

ARE YOU SETTLED IN COMPLACENCY?

ZEPHANIAH 1:12

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INTRODUCTION

Samson, a Nazarite, was a gift of God to his generation. He was given a rule of life - *no razor shall come upon his head, not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean*. He was assigned a work - *he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines (Judges 13 - 16)*.

The Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord moved upon him to accomplish his work. He did several things that were not pleasing to God - *disobeyed his parents, took a wife from outside the community of Israel, and persisted in the act of lying*.

He became used to experiencing the blessings of God and the Spirit of God moving upon him that he felt his ungodly actions would not be considered as sinful and never did he imagine that such would lead to the loss of his strength and the Spirit of the Lord leaving him. Samson would never have thought of a day in which he would be vulnerable, and captured by the enemies. Samson became unconcerned about his relationship with God and became comfortable about his ungodly ways.

Judges 16:19-20 - *Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" So he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.*

Samson's attitude gives an insight into what complacency is. In most cases, when we become used to experiencing things in our lives, if caution is not applied, we become uninterested in the way things

should be done properly and we now feel safe, secure, approved, and not guilty, doing the wrong things.

We know that seat belt is one of the main factors to surviving a car crash. Despite mandatory laws on seatbelt, both drivers and passengers widely ignore seatbelt fastening while the vehicle is in motion. The primary reasons given are *"driving short distances and knowing someone who died in a crash while wearing a seat belt"*

In complacency, we take things for granted and this usually leads us into problems.

Zephaniah proclaims God's message to God's people (Israel) about how they become complacent about their sins, well pleased in the sins they commit and they were not worried or moved with repentance about their sins, after all, they regarded their sins as righteousness and they became unmoved how God felt and would react.

Zephaniah's great, great grandfather was the righteous king, Hezekiah. He had a good family background. Zephaniah's preaching of God's message was during the reign of Josiah. Josiah is a righteous king who is putting in reforms for the nation of Judah. But the message Zephaniah preached does not inspire hope in spite of having a righteous king or having godly reforms during such period.

"And it shall come to pass at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and punish the men who are settled in complacency, who say in their heart, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will He do evil' - Zephaniah 1:12.

Key questions to ask - are we settled in complacency? What is the problem about becoming complacent in our sins? What needs to be done?

ARE WE SETTLED IN COMPLACENCY?

In Zephaniah's day, the people will worship the host of heaven on the housetops; swear oaths by the LORD, and also swear by Milcom (the god of the Ammonites) - **Zephaniah 1:5**. They attempted to serve two masters (**God and Milcom**). A work of a divided heart - a heart that does not trust the concept of 100% loyalty to God. We know it is impossible to serve two masters (**Matthew 6:24**). Theirs was a strategy of hypocrisy.

They physically attend service to worship God, they speak the right things, and they say they are loyal to God but in principle, in their hearts, by their life styles and by their actions, they actually walked away from God - **Zephaniah 1:6 (Cf. Mark 7:6-7)**.

As they turned back from following the LORD, they did not thought it necessary to seek the face of the LORD, nor inquired of Him, as to return back to Him (**Zephaniah 1:7**).

They were settled in complacency. This refreshes our memory about the flood in Noah's day. The people were settled in complacency. They heard Noah's preaching (which is like attending service) but their hearts were not with God. They ignored the urgency to obey the message. They mocked the message. They continued doing their wrong deeds and felt so justified and approved. They were so convinced that God cannot do what Noah warned about - the flood (**Genesis 6 & 7**).

Matthew 24:37-39 - But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

The people in Zephaniah's day provoked God by their settlement in complacency. They received a warning from God through Zephaniah's message and a promise of punishment (*if they continued in their complacency*).

"And it shall come to pass at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and punish the men who are settled in complacency, who say in their heart, 'The LORD will not do good, nor will He do evil - Zephaniah 1:12.

Are we settled in complacency? Are we good at attending (few) worship services and ignore the other worship services? Are we good at saying the word of God rightly, yet we have not considered the need to preach this word to others? [Bro. Marvis Kaine emphasized the urgency and criticality of coming out to preach the gospel]. Are we good in declaring that we trust God to solve our problems yet we seek for evil, illegal and idolatrous means to solve our problems? Do we say we love ourselves by our mouth yet we are rooted in bitterness, malice, hatred, discrimination and unforgiveness? Are we settled in covetousness, immorality, corruption, wickedness, lying, gossiping, gambling, cultism, yahoo-yahoo, envy, jealousy, immodesty, etc.? Have we thought about it that we have moved away from God while still in the midst of His people? Are we comfortable living our lives like this?

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM ABOUT BECOMING COMPLACENT IN OUR SINS?

The people in Zephaniah's day said *'The LORD will not do good, nor will He do evil - Zephaniah 1:12.*

Same thing applies to us. When we do not believe God is going to do anything about it, we become comfortable in whatever wrong we are doing while claiming to be following God.

Even when we experience God's blessing (*due to His mercies and compassion*), we think that the wrongs we do are not worthy to be considered as sinful by God. We say God will not judge us or be angry with us. Therefore the Spirit is still

with us. This was Samson's assumption. The people in Noah's day belief and the people of Zephaniah's day conviction.

We say we believe that the Lord is alive but He is not active to be angry, to punish or not to dwell with us.

Our actions says that God is meditating, He is busy, He is on a journey, or perhaps He is sleeping and does not have such time to look into our wrongs, to be angry or to judge us – ***Cf. 1 Kings 18:27. 'The LORD will not do good, nor will He do evil – Zephaniah 1:12.***

We settle in our complacency and lack zeal for obedience to God's word because we think God is not going to do anything about it. So we become preoccupied with ourselves, our work, our careers, our money, our country - with its challenges, troubles and hardship, and lose regard for God. But we still worship while we do this. This is the heart that Zephaniah is condemning.

As Zephaniah stated we have not *thought it necessary to seek the face of the LORD, nor inquired of Him, as to return back to Him (Zephaniah 1:7).*

We stop caring about the lost (*preaching the gospel*). We do not care about each other (*lone ranger Christians*). We just do worship and hurry home because we are comfortable. We do not need anyone else or anything else.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

Israel was already worshiping God and saying that they were loyal to God but have moved away from God by their complacency. What did God want?

God wants us to have a relationship with Him. A relationship that considers the effect of our actions on Him, on His church and on others. A relationship in which we can be prompted in time that we are moving away from Him and make an urgent return to Him.

Revelation 2:5 - Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

It is time to see God as our only Master to serve and obey; it is time to open or re-open our hearts to allow Him guide us, to develop and build our relationship with Him that His power of transformation is seen in us.

God needs our hearts to be fixed in obedience and loyalty, not just doing certain things or not doing certain things.

CONCLUSION

We can put an end to stagnant faith and complacency when we go away from doing what we think would appease God to seeking and building a relationship that is pleasing to God.

Are you settled in complacency?

REFERENCES

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