**The Book of Zephaniah**

**Zephaniah Chapter 1**

1The word of Yahweh that came to Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

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| 2 | “I will sweep, yes, sweep everything  off of the face of the earth,”  says Yahweh. |
| 3 | “I will sweep away man and animal.  I will sweep away the birds of the heavens,  the fish of the sea  and the stumbling blocks with the wicked.  I will cut off humankind from the face of the earth,”  says Yahweh. |
| 4 | “I will stretch out my hand against Judah  and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.  I will cut off the remnant of Baal  from this place,  the name of the idolatrous priests  and pagan priests, |
| 5 | those who worship the army of heaven  on the housetops,  those who worship and swear by Yahweh  and also swear by their “king,” |
| 6 | those who have turned away from *following* after Yahweh,  and those who have not sought Yahweh or asked anything of him.” |
| 7 | Be silent in the presence of the Lord Yahweh!  For the Day of Yahweh is at hand;  for Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice.  He has consecrated his guests. |
| 8 | It will happen in the Day of Yahweh’s sacrifice, that—  “I will punish the officials, the king’s sons,  and all those who are clothed with foreign clothing. |
| 9 | In that day, I will punish  all those who leap over the threshold,  who fill the house of their Lord  with violence and deceit. |
| 10 | In that day,”  says Yahweh,  “there will be the noise of a cry from the Fish Gate,  a wailing from the Second Quarter  and a great crashing from the hills. |
| 11 | Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar,  for all the merchant people will be destroyed!  All those who weigh out silver will be cut off. |
| 12 | It will happen at that time  that I will search Jerusalem with lamps,  and I will punish the men who are *like wine* comfortably settled on the lees,  who say in their heart,  ‘Yahweh will not do good, nor will he do evil.’ |
| 13 | Their wealth will become plunder  and their houses a desolation.  Yes, they will build houses, but will not inhabit them.  They will plant vineyards, but will not drink their wine.” |
| 14 | Near is the great Day of Yahweh.  Near, and very swiftly approaching.  The sound of the Day of Yahweh!  The mighty man cries out bitterly. |
| 15 | A day of wrath is that day.  A day of distress and anguish.  A day of trouble and ruin.  A day of darkness and gloom.  A day of clouds and thick darkness, |
| 16 | a day of the shofar and battle cry  against the fortified cities  and against the high corner towers. |
| 17 | I will bring distress on people  such that they will walk like blind men  because they have sinned against Yahweh,  and their blood will be poured out like dust,  and their bowels like dung. |
| 18 | Neither their silver nor their gold  will be able to deliver them  on the Day of Yahweh’s wrath,  but the whole earth will be devoured  by the fire of his jealousy;  for he will make an end,  yes, a terrible end  of all those who live on the earth. |

**Zephaniah Chapter 2**

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| 1 | Gather yourselves together like stubble,  yes, gather together like stubble, O nation without shame, |
| 2 | before the decree becomes reality (the day passes on like the chaff)  before the fierce anger of Yahweh comes on you,  before the Day of Yahweh’s anger comes on you. |
| 3 | Seek Yahweh, all you humble of the land  who have kept his ordinances.  Seek righteousness. Seek humility.  It may be that you will be hidden  on the Day of Yahweh’s anger. |
| 4 | For Gaza will be abandoned,  and Ashkelon will become a desolation.  They will drive out Ashdod at noonday,  and Ekron will be uprooted. |
| 5 | Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast,  the nation of the Cherethites!  The word of Yahweh is against you,  O Canaan, land of the Philistines.  I will destroy you, so that there will be no inhabitant left. |
| 6 | The seacoast will become pastures,  with caves for shepherds and walled enclosures for flocks. |
| 7 | And the coastland will be  for the remnant of the house of Judah.  They will find pasture on it.  In the houses of Ashkelon,  they will lie down in the evening,  because Yahweh their God will visit them  and restore their fortunes. |
| 8 | “I have heard the reproach of Moab  and the insults of the children of Ammon  with which they have reproached my people  and made boasts against their territory. |
| 9 | Therefore as I live,”  says Yahweh of Armies,  the God of Israel,  “surely Moab will be as Sodom,  and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah,  a possession of nettles,  and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation.  The remnant of my people will plunder them,  and the survivors of my nation will inherit them.” |
| 10 | This they will get in return for their pride,  because they have taunted and boasted  against the people of Yahweh of Armies. |
| 11 | Yahweh will be terrifying to them,  for he will starve all the gods of the earth.  All the coastlands of the nations  will bow down to[[1]](#footnote-22728) Him,  each one from his own place. |
| 12 | You also, O Cushites—slain by my sword are they! |
| 13 | And he will stretch out his hand against the north  and destroy Assyria.  He will make Nineveh a desolation  as dry as the wilderness. |
| 14 | And herds will lie down in the middle of her,  as well as all the animals of the nations.  Both the desert owl and the screech owl  will lodge in the tops of her pillars.  Their calls will echo through the windows.  Devastation will be on the thresholds,  for he will lay bare the cedar beams. |
| 15 | This is the exultant city  that lived securely,  that said in her heart,  “I am, and there is none besides me.”  What a desolation she has become,  a place for animals to lie down in!  Everyone who passes by her  will hiss and wave his hand *in contempt*. |

**Zephaniah Chapter 3**

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| 1 | Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled,  the oppressing city! |
| 2 | She has not listened to the Voice!  She accepts no correction!  She did not trust in Yahweh;  she did not approach her God. |
| 3 | Her leaders in the midst of her are roaring lions.  Her judges are wolves at evening.  They leave not a bone *to gnaw on* for the morning. |
| 4 | Her prophets are arrogant  and treacherous people;  her priests have profaned the holy place;  they have done violence to the law. |
| 5 | Yahweh, *who resides* in the midst of her, is righteous.  He will do no injustice.  Morning by morning he brings his justice to light;  he will not fail.  But an unjust *person* knows no shame. |
| 6 | “I have cut off nations;  their corner towers are in ruins.  I have made their streets waste,  so that no one passes by.  Their cities are destroyed  so that there is no person; *they are* without an inhabitant. |
| 7 | I said, ‘Surely you will fear me;  you will accept correction, so that her dwelling place  will not be *completely* cut off  because of all that I have visited upon her.’  But they rose early  and corrupted all that they did. |
| 8 | “Therefore wait for me,”  says Yahweh,  “*wait* for the Day that I rise up to testify,  for my decision is to gather the nations,  to assemble the kingdoms,  to pour on them my indignation,  *even* all my fierce anger,  for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth will be devoured. |
| 9 | For then I will change the speech to a pure language,  so that they may all call  on the name of Yahweh  to serve him shoulder to shoulder. |
| 10 | From beyond the rivers of Cush,  my worshipers, even the daughter of my scattered people,  will bring my offering. |
| 11 | In that day you will not be put to shame  for all you have done  in which you have transgressed against me.  For then I will remove from your midst  your *people* who rejoice in their pride,  and you will not be haughty anymore  in my holy mountain. |
| 12 | But I will leave among you  a humble and lowly people,  and they will take refuge in the name of Yahweh. |
| 13 | The remnant of Israel will not do iniquity,  nor speak lies;  nor will a deceitful tongue  be found in their mouth,  for they will feed and lie down,  and no one will make them afraid.” |
| 14 | Sing, Daughter Zion!  Shout, Israel!  Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,  Daughter Jerusalem. |
| 15 | Yahweh has taken away the judgments against you.  He has turned back your enemy.  The King of Israel, Yahweh, is in your midst.  You will not be afraid of evil any more. |
| 16 | In that day, it will be said to Jerusalem,  “Do not be afraid, Zion.  Do not let your hands fall limp. |
| 17 | Yahweh your God is in your midst,  a mighty one who will save.  He will rejoice over you with joy.  He will calm you with his love.  He will rejoice over you with singing. |
| 18 | I will gather together those who grieve  about the appointed feasts;  they came from you,  and the reproach *of exile*  is a burden to you. |
| 19 | Behold, at that time  I will deal with all those who afflict you,  and I will rescue those who are lame,  and gather those who were scattered.  And I will change their shame into praise and a name in all the earth. |
| 20 | At that time I will bring you in,  even at the time when I gather you together,  indeed, I will make you to be a name and a praise  among all the peoples of the earth  when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,”  says Yahweh. |

1. Or “worship” [↑](#footnote-ref-22728)