Division II

*The Great Day of the Lord: God’s Promise of Future Day of Astounding Joy and Blessing*

**Zephaniah 3**

**Introduction:**

-The Lord is Holy and just, therefore, He must judge sin.

-As pointed out in the preceding chapters, God’s judgments will be terrible and fierce, but the Lord will also be merciful.

-In fact, His judgments will one day cease, but His mercy will endure forever.

-This is the great hope of His people – all who have ever lived and trusted in Him.

-Zephaniah proclaimed this great hope to Judah

**Part I- The Lips of all People Will be Made and Pure: Cleansed morally and unified by one language. (3:9-10)**

-On the great day of the Lord, the lips of all people will be cleansed – their speech and hearts will be made pure, and they will speak one language.

-Astoundingly, all nations and peoples of the earth will join together in pure worship of the Lord and in service to Him.

1. **V. 9**- All people will call on the Lord and serve Him together.

-What comes from a person’s lips, his or her speech, is an indication of what lies in the individual’s heart.

-Isiah’s response to God’s glory reminds us that no one has ever spoken from clean lips, not from a perfectly pure heart.

-No one on earth is perfect.

-For this reason all people must be cleansed by the Lord, for out of a person’s heart the mouth speaks.

(Matt. 12:34-35, 15:10-11, 18-19)

* Scriptures reference to the people’s pure language or lips probably also means that they will speak one language when Christ returns to set up God’s kingdom on earth.

Q) What is the Lords purpose for cleansing the lips and unifying the language of the people?

* The human race has always worshipped and served the Lord with impure, imperfect hearts, speaking different languages.
* But the glorious day of the Lord is coming when the human race will worship and serve the Lord with perfectly pure hearts and a unified language.

1. **V. 10**- All true worshippers – both near and far – will bring their offerings to the Lord even those from beyond the known world.

Q) What is the known world in this case?

* Her mention reinforced the fact that God’s cleansing would reach to the ends of the earth.
* People from every nation would worship and serve the Lord together.
* Therefore Christ’s kingdom would be all inclusive, embracing all nations and people, who have been purified by the Lord that is, cleansed by the blood of the lamb.

**(John 1:29, Ro. 14:11-12, Ph. 2:9-11, Rev. 5:9-10, Rev. 7:9, Ps. 22:27-28, Is. 45:22-23, Is. 66:23)**

**PART II- The People Will No Longer Be Put to Shame Because of Sin. (11-12)**

* The people of Judah had been brought to shame because of their sins; but in Christs coming kingdom, they will no longer be put to shame.
* Christ will wipe sin and blame off the face of the earth.
* Through judgment the Lord will remove the proud and arrogant from the world.
* Only the meek and humble – those who trust in the Lord – will remain.
* They will be secured by the Lord and will sin no more.

1. **V. 11a**- The Lord will remove the proud and arrogant

-Sin always brings shame and Judah was guilty of the most horrendous sins, sins that brought the nation down.

-The people’s sin and corruption were a grievous insult to the holy presence of God.

-However, those who were proud and haughty, who had brought the nation (city) to ruin, would be purged from the from the land of God’s judgment.

-This was not only a historical fact but also a foreshadowing of what will happen in the last days.

Q) Who does the proud and arrogant represent?

-With the proud and rebellious absent from our midst, God’s people will never again be shamed.

-In fact they will be honored among all nations. **(19-20)**

1. **V. 12**- The Lord will preserve the meek and humble, all who sincerely trust the Lord.

-No longer will anyone rebel against God, for all who remain will know the Lord personally and walk in His ways.

-When the Lord judged Judah, He preserved a faithful remnant: He protected and cared for them Himself.

-These were the meek and humble, those who trusted in and walked with the Lord.

**APPLICATION**

God has promised to always protect and restore a remnant of His people—those who are loyal and obedient to Him. In the closing days of human history when God’s final judgment and justice come to earth, He will preserve all who trust and remain faithful to Him. These are the people who will live forever and inherit the Kingdom of God.

**(Matt. 13:30, 49, 25:31-33, 2 Thess. 1:7-10, Deut. 4:40)**

**PART III- The true believers (remnant) 0f Israel will live righteously. (13)**

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* At last, people will live righteously and live together in a perfectly just and harmonious society.

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* The people of the earth will no longer attempt to fool God professing to be His followers while disobeying His word and living wickedly.
* Previously priests and prophets had defiled the Holy Temple and the sacredness of their positions.
* Rulers and leaders had oppressed the people and led them into idolatry.
* When Christ establishes God’s kingdom on earth, however all hypocritical behavior, all lies and deception, will be erased from the earth.
* Deception will have no place in God’s kingdom

Q) What will replace the lies?

**PART IV- The People Live in Prosperity, Peace and Security. (13)**

* In Christ’s kingdom God’s people will be like sheep and feel completely safe.
* They will eat and rest without fear of predators.
* There will be no more war or strife of any kind.
* Neither will there be any poverty, disease, or death.
* Instead prosperity and health will abound.
* People will no longer suffer lives of meaninglessness or despair as so many do today.
* All their physical, emotional and spiritual need will be met.
* They will live eternally in the kingdom of God and be rewarded with peace, prosperity and security.

(Rev. 7:16, Is. 65:25, Jer. 31:12, Joel 3:18)

**PART V- The People Will Sing and Rejoice With all of Their Hearts- (14-16)**

* At this point, God’s people will have passed through the judgment to the height of peace and prosperity.
* For this reason, they will sing and rejoice with all their hearts.
* In v. 14, the whole tone of Zephaniahs message changes, reaching a climax.
* He moves from judgment and doom to exaltation and praise.
* Only the Lord could make such joy and praise possible especially in the face of coming judgment.
* He was going to bring permanent peace and prosperity to His people through judgment.
* Therefore, Zephaniah called the people together to rejoice and sing, not for the coming judgment but in spite of it.
* The certainty of coming judgment was to be followed by the certainty of restoration.
* Note, also, that the prophet was calling the people to faith and trust in the Lord.
* For most it would be very difficult to see beyond the impending judgment and destruction.
* Because the Lord had promised restoration, the people should rejoice and sing in the face of coming judgment.
* Believers today share in the same promises.
* Therefore, we too can cling to the great promises of God and give Him praise even when we face great trials.
* In addition to the general peace and prosperity that Judah would one day enjoy, God’s people had several other reasons to praise Hm.
* Zephaniah noted four reasons in particular that were cause for great joy.
* Each statement was a promise of certainty, and each was stated in the past tense as if it already occurred.
* In fact these promises are so sure, so certain, that nothing can prevent their fulfillment.