



No turning back!

July 31, 2017

ZEPHANIAH 1:4-7 NKJV – (4) “I will stretch out My hand against Judah, And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. I will cut off every trace of Baal from this place, The names of the idolatrous priests with the *pagan* priests — (5) Those who worship the host of heaven on the housetops; Those who worship and swear *oaths* by the LORD, but who *also* swear by Milcom; (6) **Those who have turned back from following the LORD**, And have not sought the LORD, nor inquired of Him.” (7) Be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD; For the day of the LORD *is* at hand, For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has invited His guests.

Verse 4 ‘Lift up or stretch out my hand’ means ‘God will raise His hand to hit or punish’. The people in Judah and Jerusalem had a false god called Baal. The priests/preachers were the servants of the false gods. The Lord had His priests also. They were His servants in His house (the Temple) in Jerusalem. In **verses 4-6**, we find three things that made God angry - (1) His people served (or were servants of) false gods like Baal and Malcam; Malcam was also called Molech; (2) The people tried to work for the true God and false gods at the same time; and (3) The people made the stars in the skies into their gods. In verse (6a) it reads, “**Those who have turned back from following the LORD**”.

Verses 7-8 - A sacrifice was something that people burned for their gods. Usually it was an animal. But sometimes it was a man, a woman or a child. In these verses, ‘the people that He has asked to come’ are the sacrifice”, the Lord says that he will kill many of his people in Judah. This is how he will punish them. The ‘people with authority’ are the leaders of Judah. To ‘wear foreign clothes’ may mean ‘to do what the Assyrians do’ or bend down to false gods. Perhaps the Jews also dressed like *Assyrians.

Do you remember or have you ever heard the hymnal, “**NO TURNING BACK?**”

I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus,
No turning back, no turning back.

The world behind me, the cross before me;
the world behind me, the cross before me;
the world behind me, the cross behind me,
No turning back, no turning back.

Though none go with me, I still will follow;
though none go with me, I still will follow;
though none go with me, I still will follow;
No turning back, no turning back.

Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
No turning back, no turning back.

There are consequences for turning back, not making up your mind, and for following others who are against God.

SCRIPTURE READING

2 PETER 2:21-22

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

It is the purity of the Spirit that will keep corruption from the flesh.