

---

---

# Zephaniah

“Jehovah Hides”

## Historical Background

### The man

#### Name

Zephaniah means "Jehovah Hides" or treasures.

#### Ancestry

Zephaniah traces his ancestry back four generations to Hezekiah. It may be that he is descendent of royal blood.

#### Occupation and home

Nothing is known of his occupation or his home. It is suggested that because of his knowledge of the conditions that existed in Jerusalem, that it could have been his home.

### Date

This prophesy was probably written about 630 – 625 BC

### Background

#### Political events Judah

Hezekiah was succeeded by his 12 year old son Manasseh. He rebuilt all the high plasces, reinstited the worship of Baal and Ashteroth and built alters to all the host of heaven. He made his son to pass through the fire, practiced augury and enchantment, and dealt with familiar spirits. He also filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. (2 Kings 21).

Ammon succeeded his father and continued to carry out his great wickedness. (2 Chron. 33:21–25)

Josiah who came to the throne at the age of 8, was the last good king over Judah. His reforms were the most ambitious of any previous kings in Judah. Alters and Images were destroyed. The bones of Idolatrous priest were gathered, burned and destroyed. During the cleansing of the temple, the law was found and upon hearing the words, he sent for the prophetess Huldah for a prophecy from God concerning what he learned. Josiah caused the word of God to be read to all the people, ad following the cleansing of the temple, the passover was observed with great enthusiasm.

It was during the reign of Josiah that Zephaniah wrote this prophesy.

### Political Events in Eastern Countries

In the period from Isaiah and Micah to Zephaniah, Assyria maintained supremacy over the world of that day. Revolts throughout the empire existed, but were maintained through much bloodshed. It appears that Josiah remained loyal to the king of Assyria during this time.

Ashurbanipal, the last great king of Assyria died about 633 BC. After his death the empire began to disintegrate.

In 625 BC, Nabopolassar, king of Babylon declared independence from Assyria and in 614 BC he captured Ashur, the chief city of Assyria. In 609 BC, the last remaining forces of Assyria were destroyed, thus giving the Babylonians supremacy of the world. During this last battle, Josiah attempted to stop Pharaoh – Necho of Egypt from assisting Assyria in this war. Josiah was killed during this war. Later in history, Judah was to be destroyed by Babylon.

It may be possible, that the rise of the Babylonian power and their westward threat was the reason for the writing of this prophecy.

### Religious and Moral Conditions

The religious reforms reached their peak during the 18 year of Josiah's reign. Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk all prophesied during his reign. The people during this time, though, appear to be cruel and corrupt. Injustice and corruption appeared to be widespread. Luxury and extravagance were common and idolatrous worship was still widespread. The time was necessary for Zephaniah's prophecy.

# Zephaniah

## Outline

- I. Introduction – Vs. 1
- II. Universal Judgment – 1:3 – 3:8
  - A. Judgment upon earth, sky and sea – 1:2–3
  - B. Judgment upon Judah – 1:4–2:3
    - i. It's cause – 1:4–7
    - ii. The extent of Judah's destruction – 1:8–13
    - iii. The proximity and inescapable horror of God's judgment – 1:14–18
    - iv. Call to repentance – 2:1–3
  - C. God's Judgment upon the Gentile nations – 2:4–15
    - i. God's judgment upon Philistia – 2:4–7
    - ii. God's judgment upon Moab and Ammon – 2:8–11
    - iii. God's judgment against the Cushites – 2:12
    - iv. God's judgment upon Assyria – 2:13–15
  - D. God's judgment upon Judah repeated – 3:1–7
    - i. Wait in patient trust for God's day – 3:8
- III. The Universality of God's Grace Embracing Jew and Gentile – 3:9–20
  - A. Gentiles and Jews united into one Holy Church – 3:9–13
  - B. Joyous activity on Earth and in Heaven – 3:14–20

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 1

1:1 The word of Jehovah which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amarah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, King of Judah.

1:2 I will utterly consume all things from off the face of the ground, saith Jehovah.

1:3 I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the face of the ground, saith Jehovah.

1:4 And I will stretch out my 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 Chemarim with the priests;

1:5 and them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship, that swear to Jehovah and swear by Malcam;

1:6 and them that are turned back from following Jehovah; and those that have not sought Jehovah, nor inquired after him.

1:7 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord Jehovah; for the day of Jehovah is at hand: for Jehovah hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath consecrated his guests

### Questions

1. Why do you think Zephaniah's genealogy is traced to four generations? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Is there any connection between Zephaniah and King Hezekiah? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who was the king of Judah during this prophesy? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How does the word "utterly" modify the consummation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What groups will God consume? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What are the "stumblingblocks with the wicked"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What nation is God's wrath directed at? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What forms of worship had infiltrated Judah? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What two groups of people will God cut off in vs. 6? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What is meant by "he hath prepared a sacrifice"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. What is meant by "he hath consecrated his guests"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 2

1:8 And it shall come to pass in the day of Jehovah's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's sons, and all such as are clothed with foreign apparel.

1:9 And in that day I will punish all those that leap over the threshold, that fill their master's house with violence and deceit.

1:10 And in that day, saith Jehovah, there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and a wailing from the second quarter, and a great crashing from the hills.

1:11 Wail, ye inhabitants of Maktesh; for all the

people of Canaan are undone; all they that were laden with silver are cut off.

1:12 And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with lamps; and I will punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their heart, Jehovah will not do good, neither will he do evil.

1:13 And their wealth shall become a spoil, and their houses a desolation: yea, they shall build houses, but shall not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but shall not drink the wine thereof.

### Questions

1. When will be "the day of Jehovah's sacrifice"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who will be punished? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is significant about being clothed with foreign apparel? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What does "leaping over the threshold" indicate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the "fish gate"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Where were the inhabitants of Maktesh? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How will Jerusalem be searched? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What does "settled on their lees" mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. According to vs. 9, what was these people's attitude? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What will happen to their prosperity? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 4

1:14 The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of Jehovah; the mighty man crieth there bitterly.

1:15 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,

1:16 a day of the trumpet and alarm, against the fortified cities, and against the high battlements.

1:17 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung.

1:18 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land.

### Questions

1. Why is the Day of Jehovah going to be great? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What does the prophet mean by the "voice of the day"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How is this day described? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How does one walk as a blind man? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Describe the physical well being of the people. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What value will be the peoples riches? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How far will God's wrath be felt in the land? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What is to happen to their way of life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### What can we Learn from Chapter 1

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 5

2:1 Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation that hath no shame;  
2:2 before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of Jehovah come upon you, before the day of Jehovah's anger come upon you.  
2:3 Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, that have kept his ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah's anger.  
2:4 For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation; they shall drive out Ashdod at noonday,

and Ekron shall be rooted up.  
2:5 Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea-coast, the nation of the Cherethites! The word of Jehovah is against you, O Canaan, the land of the Philistines; I will destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.  
2:6 And the sea-coast shall be pastures, with cottages for sheperds and folds for flocks.  
2:7 And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed their flocks thereupon; in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening; for Jehovah their God will visit them, and bring back their captivity.

### Questions

1. Why was it important for the people to gather together? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the nation known for? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How does Zaphaniah plea with the people in vs 2? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Describe the day as it is passed as chaff. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What group of people does Zephaniah address in vs 3? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is his prayer for the meek? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What is to happen to several important Judean cities? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How thorough would be the destruction of Canaan? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What group of people shall inherit the sea coast? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Who shall remain in the land? \_\_\_\_\_
11. What will be the state of the remnant? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 6

2:8 I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, wherewith they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border.

2:9 Therefore as I live, saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, a possession of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my

people shall make a prey of them, and the remnant of my nation shall inherit them.

2:10 This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of Jehovah of hosts.

2:11 Jehovah 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 nations.

### Questions

1. Who were the Moabites and the Ammonites? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why was God's anger directed toward these nations? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Does God seem to be making an oath in vs 9? If so, why is this a proper thing for God to do?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why is the end of Moab and Ammon compared to Sodom and Gomorrah? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Define nettles. \_\_\_\_\_
6. How great was their destruction to be? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What does it mean to inherit something? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What caused Moab and Ammon to fall? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What does God call the remnant of his nation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What does it mean to "famish all the gods of the earth"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. How will men conduct themselves before God according to vs. 11? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 7

2:12 Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword.

2:13 And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like the wilderness.

2:14 And herds shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the pelican and the porcupine shall lodge in the capitals

thereof; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for he hath laid bare the cedar-work.

2:15 This is the joyous city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides 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.

### Questions

1. Why do you suppose the Ethiopians were to receive God's judgement? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why do you suppose the Assyrians were to receive God's judgement? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Describe the desolation of Nineveh? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the significance of animals lodging in the capitals? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What does the reference to "thresholds" indicate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What does laying bare the cedar-work refer to? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. List some thoughts of a "joyous city that dwelt carelessly". \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What was the attitude of this city? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What would God transform this great city into? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What would this city be to people who would pass by it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### What Can We Learn From Chapter 2?

---

---

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 8

3:1 Woe to her that is rebellious and polluted! to the oppressing city!

3:2 She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in Jehovah; she drew not near to her God.

3:3 Her princes in the midst of her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they leave nothing till the morrow.

3:4 Her prophets are light and treacherous persons; her priests have profaned the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.

3:5 Jehovah in the midst of her is righteous; he will not do iniquity; every morning doth he bring his justice to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

3:6 I have cut off nations; their battlements are desolate; I have made their streets waste, so that none passeth by; their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, so that there is no inhabitant.

3:7 I said, Only fear thou me; receive correction; so her dwelling shall not be cut off, according to all that I have appointed concerning her: but they rose early and corrupted all their doings.

3:8 Therefore wait ye for me, saith Jehovah, 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.

### Questions

1. What city is God referring to in vs. 1? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What three things describe this city in vs. 1? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is she accused of in vs. 2? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Describe her princes and judges? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Describe the prophets and priests? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How is Jehovah compared to the unjust? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What has God done to many mighty nations? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. In vs. 7, what was God's request of the people and what was their answer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Will any escape the anger of God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 9

3:9 For then will I turn to the peoples of a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent.

3:10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

3:11 In that day shalt thou not be put to shame for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me; for then I will take away out of the midst of thee thy proudly exulting

ones, and thou shalt no more be haughty in my holy mountain.

3:12 But I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall take refuge in the name of Jehovah.

3:13 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.

### Questions

1. What does a "people of a pure language" indicate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How will these people serve God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who is the "daughter of my dispersed"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is God's promise concerning their past transgressions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Who would not be among them? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is God's holy mountain? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Who are the afflicted and poor people? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Why will they take refuge in Jehovah? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What shall not be found among the remnant of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Why will they not be afraid? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Zephaniah

## Lesson 10

3:14 Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

3:15 Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more.

3:16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack.

3:17 Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing.

3:18 I will gather them that sorrow for the solemn assembly, who were of thee; to whom the burden upon her was a reproach.

3:19 Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that afflict thee; and I will save that which is lame, and gather that which was driven away; and I will make them a praise and a name, whose shame hath been in all the earth.

3:20 At that time will I bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah.

### Questions

1. What are the people encouraged to do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What has God removed from the people? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who is the true King of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What does it mean not to have slack hands? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What will God show to his people? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Why were the people sorrowful for the solemn assembly? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What is God's promise to the laem and affliceted in vs. 19? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What would his people be before all the peoples of the earth? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What does "when I bring back your captivity before your eyes" mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### What can we learn from Chapter 3?

---

---

---

---

# The Kings and Prophets of Israel

All Dates Are B.C.

## United Kingdom

Saul	1053
David	
Solomon	933

## Israel

Jereboam	933-911	Bad
Nadab	911-910	Bad
Baasha	910-887	Bad
Elah	887-886	Bad
Zimri	886	Bad
Omri	886-875	Extra Bad
Ahab	875-855	The Worst
Ahaziah	855-854	Bad
Joram	854-843	Bad Mostly
Jehu	843-820	Bad Mostly
Jehoahaz	820-806	Bad
Joash	806-790	Bad
Jeroboam II	790-749	Bad
Zechariah	748	Bad
Shallum	748	Bad
Manahem	748-738	Bad
Pekahiah	738-736	Bad
Pekah	736-730	Bad
Hoshea	730-721	Bad

## Judah

Rehoboam	933-916	Bad Mostly
Abijah	915-913	Bad Mostly
Asa	912-872	Good
Jehoshphat	874-850	Good
Jehoram	850-843	Bad
Ahaziah	843	Bad
Athaliah	843-837	Devilish
Joash	837-803	Good Mostly
Amaziah	803-775	Good Mostly
Uzziah	775-735	Good
Jotham	735-734	Good
Ahaz	741-726	Wicked
Hezekiah	726-697	The Best
Manasseh	697-642	The Worst
Amon	642-640	The Worst
Josiah	640-608	The Best
Jehoahaz	608	Bad
Jehoiakim	608-597	Wicked
Jehoiachin	597	Bad
Zedekiah	597-586	Bad

## Prophet

Elijah	875-850
Elisha	850-800
Joel?	840-830
Jonah	790-770
Amos	780-740
Hosea	760-720
Isaiah	745-695
Micah	740-700
Zephaniah	639-608
Nahum	630-610
Jeremiah	626-586
Habakkuk	606-586
Obadiah	586

Assyrian Captivity  
2 Kings 17:1-8

Babylonian Captivity  
2 Kings 25:1-30

## Return From Exile

Joshua	536-516
Zerubbabel	536-516
Ezra	457-430
Nehemiah	444-432

## Prophets In Exile

Daniel	606-534
Ezekial	592-570

## Prophets After Exile

Haggai	520-516
Zechariah	520-516
Malachi	450-400