

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Seek Humility

(Jerry Fite)

Zephaniah prophesied in the days of the last good king of Judah. Twenty year old King Josiah tore down the altars dedicated to the surrounding false gods. He ground to powder the graven and molten idolatrous images, spreading the ashes upon the graves of those who sacrificed unto them. He burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars. Outwardly, he was purging Judah (2 *Chronicles 34:1-7*). But Zephaniah says nothing about this reformation.

Zephaniah speaks to the inward man in the midst of outward reformation. He calls God's people to *“Seek Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, that have kept His ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah's anger”* (*Zephaniah 2:3*). If tearing down the sun images had occurred, there were people still worshipping the host of heaven upon the housetops (*Zephaniah 1:5*). The day of the Lord was near (*Zephaniah 1:14*), and there was no way to escape the judgment of the Lord. The Chaldean

army was coming from Babylon, and there was nowhere any could go to physically escape the instrument of the Lord's wrath. The land of the Philistines to the West, the land of Moab and Ammon to the East, the Ethiopians to the South and the mighty Assyrian capital of Nineveh to the North will not escape the stretched out hand of God (*Zephaniah 2:4-12*).

Zephaniah emphasizes meekness or humility as the important inward quality of those who can escape the day of the Lord's wrath. He speaks to those who had humbled themselves before the Lord and were keeping God's ordinances. But because of the evil influence still around them, Zephaniah must exhort the humble to seek humility.

This lack of humility before God manifested itself in two ways among God's people. First their heart was divided. They could *“swear to Jehovah and swear by Malcam (Molech)”* (*Zephaniah 1:5*). They were not totally dedicated to God, for they honored another God in their heart. Man is truly arrogant be-

fore God when he does not allow God to have total reign on his heart. Next, self-sufficiency through material gain had caused them to *“say in their heart, ‘Jehovah will not do good, neither will He do evil’”* (*Zephaniah 1:12*). Arrogance again manifests itself when we think “good” has come to us through our own material gain. Counting our riches, we deceive ourselves into thinking God will not bring “evil” upon us. The arrogant are settled in their ways; they do not seek or listen to God (*Zephaniah 3:2*). Such will not be hid from God's wrath!

God's people today need to seek humility. We live among divided and self-sufficient hearts which can draw us away from following God according to his ordinances. We cannot serve God and Mammon (*Matthew 6:24*). We must seek the humility of an undivided heart before God. We must also seek humility by honoring God as the source of our sufficiency, not our arrogant “Self” (*Hebrews 13:5-6*). Will you continue to be hid with Christ in God (*Colossians 3:3*)?