



FAITH
& LOVE
Church of God in Christ

Faith and Love C.O.G.I.C
Sunday School

Lesson 3 June 21, 2026

ASSURANCES AND JOY FOR
THE FAITHFUL

SUNDAY SCHOOL CORE VALUES



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ASSURANCES AND JOY FOR THE FAITHFUL



SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. **Psalm 133:1**

School/Class: But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. **Hebrews 13:16**

Superintendent/Teacher: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**

School/Class: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. **Psalm 119:105**

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SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Philippians 2:4**

School/Class: He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. **Proverbs 22:9**

Superintendent/Teacher: Therefore he says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive and gave gifts to men.” **Ephesians 4:8**

School/Class: As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. **1 Peter 4:10**

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SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:12**

School/Class: For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function. **Romans 12:4**

Superintendent/Teacher: By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:35**

School/Class: For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **Gal. 5:13**

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SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

ALL:

But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:18

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- Bible Basis: Zephaniah 3:9-14, 20
- Bible Truth: God’s intervention was required to stop the people from rebelling and to return to the Lord with singing.
- Memory Verse: “Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem” (Zephaniah 3:14)
- Lesson Aim: By the end of the lesson, we will: TELL of God’s proclamation through Zephaniah that He would bring the people to obedience; BE ASSURED God will help us through our times of trouble and disobedience; and PRAY for one another and ourselves for God’s presence and involvement in our lives.
- Background Scriptures: [Hebrews 11:29-39; Zephaniah 3:9-14, 20](#) – Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

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Zephaniah 3:9-14, 20 KJV

9 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.

10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

11 In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.

12 I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

13 The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

14 Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

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Zephaniah 3:9-14, 20 KJV

20 At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord.

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LIGHT ON THE WORD

Ethiopia. In the time of Zephaniah, the land around the southern parts of the Nile was called Ethiopia or the land of Cush. This land is named after the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah. It is not to be confused with modern-day Ethiopia, but more accurately located in the region of the modern-day nation of Sudan. The term Ethiopia is also used in the Bible to refer to the whole African continent. In ancient times, Ethiopia was often connected with Egypt and gave birth to many powerful rulers such as Tirhakah and Queen Candace ([2 Kings 19:9](#); [Acts 8:27](#)).

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LIGHT ON THE WORD

The Remnant. The remnant is the group of people that survive the judgment of the Lord. When Israel and Judah escaped capture, the survivors were called a remnant. The word also refers to other groups throughout the Old Testament: a remnant of Israel entered the Promised Land; those who remain faithful when others fall away from the faith can also be called a remnant. The remnant survives divine judgment and remains faithful as God destroys those who are unfaithful to Him. The remnant is therefore a purified group, and described in [Zephaniah 3:9-13](#).

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LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON:

AIM: We will understand how people will sometimes repent of their harmful, destructive ways, and seek to restore what has been ruined.

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INTRODUCTION

God's Remnant

The book of Zephaniah was written in the seventh century BC during the reign of Josiah. When Josiah ascended to the throne, Judah was filled with idol worship. Their rituals were so deeply ingrained that some practices still remained after Josiah had instituted religious reform. The Lord promised to bring judgment that would destroy everything in the land of Judah. However, even amid the judgment, the Lord promised that He would preserve a remnant that would worship Him.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: We will know that God is faithful and is worthy
of all praise.

I. PURIFICATION OF THE REMNANT

Zephaniah 3:9-10

After the Babylonian captivity, the language of Judah had been mingled with that of pagans ([Nehemiah 13:24](#)). The Lord said He would make for Himself a people of "pure speech." Once their speech was purified, they would call on the name of the Lord (v. 9). Purified speech is tied to separation from temptation and evil. Not only is it a sign of loyalty to the Lord, but also a behavior that demonstrates commitment to God. The people whom the Lord purifies "shall not ... speak lies" (v. 13) and do no injustice. This people will show their devotion to God by following in His ways. Even now, our speech also demonstrates our loyalty to God. [Romans 10:10](#) says "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

The purification would not be limited to the faithful in Jerusalem. The Lord would gather those who have been scattered and number them among the faithful.

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I. PURIFICATION OF THE REMNANT

Zephaniah 3:9-10

9 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.

Zephaniah prophesies that hope will come after Jerusalem's destruction. The Lord will turn (Heb. *haphak*, **ha-FAK**), which can mean overturn or change, the people's language. It will be a pure (Heb. *barar*, **ba-RAR**) language, purged of defilement.

Zephaniah concludes that this is so the people would call on the Lord and serve Him with one consent (Heb. *shekem*, **she-KEHM**). This word literally means shoulder, but metaphorically the place where a burden or responsibility is carried. In this context the image is that the Lord's people will, as one, shoulder the weight of serving Him.

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I. PURIFICATION OF THE REMNANT

Zephaniah 3:9-10

10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

The mention of rivers of Ethiopia here does not refer to the modern nation of Ethiopia, but the area of ancient Nubia or modern Sudan. "Beyond the rivers of Ethiopia" would refer to all of Africa, including sub-Saharan Africa. The word for "suppliants" (Heb. *atar*, **ah-TAR**) can refer to the people who worship a deity, or the incense the people of this time and place would commonly use in their worship especially in supplication for help. This worship will include the daughter of God's dispersed (Heb. *putz*, **POOTZ**), that is, pushed out and scattered. This is likely a reference to the coming exile. This would have resonated with Judahites who knew of the Assyrian and Babylonian empire's tactics of war and conquest.

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I. PURIFICATION OF THE REMNANT

Zephaniah 3:9-10

10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

The Assyrians were known for removing people from their land and distributing their population throughout the many provinces of their empire in order to weaken their physical unity and political will. The Babylonians continued this tactic when they took over the Ancient Near East. This makes clear that not even exile would keep God from realizing His plans for His people.

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II. BLESSINGS FOR JERUSALEM

Zephaniah 3:11-13

When the Lord restores Judah, He will remove their shame. As children who have been punished are often ashamed, those disciplined by the Lord often feel shame for their actions. However, the Lord promises to cleanse Judah from guilt and shame. Likewise, the Lord removes any sense of condemnation from those who are in Christ ([Romans 8:1](#)).

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II. BLESSINGS FOR JERUSALEM

Zephaniah 3:11-13

The Lord would purify for Himself a people of humility and faith. Their faith will not be in themselves, but the Lord alone. They will have pure speech, pure hearts, and pure actions (v. 13). The Lord Himself will be their protection, and they will have no reason to fear as they go about their daily activities (3:13).

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II. BLESSINGS FOR JERUSALEM

The Fall of Pride and Arrogance

Zephaniah 3:11-13

11 In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.

The phrase "in that day" refers to do the Day of the Lord and the rebuke and chastisement that will take place when God gets rid of those who are proud and arrogant. God declares that Judah will not be ashamed (Heb. *bush*, **BOOSH**), which means that they will not experience disgrace for their deeds. God's people would no longer have to fear and be astonished at His judgment. They had transgressed (Heb. *pasha'*, **pa-SHAH**), meaning sinned or rebelled, against Him, but He had a remedy. The Lord would take away from them those who rejoice (Heb. *'alliz*, **ah-LEEZ**) or are jubilant and exultant. This word is often used for those who rejoice in a bad sense ([Isaiah 13:3, 22:2](#)).

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II. BLESSINGS FOR JERUSALEM

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They are rejoicing insolently in their pride. One of the few other times this word is used is in [Zephaniah 2:15](#), when the prophet describes Jerusalem as the "rejoicing city." The city was full of proud people who thought they were safe because of Jerusalem's strategic military position on a mountain. The Lord says they will no longer be haughty (Heb. *gavah*, **ga-VAH**), which means to be high or lifted up, and can be used positively (like for God) or negatively (like here). This could be a play on words as Jerusalem is high up on a mountain. In other words, the people had been proud and haughty because of God's holy mountain. They are rejoicing in being God's covenant people while at the same time not adhering to His covenant stipulations.

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II. BLESSINGS FOR JERUSALEM

The Fall of Pride and Arrogance

Zephaniah 3:11-13

12 I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. 13 The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

The Lord will leave an afflicted (Heb. *'ani*, **ah-NEE**) and poor (Heb. *dal*, **DAHL**) people in Judah. These words have different connotations for people's condition. *'Ani* means to be without property and marked by meekness or modesty. This would refer to people's internal disposition as a result of their external circumstances. *Dal* refers to the actual condition of people as weak, powerless, and insignificant. These are people who would have no alternative but to trust (Heb. *chasah*, **kha-SAH**) in the name of the Lord. The word for "trust" has an underlying meaning of flee or take refuge. Where once the people took refuge in their own pride at being God's chosen people, this time they would humbly seek Him for their refuge.

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II. BLESSINGS FOR JERUSALEM

The Fall of Pride and Arrogance

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This same remnant would do no iniquity (Heb. *'awlah*, **av-LAH**). This word can be defined as sin but often refers specifically to violent deeds of injustice. The phrase "they shall feed and lie down" metaphorically speaks of them as sheep in the care of a shepherd and shows their safety and security is in God. Because of this restoration and hope, Israel is exhorted to sing (Heb. *ranan*, **rah-NAN**), which has the connotation of shouting for joy. This is no ordinary liturgical singing, but the singing of people overwhelmed with hope. They are told to be glad and rejoice, because God's favor would shine on His people again.

III. REJOICEING FOR THE REMNANT

Zephaniah 3:14

The messages in this section of the prophecy are very different from those of punishment and destruction. The Lord promises that Judah will once again rejoice. They will sing and shout aloud (v. 14). The fear of punishment will be removed and the Lord Himself will live among them (v. 15). Judah will be fully forgiven and would have the very presence of God and once again would be filled with rejoicing.

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III. REJOICEING FOR THE REMNANT

Rejoice, Jerusalem, Rejoice!

Zephaniah 3:14

14 Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Zephaniah's prophecy would be fulfilled after seventy years of Babylonian captivity. However, the prophecy also refers to the Second Coming of Christ, when there will be no more sorrow and the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge and glory of the Lord ([Revelation 21:4](#); [Habakkuk 2:14](#)). Like the people of Judah, we can rejoice because we have been forgiven of our sins. We have the Spirit of God living within us. Ultimately, Jesus will return and we will be with Him forever. We will rejoice in the glory of the Lord.

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III. REJOICEING FOR THE REMNANT

Rejoice, Jerusalem, Rejoice!

Zephaniah 3:14

14 Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

The terms of endearment God uses for His people are significant for believers in Christ. He calls them the "daughter of Zion," which is an affectionate name for the faithful and a reference to God's holy mountain. He calls them "Israel," the name for God's chosen people, not just the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom. Finally, the Lord calls His people the "daughter of Jerusalem." The earthly city of Jerusalem is a foreshadowing of the new Jerusalem, where all those who profess faith in Christ will live with Him forever.

IV. RESTORATION OF THE REMNANT

Zephaniah 3:20

The Lord promises to gather the faithful together and bring them honor and blessing. He promises them a homeland, an esteemed name among the nations, and the restoration of their fortunes. He fulfilled these promises when Judah returned from bondage.

However, a gathering and restoration of Israel will come when its name will be a praise to the whole world (v. 20). When Jesus returns, He will gather His people, and Israel will shine. This will be the ultimate fulfillment of the Lord's promises and a time of great rejoicing, of total redemption, free from all suffering.

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IV. RESTORATION OF THE REMNANT

Restoration is Promised

Zephaniah 3:20

20 At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.

In this verse, God promises restoration. The people will return from exile. The Lord says that He Himself will gather them and return them to the land, as well as He will make them a name and a praise. To make them a name (Heb. *shem*, **SHEM**) is to give them a good reputation, as the name is more than just a title or label, but a person's character and reputation. The word for "praise" (Heb. *tehillah*, **te-hee-LAH**) is a word that is often used for singing hymns to God. His people would receive praise due to their association with Him and His blessings.

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IV. RESTORATION OF THE REMNANT

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Zephaniah 3:20

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God's people would receive a good reputation and be praised by all the people of the earth.

The language here is reminiscent of God's promise to Abram in [Genesis 12:1-3](#). The Lord would restore them and they would receive the blessings He promised to Abraham and his descendants. This would all happen when He turned back (Heb. *shub*, **SHOOV**) or restored the fortunes of those who had been in captivity.

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LIGHT ON THE WORD

International Community

As in centuries past, the Lord will gather His people from all corners of the world. Many are unaware of their Christian brothers and sisters laboring, teaching, and suffering for the name of Christ. Make it a point to pray for the persecuted church around the world.

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BIBLE APPLICATION

**AIM: We will learn that God desires people to seek
after the Lord.**

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BIBLE APPLICATION

The Lord promises to restore the nation of Judah. Even His judgment is executed with transformation in view. He does this to purify a people for Himself.

Not only will He preserve a remnant from Judah, He will unite the faithful who have been scattered abroad. As Christians in the United States, we hear few reports about the church worldwide. We hear little of the Christians who are persecuted for their faith and meet in secret. When Jesus returns, He will gather all His people from around the world and we will praise Him forever.

STUDENT RESPONSES

**AIM: We will know that God deserves honor, glory, and
reverence.**

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STUDENT RESPONSES

Similar to the people of Zephaniah's day, many in our society don't follow the Lord wholeheartedly. They value some of the Lord's instructions but ignore others. Some mix other elements into their Christian faith. We must follow the Lord and put our faith in Him alone. The Lord still seeks to purify a people wholly devoted to Him. Jesus gave us the greatest commandment: to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind ([Matthew 22:37-38](#)). Let this be the focus of our lives.

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Prayer

Lord,

Restore and renew our passion for You. We are blessed to have Your gracious love and correction in our lives. Allow us to remain Your servants and bless others so that You receive the glory and the honor. Forgive us of our sins as we press toward remaining faithful servants of Christ.

In Jesus' Name we pray.

Amen.

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Next Sunday
June 28, 2026

Lesson 4

“Ignoring God’s Plain Truth”

Romans 1:18-23, 28-32