

Zephaniah

The Argument

Seeing the great rebellion of the people, and that there was now no hope of amendment, he denounceth the great judgment of God, which was at hand, showing that their country should be utterly destroyed, and they carried away captives by the Babylonians. Yet for the comfort of the faithful he prophesied of God's vengeance against their enemies, as the Philistines, Moabites, Assyrians and others, to assure them that God had a continual care over them. And as the wicked should be punished for their sins and transgressions: so he exhorteth the godly to patience, and to trust to find mercy by reason of the free promise of God made unto Abraham: and therefore quietly to abide till God show them the effect of that grace, whereby in the end they should be gathered unto him, and counted as his people and children.

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Zephaniah 1

¹ The word of the Lord, which came unto Zephaniah ye son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah, the son of Amon King of Judah.

² I will surely destroy all things from off the land, saith the Lord.

³ I will destroy man and beast: I will destroy the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and ruins shall be to the wicked, and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the Lord.

⁴ I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with ye Priests,

⁵ And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops, and them that worship and swear by the Lord, and swear by Malcham,

⁶ And them that are turned back from the Lord, and those that have not sought the Lord, nor inquired for him.

⁷ Be still at the presence of the Lord God: for the day of the Lord is at hand: for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, and hath sanctified his guests.

⁸ And it shall be in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will visit the princes and the King's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

⁹ In the same day also will I visit all those that dance upon the threshold so proudly, which fill their masters' houses by cruelty and deceit.

¹⁰ And in that day, saith the Lord, there shall be a noise, and cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the second gate, and a great destruction from the hills.

¹¹ Howl ye inhabitants of the low place: for the company of the merchants is destroyed: all they that bear silver, are cut off.

¹² And at that time will I search Jerusalem with lights, and visit the men that are frozen in their dregs, and say in their hearts, The Lord will neither do good nor do evil.

¹³ Therefore their goods shall be spoiled, and their houses waste: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

¹⁴ The great day of the Lord is near: it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the strong man shall cry there bitterly.

¹⁵ That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and heaviness, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of obscurity and darkness, a day of clouds and blackness,

¹⁶ A day of the trumpet and alarm against the strong cities, and against the high towers.

¹⁷ And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord, and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.

¹⁸ Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in ye day of the Lord's wrath, but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Zephaniah 2

¹ Gather yourselves, even gather you, O nation not worthy to be loved,

² Before the decree come forth, and ye be as chaff that passeth in a day, and before the fierce wrath of the Lord come upon you, and before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.

³ Seek ye the Lord all the meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment: seek righteousness, seek lowliness, if so be that ye may be hid in the day of the Lord's wrath.

⁴ For Azzah shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon desolate: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up.

⁵ Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea coast. the nation of the Cherethims, the word of the Lord is against you: O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee without an inhabitant.

⁶ And the sea coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds and sheepfolds.

⁷ And that coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah, to feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lodge toward night: for the Lord their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity.

⁸ I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the rebukes of the children of Ammon, whereby they upbraided my people, and magnified themselves against their borders.

⁹ Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my folk shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.

¹⁰ This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the Lord of host's people.

¹¹ The Lord will be terrible unto them: for he will consume all the gods of the earth, and every man shall worship him from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.

¹² Ye Morians also shall be slain by my sword with them.

¹³ And he will stretch out his hand against the North, and destroy Asshur, and will make Nineveh desolate, and waste like a wilderness.

¹⁴ And flocks shall lie in the midst of her, and all the beasts of the nations, and the pelican, and the owl shall abide in the upper posts of it: the voice of birds shall sing in the windows, and desolations shall be upon the posts: for the cedars are uncovered.

¹⁵ This is the rejoicing city that dwelt careless, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me: how is she made waste, and the lodging of the beasts! everyone that passeth by her, shall hiss and wag his hand.

Zephaniah 3

¹ Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the robbing city.

² She heard not the voice: she received not correction: she trusted not in the Lord: she drew not near to her God.

³ Her princes within her are as roaring lions: her judges are as wolves in the evening, which leave not the bones till the morrow.

⁴ Her prophets are light, and wicked persons: her priests have polluted the Sanctuary: they have wrested the Law.

⁵ The just Lord is in the midst thereof: he will do none iniquity: every morning doeth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not: but the wicked will not learn to be ashamed.

⁶ I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate: I have made their streets waste, that none shall pass by: their cities are destroyed without man and without inhabitant.

⁷ I said, Surely thou wilt fear me: thou wilt receive instruction: so their dwelling should not be destroyed howsoever I visited them, but they rose early and corrupted all their works.

⁸ Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for I am determined to gather the nations, and that I will assemble the kingdoms to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce wrath: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

⁹ Surely then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.

¹⁰ From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, the daughter of my dispersed, praying unto me, shall bring me an offering.

¹¹ In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy works, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice of thy pride, and thou shalt no more be proud of mine holy Mountain.

¹² Then will I leave in the midst of thee an humble and poor people: and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord.

¹³ The remnant of Israel shall do none iniquity, nor speak lies: neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall be fed, and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

¹⁴ Rejoice, O daughter Zion: be ye joyful, O Israel: be glad and rejoice with all thine heart, O daughter Jerusalem.

¹⁵ The Lord hath taken away thy judgments: he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord is in the midst of thee: thou shalt see no more evil.

¹⁶ In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not, O Zion: let not thine hands be faint.

¹⁷ The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty: he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy: he will quiet himself in his love: he will rejoice over thee with joy.

¹⁸ After a certain time will I gather the afflicted that were of thee, and them that bare the reproach for it.

¹⁹ Behold, at that time I will bruise all that afflict thee, and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was cast out, and I will get them praise and fame in all the lands of their shame.

²⁰ At that time will I bring you again, and then will I gather you: for I will give you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord.