

Zephaniah

Zephaniah 1

- ¶1. The word of Jehovah 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 utterly do away with all things from off the face of the land, says Jehovah.
 3. I will do away with man and beast; I will do away with the birds of heaven, and fish of the sea, and the stumbling blocks with those who are wicked. And I will cut men off from the face of the land, says Jehovah.
 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, the name of the idols¹ with the priests,
 5. and those who prostrate themselves on housetops before the host of heaven, and those who prostrate themselves, who swear by Jehovah and swear by Milcom,
 6. and those who have turned back from Jehovah and who do not seek Jehovah nor inquire of Him.
- ¶7. “Be silent before my Lord, Jehovah! For the day of Jehovah is near. Jehovah has prepared a sacrifice; He has consecrated His guests.
8. And it shall come to pass on the day of Jehovah’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 who leap upon the threshold, those who fill the house of their masters *by* violence and deceit.
 10. And on that day, says Jehovah, there will be a sound of a bitter cry from the Fish Gate, and wailing from the Second *Quarter*, and a great crashing from the hills.
 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 at 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, ‘Jehovah does neither good nor 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 Jehovah is near. It is near! And the sound of the day of Jehovah is hastening fast. The mighty man will cry aloud there bitterly.
15. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and affliction, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

¹ Usually translated “idoltrous priests”, but that is redundant here. So, it seems here to refer to the idols themselves.

16. a day of the shofar and an alarm against the fortified cities and against the high towers.
17. I will bring distress to mankind, and they will go about like blind men because they have sinned against Jehovah. Their blood will 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 Jehovah'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."

Zephaniah 2

- ¶1. Gather yourselves together! Yea, 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 Jehovah's anger comes upon you.
3. Seek Jehovah, all you meek of the land who have done His judgments. Seek righteousness! Seek meekness! It may be that you will be hidden in the day of Jehovah's anger.
4. For Gaza will be abandoned, and Ashkelon will become a desolation. They will drive Ashdod away at midday, and Ekron will be plucked up by the roots.
5. Woe to the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! The word of Jehovah is against you, O Canaan, O land of the Philistines. Yea, I will slay you until there is no inhabitant.
6. And the sea coast will be pastures, places for shepherds and folds of the flock.
7. And the coast will be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they will graze there. In the houses of Ashkelon will they 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 children of Ammon wherewith they have reproached my people and magnified *themselves* against their border.
9. Therefore, as I live, says Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, Moab will surely be like Sodom, and the children of Ammon like Gomorrah, the possession of thorny weeds and salt-pits, even a perpetual desolation. The residue of my people will plunder them; the remnant of *my* nation will possess them.
10. This they will have in return for their pride because they reproached and magnified *themselves* against the people of Jehovah of Hosts."
11. Jehovah will be dreadful to them, for He will starve all the gods of the earth, and all the coasts of the nations shall bow down to Him, each from his place.
12. You, too, O Ethiopians, will be slain by my sword.
13. Moreover, 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 pelican and the porcupine shall lodge in her lintels.² A voice will sing in the window. Desolation is at the threshold, for He will lay bare the cedar-work.
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 beasts! Everyone passing by her will hiss and wave his hand.

Zephaniah 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 unscrupulous, treacherous persons; her priests have profaned the sanctuary; they have done violence to the law.
5. Jehovah in her midst 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, without a man; there is no inhabitant.
7. I had thought, 'Surely, you will fear me; you will receive correction,' so that her dwelling would not be cut off, howsoever I punished her. However, they arose early to corrupt all their deeds.
8. Therefore, wait for me, says Jehovah, for the day when I arise to the prey. For it is my determination to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms so that I might pour my fury out on them, all my burning anger, when the whole land is consumed by the fire of my jealousy.
9. At that time, I will turn to the nations a pure language so that they may all call on the Name³ 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. On that day, you will not be put to shame 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 an afflicted and lowly people, and they will seek refuge in the Name of Jehovah.

² Hebrew uncertain.

³ That is, the Son of God, when he returns to rule over the earth.

13. The remnant of Israel will not act perversely; yea, they will not tell a lie, nor 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, O daughter of Jerusalem!
15. Jehovah has done away with your judgments; He has turned away your enemy! Jehovah, the King of Israel, is in your midst! You shall not fear evil again!
16. In that day, it will be said to Jerusalem, ‘Do not fear, O Zion! Let not your hands be weak!
17. Jehovah, your God in your midst, is mighty. He will save! He will rejoice over you with gladness! He will make *you* quiet in His love! He will rejoice over you with a shout!
- ¶18. “I will gather those of you who grieve because of the sacred seasons. 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 gather her that was banished. I will give them praise and renown in all the earth instead of their shame.
20. At that time, I will bring *you* in. And when I gather *you*, I will assuredly give *you* renown and praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I return *your* captivity before *your* eyes, says Jehovah.”