

Who Always Preserves His People

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[0:00] Right, you know, so funny. Anyways, there's a couple stories for grandkids' stories for you, okay? Okay, so anyways, back to serious stuff. Stop messing around. Zephaniah chapter three.

We've got two more weeks in Zephaniah. Two more weeks. Zephaniah chapter three. And I was gonna do this whole chunk, three, sorry, 311 through 13, page 668 in that black Bible.

668 in that black Bible, 311 through 13. I was gonna do this in one big chunk, but I went, ah, you know, I just think it was better to split it up because it just, that's how it split up in my study as I'm reading through these guys.

They split it up like that. I'm like, ah, maybe we should just split it up and then we can really focus and hone in on some of these aspects that are really important. I mean, it's odd for me. I'm used to doing more verses than just like two or three verses.

I'm used to doing like 20. So this is different for me, but it's good. So 11 through 13, let me take a drink. 11 through 13, chapter 3 in Zephaniah.

[1:05] In that day you will feel no shame because of all your deeds by which you've rebelled against me. For then I will remove from your midst your proud, exalting ones, and you will never again be haughty on my holy mountain.

But I will leave among you a humble and lowly people, or a meek and humble people, and they will take refuge in the name of Yahweh. The remnant of Israel will do no wrong and tell no lies, nor will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouths, for they shall feed and lie down with no one to make them tremble.

The NFL 2023 season is well underway. What, it was the first game of the season?

Oh, poor Aaron Rodgers. Some people don't really like him. First game, he was carted off the field due to an Achilles injury out for the season. First game.

Now they're fighting. Which team's going to make it to the end, right? Who's going to be without injury? And the players, they wear all those pads.

[2:21] I mean, at least that's the idea, to wear those pads to keep the players from being injured. That's the idea, right? But it doesn't mean a player won't ever get injured, obviously, or get hurt in some way.

I mean, you get banged up, you get bruised, you get beaten up, you'll soar, you'll pull something. I mean, but the idea is to keep you from injury, to preserve you.

To preserve means to keep or save from injury. To keep or save from loss or ruin. To be preserved. And in the midst of these judgments that Yahweh was bringing, this discipline that Yahweh was bringing against His people, He preserves His own people, which is what we're going to see today. The theme, the motivation, the driving force of Zephaniah is seek Yahweh, the God of judgment and discipline, salvation and blessing.

[3:33] Seek Yahweh, who always preserves His people. He always preserves His people. He always preserves His own.

You can cling to that, Christian. You belonging to Him, He will preserve you. He will keep you. Like last week you sang that.

He will keep me, He will hold me fast. I think you sang that last Sunday. He preserves His people. Yahweh will remove the arrogant ones from among His people and will have His remnant who are meek, humble and trusting Him.

These are the ones He preserves His own. On the day of the Lord, Yahweh will judge the nations. He will discipline His people.

He will save Gentiles who would become His people. And He will preserve His remnant ones, His own people. God's grace does this.

[4:40] God's grace brings up people who seek Yahweh, who live like Yahweh, who are blessed by Yahweh. These are the ones who belong to Jesus, to Christ, our Messiah, our Lord.

God's people are meek, humble and trusting Him. There are people who show the very character of Yahweh in their way of life and who enjoy Yahweh's blessings and benefits all because of His grace.

Grace brings this. I think we looked at it a couple weeks ago. God's grace steps in and it brings a change.

He purifies people because of His grace. His grace steps in and changes hearts. God's grace brings it. God's grace to just kind of recap really all of Zephaniah, the call to seek Yahweh and fear Him exclusively.

The day of the Lord is truly coming. There's the rallying call to seek Him together as His people, to know that no one should mess around with His people, God's people, to wait for Him, to trust Him and to have such joy because He gives us Gentiles His grace.

[6:09] That's what we've seen in Zephaniah from chapter 1 all the way chapter 3 verse 10. So here we are chapter 3 verse 11, 12, and 13. Yahweh always preserves His people and notice how it first begins.

First begins here. Yahweh removes the arrogant ones. Yahweh removes the arrogant ones. As He is preserving His people, first He removes the arrogant.

He removes the haughty. Verse 11. In that day, now stop there, that what day? Again, this refers to the day of Yahweh, the day of the Lord.

And we know, we've talked about this before, there's an initial fulfillment of the day of the Lord as well as a future, grand, final fulfillment where final salvation comes.

So all this begins back in chapter 3 verse 8, well actually, chapter 1 verse 7, the day of the Lord. The day of Yahweh.

[7:12] Yahweh had a plan for the world. On the day of the Lord, I said this earlier, Yahweh will judge the nations. He'll discipline His people.

He'll save Gentiles, which they would become His people. And He will preserve His remnant ones, His own people. And the first thing He's going to do is He removes the arrogant.

Notice, again, verse 11, in that day, the day of the Lord, you will feel no shame because of all your deeds by which you've rebelled against Me. Who is the you? This looks back to Jerusalem.

Judah, God's people. Jerusalem will not feel shame anymore for her past sins for rebelling against Yahweh. Look at chapter 3 verse 1.

Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled the Tyranical city. Remember, we talked about this a couple weeks ago. This is Jerusalem, Judah.

[8:18] So He's, Yahweh's saying, you're not going to feel shame anymore for those sins. And notice, the grace and the mercy of God, He grants that to them. He says, in that day, you will feel no shame because of all your deeds by which you've rebelled against Me.

For then, notice, I will remove from your midst your proud, exalting ones. What will Yahweh do for His people? He will remove those who are proud, arrogant, exalting themselves over God.

A great way to summarize sin, our sin, their sin, sin, is pride, arrogance. repentance. This was seen in chapter 3, verses 1 through 8.

And their attitude towards Yahweh and His righteousness, His grace, His compassion. They were arrogant and defiant.

But now, Yahweh will remove these totally. He would remove their haughty ones. God is the one who will do a change in the heart of His people so they would respond as seen in verse 12.

[9:43] We'll see that in just a moment. They would dedicate themselves to Yahweh and not disobey Him. So, notice, He will not allow any who are prideful against Him to be there.

The end of verse 11, and you will never again be haughty on my holy mountain. That is Jerusalem, Mount Zion.

Again, this refers to God's people, Judah, and really holistically to God's people, Jews and Gentiles. So, here we see any who profess to be His people but were prideful, rebellious, will be removed by Him having no part of His blessing because He cannot have that on His holy mountain.

comes to mind from 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 15 and 16.

For like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in your behavior because it is written, you shall be holy for I am holy. No more of those who are prideful and arrogant will be on my holy

mountain.

[11:01] He will change hearts, remove people. Yahweh removes the arrogant ones. That's the first aspect that we see from the text. And then the second aspect, this is where we get our theme for this morning's message, Yahweh preserves His humble ones.

Yahweh preserves His humble ones, His people. Verse 12 and 13. Notice verse 12, but I will leave among you a humble or meek and lowly or humble people.

I will leave. Once again, here's the remnant. Remember, this is talked about in chapter 2, this remnant here that will, their fortune will be restored.

Chapter 2 verse 9, the remnant of my people will plunder them and the remainder of my nation will inherit them. This is what He means by saying, I will leave. These are the ones who are deliberately preserved by Yahweh, who are truly His own, all who are loyal to Him and to His covenant.

So it's only these ones who will be left to worship Him in Jerusalem, Yahweh's own. These are the ones who belong to Yahweh.

[12:25] These are the ones who seek Yahweh. These are the ones who follow Yahweh. These are the ones who inquire of Yahweh. These are the ones who seek Yahweh's way of life.

These are the ones who depend upon Yahweh. They are the true people of God. As one writer said, the only holy God can only be worshipped on His holy mountain, verse 11, by His holy people.

I will leave among you a meek and humble people. Notice how His people have three different aspects. Three aspects. The first one, they're humble or meek.

Another way to translate is meek. Notice this contrast contrast to the haughty. In contrast to the arrogant, these will bow their heads in submission to their God who is also their king.

interesting, the word here, meek or humble, the root meaning is afflicted or oppressed.

[13:43] You see this word a lot in the Psalms. The afflicted ones, the oppressed ones. This is how this word's used. These are the ones they turn away from being self-assertive.

They relied totally upon Yahweh for deliverance. They see themselves as bankrupt. Which leads to the second aspect.

A humble or meek and lowly or humble people. The humble, these are fully aware of their weakness and their lack of resources. Here's the second trait, aspect I should say of his people.

They know they need God's provision and that they can only depend upon him. They do not assert their rights.

These are the ones who seek after Yahweh chapter 2 verse 3. And the Old and New Testament is replete with examples of this sort.

[14:56] Aspects of God's people here. Proverbs. Proverbs 16 verse 5.

Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. Surely he will not be unpunished verse 18. Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before stumbling.

Verse 19. It is better to be of humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud. Isaiah 66 verse 2.

Verse 2. Yahweh says, For my hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being, declares Yahweh, but to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit and who trembles at my word.

Matthew chapter 5. You are familiar with this. Jesus says it himself. Blessed are the meek or the gentle, the humble, for they will inherit the earth.

[16:21] James chapter 4 verse 6. I'm just giving you a few examples. James 4 verse 6.

He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble. 1 Peter 5. Verse 5 and 6.

All of you clothe yourselves in humility toward one another for God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you at the proper time.

praise God for another verse in Proverbs. Proverbs 16 verse 6.

By loving kindness and truth iniquity is atoned for and by the fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil. Praise God that when we are prideful God's loving kindness steps in and gives us grace.

[17:26] So in other words back to Zephaniah these have repentant hearts.

They have attitudes of meekness and humility. They depend on Yahweh for their existence.

they deny themselves according to what Jesus says Luke chapter 9 verse 23 deny themselves take up the cross and follow Jesus. This is what it means to become a Christian.

You see that you're bankrupt. You have nothing to offer God except your sin. You come to Christ you say Jesus save me I need you I cannot go anywhere without you you need to save me or else I'm going to be condemned.

There's nothing that I can do to bring before you. He loves that. He loves that. So they're humble. They're meek.

[18:37] Three. Third aspect. They trust in Yahweh. Again Zephaniah back to Zephaniah chapter 3 verse 12 and they will take refuge in the name of Yahweh.

And trusting in chapter 3 verse 2 Judah was accused of not trusting in Yahweh.

She did not trust in Yahweh. These will. Only those who humble themselves with dependence truly trust Yahweh. These submit to Yahweh because they put their trust in Yahweh.

They take refuge in Yahweh. They know life is solely found in God alone. And notice it says they'll take refuge in the name of Yahweh.

Which means all that Yahweh has revealed about himself and his character, his works, his truth. So their dependence is upon the Lord, not upon their performance.

[19:41] all that he says about himself take refuge in him. Great questions for us as a body.

How are God's people known within a church body? How are God's people known within a community? How should we be known amongst each other? How should we be known in this community?

We are meek, humble, and trusting the Lord kind of people. That's how we should be known. Oh, those are the people, they're meek and they're humble, they're trusting the Lord.

And that God dude thing, they trust him. That's what they're known for. They do not accept their rights. They don't attack each other.

They're not arrogant. They default to grace. And notice what happens in verse 13.

[20:38] The remnant of Israel. Notice, again, the remnant. It says in verse 12, I will leave among you. Here's the remnant of Israel. Again, those loyal to Yahweh, they are the ones preserved by him.

For these were called his people, the remnant. Notice, their lives display these characteristics. Because God's grace brought about this repentant faith, this humility and entrusting in Yahweh, look at the traits that come about from their lives.

The remnant of Israel, one, will do no wrong. Three negative traits, or put in a negative, will be displayed by those who have humbled themselves and trusted in Yahweh.

First, they do no wrong. Godly behavior. behavior. This is the kind of lifestyle they have. This is the trait of their character because of God's grace that's been poured out upon their lives.

This is what they display. They do no wrong. They act the same way Yahweh acts. It reminds us of chapter 2, verse 3.

[22:00] where the call is to, it says, seek Yahweh, and it says, seek righteousness.

Righteousness is living life the way God intended it to be lived.

His way of living. This is how they live. So, the remnant of Israel will do no wrong, first. Second, they tell no lies.

they only speak truth. We live in a world that thrives on lies and deceives others from social media to our own government, news, everywhere.

we just don't know who to believe anymore. We just don't know who to believe anymore. Not so with our God, and not so, at least it shouldn't be like this, with His people.

We should be known among ourselves in this body and in this community. We're a people of truth who speak truth. They say, those people, they speak truth.

[23:20] those people, they're always honest. So here are the characteristics of the remnants. One, they do no wrong.

Two, they tell no lies. Three, nor will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouths. They do not deceive others. Saying one thing and doing another.

or say one thing to one person and say something else to someone else. Look, nothing mars the gospel more in a community when a church has people who are saying one thing here and something else over there.

It's tragic. And nothing else glorifies the gospel than when a people are so truthful and they're not deceitful towards each other, they're straight out in love and grace.

That debt just magnifies the gospel. It adorns the gospel. It shines like a diamond. We should not be saying one thing to one person and something else to another.

[24:35] It's deceitful. It's playing a political game. No, we let our yes, yes or no, no. Not talking behind the back. No, no.

These people of God, they do no wrong. They tell no lies. They have no kind of conduct that cheats and misleads. They act like their creator, free from unrighteousness, deception, duplicity, that's how one person put it.

Remember the pure lips from chapter three, verse nine. His grace comes, they have purified lips. So may the Lord give us his grace to maintain our corporate life as a body in this community whereby our lives and witness truly corresponds to our words.

People of grace, realize that we're not perfect. That's why Jesus had to die, right? Takes care of that. Good thing, good thing. Purify lips, purify lives.

And remember it's done by an act of Yahweh who gives his grace to change the hearts of sinners of his people so they come to seek him, love him, trust him, taking refuge in him.

[26:00] This is the remnant. And then look at the last part of verse 13. For they shall feed and lie down with no one to make them tremble.

feed here means to graze. So the remnant is a flock. Reminds us chapter 2 verse 7.

So like a flock of sheep who have enough food and sustenance and have no fear of attacks from wild animals, this new restored people of God will enjoy the wonderful blessings of Yahweh and rest and peace with no one to make them afraid.

He says with no one to make them tremble, freed from fear, which is part of Yahweh redeeming and restoring his people.

He saves us and blesses us, the God of salvation and blessing. mercy. We have no need to fear because the Lord is on our side.

[27:14] Remember Romans chapter 8 verse 31? If the Lord is for us, who can be against us? Says Paul. And today we enjoy God's blessing, trusting he provides for our needs and grants us peace, peace with him, peace from him in those times of anxiety, of trial, of hardship, persecution.

He loves us. And notice, we can see, once again, an initial fulfillment of this passage in the first coming of our Lord, Jesus the Messiah, who is the good shepherd laying down his life for the sheep so that we may have abundant life, satisfied with him, resting in him with peace.

So you see this initial fulfillment now today, but then you can see how this will have even greater fulfillment in the future, in the millennial kingdom, when this takes place on behalf of God's people in the restoration of Israel where all of God's people would experience the blessing of peace and rest having no fear.

You see that initial fulfillment and later future fulfillment. And in that future fulfillment in that day, there will be no perversity, no treachery, no fraud, no cheating, no deceit, there will be total pure and holy living.

God's people will be secure, find rest, and be freed from fear. how true this is today in the gospel, and how true it will be in the millennial kingdom when Jesus reigns as king.

[29:11] Isn't this wonderful? That God's mercy triumphs over his just wrath? I said this in the first hour, mercy triumphs over judgment. He preserves his people.

God's grace brings a people who seek Yahweh, who live like Yahweh, and they're blessed by Yahweh. These are the ones who belong to Jesus. God's people are meek, humble, trusting.

There are people who show the very character of Yahweh in their way of life. They enjoy Yahweh's blessings and benefits all because of him being so gracious, his unmerited favor towards them.

So, Yahweh will remove the arrogant ones from among his people, and will have his remnants who are meek, humble, and trusting him.

It's good to know. Isn't this wonderful that God preserves his people? He preserves his own. He knows what he's doing. God preserves his own, always preserves his people.

[30:25] You can cling to that, Christian. You can hold on to that. Let's thank him for it. Lord Jesus, thank you.

You hold us fast. Thank you, Father. You love us. You hold us. No one can snatch us out of your hand. You preserve your people.

Keep making us a people who are meek and humble, trusting in you, taking refuge in you. We'll be people of grace doing no wrong, telling no lies, no deceit.

There's righteous living. There's honest speaking. There's truth being said.

Let us be a community, a body that displays this. Thank you that you're faithful to preserve us. so we give ourselves to you.

[31 : 42] And each week when we gather to celebrate your grace, we're reminded of our allegiance to you, our love and devotion to you.

As we will sing, I give you my heart. I encourage you, take these few moments.

Let God's words sink deeply into your soul. May minister to you. Speak to yourself gospel truth, gospel grace truth.

And we'll sing, we'll pray. Take these few moments. Silence, and then I'll play a little bit with the guitar. So you can just focus your mind on the truth of the gospel.

Do that now, please. Do that now, please. Do that now, please. Do that now, please. Do that now, please. Do that now, please. Do that now, snap this.

[32 : 52] Apply this Hebrews want to ask a script.

Do that now?