

Series "Fixed On 66"
"Zephaniah"
Book-36

Key Passage: Zephaniah 1:14-15; 2:3

"The Day of the Lord" is an important biblical doctrine that tells us where things are going and how they're going to end.

God will send tribulation to the world, judge the nations!

Save His people Israel!

Establish His righteous kingdom! Zephaniah 2:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

The Author: Zephaniah, Zephaniah 1:1 The word of the LORD which came to **Zephaniah**.

Zephaniah: The prophet's name means "*watchman for the Lord.*"

This would make Zephaniah the only prophet of royal decent, being a descendant of King Hezekiah.

When Written: Written about 630 B.C. Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of Josiah of Judah 640-609 B.C. **Zephaniah** was a contemporary of **Nahum, Habakkuk,** and **Jeremiah.** (605 Babylonians would begin to take Judah.)

There were in Josiah's reforms outward indications of a return to God, but the lifestyle of the people gave no evidence of repentance or return.

Where it was Written: Jerusalem. He uses the phrase **"This place"**

Zephaniah 1:4

Purpose: In Judah's hectic history there would be reform from time to time. Zephaniah's forceful prophecies may have been a factor in the reform under Josiah's reign.

Theme: Zephaniah – "Judgment And Blessing In The Day Of The Lord"

The "Day of the Lord" is a phrase used by Old Testament prophets to indicate events associated with God's direct involvement in human affairs. This day began with Jesus' ministry and will culminate with the Second Coming.

Key Words: "Lord" 31 times, "Shall" 31 times, "Day" 19 times, "Judgement" 11 times, "on that day" times.

Key Chapter: Zephaniah 3 This chapter describes the two important parts of the Day of the Lord: **Judgment** and **Restoration**.

Key Passage: Zephaniah 1:14-15; Zephaniah 2:3

Outline:

1. **Zephaniah 1:1–2:3 The Day Of The Lord And The Jews:**
2. **Zephaniah 2:4-15 The Day Of The Lord And The Gentiles:**
3. **Zephaniah 3:1-20 The Day Of The Lord And The Kingdom:**

1. Zephaniah 1:1–2:3 The Day Of The Lord And The Jews:

Zephaniah 1:1 The word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah

Zephaniah provided more genealogical information about himself than any other Old Testament prophet. He traced his ancestry back four generations, to "**Hezekiah.**"

Josiah was Judah's last godly king. He took the throne following a half-century of apostasy under **Manasseh** and **Amon** and soon determined to lead his people back to the Lord. He attempted to purge the land of idolatry and reinstated temple worship.

Habakkuk - portrayed the corruption of the legal system and society itself (**Habakkuk 1:1–4**)

Zephaniah - cited evidence that Assyrian and Canaanite religions maintained a hold on the people (**Habakkuk 1:4–5**).

Gives (3) Pictures of That Great Day:

(1) Zephaniah 1:2-6 Pictures of That Great Day: Like A Flood:

God Will Destroy Creation: Zephaniah 1:2-3

God gave man dominion over the fish, the fowls, and the beasts (**Genesis 1:28; Psalms 8:7-8**), but man lost that dominion when Adam disobeyed God. However, through Jesus Christ, man's lost dominion will one day be restored (**Hebrews 2:5-9**).

God will also Destroy the Idols that People Worship:

Zephaniah 1:4 Baal - "*the rain god of the Canaanites*"

Zephaniah 1:5 bow down on the housetops to the host of heaven, The worship of the stars. We know this as astrology. (**Deut. 4:19; Jer. 19:13; 32:29**)

Malcom (Molech), the terrible god of the Ammonites, the sacrificing of children.

A blessing resulted from the Babylonian Captivity; the Jews were cured of their fascination with foreign gods.

Zephaniah 1:6 And those who have turned back from following the LORD,

This passage helps us understand the futility of man's search for "freedom."

The people of Judah turned back from following the Lord. They thought **obedience to Him was too restrictive**. But what did they actually obtain?

(2) Zephaniah 1:7-13 Pictures of That Great Day: Like A Great Sacrifice: Zephaniah 1:7

God who was hosting the sacrifice; His guests were the Babylonians; and the sacrifices to be offered were the people of Judah!

Zephaniah 1:8-9

Judah refused to obey God, and demanding freedom fell prey to superstition, such as the practice of refusing to step on the threshold of a house of pagan worship.

Who fill the house of their lord with violence and deceit. They refused to obey God, and created a society in which each person was selfish, and there was violence and deceit.

Zephaniah 1:10 Fish Gate - where the fish were brought to and sold.

"Second Quarter" was where the rich people lived in their fashionable houses built from the wages owed to poor laborers.

Zephaniah 1:11 Mortar was the market and business district of the city where the merchants and bankers were located.

Zephaniah 1:12 The tragedy is that the invasion could have been avoided if the people had not been so complacent and indifferent toward what God was saying through His prophets.

Zephaniah 1:13

People today seem to have that same insistent desire for "freedom." God's ways seem restrictive, and so they "turn back from following the Lord."

(3) Zephaniah 1:14-18 Pictures Of That Great Day: Like A Battle: Zephaniah 1:14-18

God's final judgment day seems far off to most people. But for those who, like Judah, persist in sin, there is often "a" judgment day, as well as "the" judgment day!

Zephaniah 2:1-3 Plea To The People: Seek The Lord:

Zephaniah 2:1-2 Zephaniah and Jeremiah ministered during the same period in history, and both of them begged the rulers to trust God and turn from sin, but the kings, officials, and priests refused to obey.

Zephaniah 2:3

Zephaniah's warning concluded with an invitation. Before the time appointed for judgment comes, we can find shelter in the Lord. All it requires is humility.

All you humble of the earth - But the Lord did spare a godly remnant that stayed true to Him throughout the seventy years of captivity.

What is humility? The humble gladly submit to God. The humble express their submission by seeking the Lord and doing what He commands.

2. Zephaniah 2:4-15 The Day Of The Lord And The Gentiles:

God's judgment begins in the house of the Lord **1 Peter 4:17**
Which explains why Zephaniah started with the people of Judah;

The nations named may represent all the Gentiles since these nations correspond to the **Four Points of the Compass:**

Zephaniah 2:4-7 Philistia: (West) Zephaniah 2:4-6

The Philistines were ancient enemies of the Jews (Gen. 20-21, 26). Amos 1:6-8, they took Jewish people captive from cities in southern Judah and sold them to other nations as slaves.

Nebuchadnezzar invaded Philistia and conquered it, and the only remnant of that great nation left today is the name "Palestine," which comes from "Philistine."

Zephaniah 2:7 God is promising that Israel will receive back the land that God had promised to them.

Zephaniah 2:8-11 Moab and Ammon: (East) Zephaniah 2:8-9

The Moabites and Ammonites originated from Lot's incestuous union with his two daughters (**Genesis 19:30-38**) and were hateful enemies of the Jews (**Num. 22; Jud. 3; 10; 1 Sam. 11:1-5; 2 Sam. 12:26**). But these two arrogant nations would end up like Sodom and Gomorrah.

Zephaniah 2:10-11

Zephaniah 2:12 Cush: (South) Zephaniah 2:12 "You also, O Ethiopians, will be slain by My sword." This nation was located in the upper Nile region. Some students think the reference includes Egypt, another long-time enemy of the Jews.

Zephaniah 2:13-15 Assyria: (North) Zephaniah 2:13

Assyria had the city of Nineveh warned by God through the prophet Jonah 150 years earlier and later through Nahum; now, in just a few years, those prophecies would be fulfilled through the Babylonians.

Zephaniah 2:14-15

There are 2 great lessons to remember:

- 1. God Judges His People When They Deliberately Disobey His Law.**
- 2. God's Promise To Abraham Still Stands: Those Who Bless Israel, God Will Bless; Those Who Curse Israel, God Will Curse: (Genesis 12:1-3).**

3. Zephaniah 3:1-20 The Day Of The Lord And The Kingdom:

Zephaniah 3:1-8 Jerusalem - God's Jealous Anger: The city of Jerusalem was under siege, being punished for her many sins.

Zephaniah 3:1-2

Jerusalem – "*City of Peace*" Not a city of peace.

Zephaniah 3:3-4

God is never impressed by appearances. His concern today, as in Zephaniah's time, is with the heart.

Zephaniah 3:5-7

The Jews were more guilty than the Gentiles because the Lord had given Israel more truth and more blessings.

Zephaniah 3:8

Zephaniah 3:9-10 The Gentiles - Gracious Forgiveness: Zephaniah 3:9-10

Zephaniah 3:11-20 The Remnant – 3 Great Blessings:

(1) Zephaniah 3:11-13 The Sinners Removed: Zephaniah 3:11-13

(2) Zephaniah 3:14-17 The Believers Rejoicing: Zephaniah 3:14-17

(3) Zephaniah 3:18-20 The Land Restored: Zephaniah 3:18-20

Application:

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 1. God Will Send Tribulation To The World, Judge The Nations.
 2. Save His People Israel.
 3. Establish His Righteous Kingdom.
- 2.** Like Judah, People Today Seem To Have That Same Insistent Desire For "Freedom." God's Ways Seem Restrictive, And So They "Turn Back From Following The Lord." But Always When People Demand Such Freedom, They Find Themselves Caught In A Monstrous Web.
- 3.** God's Final Judgment Day Seems Far Off To Most People. But For Those Who, Like Judah, Persist In Sin, There Is Often "A" Judgment Day, As Well As "The" Judgment Day: