

Devotion 39:

Our Father Will Have His Day

Zephaniah 1—3

“The great day of the Lord is near—near and coming quickly. Listen! The cry on the day of the Lord will be bitter, the shouting of the warrior there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness, a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the corner towers. I will bring distress on the people and they will walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord.” 1:14-17

“The day of the Lord” is the major theme of Zephaniah. Actually this phrase has been repeated throughout most of these minor prophets near the end of the Old Testament:

“The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Joel 2:31-32a

“Will not the day of the Lord be darkness, not light—pitch-dark, without a ray of brightness?” Amos 5:20

“The day of the Lord is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head.” Obadiah 15

“It will be a unique day, without daytime or nighttime—a day known to the Lord. When evening comes, there will be light. On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem...The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name.” Zech. 14:7-9

Our Father will have His day and it will be filled with judgment. This Day will be horrible for the unrepentant:

“Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord’s wrath. In the fire of his jealousy the whole world will be consumed, for he will make a sudden end of all who live in the earth.” 1:18

It is interesting to note that the major idol, the reigning false god, will be materialism. At the time of this writing, declining economic times have hit America and many countries around the world. Gasoline prices have soared above \$4 a gallon. The stock market seems to fall sharply daily. Large layoffs are announced weekly and house prices are

plummeting. Christian ministries are suffering: church budgets are slashed, schools are emptying, and giving is down. Ironically, our money is stamped with “In God We Trust” but perhaps it would more accurately read “In This god We Trust.”

I have never considered myself to be materialistic. But perhaps this is because I have never known a time to be without comforts I wanted. Now as I worry about retirement income, steady employment, and health insurance, words from I Timothy 6: 10, 17-19 are convicting:

“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs...Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.”

As I am writing this devotion, my bank statement arrived in the mail. Am I looking more to the balance in the book or to the day of the Lord? How about you? Our Father will have a day where He will balance the books for all of us. Will we show a profit or a loss?

The day of the Lord, fortunately, will also be a day of salvation. Hear some of the most beautiful words in the entire Old Testament:

“The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing....At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home.” 3:17, 20a

When will our Father do this for those who trusted in His name? On His Day.

“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen.” Rev. 22:20-21