

Zephaniah 2:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;

Analysis

Gather yourselves together (הִתְקַוְשֵׁשׁ וְקַוְשֵׁשׁ hitqosheshu vaqoshu)—The doubled verb intensifies the urgency: 'gather, yes gather!' This unusual Hebrew root may suggest collecting stubble before it's burned, giving the phrase poignant irony.

O nation not desired (הָגֹי לֹא נִקְשָׁף hagoy lo nikhsaf)—'Not desired' or 'having no shame/longing.' Judah had become like the pagan nations (goy), shameless and undesirable. Yet God's call to gather implies a window of opportunity before final judgment—a summons to corporate repentance like Nineveh's response to Jonah (Jonah 3:5-9).

Historical Context

This call to national repentance resonates with King Josiah's reforms (2 Kings 22-23), when the rediscovered Law sparked widespread repentance. However, Jeremiah reveals the reforms were largely superficial (Jeremiah 3:10), and judgment came a generation later.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. When has God's mercy appeared as a 'window' before judgment—a call to urgent repentance before it's too late?
2. What makes a 'nation not desired'—what cultural shamelessness and spiritual complacency do you observe today?
3. How should the church respond when it has become indistinguishable from the surrounding culture—'a nation not desired'?

Interlinear Text

לְכָאֵן	לְכָאֵן	לְאַנְשָׁה	לְאַנְשָׁה	לְאַנְשָׁה	לְאַנְשָׁה	לְאַנְשָׁה
Gather yourselves together	Gather yourselves together	O nation	H3808	not desired		

H7197

H7197

H1471

H3700

Additional Cross-References

Joel 1:14 (Parallel theme): Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD,

2 Chronicles 20:4 (Parallel theme): And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

Nehemiah 9:1 (Parallel theme): Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.

Nehemiah 8:1 (Parallel theme): And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.

Esther 4:16 (Parallel theme): Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I

also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

Jeremiah 3:3 (Parallel theme): Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.

Jeremiah 6:15 (Parallel theme): Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

Zechariah 11:8 (Parallel theme): Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.

Matthew 18:20 (Parallel theme): For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

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