

September 27, 2020 Zephaniah

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Zephaniah

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Intro: Foretelling and Forth-telling

Zephaniah 3:6-20

Point:

Zephaniah 1:1 - prophesied during reign of Josiah

- this means something!
- one of worst times in their history
- he also lived during revival!
- Zephaniah's preaching in part was used by God for the revival

Background:

Josiah - became king at 8

Father Amon was 22 when he assumed throne

served 2 yrs and was assassinated

Amon's father was Manasseh - 12 when he became king

served 55 years - horrible years

2 Kings 21:2 He did what was evil in the Lord's sight, imitating the detestable practices of the nations that the Lord had dispossessed before the Israelites.

2 Kings 21:16 Manasseh also shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem with it from one end to another. This was in addition to his sin that he caused Judah to commit, so that they did what was evil in the Lord's sight.

This is the world into which Zephaniah was born. 55 yrs of Manasseh and 2 years of Amon had left Judah far away from God. We can assume things were not better until about the 18th year of Josiah's reign. This is the political, moral and spiritual climate in which Zephaniah began to speak. His message is hard. Key phrase is "the day of the Lord". It's a day of judgement.

For a brief while through Zephaniah's prophecy and Josiah's leadership, revival does come. This context of Zephaniah's prophecy helps us identify things necessary for revival:

Revival comes at the point of ...

Desperation

he lived in desperate times - Dickens wrote "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times" - at this time it was just the worst

These times made Zephaniah desperate for revival!
begs several questions:

how desperate are we for revival?

what is the evidence in our lives that we are desperate for revival?

in our praying?

in our personal holiness?

how difficult do things have to be before we get desperate?

Re-Discovery of God's Word

When Josiah was 26 commands repair of the temple
sends men with money and they receive report from high priest that the book the law (Torah) was found
assume it was lost during Manasseh and Amon
Book sent back to Josiah- things begin to change

Josiah's heart changed
he begins to lead for reform
revival comes

There are all kinds of patterns for revival, but you will not find a model for revival that does not have
surrender to the word of God as the final rule and authority over our lives.

Personal Repentance

Zeph 2:3

brings out the personal responsibility of revival
personal hope for revival
the world, america may not have revival but I can
easy to wail about the sin of others, but what about my own sin?

Judgement of God

In book about judgement Zephaniah ends with a word of hope

kind of hope that has God singing over his people!

take away: the announcement of the judgement of God and the reality of the judgement may be the very thing necessary to bring revival!

Zephaniah had hope! Hope for:

Revival

Repentance
A Remnant
Restoration

“Faith points us beyond our problems to the hope we have in Christ”

B Graham

“My hope does not rest in the affairs of this world. It rests in Christ who is coming again.”

B Graham

Point: