

Zephaniah

Chapter 1

- ¶1. The word of the LORD that came to Zephaniah ben Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah ben Amon, King of Judah:
2. I will completely sweep all things away from off the face of the land, says the LORD.
3. I will sweep away man and beasts, and I will sweep away the fowls of the heavens and fish of the sea and the stumbling blocks, the wicked. I will cut man off from the face of the land, says the LORD.
4. I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, *and* the name of Chemarim with the priests,
5. and those bowing on *housetops* to the host of heaven, and those bowing *and* taking an oath to the LORD, and yet swearing by Malcham¹,
6. and those who have turned away from the LORD and who did not seek the LORD nor inquire *of* Him.
7. Be silent before the Lord Jehovah, for the day of Jehovah is near! The LORD has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated His guests,
8. and it shall come to pass on the day of the LORD's sacrifice that I will punish the rulers and the sons of the king, and all those arrayed in foreign clothing.
9. And I will punish on that day all those who leap upon the threshold, those who fill the house of their masters *with* violence and deceit.
10. And on that day, says the LORD, there shall be a sound of a bitter cry from the Fish Gate, and wailing from the Second *Quarter*, and a great crashing from the hills.

¹ Possibly, "the king". Hebrew obscure.

11. Howl, O inhabitants of Maktesh! For all the people of Canaan are cut down; all those laden with silver are cut off.
12. And it shall come to pass in that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are settled on their lees, who say in their heart, "The LORD will not do good, neither will He do evil."
13. And their goods shall become spoil, and their houses a desolation. And they will build houses, but they will not dwell *in them*, and they will plant vineyards, but they will not drink their wine.
14. The great day of the LORD is near. The sound of the day of the Lord is very near and coming quickly. The mighty man shall cry out there bitterly.
15. That day *will be* a day of wrath, a day of distress and affliction, a day of waste and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness,
16. a day of a trumpet blast, and an alarm against the fortified cities, and *against* the high towers.
17. I will *bring* distress to mankind, and they will walk as blind *men* because they have sinned against the LORD. Their blood shall be poured out like dirt and their bowels like dung.
18. Neither their silver *nor* their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath. By the fire of his jealousy, the whole land shall be consumed. He will surely make a full and speedy end of all the inhabitants of the land.

Chapter 2

- ¶1. Gather yourselves together! Yes, gather yourselves, O unwanted nation,
2. before the decree comes forth (the day will pass like the chaff), before the heat of Jehovah's anger comes upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger comes upon you.

3. Seek the LORD, all *you* meek of the earth who have done *according to* His justice. Seek righteousness! Seek meekness! It may be that *you* will be hidden in the day of the LORD's anger.
4. For Gaza shall be abandoned, and Ashkelon shall become a desolation. They shall drive Ashdod away at midday, and Ekron shall be plucked up by the roots.
5. Woe to the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of *the* Chere-thites! The word of Jehovah *is* against *you*! O Canaan, land of the Philistines, I will destroy *you*, and there will be no inhabitant *left*.
6. And the sea coast shall be pastures, places for shepherds, and for folds of the flock.
7. And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall graze there. In the houses of Ashkelon, they will recline in the evening because Jehovah their God will visit them and return their captives.
8. I have heard the scorn of Moab and the taunts of the sons of Ammon. How they have reproached my people and magnified *themselves* on their border.
9. Therefore, *as* I live, says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Moab shall surely be like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah, the possession of thorny weeds and *a* salt pit, and a perpetual desolation. The residue of my people will plunder them; the remnant of *my* nation will possess them.
10. This shall be theirs in return for their pride because they reproached and were lifted up against the people of the LORD of hosts.
11. Jehovah *will become* dreadful to them, for He will starve all the gods of the earth, and throughout the coasts of the nations, every man in his place shall bow down to Him.
12. And *you*, O Ethiopians, shall be pierced by my sword.
13. And He will stretch out His hand against the north and destroy Assyria, and He will make Nineveh a desolation, parched like a desert.

14. Flocks shall lie down in her midst, all the herds of the nation; both the small and the large owl² shall lodge in her capitals; *their* call will sound at the window, and desolation *will be* at the threshold, for He will strip the cedar-work bare.
15. This *is* the joyful city that sits confidently, that says in her heart, “I am, and there is none besides me.” How she has become a desolation, a resting place for animals! Everyone passing near her will hiss and wave his hand.

Chapter 3

- ¶1. Woe to her that is rebellious and defiled, the oppressing city!
2. She did not heed the voice; she did not receive correction; she did not trust Jehovah; she did not draw near to her God.
3. Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves. They do not even leave bones for the morning.
4. Her prophets are light, treacherous persons; her priests have profaned the sanctuary; they have done violence to the law.
5. The LORD within her is righteous. He will not act perversely; morning by morning He brings his judgment to light; He does not fail. But a perverse person knows no shame.
6. I have cut off nations; their towers are desolate. I have laid waste their streets, without a passerby. Their cities are laid waste, so that there is not a man, not an inhabitant there,
7. I had thought, “Surely, you will fear me; you will receive correction,” and that all her dwelling that I appointed for her will not be cut off. But they rose early, *and* they corrupted all their deeds.
8. Therefore, wait for me, says the LORD, for the day when I rise up to the prey. For my determination is to gather the nations, that I might assemble kingdoms to pour out upon them my fury, all my fierce anger, for all the earth will be consumed with the fire and my jealousy.

² Hebrew uncertain.

9. Then I will return to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of Jehovah to serve Him in one accord.
10. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, those who worship me, the daughter of my scattered ones, will bring my offering.
11. In that day, you shall not be ashamed for all your deeds in which you have transgressed against me, for at that time I will remove from your midst those who rejoice *in* your pride, and you will not again be haughty on my holy mountain.
12. I will also leave in your midst a poor and lowly people, and they shall seek refuge in the name of the LORD.
13. The remnant of Israel will not act perversely, and they will not tell a lie; neither will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth. But they will graze and lie down, and no one will make *them* afraid.
14. Cry aloud, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem!
15. The LORD has taken away your judgments, he has turned away your enemy. The King of Israel, Jehovah, is in your midst! You shall not fear evil again.
16. In that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem, “Do not fear, O Zion! Let not your hands be weak!
17. The LORD your God in your midst is mighty! He will deliver! He will exult over you with gladness! He will rest in His love! He will rejoice over you with a shout of joy!
18. I will gather those among you who were grieved for the assembly. (They were a burden on her, a reproach.)
19. Behold! At that time, I will deal with all who afflict you. I will deliver her who is lame, and I will gather her that was banished. I will give them praise and renown throughout the land of their shame.
20. At that time, I will bring you in. And when I gather you, I will surely give you renown and praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I return your captivity before your eyes, says the LORD.