

When God Shouts

Zephaniah 3:17

2/22/04

Intro

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The prophet Zephaniah lived in the Southern Kingdom after the Northern Kingdom had already been destroyed. Assyria, the nation responsible for that destruction, is at this time also destroyed by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar.

He was born during the reign of one of the most despicable kings Israel had even had, Manasseh; but he serves as prophet under Josiah, a young king who is the last of the good kings.

Though the Northern Kingdom was destroyed, the **Southern Kingdom did not learn** from seeing their mistakes and their hearts wandered far from the Lord while sin became more and more offensive to the Lord.

During Josiah's reign, someone **discovered a copy of the Law**, he was cut to the heart by what he read and called for a time of national reformation and renewing of God's covenant.

It is during this time that Zephaniah serves as prophet and so the messages of the prophet **are part of the call for revival and national repentance.**

In chapter 3 Zephaniah prophesies about a glorious time to come for Israel, but these words also apply to us because it will come about when they are under the New Covenant, that we also share.

In verse 17, the prophecy reveals the heart of God toward us in an amazing way, that the shouts over us with singing.

These are the principles in God's heart of shouting over us with joy.

I. The Lord is a Mighty Warrior

A. He is in your midst

- It has always been God's heart that he dwell with His people.
- He walked with Adam in the cool of the evening.
- The temple was built for God's glory to be among the people.
- Jesus is called Immanuel – God with us.
- **The Holy Spirit is within us so that we are the temple of God – God in us, the hope of glory.**

2 Corinthians 4:7, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves."

- When there is a new heaven and a new earth, there will not be a temple there, because God Himself is there.

Revelation 21:22-23, "I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for

the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.”

B. A mighty warrior

- The emphasis is that God is mighty and victorious – on our behalf..
- Yes, the devil is a prowling lion, seeking whom he may devour, but he cannot snatch us out of God’s hand.

John 10:28-30, “No one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”

- In His hand are power and might.

1 Chronicles 29:12, “Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone.”

C. Who saves

- Zephaniah prophesies that God is a warrior in our behalf...
- So that we know we have nothing to fear.

Romans 8:31-39 – If God is for us, who can be against us?

- **Jesus makes requests for us from God the Father.**

Hebrews 7:25, “Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

II. He is Quiet in His Love

A. Silent as to our sins

- God doesn’t keep bringing up our past.
- This is also seen in the famous chapter about love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5, “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs.”

Proverbs 25:2, “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter...”

- In contrast, the devil is called “the accuser of the brethren.”

Illus – Which should we imitate; Jesus or the devil?

B. Silent in His love

- This is the only place in scripture where God tells us that there is silence in His love.
- There is a kind of love that shouts from the mountaintops.

Illus – The Christian comedian, Robert Lee, tells of a marriage group he was in ...

- There is another kind of love that at times is silent.

Illus- There is a mature love that does not require speech.

Illus – In our relationship to God, we pray with words, but there are times when words get in the way.

III. He Rejoices with Shouts of Joy

A. There is rejoicing in heaven

- It is truly amazing to think about God actually rejoicing over us.
- But that is exactly what Jesus taught even in regards to when a sinner repents; even when we wander from Him and then are found.

Luke 15:3- 10 – A lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost son.

➤ **God Himself is our strength...**

B. He sings for joy

- It's even more amazing to realize that God rejoices in His love for us so much that he even shouts over us with shouts of joy, with singing.

Jeremiah 32:41, “I will rejoice over them to do them good and will faithfully plant them in this land with all My heart and with all My soul.”

C. He wants the same from us

- Many can't imagine God actually rejoicing over us, let alone rejoicing over us with shouts of joy.
- This is because we are bound in our shame, we know that we have sinned and are unworthy of God's joy.
- **But God does want us also to respond to him with shouts of joy – He has taken away our shame.**

Verse 14-15

Psalm 25:1-3, “To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul; in you I trust, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame...”

Conclusion

If we could only be absolutely convinced of His love, we would be completely changed.