

Seek Yahveh, Waiting for Him!

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Date: 03 September 2023

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[0:00] please take your bibles and go to zephaniah zephaniah chapter 3 if you need a bible the chair in front of you can pull that out black bible out there in the bottom and find page 668 zephaniah 3 coming towards the end of zephaniah well a quick eight weeks zephaniah chapter 3 i'm going to do chapter 3 verses 1 through 8 this morning excuse me zephaniah 3 1 through 8 i'll read and then we'll jump in woe to her who is rebellious and defiled the tyrannical city she heeded no voice she accepted no instruction she did not trust in yahweh she did not draw near to her god her princes within her are roaring lions her judges are wolves at evening they leave nothing for the morning her prophets are reckless treacherous men her priests have profaned the sanctuary they've done violence to the law yahweh is righteous within her he will do no injustice every morning he brings his justice to light he does not fail but the unjust knows no shame i have cut off nations their corner towers are in ruins i've made their streets desolate with no one passing by their cities are laid waste without a man without inhabitant i said surely you will fear me accepting instruction so that her dwelling will not be cut off all that i've appointed concerning her but they were eager to corrupt all their deeds therefore wait for me declares yahweh for the day when i rise up to the prey 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 i think i've told you about how i learned how to water ski i don't know if i remember telling you about how i learned how to barefoot ski i said that now it was off a boom which is a big pole comes off the side of the boat and i was like i don't know it was just a couple years ago i was like 25 you know so hey what are you laughing at um so the idea is you got a rope oh it's probably like i don't know three to five feet long and you have the handle and you're dragged holding on to this handle but you can't stay like that you don't wait wait and waiting in terms of waiting in terms of um not doing anything um staying there you don't do that what you have to do you trust your instructor so this is the part this is the catch you have to trust your instructor so you're being dragged you have to trust your instructor who tells you what you're supposed to do is you're supposed to turn and so you're like this and then you actually end up going on your back and then you turn back around and then you're on your butt sorry shouldn't say that one you're on your rear end and then you have to slowly stand up but if you stand up too fast you'll go back and then most people let go at that point and you so it's not as easy as i'm describing because it it wasn't it was really really hard

especially when you have to trust what your instructor because you're being dragged you're like there's no way i'm going to be able to turn this way but you are because you're going so fast you're going at a higher speed when you're doing a barefoot at least that's what i was told and so you have to trust your instructor don't wait don't do anything you have to trust him turn get on your rear end and then you slowly stand up and i tell you when you're doing that and you get it and i did it's a rush it's a thrill of a lifetime it's so amazing you're like i'm actually smart you have to focus too anyways in a similar way when yahweh calls us to wait notice verse 8 therefore wait for me declares yahweh he doesn't mean to stay where you are he doesn't mean delay action most of the time in the psalms in the bible not all the time but most of the time when you see the word wait it means to trust to follow you trust him so as we come to this part in zephaniah seek yahweh the god of judgment and discipline salvation and blessing wait for him or waiting for him seek yahweh waiting for him seek yahweh wait for him wait for him again from the verse verse 8 the only command that you have here wait for me wait for me wait means to come to yahweh accept yahweh obey yahweh trust yahweh and you see this word wait or waiting throughout the psalms david says it numerous times i think when we were going through the psalms this past summer i mentioned to you when we hit the word wait most not all the time but most of the time it means you trust you cling you follow you rest you're trusting in the lord that's what waiting means you come you accept you obey you trust yahweh calls

his people to his people to come and receive his gracious mercy receive it trust him he'll give you his gracious mercy as we'll see in just a few moments his grace abounds his grace abounds yahweh calls us as his people to wait for him which means we come to him we accept his instruction we obey him and trust him this is what it means to wait for him what it means to seek him but judah god's people willfully refused to wait for him they lacked shame they loved corruption yet yahweh's righteousness prevails his grace abounds but his justice would come and because they did not wait for him yahweh would judge judah his people in the same way he would judge all the nations and this was the catch here in chapter 3 we'll see this in a few moments judah acted like the nations they were no different from the nations and they would have to answer to the lord for their sinful ways yahweh said to them you're no better judah

israel was called to be holy set apart morally pure and a model for the whole world on what it means to be yahweh worshipers instead they became just like the nations just like the world that's what's happened to the church today is become like the world instead of being examples of grace love truth justice compassion community loving christ loving each other loving the word of god it's the opposite the so-called church has become selfish unforgiving backbiting truth underminers unjust bitter no sense or desire for community self-loving world-loving not obeying the word what has happened to us we need god to be gracious to us have mercy on me and we need to humble ourselves thanking him that he shows us his grace we'll celebrate that in a few moments he shows us his grace and the tangible elements of the gospel the bread and the juice tangibly touching and tasting the gospel god god has been so gracious to us so let's walk through text and I have for each of the points it's gonna start with wait for me so you can wait for me dot dot dot wait for me but judah willfully refused wait for me but judah willfully refused verses one through four notice the first word woe this is a lament this is to draw us as the readers draw our attention this is serious news because it doesn't have to do with the nations chapter two verses four through fifteen we saw that last week it has to do with those who proclaim to be god's people it's about them oh no judah was very happy to agree oh they're pagan neighbors they should be punished oh absolutely but they would be shocked that these verses was about them that they were the direct object they were the hardened sinners they were rebellious they were selfish they were greedy because notice he says woe to her who was rebellious and defiled the Tyranical city what city?

Jerusalem not the foreign nations not Nineveh Zephaniah would actually draw many similarities between Nineveh and Jerusalem that the city that should have been the model for the world to see the light on a hill the example of holy God worshipers they became just like the world just like the nations the city or God's people notice how they're identified in three different ways three different adjectives look at it who is rebellious who is defiled who is Tyranical rebellious standing against God with their disobedient obstinate behavior Israel was known to be a stubborn and rebellious generation not loyal to God they would dig in their heels

Psalms 78 verse 8 rebellious defiled personal sinful defilement violent they were stained with sinful wicked conduct that reflected the nations around them Tyranical repressive or bullying they disregarded others and others welfare they didn't care for each other or love each other the way Yahweh commanded them to love each other there was no brotherhood instead it was every man for himself so here's these adjectives describing and then notice the four accusations that come about from verse 2 that further enhanced these adjectives these four accusations brought against them showing this rebellion this defilement this tyrannical conduct just like the nations verse 2 she heeded no voice

[13:01] God's people did not listen to God's voice to the prophets when they spoke God's word to them they didn't listen they didn't obey the word of God in the Torah they didn't obey the prophets like Isaiah like Moses like Ezekiel like Jeremiah they didn't listen they completely disregarded God's word brushing it off accusation number one she heeded no voice accusation number two she accepted no instruction or discipline so in other words their way of life did not accord with God's way of life God's way of living that's true wisdom the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy

One's understanding Proverbs 9 10 they did not take God seriously who would correct their ways according to his will and Yahweh continued to graciously put them in circumstances whereby he would alert them as his people to their sinful ways calling him to repent and nothing they would not have it so she heeded no voice she accepted no instruction she did not trust in Yahweh third accusation she did not trust in Yahweh true genuine people of God put their trust in God put their

trust in Yahweh in spite of God's covenantal relationship with his people they did not trust him they trusted in other gods they trusted in wealth they trusted in people they trusted in themselves they didn't listen he didn't know voice didn't accept instruction did not trust

Yahweh remember he says wait for me last accusation number four from verse two she did not draw near to her God their attitude was not of love devotion allegiance worship of Yahweh they were called to approach Yahweh with a sincere heart they no longer wanted his help they no longer wanted his love they had no interest in Yahweh no interest in true fellowship with him no interest they would rather draw near to the world and his false gods like Baal Ashereth Milcom the stars instead of the true God all these false gods these false idols we were talking about idolatry in the first hour these are the accusations against God's supposed people those who called themselves his followers they called themselves seekers but their lives showed otherwise in spite of the true prophets and the faithful priests telling them the truth and what they needed to hear they refused Judah refused and because they refused God would shut them down and yet know this God always has a remnant who did truly seek him and follow him but the vast majority of these were fakers so he would discipline them severely look how this refusal it continued on and actually you see it with their kings with their prophets with their priests with those in the civil authority like the kings the princes and the judges with those who were the prophets and with those who were the priests look at verse 3 her princes within her are roaring lions her judges are wolves at evening they leave nothing for the morning Jesus Christ was is he is our Lord who is the true final perfect prophet priest and king praise his name but these were fakers this is why we needed

Christ to come so I we needed the true prophet priest and king and Christ Jesus he's the fulfillment of that because notice the fakers the four groups of leaders influenced the people first the civil authorities they were like lions ready to pounce instead of protecting the people and providing leadership making the people safe they preyed upon them look at what it says about the judges they were like wolves they left nothing at daybreak they totally devoured them they were greedy they were full of covetousness they wanted to extract from God's people taking whatever they could from them which tells us true good leaders protect God's people true good leaders protect God's people look at verse 4 her prophets are reckless treacherous men they're reckless undisciplined only given words of deception not God's true word they did not give the whole counsel of [18:55] God only given what the people wanted and spoke from their own minds they did not give true revelation they did not give the true revelation on top of that they actually promoted rebellion and apostasy against God says one writer that's how reckless they were but true good leaders honestly teach God's word to God's people and true good leaders promote trust and obedience among God's people that's what you see with Christ Jesus our Lord did that our Lord was that one who taught God's word our Lord is the one who protects his people our Lord is the one who promotes trusting and obedience to the Lord notice the priests again verse 4 her priests have profaned the sanctuary they have done violence to the law the priests were to teach the people the law and making sure the sanctuary was kept holy and pure but these have profaned the sanctuary and did not teach the law to Yahweh's people instead of being the guardians of his word they undermined it and then replaced it remember this was before they had found the book of the law remember some priest probably put his feet upon as it was a foot rest oh look at this oh look we found this king what's this that's the book of the law oh my goodness we haven't been doing any of this stuff they weren't even reading it it was they're collecting dust but true good leaders what do they do they they bolster

God's word and regard his people holy and pure because the church God's people we are the sanctuary they don't undermine it they don't profane it and I'll tell you who these leaders were the people imitated and yet conversely speaking who the people were was reflected in their leaders I'll tell you no amounts of reform would bring what was truly needed they needed a heart change that's what they needed they needed a heart change so wait on him but Judah refused there's the next point wait on him wait for me because Yahweh's righteousness prevails his righteousness prevails notice the stark contrast hearing from verse 5

Yahweh is righteous within her and stark contrast to the unjust wicked evil behavior of God suppose people Yahweh their true covenant king was righteous he is righteous he will do no injustice every morning he brings his justice to light he does not fail his righteousness prevails it stands he does no injustice and he cannot be connected to this corrupt people he would need to deal with them he would need to deal with them in the morning the judges would meet and hear cases in the morning

the kings and the princes they would hear the cases from the people but her leaders had become corrupt truth justice was gone Yahweh's standards are visible and his standards never fail notice every morning morning by morning he dispenses his righteousness it happens day after day his character righteousness never changes that's why he is the only one who can be trusted because he's trustworthy everything that

God will do is right everything that's why you can trust him the just reliable God because notice it says he does not fail come accept obey trust wait on him he's trustworthy wait for him Judah refused wait for him because his righteousness prevails wait for him wait for me he says but Judah lacked shame again the stark contrast to end of verse 5 but the unjust knows no shame in contrast to Yahweh his righteousness the people were unjust in all their ways and so bad was their injustice that they felt no shame for their misconduct they weren't embarrassed at all by the things they were doing wrong they didn't care

I'm gonna keep doing it wait for me but Judah refused wait for me his righteousness prevails wait for me but Judah lacked shame wait for me because Yahweh's graciousness abounds look at verse 6 this is Yahweh speaking I've cut off nations their corner towers are ruined I made their streets desolate no one passing by cities are laid waste without a man without an inhabitant look at these verbs cut off ruins desolate notice no inhabitant laid waste what's going on here what's being said here this describes Yahweh's actions against nations that have defied him this is what he did to these nations in the past and this will happen to his own people

[25:12] Judah because here's the irony his people acted just like the nations this is what I do to people who defy me says the Lord but yet there's no difference between the nations and Judah God's supposed people because they acted just like the nations the church many times can act just like the world it's a shame so the question is posed would history drive God's people to repent so they would avoid this same fate put another way would Yahweh's judgment on the nations give Judah enough reason to see her conduct and repent nothing would remain of these nations all inhabitants were taken so Judah it's like he's saying listen and then here verse 7

I said surely you will fear me accepting instructions so that her dwelling will not be cut off all that I've appointed concerning her the way he judged the nations it should drive them to repentance drive them to fear him drive them to accept instruction drive them to wait for him so that they wouldn't be cut off all that Yahweh had appointed for them Yahweh did not want to discipline his people in this way he wants to show grace he wants to show grace he wants to show undeserved favor should he let this go and forgive them based upon the cross absolutely not that's why it's called grace favor undeserved he wanted them to return to him repentance and if they did they'd be saved listen to what one writer says in spite of all the wrongdoings of his people

Yahweh would stay committed to them as the righteous God a repentant response from them would divert his discipline our God is long suffering and willing to withhold his anger if there would be an attitude of humble repentance his grace abounds that's why we can wait for him that's why we can trust him he will be faithful to his word come with a humble attitude and with an attitude of repentance and contrition it reminded me what Daniel prayed in Daniel chapter 9 from verse 3 and following Daniel wrote this so I gave my attention to the Lord

God to seek prayer and supplications with fasting sackcloth and ashes and I prayed to Yahweh my God and confessed and said alas oh Lord the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant and loving kindness for those who love him and keep his commands we have sinned committed iniquity acted wickedly and rebelled even turning aside from your commands and ordinances moreover we have not listened to your servants the prophets who spoke in your name to our kings our princes our fathers and all the people of the land notice Daniel says this righteousness belongs to you oh Lord but to us open shame as it is this day to the men of Judah the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel those who are nearby and those who are far away and all the countries to which you've driven them because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against you open shame belongs to us oh Lord to our kings our princes and our fathers because we've sinned against you to the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness for we have rebelled against him his grace abounds and that's the wonderful part

God is abounding in his grace toward us in Christ this is the essence of the gospel God should condemn us and yet he doesn't instead he sends Jesus he came he died he rose repent and trust Christ if you're here don't know Jesus or you're listening to his message come and God will show his grace to you come trust him he'll save you that's the grace of God abounding wait for him

because Yahweh's grace abounds wait for him but Judah loved corruption end of verse 7 but they were eager to corrupt all their deeds this word eager means rose early to do rise up early so you can exercise you rise up early so you have that cup of coffee

[30 : 52] I can't think we're in my coffee right the idea is they rose up early so they can do evil deeds they were eager to keep on in their sinful corrupt ways interesting too the word corrupt is the word used to describe the people before the flood Yahweh gave them countless opportunities to repent but they resisted his love this is why we need changes of heart this is why we need God to change our hearts because if he doesn't change our hearts we want nothing to do with him so true and then you come to hear the only command given throughout this whole section therefore wait for me declares Yahweh again means to trust repent and trust Yahweh why wait for me and here's the last point wait for him because

Yahweh's justice comes because the day will come when he will rise up to the prey where he would testify against not just all the nations but Judah for the day when I rise up to the prey indeed my decision is to gather nations to assemble kingdoms to pour out on them my indignation all my burning anger he would testify against them because he is the only competent witness it's quite interesting here because here you see Yahweh is the prosecutor the prosecuting attorney Yahweh is also the only true witness Yahweh is actually the only true judge and Yahweh is the one who's the executioner he's the true prosecuting counsel Yahweh is the only true witness

Yahweh is the true judge Yahweh is the true executioner he's all of them put together the prosecutor the witness the judge and the executioner all four and you see that here now he's going to shut down all the nations not just all the nations he's going to shut down Judah Yahweh decided to assemble all the nations and pour out all his indignation his burning anger all the earth would be devoured by the fire of his jealousy when it doesn't say but it seems to be on that final day a few weeks ago we talked about the day of the Lord remember the final day in history when God judges all peoples Yahweh had it that day would come which looks way into the future to the day of the Lord when Yahweh will make all pay for how they treated him how they rebelled against him but what's the most disturbing news

Jerusalem or God's people would be part of this universal judgment it's all all the earth will be devoured by the fire of my zeal how sad God had to treat his people has to treat his people the same way he treats those who hate him because that's what they were acting like because unfortunately those who were called his people were acting just like the world so in reality they were not truly his people they were not truly those who sought him God's people seek him God's people seek his way of living God's people seek humility one writer he said this quote where the people of the Lord refuse to listen to the voice of God disregard God's instructions to correct sinful behavior do not trust him and are not interested in seeking his presence and worship they become rebellious defiled and oppressive when the relationship with God is neglected it leads to a decay in relationships with others and God would judge discipline them for their sinful behavior so where have we as his people where have we refused to listen to the Lord where have we disregarded his instruction where have we not trusted him where have we not sought him in worship where have we become rebellious or defiled and oppressive sad when the conduct of God's people is no different from that of non-believers and yet it's this very conduct that shows those people are not really God's people followers of Jesus that's why we're called to be different Peter says that we're called to be different from this world because we're not of this world and yet God always has a remnant he always has a remnant he will take care of them even though they may have to go through that fire of discipline with the others he will always have a remnant that are faithful to him always Yahweh calls us as his people to wait for him which means we come to him we accept his instruction we obey him we trust him this is what it means to wait for him this is what it means to seek him wait it means to come to Yahweh accept Yahweh obey Yahweh trust Yahweh let's trust him let's trust him let's stop and pray and ask him to help us to trust him we stop we pray because father you command us to wait for you to wait to wait upon you to trust in you to accept you to obey you to cling to you oh Christ and that's what we will celebrate in a few moments the bread the bread the juice representing your shed blood

[37 : 29] Jesus you've shown us such grace and thank you for the times the times where we've acted like the world you had to die for that too Lord Jesus we cling to you we come to you with open hands with open hearts thankful for your grace thankful for your your mercy toward us and Christ Jesus it's so good take these few moments if you would to ponder what we've seen in God's

word you can take this time to even begin to examine your heart know that you've fallen so short in so many ways and yet don't just stop there go back to the grace that's found at the cross and may the grace and the loving kindness of the Lord drive you to repentance and drive you to more devotion to him so thankful that there's forgiveness that's there examining your heart repeating and reminding yourself the elements the truths of the gospel and this is for anyone here visiting and