

## Read Zephaniah 1

**It will come about at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are stagnant in spirit, who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good or evil!' Zeph 1:12**

Sam Jones was a preacher who became known for holding "quittin' meetings". He would hold revival services aimed at Christians to get them to quit the sinful practices that were hindering their walk with Jesus. He was talking to a particular woman who said, "I'm guilty of doing nothing...I should really quit that." While she wasn't specifically hindered by bad habits, she wasn't actively working for anything to please God.

Being stagnant in spirit doesn't sound like the best description that could be leveled at you. But as believers we have all had these moments. We didn't forget to pray, we just chose not to. We know that staying up late Saturday is going to tempt us to miss church, but we disregard the Lord's day deliberately. Ultimately it comes down to believing that for those moments, God is probably too big to be concerned with what we're doing anyway. However God is an active and personal God. He called us from death into life. When we were dead in our sins we weren't expected to do anything. But we have been called to a new life. **What is your ministry for the Lord? Do you show hospitality to those who rarely receive it? Do you look for ways to show the love of Christ to your neighbors? Do you seek ways to serve Him in your church? If you cannot think of a ministry that is yours, then your spirit is stagnant. Discover your gifts and use them for God's glory. He is real and wants you to have a real impact on a lost and dying world. Christians are people of action over apathy.**

## Read Zephaniah 2

**This they will have in return for their pride, because they have taunted and become arrogant against the people of the LORD of hosts. Zeph 2:10**

Investing can be tough. It's tough as you first begin to move money out of the spending zone into the saving zone. And if you're really attempting to make a solid investment, it's going to require some time. Many people who get started in investing soon write it off as not worth the risk. These are the kinds of people who hope for a \$1000 return on \$10 after a month. Investing may appear tough at the outset, but you have to keep your mind on the long-term goal of why you are investing in the first place.

We all have things we hope for a return on. You may be hoping on a good return on some of your money. Many people in our world hope for a good return on their lives. People often claim that being a good person will get them in Heaven. So they are hoping for a good return on a life well lived. But what does that life really look like? We know that it cannot be lived apart from God and in this chapter, verse 3 shows the people who can avoid God's wrath: people characterized by humility, obedience and righteousness. Then we see a list of cities and nations that will face judgment, and verse 10 tells us why; they are getting a return on their investment. They were filled with pride, believing they had sole control of their lives, so God left them to themselves. Pride never gives us a great return. **Sometimes I deal with pride even as I serve Him. I allow myself a few too**

many pats on the back, often from myself, as I think about how I served Him in my family or church. We can have joy in doing His work, but pride is misplaced. All our work is overseen and made successful by His hands. What are you investing in with your time and life? The Kingdom of God or the kingdom of you? What returns do you think your investments are going to bring you?

### Read Zephaniah 3

**She heeded no voice, she accepted no instruction. She did not trust in the LORD, she did not draw near to her God. Zeph3:2**

When I read this statement, I immediately thought of Rehoboam. Remember he was the son of Solomon and after he was made king, the people asked him to lighten their labor. So he asks his father's advisers who agree that the people deserve a break from all that Solomon had required of them. Then Rehoboam also asked his buddies he grew up with, who said that the people should be worked even harder in order to establish his authority. So he listens to his friends, and the kingdom becomes divided by those who are unwilling to submit and those who are unwilling to leave the king.

In this declaration of God's people, Zephaniah says that the people heeded no voice. So how does Rehoboam become an example, since he was listening to others? The point is, that he really didn't. He simply looked for confirmation of what he already wanted to do. He grew up with those young guys and they had no true wisdom. He heeded worthless voices, which are the same as no voices at all. **Where do you go when you seek instruction? Do you go to the Bible and to prayer, or are those your final options? The word of God tells us that we should seek godly wisdom and to do so from people is not wrong. But to only seek wisdom from people means there is a good chance you're going to miss God's words for your life. His ways are not our ways...they are higher and greater. As a result, we can never expect a man to give us answers equal to those of God. Examine today if you are allowing God to speak into your life, or men only?**