

Zephaniah

The lineage recorded for Zephaniah (Zeph. 1:1), the longest given for any prophet, traces his ancestry back to the righteous king Hezekiah. His noble ancestry may have given him access to the palace and made it possible for him to effectively reach the heart of young Josiah with his prophecies. However, since Zephaniah is not mentioned in any of the Historical Books of the Old Testament, it is not certain whether he held a position in the national administration. He prophesied during the reign of Josiah (640-608 B.C.), but before Josiah initiated his reforms in 631-621 B.C. (2 Chr. 34:3-35:19)

Zephaniah is a book of vivid contrast. Compared to other prophets, he paints a darker picture of God's judgement, and a brighter picture of Israel's future glory. This extreme contrast reflects the divided religious loyalties of the people of Judah. Their worship of the Lord was often mixed with pagan practices that were abominable to God. God's judgement on this divided camp is called the "Day of the Lord" (see note on Zeph. 1:7) and makes up the theme of the book. The term is specifically referred to in 1:7-10, 14-16, 18; 2:2, 3; and 3:8, 11, 16.

Another key element of Zephaniah's teaching is the concept of a "remnant" that is protected in the "Day of the Lord" (Zeph. 2:7, 9; see note on 3:13). It is interesting that the meaning of Zephaniah's name, "the Lord hides," is closely associated with this aspect of his prophecy. (Key Word, page 1147)

Chapter 1

The Day of God's Anger Is Coming

1 The word of the LORD which came unto Zephaniah the 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 utterly consume all *things* from off the land, saith the LORD.

Hebraic, By taking away I will make an end.

Hebraic, the face of the land.

3 I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.

Or, idols

Stumblingblocks 4384, makshelah, mak-shay-law'; feminine from 3782; a stumbling-block, but only figurative (fall, enticement [idol]): -ruin, stumbling-block.

Matthew 13:

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

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 the priests;

Chemarims 3649, Komer, know-mer'; from 3648; (properly) an ascetic (as if shrunk with self-maceration), i.e. an idolatrous priest (only in plural): -Chemarims, (idolatrous) priests.

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

Or, to the Lord,

Malcham 4445, Malkam, mal-kawm'; or Mil-kom, mil-kome'; from 4428; Malcum or Milcom, the national idol of the Ammonites: -Malcham, Milcom.

6 And them that are turned back from the LORD; and *those* that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him.

7 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD *is* at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.

Hebraic, sanctified, or, prepared

Revelations 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

The phrase "Day of the Lord" is one of the primary expressions in the Old Testament that is relevant to eschatological events. It properly refers to any time the Lord openly intervenes in the affairs of men. Thus it often can apply to two separate events in two different time periods. Zephaniah saw the fall of Jerusalem as "that time" that would occur very soon (v. 12), and therefore used terms such as "at hand" (v. 7) and "near" (v. 14). Yet, as is common in Old Testament prophecy, this imminent intervention of God becomes merged in the prophet's vision with the "Day of the Lord," God's ultimate intervention in the affairs of His people. At that time, He will judge the whole earth (vv. 2, 3; 3:8), purge Israel (Zeph. 3:11-13;), and then reestablish His people to their land (3:13-20). The apostate people of Israel and Judah had to be constantly reminded that the Day of the Lord would be a time of judgement, and for the ungodly, a time of utter darkness (Jer. 30:3-31:26; Amos 5:18-20; 1 Thes. 5:2).

The "sacrifice" mentioned here refers to Christ's atoning work on the cross of Calvary (Heb. 10:12). In the phrase "bid his guests," God is inviting His people to accept this offering and come into a right relationship with Him (Matt. 10:6; 15:24). (Key Word, pp. 1147-1148)

8 And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD'S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

Hebraic, visit upon

Strange 5237, nokriy, nok-ree'; from 5235 (second form); strange, in a variety of degrees and applications (foreign, non-relative, adulterous, different, wonderful): -alien, foreigner, outlandish, strange (-r, woman).

9 In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, *that there shall be* the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills.

2 Chronicles 33:14 Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.

11 Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off.

Maktesh (mak'tesh) [a mortar, a trough, a hallow]. A locality at Jerusalem (Zeph. 1:11). The Targum identifies it with the Kidron valley; it probably was in the northern part of the city, and the name may have been derived from the hollowed-out form of that part of the Tyropoeon just north of the walls, where foreign merchants congregated. (Davis, page 372)

James 5:1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

12 And it shall come to pass at that time, *that* I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.

Hebraic, curded, or thickened

The promise in this verse may be to condemn the philosophy of the Deists in that God will punish those who merely acknowledge His existence and do not believe that He is involved in the affairs of this world, that He neither judges or blesses the actions of men To God, this is the same as denying Him (cf. Heb. 11:6).

13 Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

Micah 6:15 Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine.

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 mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

Jeremiah 4:19 My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.

15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

Mark 15:

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

*34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, **Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?** which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

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

Revelation 9:

14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

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 the 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.

Ezekiel 7:19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity.

Chapter 2

Israel's Neighbours Are Doomed

1 Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;

Or, not desirous

Joel 2:16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

Matthew 9:15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

2 Before the decree bring forth, *before* the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger come upon you.

Matthew 3:12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

3 Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

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

Gaza (ga'za), thrice Azzah in A.V. and once in R.V (1 Chron 7:28) [Heb. 'azzah, Gr. Gaza, Arab. Ghazzah has preserved the ancient name]. 1.The most Southern of the 5 Philistine cities (Josh. 13:3; 1 Sam. 6:17; Jer. 25:20), and very ancient (Gen. 10:19; el-Amarna letters, 15th century B.C.) It stood on the main road, between Mesopotamia and Egypt, at the edge of the sesert and at the junction of a trade route from southern Arabia. Assigned to Judah (Josh. 15:47). (Davis, page 195)





“The Hamas terrorist attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, will go down as one of the worst terrorist attacks in history. Recognizing its impact, however, involves understanding the many dimensions of the attack, its consequences for a small state like Israel and a small area like the

Gaza Strip, and its global ramifications.: Retrieved January 16, 2024 from [Hamas's October 7 Attack: Visualizing the Data \(csis.org\)](#)

Ashkelon (ash'ke-lon), In A.V. sometimes As'ke-lon (as'ke-lon). One of the 5 leading Philistine cities each ruled by a Lord (Josh. 13:3); it is mentioned in the Tell elAmarna correspondence. It was situated in a valley on the Mediterranean seashore (Jer. 47:5, 7), 12 miles north of Gaza, and was the seat of the worship of Derceto, a goddess with the body of a fish, whose temple and lake lay to the east of the city. (Davis, page 46)

Ashdod (ash'dod), in N.T. A-zo'tus [perhaps, strength, fortress]. One of 5 chief Philistine cities, ruled over by a lord, and seat of the worship of Dagon (Josh. 13:3; 1 Sam. 5:1 seq. ; 6:17; 1 Macc. 10:83; 11:4). Anakim remained in it after the conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews (Josh. 11:22. (Davis, page 45)

Ekron (ek'ron) [rooting out]. The most northern of the 5 chief Philistine cities (Josh. 13:3; 1 Sam. 6:16, 17). (Davis, page 155)

5 Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the LORD is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.

Ezekiel 25:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast.

6 And the sea coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.

7 And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the LORD their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity.

Or, When

8 I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border.

Moab and Ammon were descendants of Lot, Abraham's nephew. They were judged with special harshness for his offense against Israel. The absorption of the territories of Ammon and Moab is clearly presupposed in the millennial land allocations (Ezek. 45:1-25; 47:13-48:35). (Key Word, page 1149)

Moab (mo'ab) [probably, desirable; perhaps, seed of a father]. 1. Son of Lot by an incestuous union with his elder daughter (Gen. 19:37). (Davis, page 402)

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 saltpits, and a

perpetual desolation: the residue of my people 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 people of the LORD of hosts.

11 The LORD *will be* terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and *men* shall worship him, every one from his place, *even* all the isles of the heathen.

Hebraic, make lean

12 Ye Ethiopians also, ye *shall be* slain by my sword.

US Military Seized Iranian Weapons Bound for Yemen's Houthis on Jan 11

U.S. Central Command said in a statement Tuesday it had seized Iranian advanced conventional weapons bound for Yemen's Houthis on Jan. 11.

It was the first seizure of "lethal Iranian-supplied advanced conventional weapons" to the Houthis since Houthi attacks against merchant ships began in November, the statement added.

Retrieved January 16, 2024 from [US Military Seized Iranian Weapons Bound for Yemen's Houthis on Jan 11 | Newsmax.com](#)

13 And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, *and* dry like a wilderness.

This verse foretells the fall of Nineveh and the destruction of Assyria. It is also representative of the judgement to come on all of Israel's end-time enemies (see note on Mic. 5:3-9). The city of Nineveh fell approximately twenty years after this prophecy was given. (Key Word, page 1149)

14 And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; *their* voice shall sing in the windows; desolation *shall be* in the thresholds: for he shall uncover the cedar work.

Or, pelican

Or, knops, threshold

Or, when he hath uncovered

15 This *is* the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I *am*, and *there is* none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, *and* wag his hand.

Chapter 3

Jerusalem Will Be Saved

1 Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!

Or, gluttonous

2 She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God.

Or, instruction

3 Her princes within her *are* roaring lions; her judges *are* evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.

Ezekiel 22:27 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.

4 Her prophets *are* light *and* treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.

Ezekiel 22:26 Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

5 The just LORD *is* in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

Hebraic, morning by morning

6 I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

Or, corners

7 I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, *and* corrupted all their doings.

8 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination *is* to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

9 For 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.

Hebraic, lip

Hebraic, shoulder

Isaiah 19:

17 And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it.

18 In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction.

19 In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD.

10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, *even* the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

Acts 8:27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

11 In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.

Hebraic in my holy

12 I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

13 The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make *them* afraid.

The concept of the “Remnant” represents a spiritual entity within the national body of Israel. As early as Elijah’s day God made note of “seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him” (1 Kgs. 19:18). Here the term “remnant” has an immediate reference to the righteous ones living in Jerusalem. Remnant also refers to the group of God’s people who would return after the Babylonian Exile: Isaiah’s son’s name has this reference as well as an eschatological one (see Is. 19:9; note on Is. 8:1-4). Such a reference to a remnant is also found in Haggai (Hag. 1:12, 14; 2:2). However, the most common figure is that eschatological “remnant” that will be regathered at the end of the Great Tribulation to reign with King Messiah (Is. 10:20-22; 11:11, 16; 46:3; Jer. 31:7; Joel 2:32; Mic. 2:12; 5:3, 7, 8; Zeph. 1:7, 9; Zech. 8:6, 12; Rev. 12:17). With regard to the New Testament, those Jews who have accepted Jesus Christ as savior are also called “a remnant” (Rom. 9:27 [quoting Is. 10:22]; 11:5), inasmuch as they prefigure God’s ultimate remnant. (Key Word, page 1150)

14 Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of 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 not see evil any more.

Revelation 7:15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

Revelation 21:

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: *and* to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack.

Or, faint

Revelation 21:12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

17 The LORD thy God in the midst of thee *is* mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

Hebraic he will be silent

18 I will gather *them that are* sorrowful for the solemn assembly, *who* are of thee, *to whom* the reproach of it *was* a burden.

Hebraic the burden upon it was reproach

19 Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.

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

Ezekiel 28:

25 Thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob.

26 And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them; and they shall know that I am the LORD their God.

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