is no reason to fear ever again.

And here is the thing, the people are not the only one's partying.

Zephaniah 3:17

“The LORD your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will rejoice over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.” (NASB 2020)

From the Temple complex, where the King Jesus and the Father are, comes the sound of joy and rejoicing, and it is coming from the Lord.

The fall has been reversed, God is with us and our redeemer, Jesus Christ is on the throne. Everything we have studied, hoped for, lived for is now suddenly and completely fulfilled. And it is only just beginning.

What we are talking about here at the beginning of the millennial reign and rule of Jesus Christ is unimaginable joy. The Father is celebrating, all His prodigals that came to their senses are there with Him. “He knows the most about joyful singing, and models exulting for His people.” (Rosscup 2008, 1403)



Again, consider why it is God is rejoicing and singing. It is because you and I took John 3:16 seriously.

That Almighty God should derive delight from his own creation is significant in itself. But that the Holy One should experience ecstasy over the sinner is incomprehensible. God breaking out in singing! God joyful with delight! All because of you. (Robertson 1990, 340)

I do not think it will be very quiet that day...and I can't wait.

Zephaniah 3:18–20

“I will gather those who are worried about the appointed feasts— They came from you, Zion; The disgrace of exile is a burden on them. Behold, I am going to deal at that time With all your oppressors; I will save those who limp And gather the scattered, And I will turn their shame into praise and fame In all the earth. At that time I will bring you in, Even at the time when I gather you together; Indeed, I will make you famous and praiseworthy Among all the peoples of the earth, When I restore your fortunes before your eyes,” Says the LORD.” (NASB 2020)

No more sorrow over missing a feast, God is regathering all His people back to Israel. The oppressors, globally, are now all gone. God is restoring His people to their land that He promised them. “This will all happen before her very eyes. In the Millennium, Israel will possess her land as God promised (Gen. 12:1–7; 13:14–17; 15:7–21; 17:7–8), and the Messiah, Israel’s King, will establish His kingdom and will reign (2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:3–4; Isa. 9:6–7; Dan. 7:27; Zeph. 3:15).” (Hannah 1985, 1534)

Zephaniah has taken us all the way to the final judgement of sin just prior to the beginning of the eternal state. He has pointed out the need to deal with the nations and their sin as well as his own people Judah. But he concludes his short book with the joy and glory believers will experience as we join in worship and praise at the beginning of the rule of the King, Jesus Christ.

I hope all who are listening and watching will be there. It is so easy and so hard at the same time to make sure you are there. The hard part, giving up on self. The easy part, trusting Him.

Romans 3:21 – 24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9 – 13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

### **ABC’s of Salvation**

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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