

COMMENTARY

ZEPHANIAH

Zephaniah 1

Zephaniah was a great-grandson of King Hezekiah, of Judah and thus, was a kinsman to King Josiah of Judah (Josiah carried out moral and religious reforms during his reign in an attempt to turn the people back to their God), during whose Kingship he prophesied.

God speaks of a coming day of destruction. A day when everything would be destroyed. Judah would not be left out. Judah would be destroyed because of its' idolatry and its' reluctance to serve the true God of Judah. The leaders of Judah would be punished, along with the merchants and all who had become complacent, thinking that the Lord would never follow through with His threats. Their wealth and possessions would be taken away from them.

Contrary to popular belief, the day of the Lord would be a day of wrath for Judah. It would bring distress and punishment because of their sin. Many had assumed that it would be a day of great glory and victory for all who called themselves God's people!

Zephaniah 2

Zephaniah calls the people of Judah to repent and to return to obeying the Lord. He suggests that this might prevent them from being destroyed in the day of the Lord's anger.

He lists the major cities of the Philistines and prophesies their coming destruction. Their land would be given to God's people and God would restore His people.

The Moabites and Ammonites would be destroyed because of the joy that they took in Judah's fall. Their gods would be powerless against the true God of Judah.

The Cushites (Egyptians) would be killed. The Assyrians would be destroyed by God and become a desolate place (for many centuries, man did not know where the Assyrian Empire was, for there was no trace of any of its' cities).

Zephaniah 3

Zephaniah characterizes the people and leaders of Jerusalem as being greedy, selfish, and proud people. They seek their own interests; no matter who gets hurt. In contrast, their God is righteous and fair. God promises to discipline His people until they learn to obey and serve Him. Those that refuse would be destroyed.

God promises to leave a remnant of faithful people whom He would care for and restore. He would give them a place that He had prepared for them and their enemies would be destroyed.

STUDY GUIDE

ZEPHANIAH 1

1. When did Zephaniah prophesy? (vs. 1)
2. What would God sweep away? (vs. 2)
3. Who would God cut off? (vs. 6)
4. Why were they to be silent? (vs. 7)
5. Who would be punished? (vs. 8)
6. Who else would be punished? (vs. 12)
7. What would the Day of the Lord be? (vs. 15)
8. What would be consumed? (vs. 18)

STUDY GUIDE

ZEPHANIAH 2

1. What were the people to seek? (vs. 3)
2. What would happen to the cities of the Philistines? (vs. 4)
3. What would God do for Judah? (vs. 7)
4. What had the Moabites and Ammonites done? (vs. 8)
5. Why would Moab and Ammon be destroyed? (vs. 10)
6. Who would be slain by the sword of the Lord? (vs. 12)
7. Who would God stretch out His hand against and destroy? (vs. 13)

STUDY GUIDE

ZEPHANIAH 3

1. How does God describe Jerusalem? (vs. 2)
2. How are the people described? (vs. 3,4)
3. How is the Lord described? (vs. 5)
4. What had God said to the city? (vs. 7)
5. What was their response? (vs. 7)
6. Why was God going to purify the lips of the people? (vs. 9)
7. Who would be left behind and how are they described? (vs. 12,13)
8. What would the Lord do? (vs. 17)
9. What would the Lord do for the people? (vs. 20)