

Hide & Seek

The book of Zephaniah

Have you ever felt like God was/is playing games with you?

If your answer is “yes”, **is that really consistent with God’s character?**

Sometimes we project certain things on God based on our own perceptions. But God is not bound by our experiences, or our man-made constructs!

We must be careful when we say things like, “God is like...” or “God works in such ways.” Just because it seems a certain way to us doesn’t make it reality!

For example, it may seem like God is playing games with us, like...

- **Monopoly** – One moment things are great, we’re building houses/hotels with lots of money, and the next moment we are bankrupt & in jail! Since God is sovereign, He must be the one responsible for this, right?!?
- **War** – A game of complete chance! We are just flipping random cards over. But why God, does it seem like someone/something is behind how the cards fall, and like the deck is always stacked against us?
- **Marbles** – A game of progress! Every time we seem to be moving in the right direction and getting closer to the finish line, out of nowhere someone sends us back to start! Seriously?!? Come on God!!!
- **Uno** – Why is it that it always seems like when we want yellow, God plays blue. If we want clockwise, God reverses it. If we already have more cards than we can handle, God seems to have another “Draw 4!”
- **3’s to King’s** – A game where all we want is a chance to play! If only it gets around to our turn, then we might have a chance to win/succeed! God, just give me a chance! Let it finally be my turn! I can do it!
- **Hide & Seek** – Have you ever felt like God was/is playing this game w/ you?

Like you are seeking Him, but He is nowhere to be found!

Or you know that **God is seeking you, but you are hiding from Him?**

Or maybe you refuse to participate altogether in this game because what’s even the point, God knows everything anyway!

What if I told you that the 36th book of the Bible shows that God does play a form of “Hide & Seek” with His people, & He does the same with us today?

In the book of Zephaniah God hides, not Himself, but us! He hides us so well that He Himself can’t find us. Then He searches for us again, finds us the second time, and rejoices over us! What a crazy message!

This book, like so many of the minor prophet books, is **a message of God’s coming judgment upon His wayward children - “I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem...” – Zeph. 1:4**

Why? Because God’s people continue to turn their backs & hide themselves from the Lord. They do not seek Him or inquire of Him! - **Zeph. 1:6**

This is how God says He will respond - **“At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent...” – Zeph. 1:12**

God is basically saying He is going to play “Hide & Seek” with them, bringing judgment on those He finds! **But there is a beautiful gospel twist!**

God doesn’t just come seeking, He also goes before and hides those He intends to save, sparing them from His judgment!

Can you imagine a God who is so good at hiding His people, that He Himself can’t find them? That’s exactly the indescribable God we have!

Once God’s justice is satisfied & judgment has been poured out, then God goes seeking again, but this time with a very different outcome! **Zeph. 3:14-17**

God’s people will rejoice and sing when God finds them! **God too will rejoice and exult over them with loud singing!** Seriously? YES!!!

Now this is a game I want to play with God! And I’m so grateful that He has already chosen to play it with me/us!

How should we play the game? What’s our role? **Stop hiding, be a seeker!**

“Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord.” – Zeph. 2:3

One day God’s anger will be poured out again, when we all stand before His judgment seat. **The only place to hide will be under the body & blood of Jesus!**

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