

Zephaniah 3 | The City of God

Are you a city lover or a city hater? What memories or emotions does the image of 'the city' stir up for you?

READ Zephaniah 3:1-5

1. Zephaniah 3 reminds us that the LORD is in his Holy City and he is always at work for her good. Discuss the contrast between the LORD's rule (v. 5) and that of the leaders of the city he is in (vv. 1-4)
2. What might it look like to avail ourselves of the LORD's daily 'dispensation of justice' (v. 5b) today?

READ Zephaniah 3:6-20

3. These verses explore three particular expressions of the LORD's goodness: (i) *Judgment*; (ii) *Purification*; and (iii) *Restoration*. We'll look at each of these in turn:

In Judgment (vv. 6-8)

4. Why has the LORD made the drastic decision to pour out his wrath on all people in verse 8?

In Purification (vv. 9-13)

5. What is the link between judgment (vv. 6-8) and purification (vv. 9-13)? In particular, what is the function of the word 'then' at the beginning of verse 9?

In Restoration (vv. 14-20)

6. What is the link between purification (vv. 9-13) and restoration (vv. 14-20)? In particular, what is the function of the time markers in verses 16, 19, and 20?
7. How were the words of these final verses realised *historically* for the people of Judah? How will they be realised *ultimately* for the people of God? c.f. Heb 13:14

Apply: What would it look like to be a true lover of the 'City of God'? How might this impact the way we live:

- at home?
- at church?
- at work / school / out and about?

Pray: *That the LORD would be enthroned in our hearts as he is in his Holy City, and that his City/Kingdom would come, on earth as it is in heaven ...*