

The Day of the Lord #3  
**Matters of the Heart**

**Word**

**Scripture Reference**

Zephaniah 2:4-15

**Discussion Questions**

1. The condition of our hearts often manifest in our actions. In Zephaniah 2, we see the judgment laid out to nations surrounding Judah—nations that exhibit heart attitudes that displeased God. Look at yourself and ask what attitude you have that may displease God.
2. Read Zephaniah 2:4-15. God is the God of all nations, and He will judge all. In this passage, four countries that would face God's judgment were mentioned: Philistia, Moab and Ammon, Ethiopia (modern-day Sudan), and Assyria. What did they do to deserve the severe punishment of being destroyed (v. 6-7)?
3. There are four heart conditions displayed by these nations of which we need to rid ourselves lest we incur God's judgment. The first is the attitude of self-reliance. The nation of Philistia was so self-reliant that they believed they could take down even the people of God (v. 4-7). What did God do to them? Why is being too self-reliant a problem of the heart? What did Jesus say in John 15:5 that tells us that we can not simply do things on our own? Discuss how you often rely on yourself or even on another person, even things, instead of relying on God. What's the difference between self-confidence and self-reliance? How does reliance on God manifest in your actions? Are you confident that God would say to you, "I'll intervene for you because you rely on Me"?
4. The second heart condition we need to watch out for is the attitude of being prideful. In their pride and arrogance, the nation of Ammon and Moab (v. 8-11) insulted God's people. What did God say He would do them on verses 9-11? Pride is prevalent in our lives even today. Like the

prideful people of Ammon and Moab, it is easy for us to throw insults to someone who cannot hurt us back. What does James 4:6 says about pride? Discuss how even as Christians we tend to be critical of others because of pride.

5. The third heart condition that the Bible warns us not to cultivate is the attitude of feeling entitled exemptions. The people of Ethiopia (v. 12) probably thought they were so far away from the reach of God that they thought they were exempted from His punishment. Discuss situations where people usually assume that they are exempted from God's reach, from His principles, and His Word. Is there anyone who is really exempted from God's will or judgment? What does Acts 17:27 tells us regarding God's presence?
6. Fourthly, the heart condition we should not cultivate is the attitude that assumes being secure from and untouchable by God. The Assyrians thought that they were untouchable because they were such a powerful nation, but we know from history that God used the Babylonians to destroy them (v. 13-15). Discuss where people usually put their trust to make them feel secure and untouchable? Do you think there is anything or anyone else besides God that can assure your security?

**Walk**

Examine your heart. Ask yourself, "Am I self-reliant, prideful, feeling entitled to exemptions, and feeling untouchable?" These attitudes pull you away from being dependent on God. If you don't deal with them, it will become evident in your actions. Do you harbor any of these attitudes? What should you do in order to overcome them?

**Worship & Prayer**

*Father God, search my heart today for any trace of self-reliance, pride, entitlement, and misplaced confidence. If You see those sins, I humbly ask for forgiveness and pray that You would cleanse me. I desire to please You, Lord, and I know that those selfish attitudes displeases You greatly. And so I ask for Your strength and enablement to rid myself of these attitudes. Through Your Son I am confident of victory over sin because of what He did on the cross. Grant my request, Father, in Jesus' name. Amen.*