

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 452 – Word Came To Zephaniah Through Speedy Riddance (Zephaniah 1:1-18)

1. Where would you go to read about the time period that Zephaniah was a prophet?

Zephaniah was a prophet during the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah: *“The word of the LORD which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah” (Zephaniah 1:1).*

- **II Kings 22:1-23:30, II Chronicles 34:1-35:27, Jeremiah 1:1-2, and Jeremiah 25:3**
- We know Josiah brought about great changes and returned Judah to God. So, either these prophesies were before those changes. If you read the accounts of Josiah’s acts, you see that he took actions in the eighth year of his reign (**II Chronicles 34:1-7**) BEFORE the Law of the Lord was found in the eighteenth year of his reign (**II Chronicles 34:15**). Was that due to prophets such as Zephaniah? OR, the prophesies of Zephaniah could be in line with what God said to Josiah (**II Kings 23:23-27**).

2. What/who was going to be utterly consumed by the Lord?

“(2) I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the LORD. (3) I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD. (4) I will also stretch out mine 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 Chemarims with the priests; (5) And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham; (6) And them that are turned back from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him” (Zephaniah 1:2-6).

- The why (**II Kings 22:16-17** and **Jeremiah 24:1-10**).
- Desolation (**Ezekiel 33:27-29**).
- Man and beast (**Jeremiah 12:4**).
- Even the idols that were their stumbling blocks (**Micah 5:11-14**).
- The stretched out hand of the Lord both saves and destroys (**II Samuel 24:16, Psalms 136:11-12, Psalms 138:7, and Isaiah 5:25**).
- The judgment of God against those whom practiced idolatry (**Exodus 20:3-5, Deuteronomy 8:19, Deuteronomy 29:25-28, and Isaiah 65:6-7**).

3. At the time Zephaniah was prophesying of these things, how far off was this judgment?

It was at hand; near: *“Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests... The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly,*

even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly’ (Zephaniah 1:7; 1:14).

- At hand, it is coming, it’s nigh (**Joel 1:15** and **Joel 2:1**).
- At hand means not far off (**Jeremiah 23:23**).

4. What did the Lord say of the princes, the king’s children, and the merchant people?

“(8) And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD’S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king’s children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel. (9) In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters’ houses with violence and deceit. (10) And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills. (11) Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off” (**Zephaniah 1:8-11**).

- The day of the Lord’s sacrifice, the Passover had such terminology applied (**Exodus 12:27**). It could be however broader or even figurative.
- The leaders were carried away (**II Kings 23:30-34**; **II Kings 24:12-13**).
- Strange apparel (**Isaiah 3:18-24**). Also, consider garments that may have been worn in association with idolatry (i.e. **II Kings 10:18-27**; note vs. 22).
- Those that gained from violence and deceit, taking what was not theirs (**Jeremiah 5:23-28**).
- The cry of anguish (**Jeremiah 4:31**).
- There was a fish gate in Jerusalem (**II Chronicles 33:14**).
- Maktesh was a place in Jerusalem (Strong’s # 4389).
- The merchants were not going to be there to be looked upon for help (**Isaiah 47:15**).

5. What was meant by the phrase “settled on their lees” in this context?

“And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil” (**Zephaniah 1:12**).

- Settled: “to shrink, i.e. thicken (as unracked wine, curdled milk, clouded sky, frozen water): — congeal [solidify], curdle, dark, settle. To thicken, condense, congeal, settle, become dense(Qal) to be condensedthickening (participle). (Hiphil) to cause to curdle; congelation” (Strong’s # 7087). Cf. **Exodus 15:8**, **Job 10:10**, and **Zechariah 14:6**
- Lees: “Something preserved, i.e. the settlings (plural only) of wine: — dregs, (wines on the) lees. Lees, dregs” (Strong’s # 8105). Cf. **Psalms 75:8**, **Isaiah 25:6**, and **Jeremiah 48:11**
- They were indifferent. They erringly thought God was not going to do anything (**Psalms 94:1-10**, **Ezekiel 8:12-18**, and **Ezekiel 9:9-10**; cf. **Psalms 7:11-16**).

6. What were those that were settled on their lees going to lose?

“Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof” (Zephaniah 1:13).

- Their goods become booty (**Jeremiah 5:11-19**).
- The whole land spoiled; desolate (**Jeremiah 25:9**).
- Houses built, but not inhabited (**Deuteronomy 28:15-51** and **Amos 5:11**).

7. Did Zephaniah emphasize that these things coming were not good?

Yes: “(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, (16) A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. (17) And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung” (Zephaniah 1:15-17).

- The day of the Lord was a day of wrath, trouble, distress (**Isaiah 22:1-5**).
- Yet, the ignorant among God’s people desired that day to come in what was essentially a dare to God (**Isaiah 5:18-19**; cf. **Amos 5:18**).
- The trumpet point (**Amos 3:6**).
- Distress (**Proverbs 1:25-31**) to the point as blind men (**Lamentations 4:14**).
- Again, the reasoning, their sins (**Jeremiah 2:19**).

8. What good was their silver and gold going to do for them against the Lord’s wrath?

Nothing. “Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD’S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land” (Zephaniah 1:18).

- **Deuteronomy 32:39** and **Isaiah 43:11-13**; cf. **Proverbs 11:4**