

ZEPHANIAH

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Zephaniah was a prophet of National Judgment. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah and a prophet to Judah.

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Chapter 1

The meaning of this prophet's name is "Jehovah is my Secret" or "He Whom Jehovah Hid."

Zephaniah was contemporary of Jeremiah, both prophesied in the days of the famous Josiah, both Prophesied in the days of the famous Josiah. Some labelled Josiah to be the second "David."

So many of the prophets were of the tribe of Levi, but here we have one of royal blood, kin to David. He was the Great, Great Grandson of Hizkiah, and thus kin to King Josiah.

Zephaniah was a prophet to Judah.

Verse 1

Here the prophet declares himself to be a descendent of Hizkiah (a matter of record), thus a distant cousin of King Josiah.

Verse 2

The great judgment of the whole world is declared by Jehovah. "I will consume all things from off the land," saith Jehovah.

Verse 3

Not only is the land to become the object of Jehovah's wrath, but "man and beast, fowls of the heaven, and the fish of the sea, and the ruins along with the wicked," declares Jehovah!

Verse 4

All through the prophets we learn that Jehovah's hand is outstretched against the wicked (Isaiah 5:25; 9:12,17,21). Jehovah is also against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Verse 5

The destruction of Jehovah is complete "I will" (emphatic will) cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, plus the names of the idolatrous priests along with the regular priests. And those that swear to Jehovah, yet swear by Malcham (the same as Molech).

Verse 6

And those who have turned back from following Jehovah.

And those who leave not sought Jehovah or inquired of Him.

Verse 7

Stand still, everything! Be silent before Adonai Jehovah. For the Day of Jehovah is near.

It is good to learn of the Day of the LORD (the Day of Jehovah). It is found in many of the writings of the prophets. The farthest back into history of when "the Day of Jehovah" occurs is found in Zechariah 14:1-2.

"Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be

taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

Thus it occurs in the middle of the Tribulation, the beginning of the Great Tribulation. That's 3 1/2 years until the Millennial reign of Messiah. The date of the Day of Jehovah when it is over is found in 2 Peter 3:10.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

When the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, found also in Revelation 20:11.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

Which happens at the close of the Millennium.

So we have it beginning 3 1/2 years before the Millennium starts, and ending of the close of 1000 reign of Christ. Therefore the Day of Jehovah (the LORD) lasts at least for 1003 1/2 years.

Verse 8

The Judgment against Israel is an object lesson of what shall take place starting in the middle of 70th Week of Daniel.

Jehovah hath prepared a sacrifice, and has bidden His guests to his dooming banquet of those set forth to be a slaughtered at the banquet "I will punish the princes (ruling body of Israel) and the king's children, and all that are arrayed in soft raiment."

Verse 9

"I will punish all those that stand at the doors of their master's home and fill it with violence and deceit."

Verse 10

"And on that day" — all of this came to pass when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and Judah. There shall be a cry from the fish gate.

A wail from the second gate, and loud crashes from the hills.

Verse 11

Wail, O inhabitants of Maktesh (a certain location in Jerusalem where all the merchants meet to discuss any business that should be pertinent to them and their customers).

All mouths shall be stopped. All who deal in silver shall be cut off.

Verse 12

And at that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps. One cannot hide himself against the spoilers.

And punish the men who are not spiritual who say in their hearts, "Jehovah will not do good or evil" — Jehovah is dead. (Ever heard of this?)

Verse 13

Therefore their wealth shall become plunder. And their houses desolate. How complete was the plundering of Nebuchadnezzar. He even took the "Ark of the Covenant," and it isn't disclosed what he did with it — only it does not remain anymore.

"And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more." (Jeremiah 3:16)

They shall rebuild their houses, but not inhabit them. And plant vineyards, but not drink their wine.

Verse 14

Near, the Day of Jehovah approaches. In it the warrior cries out bitterly.

Verse 15

A day of wrath is that day. A day of trouble. A day of destruction. A day of darkness and gloom. A day of clouds and thick darkness.

Verse 16

A day of trumpet and battle cry. Against the fortified cities and the high corner towers.

Verse 17

What distress that shall be. They shall as blind men because they have sinned against Jehovah. Consequently, their blood will be poured out as dust and their flesh as dung.

Verse 18

No one shall be able to save their lives with their silver and gold. The Day of Jehovah does spell doom for the unbeliever of Messiah Jesus!

All the earth shall be destroyed in the fire of jealousy. His destruction is full and complete upon the ungodly.

Chapter 2

Verse 1

Is there a nation existing without shame? All nations of the earth shall be judged by Jesus the Messiah. Look at 2 Thessalonians 1:4-10.

"So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."

Christ Jesus shall judge His people Israel first as found in Matthew 24:29,30-40, etc.

Those who have not trusted Jesus Christ as their Saviour shall be taken into Judgment and Death, even as the unbelievers at the time of Noah, they were taken unto judgment and death.

In Matthew 25:31,32

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:"

This is the judgment of the Gentiles right after the Great tribulation. Those who are not saved shall be turned into judgment and death (Matthew 25:46).

Verses 1 - 2

Before the judgment by the Great Tribulation, the Holy Ghost is warning Israel to examine themselves and see if they are saved.

Do so: before the decree by Messiah Jesus, before the day passes, before the fierce anger of Jehovah falls upon you, before Jehovah's anger comes upon you.

Verse 3

Seek ye Jehovah all you meek. Seek righteousness. Seek meekness. You may find refuge in Jehovah when the Day of Jehovah comes.

Verse 4

Look at the nations whom are warned: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod shall be driven out. Ekron shall be rooted up.

Verse 5

The inhabitants of the seacoasts such as the Cherethites; (the word of God is against you), and the Philistines shall be destroyed. As the houses and barns are deserted, Israel shall find dwellings and cottages for the shepherd and folds for the flocks.

Verse 7

And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down at evening — for Jehovah Elohim shall visit them and give them victory and liberty.

Verse 8

The omniscience (all knowing Jehovah) has heard the reproaches of Moab and the boeing of the children of Ammon as they reproached My people and landed over them, who allowed them not to pass through their land.

Verses 9 - 10

Oh, the terrible judgment of God. It is Jehovah Sabaoth (Lord of Host), the God of Israel. Surely Moab shall become as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah (Moab and

Ammon were the descendants of Lot and his two daughters). My people (Israel) shall spoil them, and the remnant of My people shall possess them. They shall possess the salt pits — a perpetual desolation. This judgment was caused by their hatred and mistreatment against my people Israel.

Verse 11

Jehovah will be a terror to them because He will starve the gods of all the earth, as there is no one left to feed them. Everyone shall worship Jehovah in his own place and country, even those that live across the seas.

Verse 12

The Ethiopians come up for their judgment — death!

Verse 13

Assyria, who at this time is a mighty nation, is next. (Their country is existing today as Iraq).

Verse 14

When Messiah reigns, the flocks shall down together with the wild beast of the nations. None shall destroy. Birds shall sing in Israel's window. Oh, what rest, what peace.

Verse 15

This is the rejoicing city. Assyria and later Babylon — all in ruins. And in the years to come, the passersby shall hiss at her destruction.

Chapter 3

The prophet inspired by the Holy Ghost, turns his attention to existing Jerusalem and warns her that if God punishes the heathen, He will not spare the hardened sinners in Judah.

It is true that during Zephaniah's day, a great revival was poured out upon Judah. It was reformation without restitution. It lasted very few years, with Jehovah warning that He was going to correct His people.

The Temple was repaired, and during its repairs, Hilkiyah the priest found a book of the Law of Jehovah given by Moses. This scroll of the Law was brought to King Josiah, and read to him. "Upon hearing God's Word, that he rent his clothes and commanded Hilkiyah, Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king to

go and enquire of Jehovah for me, for great is the wrath of God for us who have not kept the word of Jehovah. They went to Huldah, the prophetess and told her of the finding a copy of the Law, and if she had a word from Jehovah.

"She answered them, Thus saith Jehovah Elohim, Behold I will bring evil upon this place and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book (scroll)." (2 Chronicles 34:19-24)

Then she goes on to say that the king showed remorse and loving faith. Therefore, he would go to his grave without seeing the terrible things which are coming upon Judah.

Josiah died at the hands of Pharaoh. "And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel, and behold they are written in the lamentations" (2 Chronicles 35:25).

Verse 1

"Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city." Who? Jerusalem!

Verse 2

"Who obeyed not the voice. She received not correction. She trusted not in Jehovah. She drew not near to her God."

Verse 3

Her princes, the leaders of Judah have turned out to be raging lions — destroying those who are weak. And the judges at the gates are bought with bribes.

Verse 4

Her prophets think it not wrong to give a false revelation — give what the people want. Her priests cause pollution to the sanctuary, ignore the law.

Verse 5

Jehovah is within her. He will do no wrong. No injustice with Him. Every morning He brings truth. He never fails. But these others know no shame.

Verse 6

I have taken care of sinning nation — with justice! They are cut off; their towns fall into ruins, and I made their streets to crumble. And no one is left to pass by. Their cities are remain in

ruins — no one is there.

Verse 7

Talking to Judah, Jehovah asks "I am Jehovah, your God. Surely you will revere Me. I gave instruction so she could keep her cities, but she has ignored Me.

Verse 8

Oh, wait for Me, declares Jehovah. For the day is coming when I shall rise against the ungodly. I have decided to gather nations to assemble kingdoms to pour out upon them my wrath. All my burning hatred for the whole earth will be destroyed by the fire of My zeal.

Verse 9

For then I will give to the people cleansed lips with a pure language. That all may call on the name of Jehovah. And then to serve Him, one next to each other.

Verse 10

I am looking past Israel and I see beyond the rivers of Ethiopia. My worshippers. My dispersed ones shall bring My offerings.

Verse 11

Then, justified, you will feel no shame for your terrible deeds in which you rebelled against Me.

For I will remove from your midst the proud, exulting ones.

Thus you will never again be as you were because of My holy mountain, Zion!

Verse 12

But I will leave a remnant who have been afflicted. Yes, they have been poor, thus they are humble, for they trust in the name of Jehovah.

Verse 13

The remnant of Israel shall not commit iniquity, nor lie, neither shall they possess a deceitful tongue. For they shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

Verse 14

Sin, O daughter of Zion. Shout O Israel. Be glad and rejoice all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Oh, when God redeems Israel, it shall be a heaven on earth for

Verse 15

Jehovah has taken away thy judgments. He has cast out thine enemy — the world. The king of Israel, even Jehovah manifest in the flesh — Messiah Jesus will be in the Midst of thee. Thou shalt not sin anymore.

Verse 16

In that day, it shall be said of Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion: let not thine hands be slack — work in praises.

Verse 17

Jehovah, thy Elohim is in the midst of thee for He is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee — praise God! — with joy. Oh, for the grace of God!

he will rest in his love for thee. He will joy over thee with singing.

Verse 18

I will gather those who grieve about the appointed feasts. "They came from you, O Zion. The reproach of exile is a burden on them."

Verse 19

You know what I'm going to do? Behold I am going to deal at that time with all your tormentors. I will save the lame and gather the outcast. Glory! And I will turn their shame into praise in all the world.

Yes, I will bring you back again. (Oh, what a sight that's going to be, when all Israel is saved and Jehovah gathers them to His bosom in the land He promised so long ago to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.)

And I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth when I restore all things lost things before your eyes saith Jehovah!

Who is speaking? Jehovah, of course! How? Why in the person and power and might and

by His omnipotence, world without end — through the Messiah! Yes, the Messiah Jesus! God manifest in the flesh!