

Zephaniah 3:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you (ba'et ha-hi avi etkhem u'va'et kabetsi etkhem)—The doubling emphasizes certainty: 'the time I bring you' and 'the time I gather you' are identical—God's appointed moment (kairos).

For I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth (ki-eten etkhem le-shem ve'litehillah be-khol amei ha'aretz)—God will establish Israel as a 'name' (reputation) and 'praise' globally. This fulfills the Abrahamic covenant: 'In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed' (Genesis 12:3). Ultimately fulfilled in Christ, the seed of Abraham through whom all nations are blessed.

When I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD—The phrase 'before your eyes' emphasizes experiential reality—not abstract promise but lived restoration. 'Saith the LORD' (ne'um YHWH) is the prophetic authentication formula, guaranteeing fulfillment.

Historical Context

Partial fulfillment: Persian decree allowing return (Ezra 1:1-4), Nehemiah's rebuilding, Esther's influence. But full-scale restoration to glory never occurred.

Thus, Zephaniah's prophecy points beyond the exile's return to the Messianic age when the true Israel—the church—receives honor as God's people gathered from all nations (1 Peter 2:9-10).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the promise of restoration 'before your eyes' address the longing for tangible, experienced salvation?
2. In what sense is the church the fulfillment of Israel's calling to be a 'name and praise' among all peoples?
3. What 'captivity' do you need God to 'turn back'—spiritual bondage, relational brokenness, or systemic injustice?

Interlinear Text

וְבַעַת	הָהִיא	אֶבְיָא	אֶתְּךָ	וְבַעַת	קִבֹּצִי	אֶתְּךָ
At that time	H1931	will I bring	H853	At that time	that I gather	H853
H6256		H935		H6256	H6908	
כִּי	אֶתְּךָ	אֶתְּךָ	לְשֵׁם	וְלִתְהִלָּה	בְּכָל	
H3588	you for I will make	H853	you a name	and a praise	H3605	
	H5414		H8034	H8416		
עַמִּי	הָאֵרֶץ	בְּשׁוּבִי	אֶת	שְׁבוּתֶיךָ		
among all people	of the earth	when I turn back	H853	your captivity		
H5971	H776	H7725		H7622		
לְעֵינֶיךָ	אֶמַר	יְהוָה:				
before your eyes	saith	the LORD				
H5869	H559	H3068				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 29:14 (References Lord): And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

Malachi 3:12 (References Lord): And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 56:5 (Parallel theme): Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

Isaiah 60:15 (Parallel theme): Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

Amos 9:14 (Parallel theme): And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

Joel 3:1 (Parallel theme): For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

Ezekiel 34:16 (Parallel theme): I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

Zephaniah 3:19 (Resurrection): Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.

Isaiah 66:22 (References Lord): For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

Isaiah 61:9 (References Lord): And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed.

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