

Let's Do This! Let's Seek Him!

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[0 : 0 0] please take your bibles and go to the book of zephaniah zephaniah if you're visiting with us and you left your cell phone at home or you're not visiting left your cell phone or bible at home and you can pick up that black bible in the chair in front of you go to page 667 667 zephaniah chapter 2 jonah micah naham habakkuk zephaniah if you hit haggai zach not zechariah but zephaniah if you hit zechariah malachi or malachi you went too far so go back a little bit find zephaniah chapter 2 zephaniah 2 just three verses and yet the theme of zephaniah's prophecy is right here in these three verses zephaniah 2 verses 1 through 3 says this gather yourselves together yes gather oh nation without shame before the decree takes effect the day passes like the chaff for the burning anger of yahweh burnt comes upon you before the day of yahweh's anger comes upon you seek yahweh all you humble of the earth who have done his ordinances seek righteousness seek humility perhaps you will be hidden in the day of yahweh's anger let's do this is a website for those who run cycle swim climb or clamber clamber what is that i had to look it up i think clamber is a very difficult way of climbing something like that no i don't think i've clambered before have you anyways it's a website for those who run they cycle they swim they climb or clamber quote for the heat of the competition or fun with friends says the website end quote so they help a person find book and share quote your next momentous experience end quote they also say on their website that they list quote more mass participation sports events than any other website than any other website than any other websites in the world yeah it's let's do this dot com that's what that's the website more mass production mass participation excuse me sports events than any other websites in the world and they also quote believe that the best experiences are those shared with others so they really encourage people to sign up for these events with others because the idea is to do this feat or run this race or cycle this course or swim this distance together that's their idea so let's let's do this and the idea is let's do this together come on come on come on let's go let's do this and here's the irony they call people to do this feat run this race cycle this course swim this distance and in our passage today it also calls god's people to do something together as well seek the lord that's that's the theme of zephaniah's prophecy seek yahweh he's the god of judgment and discipline he's the god of salvation and blessing and today in these three verses it's let's do this

let's seek him let's do this together let's seek him together let's do this it's a call it's a command imploring you beseeching you as god's people of course it's talking to the unsaved but really it's talking to god's people imploring you imploring us let's seek the lord let's seek christ let's seek righteousness let's seek humility that's the passage in three sentences let's seek christ let's seek righteousness let's seek humility it's beseeching you he is calling you and imploring you a christian he's imploring you calling you commanding you to seek the lord here's another way to put the passage yahweh calls us to seek him to seek righteousness and to seek humility realizing our response doesn't guarantee his mercy only his sovereign grace which is fully displayed at the cross his sovereign grace is what guarantees anything and that grace is fully displayed at the cross the heart of the gospel know this repentance doesn't save you faith in jesus doesn't save you seeking christ doesn't save you god saves you jesus saves you through faith by his grace through faith in christ jesus alone you might say that's just a matter of semantics it's not god's only remedy for sin is his grace in christ do not think that you can use god like a puppet just because you're repenting doesn't work that way the only reason why we're saved is because god is gracious salvation belongs to the lord as jonas says god's only remedy for sin is his grace in christ and and he commands us to seek him to seek righteousness to seek humility just throw that out let that be your response but know your response does not control god yahve spoke about the coming judgment discipline not just to tell them what happened to them but to spur them on to respond appropriately with humble repentance and worship so abandon your self confidence and abase yourself before the all supreme creator redeemer and ruler it's only for those who are humble only for those who humble themselves this this is the heart of zephaniah's message this is the heart of zephaniah's prophecy is right here an exhortation seek

yahve let's do this together abandon your self-confidence abase yourself before the one who's your creator your redeemer he's your ruler this is the central point really and more or less central point of zephaniah's message calling the people of israel calling god's people to seek him let's seek yahve together let's seek his way of living together let's seek humility together let's do this together let's go let's move come on so let's do this let's seek him and this passage is split up in four different parts these verses four different parts that we'll see that unfolds for us and you see first from verse one it's respond so god has mapped out has proclaimed this judgment discipline that's coming upon the whole world and then specifically israel judah he says this in verse one gather yourselves together yes gather oh nation without shame interesting this word gather verb was used to describe gathering of straw by the israelites in egypt it was also used for gathering straw to gather straw for the sabbath or before sabbath so it could have at least two different meanings from the context here it could simply mean for the people to simply gather together like they gather straw or it could actually signal that god's people were considered like straw hard to know but either way the idea is this respond humble yourselves before yahweh repenting of your arrogance abandon your sinful ways gather together come and notice what's said here oh nation without shame interesting the word nation this word is used elsewhere in the old testament to describe the other nations not god's people the other nations were called goyim and here that's what judas called foreign nation so it's a play on words so as this this call here is to respond humble yourselves and then he says here oh nation goyim goyim

I should say god's people were no longer considered as people why because they weren't acting like it they were acting like the other nations because their conduct demonstrated they were just like the other nations it was a stigma in the community the other nations like oh they act just like us oh nation notice it says without shame literally to grow pale or without desire or longing it's hard to determine what it's meant here but yet it's clear that Zephaniah is not using it in a good way he uses this phrase without shame in a derogatory way saying this Judah did not desire Yahweh and or did not show any shame for the sins they had done they didn't desire him no shame they had no shame and they did not know nor want to know how disgraceful how wicked and how evil their attitudes and conduct were they didn't want to know that they didn't care to know that they brought turmoil to their relationship with Yahweh because of their sin so he would discipline his people severely so here from this verse

Judah was like worthless straw no longer considered to be God's people because of their evil actions and having no shame for those sinful actions that's why the call is respond respond and respond is the first part but the second part is even greater because the second part is this respond it's urgent verse 2 notice how many times you see the preposition before before the decree takes effect the day passes like the chaff before the burning anger of Yahweh comes upon you before the day of Yahweh's anger comes upon you three times he says before twice he talks about Yahweh's anger and he's doing this to emphasize it's urgent it's urgent it's urgent now the day of Yahweh was coming but it had not come yet before this decree takes effect God's judgment before the day comes fast notice it says passes like the chaff chaff not in terms of they're gonna be like chaff chaff chaff just comes and it goes like dust you know you see a piece of dust and then it just goes away you see it kind of there in the sunlight right it just kind of glistens and then it just blows away that's how fast it comes boom boom and notice twice before Yahweh's burning anger before his anger before this calamity would come it's urgent it's very urgent for you to respond

[14 : 15] Yahweh's anger burned against his people because they had because they loved other things and other people more than him greater than him totally above him he wanted their love so his jealous anger burned he wanted them to want him or as Jeremiah said in Jeremiah chapter 2 for my people have committed two evils they've forsaken me the fountain of living waters to hew for themselves cisterns broken cisterns that can hold no water they don't want me he wanted them to want him just like a husband wants his wife to desire him a wife wants her husband to desire her that's what the Lord wanted but they went after other gods they went after other things they went after other people that's what they wanted that's why it's urgent there's a sense of urgency here

Yahweh's disciplining judgment would come but only if the people would not respond to his calls through the prophet to repent and turn back to Yahweh with humility there's still time in other words there's still time gather yourselves together respond you who are nothing but straw deserving Yahweh's anger humble yourselves before this great awesome God before wrath comes so respond gather respond it's urgent before before before well we've been telling you how to respond actually he hasn't told you how to respond because that's actually the third aspect to the text is respond how three ways he gives us from the text as the word before was three times here is the threefold command seek Yahweh verse three seek

Yahweh all you humble of the earth who have done his ordinances seek Yahweh to turn to him in sincere worship loving him and seeking his guidance from his word deeply dependent upon him one worships him exclusively solely absolutely Amos chapter 5 brings this up here Amos chapter 5 verse 6 same thing the Lord says to the house of Israel seek Yahweh that you may live lest he break forth like a fire a house of Joseph and it consumed with none to quench it for Bethel and verse 14 seek good and not evil that you may live and thus may the Lord God of hosts be with you just as you've said verse 15 hate evil love good and establish justice in the gate perhaps the Lord

God of hosts may be gracious to the remnant of Joseph seek him go after him worship him see that's what was missing what was missing for Israel it was a true living relationship with their God with Yahweh God that's what was missing they didn't have that they just thought it was just a ritual you just do your thing on Sunday you just do your thing on Sabbath you just go and do your thing you check it off you're good that's why the Lord said I hate your rituals I hate your sacrifices I want you to want me they should seek him totally wholeheartedly unequivocally unremittantly I depend totally upon you oh Lord I will only follow you oh Yahweh I will only seek you

Jesus I will only inquire of you you depend on him rather than yourself you let him from his perfect word guide you guide your life and no one else that's what it means to seek Yahweh to seek the Lord to seek the Lord Jesus when you seek the Lord you turn to him with your whole heart and soul he becomes the object of your highest affections John Piper says it well God is most glorified in us when we're most satisfied with him that's why the website's called

[19 : 37] Desiring God Desire him most and notice it says seek Yahweh all you humble of the earth only those who humble themselves will seek the Lord you have to humble yourself humbling oneself involves admitting you're totally wrong and as far as Yahweh was concerned he's totally right only those who humble themselves may be given a measure of hope and grace in the midst of what would befall the nation those who were complacent and prideful would not come before Yahweh and humble themselves because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble Proverbs 3 34 James picks this up as well in his letter to the Jewish believers he quotes from Proverbs in verse 6 of chapter 4

God as opposed to proud but gives grace to the humble and then James says this therefore submit to God resist the devil he will flee from you draw near to God he will draw near to you cleanse your hands you sinners and purify your hearts you double minded be miserable and mourn and weep let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord he will exalt you exactly and he's speaking to Christians this is how we respond this is how we respond the first way seek Yahweh you humble of the earth notice he says the last the middle part of verse 3 who have carried out his ordinances or done his ordinances they carried out his commands his divine law they do his divine law these are the ones who love Yahweh worship Yahweh obey Yahweh solely they say whatever you command I will willingly do your will so it means to seek him so the threefold command seek

Yahweh notice the second one seek righteousness says there seek righteousness seek righteousness this is one's daily practice and conduct with others your day-to-day contact with other believers and the unsaved this denotes a relationship between Yahweh and his people whereby God's people conform to his expectations it's living I think I have it up here yeah it's living life God's way not your way it's living life God's way not our way that's what it means to seek righteousness righteousness or even as James talks about in James chapter 3 you seek wisdom wisdom is living life the way God intends you to live righteousness is living life God's way not our way because they were God's people they would be people who were just and righteous in all their ways in their daily conduct of living a person who seeks

Yahweh conforms himself or conforms herself to his word we seek to live life the way he wants us to live because we seek him because we want him because we desire him a threefold command how do you respond seek the Lord seek righteousness three seek humility you seek Yahweh you seek his righteous way of living and you seek humility one continues to live under his control by means of his word that's humility you put yourself under Yahweh continually admitting your daily need of him I will submit myself to you I will live the life the way you want me to live I will seek you Yahweh with all my heart and soul you will be my first love

God looks to these and to these alone Isaiah tells us this the Lord tells us this through Isaiah but to this one I will look Isaiah 66 verse 2 to him who is humble and contrite of spirit and who trembles at my word Isaiah 66 verse 2 their hearts are broken before the Lord contrite ready to do his will like Isaiah 57 15 says this is really the response to the gospel you humble yourself you say Jesus I need you if you're here you don't know Jesus listening this message you don't know

[25 : 07] Jesus you say God you're just you should condemn me I'm a sinner I should be condemned but I trust that Jesus came he died for my sin and resurrected from the dead I repent and put my trust in Jesus I humble myself and trust you Jesus God will save you come come to Jesus and he'll save you and as Christians we're called to pursue humility speaking of humility Philippians 2 have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus John 13 Jesus washed the disciples feet he says as I've done this to you you do this to each other respond it's urgent how do you respond seek the Lord seek Yahweh seek righteousness seek humility the fourth part though to this message is this yet yet look at the last part of verse 3 perhaps you'll be hidden the day of Yahweh's anger interesting

Zephaniah's name means Yahweh has hidden or Yahweh is caused to be hidden so he these words and perhaps you'll be hidden what does this mean let me paint a scenario for you so if a person admits to be nothing in Yahweh's very presence seeking him seeking his way of living and seeking to be humble before him that person will escape God's wrath right if you have sincere worship you live out God's standard of holy living with all humility before God and others it guarantees that you will not face Yahweh's discipline on the day of the Lord right no it does not guarantee that you cannot rely on your desire for Yahweh your practices your holy living or anything else no matter how sincere you are the only way one may be able to be rescued from

God's hand which will come upon his people is solely by God's hand choice because it's his grace this word perhaps is not used here to imply doubt to God's effective sheltering from wrath well maybe I don't know like doubtful if God can actually do that that's not what the word means that's not what's being conveyed no what's being conveyed is the only way you can be rescued from God's hand is by God's hand or to put a different way it keeps us from presuming upon God in other words your actions don't save you your merit doesn't save you God saves by his sovereign grace and power you cannot bank upon your response you cannot bank upon your trusting in the

Lord you cannot bank upon you seeking the Lord we must bank upon God being gracious to us undeserved favor you can't make God do anything notice how the text holistically emphasizes both the righteousness of God and his grace his righteousness demands sin that is paid for and grace here we see it's his unmerited favor he can show favor to those who are humble and repent before him and yet realize this it's interesting one writer he puts it like this quote true religion means to worship Yahweh alone and to do justice according to the commandments of God however he continues even sincere religion can offer no guarantee of salvation salvation can come only from Yahweh and I add by his grace it's only by his grace to humble oneself means you accept you've rebelled against the holy righteous

God you admit that you're wrong one admits that only God himself provides the remedy to overcome his just wrath and embraces his only remedy for sin yes God's justice and righteousness demands his punishment but he's also full of mercy grace and love he calls repentance with fruit that shows that repentance but it's based on him being gracious to you and this is the gospel we sin against a righteous just holy all powerful God we justly deserve him to punish us the punishment fits the crime sin against an infinitely just God requires infinite punishment period there's no hope without God yet God provides the remedy God himself provides the remedy his grace mercy and love is shown in sending his beloved eternal son he came he died he rose as a substitute for sinners who humble themselves before him so repent and trust

[31 : 05] Jesus and his work on the cross for your sins repent and obey respond it's urgent seek the Lord seek righteousness seek humility realize though you don't bank on your response you bank it on the very character of God that he's going to be gracious to you so let's do this together as a body to show our community that we follow Jesus show our community we follow Jesus we trust Jesus we seek Jesus we love Jesus show our community this and let's call others to seek him don't forget remember back in December we did the 2023 challenge to give one to five people the gospel and invite them to a church service continue to do that implore you to do that Yahweh calls us to seek him to seek righteousness and to seek humility realizing our response doesn't guarantee his mercy only his sovereign grace which is fully displayed at the cross at the death of

Christ there there's God's grace and his favor shown to us so that's why understand this repentance doesn't save you faith doesn't save you seeking Jesus that doesn't save you God saves you Jesus saves you by his grace through faith in Christ Jesus alone God's only remedy for sin is his grace in Christ that's his only remedy he provides it himself and he commands us to seek him seek righteousness seek humility do it so close with this let's seek Christ let's seek righteousness let's seek humility let's do this together let's seek him together let's do this let's pray and ask him to do this in us and we pray that father by your spirit do that in us as your body as your church as your people what direction do you have for us what future do you have we don't know find us faithful that one person we work with across the street friend relative and needs to hear the gospel find us faithful to proclaim

Christ that they might come to know Jesus find us faithful to seek you oh Lord bring up to us where we've fallen short thanking you that Jesus you died for that so may we seek you and seek your way of living and seek humility yet let us remember it's not our response that saves us Jesus you save us by your grace which is why we're so thankful favor given to us it's unmerited undeserved so we give you our hearts give you our soul we want to live for you Lord have your way with us

I encourage you take this time a few moments if you're not seeking him repent bank on his grace you can bank on that he'll be gracious remind yourself you must cling to Christ seeking him his way of living and humility fill your mind with the truth that we've seen from God's word this morning would you please do that now God70 God Thank you.