

Our Hearts and God's Character in Nahum and Zephaniah

When evil seems to be winning all around us or when we don't understand how a good and loving God can also be angry and vengeful, we will find answers by studying the minor prophets of Nahum and Zephaniah. Both prophets urge God's people to examine their hearts and act in ways that honor God and reflect his character. They don't mince words about God's anger and judgment, but both Nahum and Zephaniah point to God as the people's only hope. We learn from them, that ultimately, God longs to show us mercy. God urges us to repent and humbly join him in bringing justice, transformation, and reconciliation to this world as *his ambassadors*.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- How do you know if your heart is truly devoted to God?
- What do you think prophets mean when they say “the Day of the Lord”?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [Our Hearts and God's Character in Nahum and Zephaniah](#)

READ [Nahum 1-3](#), [Zephaniah 1-3](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- In their study of Nahum, hosts Scott Hoezee and Darrell Delaney point out that in the long run, God will right all the wrongs and injustices in the world. Then they talk about “sneak previews,” specific situations that show us God's ultimate goal is to restore to the whole world the goodness, delight, and flourishing he intended at creation. What are some of the “sneak previews” you've experienced in life and how did they encourage your faith?
- Is it ever okay to go through the motions of worship? Why or why not?
- While discussing Zephaniah's many references to the “Day of the Lord,” Scott talks about how the Day of the Lord is both a day of judgment and a day of restoration: “God has to address sin, but it is also a day of restoration, where a merciful God heals and forgives and redeems.” How does this help you better understand God's character?
- Reflect on the three major themes Scott and Darrell drew from Nahum and Zephaniah: 1) our call as ministers of reconciliation in our current situation and context, 2) our calling to be conduits of God's justice, and 3) the importance of humility, knowing that it is God who made us and who deserves all our true devotion. What did the Holy Spirit lay on your heart as you listened to Darrell and Scott discuss these themes?
- In what ways are you tempted to act how the world acts instead of acting as Christ's ambassador?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Jeremiah 7:1-8](#), [Exodus 20:1-7](#), [Romans 1:18-25](#), [Matthew 25:31-46](#), [2 Samuel 12](#), [Colossians 3:1-10](#), [2 Corinthians 5:11-21](#)

CONCLUSION

Read [Psalm 51:1-12](#). Then, examine your heart and ask yourself if anything in your life that takes your time, attention, and resources away from God. In what ways do you need to redirect your devotion and worship back to God alone? Close your time by praying Psalm 51:1-12.

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