

NO ONE CARED FOR MY SOUL

The 142nd Psalm contains “a prayer of David when he was in the cave.” David, while hiding from King Saul, thought he had been deserted by all his friends. In one of the saddest verses in the Bible, David said, *“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul”* (Psalm 142:2).

Is it possible that we have a friend or neighbor who, like David, feels that no one cares for their soul? In all likelihood, within the last two years one of our friends or neighbors died unprepared to meet God. What did we do to prevent this tragedy? Did they know that we cared for their soul?

Do our children know we care for their soul? If we do, they will know it from our instruction in the Word of God. Before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, Moses told the people, *“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up”* (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

Do our friends know we care for their soul? One of Paul’s greatest desires was for the salvation of his nation (Romans 10:1-3). The obligation he felt to preach made him cry out, *“woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”* (I Corinthians 9:16). When was the last time we invited our friends to a Bible study? It seems as though we can find time to discuss everything in the world except the salvation of a soul which is worthy more than the world itself (Mathew 16:26).

Do our brethren know we care for their soul? *“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous”* (I Peter 3:8). Love for the brethren is expressed by action. Do we help or hinder the public assembly? Are we an encouragement or a constant complainer? We cannot encourage and complain at the same time.

At the judgment, our concern, or lack thereof, will be made known. Imagine the heartache of one of our neighbors saying, in the words of one of our songs, “You never mentioned Him to me; you helped me not the light to see; you met me day by day, and knew I was astray; yet you never mentioned Him to me.”

God warned a prophet by saying, *“When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; by his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth no sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul”* (Ezekiel 3:18-21).

-Adapted by David Padfield

“...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel...” (Amos 7:8)

MAKING GOD KNOWN

Text: _____

I. They Had to _____ the Unknown God

Notes:

II. They Had to _____ the Unknown God

Notes:

III. They Had to _____ the Unknown God

Notes:

IV. They Had to _____ the Unknown God

Notes:

V. They Had to _____ the Unknown God

Notes:

THE COMING DAY OF THE LORD

Text: _____

I. The _____ of the Day of the Lord

Notes:

II. The _____ of the Day of the Lord

Notes:

III. The _____ of the Day of the Lord

Notes:

THE CROSS FROM SEVEN VIEWPOINTS

From the viewpoint of Judas, it was about silver. Judas was a thief and a traitor (John 12:4-6; 13:28-29). He made a deal with the Jewish leaders to sell Jesus for the “*goodly price*” of thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12-13; Matthew 26:15).

From the viewpoint of the Pharisees, it was about silence. The Jewish leaders knew that the world was going after Jesus (John 12:19), and they were afraid that the whole world would believe on Him (John 11:48). When they could not stump Him or snare Him with their questions (Matthew 22:15-17,35), they decided to silence Him by slaying Him (Matthew 26:3-4). As you know, even this didn’t work. He rose three days later, and His apostles boldly preached His resurrection (Acts 2; 4:18-30,33; 5:17-29,40-42; 17:6).

From the viewpoint of Pilate, it was about self-preservation. Although Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent (Luke 23:4; Matthew 27:24), he caved into Jewish pressure to crucify Jesus (John 19:12-13; Mark 15:15). He sacrificed Jesus in an effort to save himself (John 12:25).

From the viewpoint of the Roman soldiers, it was about sport. The Roman soldiers brought Jesus into the common hall and mocked Him (Matthew 27:27-31; Luke 23:11; John 19:2-3). At the foot of His cross, they cast lots for His wardrobe as they watched Him struggle in pain (Matthew 27:34-35).

From the viewpoint of the Father, it was about substitution. In His grace, God sent Jesus to taste death for us by taking out place on the cross (Hebrews 2:9; Romans 5:8-10; Isaiah 53:5,11; I Peter 2:21; John 3:16; I John 4:9-10).

From the viewpoint of the Son, it was about submission. Although the cross meant shame and suffering, Jesus submitted to the Father’s will and went to the cross (Matthew 26:39,53; Hebrews 5:7-9; 12:2; Philippians 2:8-9).

From the viewpoint of the saints, it was about salvation. The early Christians saw the cross, and the blood shed there, as the means of their salvation (Matthew 26:28; Acts 20:28; Romans 5:9-10; 6:3-4; I Corinthians 1:18-24; 6:19-20; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 1:5; 7:14).

-Wade Webster

THE BOOK OF DIVINE JEALOUSY

Well over a thousand years before the prophet Zephaniah was ever born, Moses had warned the children of Israel, *“For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God...”* (Exodus 34:14). Over the ensuing centuries God’s children would prove from generation to generation their unwillingness to recognize such an astute fact as the divine jealousy of the eternal God. IT is because of that fact that now hundreds of years later Zephaniah is made to prophesy among the product of many generations’ worth of rebellion and rejection and tell them the same thing Moses had long before. The main difference between their messages is that Moses warned that they might avoid God’s wrath and Zephaniah warns because they now will suffer God’s wrath.

Twice in the book bearing his name, Zephaniah refers to God’s jealousy, one to Judah alone and once regarding all the rebellious earth. First, in Zephaniah 1:18 he wrote: *“Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord’s wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.”* Then in Zephaniah 3:8 regarding all the world he penned: *“Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.”* This jealousy, though, is not the one built upon misery and hatred but rather love. God “so loves his people that He cannot bear a rival, and must have their wholehearted devotion; and He will do everything to secure this, even going to the length of awful judgment, as here” (Robert Lee).

The book of Zephaniah, itself, it typically divided into its three natural sections. First, the prophet warns of God’s judgment upon Israel (1:1-2:3; 3:1-7). His promise is epitomized in Zephaniah 1:2-3 as: *“I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the Lord. I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked: and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the Lord.”* The judgment of God, then, would be in the whole land and extend to all classes of people. From the royalty, nobility, and tradesmen to the indifferent and obstinate, all would feel His wrath.

Second, in Zephaniah 2:4-15 and 3:8, the prophet gives reference to the judgment of God on the surrounding nations. Not only would Judah feel the anger of His jealousy but also named are her enemies Canaan, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia, and Assyria. Unto all these heathen it is promised: *“The Lord will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, everyone from his place, even all the isles of the heathen”* (Zephaniah 2:11).

Then, finally is Zephaniah’s pronouncement of a remnant’s salvation (Zephaniah 3:9-20). One day His jealousy would be quenched and: *“In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain”* (Zephaniah 3:11).

Christ’s presence in Zephaniah’s book is seen from two standpoints. First, the day of the Lord, mentioned on multiple occasions in Zephaniah, is typical of the great day of the Lord for which the world still waits in which Christ shall again appear and the earth and all works are melted with fervent heat (II Peter 3:10). Second, the great redemption of the remnant of Judah is typical of the great redemption available in Christ.

Zephaniah’s book of prophecy is one filled with purpose and principle to all the world today. The general theme, comparable to other of the prophets, of sins’ consequences is one needed throughout all the earth. When it is learned and heeded then shall the Lord God be in the midst of the world mightily and save (Zephaniah 3:17).

-Andy Brewer