

WFMC Update
March 28, 2020
Pastor Daryl

Links and Resources for Tomorrow

Sunday Worship:

[To WFMC YouTube Channel for today's worship service](#)

[Click here for the WFMC Truthcasting/podcast message only audio](#)

ABF Meetings, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Café Berea: Click to Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/435901024>

Cafe Berea is direct Bible study, verse by verse, or paragraph by paragraph, with study questions sent out in advance. The class session works through those questions, with responses sought from class members. The discussions can be wide-ranging, but the attempt is made to keep these within the bounds of the Biblical text. We have been working through the Minor (or better, Concise) Prophets and are currently at Zephaniah 2. John Oswalt, leader. Also, see worksheet below

Explorers: Click to Join Zoom Meeting: <https://asburyu.zoom.us/j/278069154>

This Sunday we will be looking at Puccini's 1905 opera, Madame Butterfly as a jumping off point for a discussion of Christian hope. Focus will be on the aria, "Un bel di vedremo". Keith Iddings will lead our time. (Note: no knowledge of the opera is needed prior to our ABF time; if one wishes, the opera and aria are available in several versions online.)

Young Families – coming next week!

Home Builders – coming soon!

Finally, A Prayer for Today:

Almighty God, Our heavenly Father,

During times of crisis and international and national emergencies, our fainting and anxious hearts have no safe refuge but you. In this present crisis revolving around the pandemic COVID-19, our hearts, minds and voices once again cry out to you. In the midst of anxiety and fear that seems to exude from many quarters and threaten to envelop us, we turn to you. For who else but you can calm our anxieties and speak peace in the midst of this current storm!

You have promised that you will keep those in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on you. Let this peace that transcends all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus! May the comforting presence of your Spirit likewise keep us calm and secure!

As a result, may we experience a quiet confidence in you that quells threatening fears and rising anxieties. Grant that while fully trusting in you, we will also cooperate with you by taking all possible human precautions that help to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ who triumphs over all things, even fear and death. Amen!

(by Tony Headley)

Café Berea Zephaniah 2, March 29, 2020

- *There are two elements in this chapter: the call for repentance (1-3), and an announcement of judgment upon the nations (4-15). The placement of the latter seems somewhat out of place, especially with the judgment on Jerusalem that appears in 3:1-7. We might expect the segment to come at the end of the book after Judah has been judged and restored, as in Zechariah. However, when we look at all the prophets that contain such a segment, we find that each of them puts it at a different place in their book, depending on the larger point they are making. Often God condemns nations that Judah or Israel might be trusting in place of God. Here I think the issue may be nations of which the Judeans might be afraid and might be inclined to make deals with.*
- *The nations are Philistia (west and south 2:4-7), Moab and Ammon (east, 2:8-11), Ethiopia (which was ruling Egypt at the time, 2:12) and Assyria (2:13-15). The Philistines, Moabites and Ammonites were near neighbors of Judah and were always looking to take advantage of any Judean weakness. With Assyria's decline, they may have seen an opportunity. had, of course, been a major threat for 300 years, and now in their hour of the Assyrian weakness. The Ethiopians ruling Egypt were determined to prop up Assyria, probably in the hopes of keeping a buffer state between them and the emerging Medo-Babylonian empire.*
- *Nineveh fell in 611 and the remnants of the Assyrian grand army fled westward and tried to make a stand at Harran in Syria in 609. The Ethiopians went north to help the Assyrians. Along the way, at the pass of Megiddo, King Josiah of Judah attempted to stop the Ethiopians, but was killed. The Ethiopians continued on north and joined the Assyrians. But the Babylonians defeated this coalition and the Egyptians fled back southward, taking with them the new Judean king Jehohaz, and placing his older brother Jehoiakim on the throne. All of this suggests that Zephaniah may have been written as late as 611.*

1. To whom is the message of 2:1-3 directed according to v. 1? But who is addressed in v. 3? How do you put those two together?

2. According to v. 3, what are we to “seek”? How do these go together?

3. What does humility have to do with repentance?

4. How might the judgment against the Philistines (4-7) be intended to speak to the Judeans? Notice the last sentence in v. 7. What is the point?

5. Notice a similar point being made in vv. 9 and 11.

6. Relate v. 10 to v. 3.

7. What is Assyria's sin (v. 15, cf. Isaiah 47:8, 10)? What's the problem with that?

8. Summarize the message of Zephaniah 2, especially for us.