

Zephaniah 1:7-16

⁷ Be silent before the Sovereign LORD, for the day of the LORD is near. The LORD has prepared a sacrifice; he has consecrated those he has invited. ⁸ “On the day of the LORD’s sacrifice I will punish the officials and the king’s sons and all those clad in foreign clothes.

⁹ On that day I will punish all who avoid stepping on the threshold, who fill the temple of their gods with violence and deceit. ¹⁰ “On that day,” declares the LORD, “a cry will go up from the Fish Gate, wailing from the New Quarter, and a loud crash from the hills. ¹¹ Wail, you who live in the market district; all your merchants will be wiped out, all who trade with silver will be destroyed. ¹² At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps and punish those who are complacent, who are like wine left on its dregs, who think, ‘The LORD will do nothing, either good or bad.’

¹³ Their wealth will be plundered, their houses demolished. Though they build houses, they will not live in them; though they plant vineyards, they will not drink the wine.”

¹⁴ The great day of the LORD is near — near and coming quickly. The cry on the day of the LORD is bitter; the Mighty Warrior shouts his battle cry. ¹⁵ 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 — ¹⁶ a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the corner towers. Zephaniah 1:7-16 NIV

1. Who or what is the sacrifice in verse 7?
2. Read verses 1-6. What do you think the “day of the Lord” refers to?
3. What is the message here?
4. Read chapters 2 and 3. What is the message?

Ephesians 4:7-16

⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ⁸ This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.”

⁹ (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Ephesians 4:7-16 NIV

1. Verse 7 – What does he mean “grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.”?
2. Look at 1 Corinthians 12:26-28. What is Christ doing (verse 11-12) and why?
3. How do we know what our “gift(s)” are?

Matthew 25:14-30

¹⁴ “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶ The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. ¹⁷ So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. ¹⁸ But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹ “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’ ²¹ “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

²² “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’ ²³ “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

²⁴ “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out

and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’²⁶ “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed?’²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned, I would have received it back with interest.

²⁸ ““So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags.²⁹ For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.³⁰ And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Matthew 25:14-30 NIV

1. What do the bags of gold represent? Who is the master?
2. Why did the master give different amounts to each servant? Was he being unfair?
3. What things that were good did the first two servants do? What was their reward?
4. Was the third servant justified in what he did? Is there a message here for us?