



Zephaniah: "Wait for the Lord"

July 12, 2026

Ice Breaker

What is one thing you are genuinely looking forward to in the future, whether near or far, and why does it excite you?

Key Verses

- Zephaniah 3:8
- Zephaniah 3:12-13
- Zephaniah 3:17
- Hosea 3:4-5
- John 4:13-14

Questions

1. The pastor described the phrase "first the worst, then the best" as the core message of Israel's prophets. How does holding onto the "best is yet to come" change the way you face difficult or discouraging seasons in your life right now?
2. Zephaniah 3:8 records God saying "wait for me" to His people in the middle of a world full of corruption and evil. What does it practically look like for you to "wait on the Lord" in your daily life, and what makes that difficult?

3. The sermon pointed out that the leaders, priests, and prophets in Jerusalem were corrupt even though they had access to God's Temple and His Law. How does having access to God's Word and community increase our accountability, and where do you see the temptation to compromise in your own life?
4. The pastor mentioned feeling discouraged when other Christians compromise, making it harder to stand firm. Have you ever felt that way? How did you handle it, and what helped you stay faithful?
5. Zephaniah describes Christ's future Kingdom where all nations serve Jesus shoulder to shoulder, where people are fully forgiven, deeply humble, totally honest, and always safe. Which aspect of that future world resonates most deeply with you personally, and why?
6. The sermon used the image of the two thieves on the cross to illustrate the choice every person faces: believe in Jesus and live with Him forever in His Kingdom, or reject Him and face judgment. How does that image challenge or encourage you in how you share your faith with others?
7. The pastor described Jesus rejoicing over His faithful people with shouts of joy over those who waited on Him during hard times. How does the idea of Jesus personally rejoicing over your faithfulness motivate you to keep going when things feel discouraging?
8. The sermon emphasized that no one is getting away with anything and that God's justice is certain. How does trusting in God's justice free you from bitterness or despair when you see evil seemingly going unpunished around you?

Life Application

This week, identify one specific area of your life where you have been tempted to give up, compromise, or lose hope because of the evil or discouragement around you. Write down Zephaniah 3:17 and place it somewhere you will see it daily. Each morning, intentionally choose to "wait on the Lord" in that area by praying a short prayer of trust, reminding yourself that Jesus is a victorious warrior who rejoices over you and that the best is truly yet to come.

Key Takeaways

- God's judgment on evil is certain and complete. No person, leader, or nation is getting away with anything, and His justice will ultimately fall on all rebellious humanity in the Day of the Lord.

- God's call to His faithful people in the middle of a corrupt world is simply to "wait for Me." Patience, humility, and faithfulness in hard times are not wasted; they are seen and rewarded by God.
- The future God has promised is breathtaking: a restored world where all nations serve Jesus shoulder to shoulder, where there is no more lying, fear, or shame, and where Jesus Himself rejoices over His people with shouts of joy.
- Believing in Jesus as Savior is the only way to be part of the coming Kingdom. Like the thief on the cross who said "remember me in your kingdom," faith in Christ is the one-time drink of living water that satisfies forever.
- The church today gets a small foretaste of the coming Kingdom when believers from diverse backgrounds love, trust, and pursue Christ together. This should encourage us to live faithfully now, knowing the full experience is still ahead.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the hope that Your Word gives us today. Thank You that evil does not have the final word, that You see everything, and that Your justice is sure. We confess that it is easy to grow weary and discouraged when the world around us feels overwhelming, but You have called us to wait on You with expectant hearts. Help us to do that this week. Remind us that You will be a victorious warrior, and You will rejoice over us with joy and love. May the hope of Your coming Kingdom shape how we live, how we speak, and how we treat the people around us. For those in our group who are still searching, draw them to the living water that only You can give. We trust You with our lives, our fears, and our futures. Come quickly, Lord Jesus. In Your name we pray, amen.