

Commentary on Zephaniah Chapter 3, by Chuck Smith 7.10.24

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May memory verse Romans 6:8 (NKJV)

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

June memory verse Romans 6:9 (NKJV)

knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more.

Death no longer has dominion over Him.

July memory verse Romans 6:10 (NKJV)

For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.

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Now the Lord speaks against Jerusalem.

Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! She obeyed not the voice; she receive not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God ([Zep 3:1-2](#)).

So God's indictment against her: she wouldn't listen, she wouldn't obey, she wouldn't receive correction, she wouldn't trust in the Lord, she would not draw near to God.

Her princes within her are as roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law ([Zep 3:3-4](#)).

Now we find that these are much the same indictments that Jeremiah was bringing against the nation and against Jerusalem in his prophecy. You remember how Jeremiah had a hard time with these false prophets who were coming to the king and saying, "Oh, king, you're gonna be pushing the Babylonians all over the place. They won't come near here" and all. And how that they were conspiring against Jeremiah because he dared to stand up and tell the truth. So here Zephaniah speaks of their prophets: they're light and treacherous persons, their priests have polluted the sanctuary, they've done violence to the law.

The just LORD is in the midst thereof; and he will not do iniquity: every morning does he bring his judgment to light, he fails not; but the unjust does not know shame. I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passes by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, there is no inhabitant. I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut

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off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted their doings ([Zep 3:5-7](#)).

God intends, actually, that judgment be for correction, first of all. When we start getting out of line, God oftentimes brings judgment in the form of chastisement into our lives. The purpose of it is to turn us back to God. But it's tragic that so many people, when God is bringing the rod of chastisement, will oftentimes rebel against the Lord, and thus, their condition only worsens. But the Lord said, "When My judgments are in the land, it will cause My people to turn to righteousness." A true child of God, when he begins to see the judgments, turns to God. But here the Lord speaks of His judgments and how that they just corrupted themselves all the more.

Therefore ([Zep 3:8](#))

Now we go out to the future, the great judgment of the nations which is coming.

wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation ([Zep 3:8](#)),

As we told you, the word indignation in the Old Testament is the equivalent of the Great Tribulation of the New Testament. So here God is speaking of the Great Tribulation period as He gathers the nations. Of course, gathering them into the great valley of Megiddo for the great battle of Armageddon. "Where I will pour out upon them all my indignation, even all My fierce anger."

for the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent ([Zep 3:8-9](#)).

Now, originally man all spoke one language. But at the tower of Babel, as men through tremendous scientific progress were building these communication towers, for extra stellar communication, to communicate with people in space, to learn from those in space. You remember as the Lord looked upon the scene of the building of the tower of Babel, He spoke of how that men gathering themselves together had advanced so far in their technology, that nothing that they determined to do could be withheld from them. So in order to thwart man from his devious plans, God brought the confusion of tongues, and the separation then into ethnic groups by language throughout the world. Now the day is coming when we're going to speak a pure language again.

I found it quite interesting when our Hebrew guide told us that there were no swear words in Hebrew. If a Jew wants to swear, he has to use English. They have no swear words in Hebrew. We were in the Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus, and we heard this doctor talking in Hebrew. As he was talking to his colleagues, he let out a series of oaths that I understood in English. So I turned to my wife, and I said, "I guess it is true, the only way they can swear is in English." Of course, he got very embarrassed, but I

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thought that was quite interesting. A language in which there are no swear words. Perhaps that is the pure language. "But the Lord will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent," or with one voice.

From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring my offering. In that day shall thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. And the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none will make them afraid ([Zep 3:10-13](#)).

Now notice again the sequence, God's judgment, the indignation that is going to come, but followed by the new age; the one language, the restoration of the earth to God's order, and God's plan. Of course, then going on into verse 14, the glorious day of the Lord, the day that the Lord comes and establishes His kingdom upon the earth.

Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. For the LORD has taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out your enemy: the King of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: and thou shalt see evil no more ([Zep 3:14-15](#)).

That glorious day when Jesus comes and reigns, the Lord dwelling in the midst of His people once again, even as He did when He was upon the earth two thousand years ago. The word made flesh and dwelt among us. He was in the world, the world was made by Him, but the world knew Him not. He came to His own, but His own received Him not. So the Lord dwelling in the midst of the people, the rejoicing, the singing, the glory of that wonderful day.

And in that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Don't fear: and to Zion, Let not thy hands be slack. For 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 ([Zep 3:16-17](#)).

So the attention is drawn now to the Lord in the midst of His people. First of all, His mighty power is made mention. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty." Then His work, "He will save."

Really, the world today is in dire need of salvation. Man has gone just about as far as he can go without destroying everything. Man presently is spending one trillion dollars a year on military weapons. It's bankrupting the whole world. Our economy is bankrupt. The Russians' economy is bankrupt. Because we are spending so much money in our military budgets, we are bankrupting our world. A hundred and three billion dollars of deficit spending on this year alone for the defense projects. In fact, we're spending even

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more than that for defense. They have asked for one trillion dollars for defense over the next five years. It just boggles your mind. You can't even think in numbers like that. Even if you wanted to count to a billion, it would take you nineteen years day and night counting at a hundred a minute. A hundred and three billion dollars that they don't have, they're spending.

Now, I don't recommend you go out and write checks on funds you don't have. It's a crime, punishable by imprisonment. Yet, our government is doing exactly that, writing phony checks. Actually, they're printing phony money and passing it off on you. It used to be that the currency was covered by gold. They had gold notes. Then it was covered by silver, and they had silver notes. You noticed on the old silver notes, it was redeemable in silver. But a few years ago they called in all the silver notes. The gold notes in effect said, "We owe you twenty dollars in gold." The silver notes said in effect, "We owe you ten," or "twenty," or "five dollars in silver." Now the notes that they give you, the Federal Reserve notes, they're not backed by anything. So in reality, it says, "We owe you nothing." Sad state of affairs. Oh, how the world needs saving. Unfortunately, government can't save us. In fact, it is government that is burying us, destroying us. We can't afford government anymore. Government has become too expensive. The same is true around the world.

Only one hope for this whole sick world. From a sociological standpoint, we look at the sociological sickness of the world, we look at the sociological sickness in the United States. We see the epidemic crime levels. We see the assaults, the murders, the rapes. No solution, no answer. We need a Savior.

Now there is coming a false savior. A man who is going to have all kinds of novel, new ideas, who will seemingly save the economy for a time. Who will solve much of the social evils, because so many of the crimes involve money. All of the convenience stores that are robbed every night, the service stations that are robbed, and pockets that are picked and purses that are snatched, or goods that are heisted, and it all involves a monetary exchange. A guy rips off your television set and all so that he can go and sell it quickly for some money. Gives it to a fence, and he gets money, and it's all this thing of money.

So this man is gonna come up with a fantastic solution to the social problems, many of them of a crime, by eliminating money completely. By assigning every one a mark, recognizable by a computer scanner. A mark that will be placed in the right hand or in the forehead of everybody. No one will be able to buy or sell unless they have this mark. Did you read this week in the paper where they figure that there is between eighty and a hundred billion dollars of unpaid taxes every year from people who are skimming off the top? The government is gonna have to do something, and what better thing can you do than to get rid of money, and say, "All right if you want to buy or sell, you'll have to use the mark. No one buys or sells without a mark." That way they'll know every asset that you have. You won't be able to dispose of them, except that mark is used. All the exchanging will be done through the use of the mark, which, of course, will have your monetary equivalent within the computer bank, stored within the computer system.

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Immediately all of the crimes involving money will be over. You can't hold up... it's all in the computer. Of course, there'll be then people who will be developing ways of tapping into the computer and all, but nonetheless, it's gonna change the crime. It'll take a while for people to figure the new system, at least three and a half years.

So he'll come up with some economic solutions, he'll come up with some sociological solutions. All of the world is gonna begin to hail this man as its leader, as its savior. The false Messiah, the antichrist. He will even befriend the Jewish nation; make a covenant with them, whereby they will be able to rebuild their temple on the temple mount. All of these things are in order today.

How the world needs to be saved. The only hope is Jesus Christ. This man who pretends to be a savior, who the world thinks is a savior, is only going to ultimately plunge the world into the greatest chaos the world has ever known. For three and a half years it's gonna look like peaches and cream, and then the cream is gonna sour and things are gonna really go bad.

"The Lord thy God in the midst of thee," but Jesus is then coming. He's gonna set up His kingdom; He's gonna dwell in the midst of the people. What rejoicing, what singing, what joy in those days. "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." The Lord is gonna be singing a love song to you.

I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. Behold, at that time, I will undo all that afflict thee: I will save her that halteth, I will gather her that was driven out; I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time I will bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all the people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD ([Zep 3:18-20](#)).

So the future blessing upon the nation of Israel in the glorious Kingdom Age closes the prophecy of Zephaniah.

Prayer Requests

Unspoken