

Zephaniah: The Day of the Lord is Near

God spoke to Zephaniah and gave him a message to speak. Zephaniah was called to proclaim a message about _____. He wasn't called to make people feel good or tickle people's ears. In the last days, God made it clear that people would request preachers/teachers who agreed to speak a compromised message. In 2 Tim. 4:1-5, Paul said, "*I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: **preach the word**; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having **itching ears** they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*" Preaching God's _____ God's _____ isn't an easy call or assignment!

Prophets are known in different ways. Jeremiah is known as the _____ prophet; Jonah is known as the _____ prophet; and Zephaniah is known as the prophet of ***the day of the Lord***.

Many people believe the message of judgment has no place in today's _____. Jesus loved people; He showered people with grace; and He modeled compassion and mercy. Did Jesus talk about judgment? Did He rebuke people? Did He let people walk away? In Matthew 19, Jesus interacted with a rich young man. Jesus gave the young man clear _____ to his _____. Matthew 19:22 says, "*When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*" Jesus didn't compromise, negotiate, or reconsider His message. He allowed the young man to _____. It's hard in church ministry to let people walk away.

Zephaniah means "_____." As the day of the Lord draws near, He will "hide" a remnant of people. These people will be faithful and devoted. There is a major _____ between the "Lord's Day" and "The Day of the Lord." The Lord's Day is the day that Jesus overcame the grave. He walked out of the grave on a Sunday morning. It's the day that believers gather together and worship the Risen Savior. However, "The Day of the Lord" is the day that God unleashes His divine judgment. In reference to this day, Zephaniah proclaimed, "*I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth, declares the Lord*" (Zeph. 1:2). You and I can't begin to comprehend the magnitude of that day.

Matthew 24:29-31 – "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds,*

from one end of heaven to the other.”

2 Thessalonians 5:1-6 – Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.

Zephaniah talked about many nations in chapter two. What’s the meaning behind the various nations? Those nations are no longer in existence. However, God’s Word is _____ and _____ about them. Those nations symbolize independence, stubbornness, arrogance, and pride.

As “the day of the Lord draws near,” He promises to bring _____ out of pain, _____ out of hurt, and _____ out of sorrow. As we contemplate “the day of the Lord” and painful days now, let’s focus on Zeph. 3:17. The prophet said, “The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.”

- The Lord is _____ us.
- The Lord is the One who _____.
- The Lord rejoices over us with _____.
- The Lord calms our lives by His _____.
- The Lord covers us with loud _____.

How should you and I live as “the day of the Lord” draws near?

- _____ and _____ in proclaiming God’s truth.
- _____ and _____ in sharing Jesus Christ.
- _____ and _____ in discerning the times.
- _____ and _____ in following God’s leadership.
- _____ and _____ in welcoming the Lord’s return.

How do you and I guard against disobedience, complacency, pride, stubbornness, and independence?

Psalm 139: 23-24 – Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

As “the day of the Lord” draws near, let’s pray for our walk with Jesus to be _____, _____, _____, and _____.

Zephaniah: The Day of the Lord is Near

God spoke to Zephaniah and gave him a message to speak. Zephaniah was called to proclaim a message about **God's judgment**. He wasn't called to make people feel good or tickle people's ears. In the last days, God made it clear that people would request preachers/teachers who agreed to speak a compromised message. In 2 Tim. 4:1-5, Paul said, *"I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: **preach the word**; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having **itching ears** they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."* Preaching God's **message** God's **way** isn't an easy call or assignment!

Prophets are known in different ways. Jeremiah is known as the **weeping** prophet; Jonah is known as the **rebellious** prophet; and Zephaniah is known as the prophet of **the day of the Lord**.

Many people believe the message of judgment has no place in today's **ministry**. Jesus loved people; He showered people with grace; and He modeled compassion and mercy. Did Jesus talk about judgment? Did He rebuke people? Did He let people walk away? In Matthew 19, Jesus interacted with a rich young man. Jesus gave the young man clear **answers** to his **questions**. Matthew 19:22 says, *"When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."* Jesus didn't compromise, negotiate, or reconsider His message. He allowed the young man to **walk away**. It's hard in church ministry to let people walk away.

Zephaniah means "**hidden of the Lord**." As the day of the Lord draws near, He will "hide" a remnant of people. These people will be faithful and devoted. There is a major **difference** between the "Lord's Day" and "The Day of the Lord." The Lord's Day is the day that Jesus overcame the grave. He walked out of the grave on a Sunday morning. It's the day that believers gather and worship the Risen Savior. However, "The Day of the Lord" is the day that God unleashes His divine judgment. In reference to this day, Zephaniah proclaimed, *"I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth, declares the Lord"* (Zeph. 1:2). You and I can't begin to comprehend the magnitude of that day.

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Zephaniah talked about many nations in chapter two. What’s the meaning behind the various nations? Those nations are no longer in existence. God’s Word about the nations is **literal** and **symbolic**. Those nations symbolize independence, stubbornness, arrogance, and pride.

As “the day of the Lord draws near,” He promises to bring **peace** out of pain, **hope** out of hurt, and **singing** out of sorrow. As we contemplate “the day of the Lord” and painful days now, let’s focus on Zeph. 3:17. The prophet said, “*The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.*”

- The Lord is **with** us.
- The Lord is the One who **saves**.
- The Lord rejoices over us with **gladness**.
- The Lord calms our lives by His **love**.
- The Lord covers us with loud **singing**.

How should you and I live as “the day of the Lord” draws near?

- **Bold** and **courageous** in proclaiming God’s truth.
- **Sensitive** and **obedient** in sharing Jesus Christ.
- **Watchful** and **alert** in discerning the times.
- **Surrendered** and **passionate** in following God’s leadership.
- **Ready** and **expectant** in welcoming the Lord’s return.

How do you and I guard against disobedience, complacency, pride, stubbornness, and independence?

Psalm 139: 23-24 – *Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!*

As “the day of the Lord” draws near, let’s pray for our walk with Jesus to be **intimate, fresh, secure, and faithful**.