

3/17/17

Zephaniah 1

We come to the book of Zephaniah, One of the twelve Minor Prophets.

He is the last pre-exilic prophet in the order of the Bible, before the Babylonians captivity of seventy years.

After the seventy year captivity we have three post-captivity Minor Prophets.

1. Haggai 520 B.C.
2. Zechariah 520 B.C.
3. Malachi 430 B.C.

1:1 The introduction to the prophecy.

1:1a The origin of the words of Zephaniah.

- 1) The word of the LORD “Yahweh” the covenant God of Israel was made known to Zephaniah, it came to him.
 - a) Revelation has to do with God communicating His mind and will to man. 2Tim. 3:16-17
 - b) Inspiration has to do with the method of the Holy Spirit of God coming upon a person to insure the accurate and inerrant recording. 2Pet. 1:19-21
 - c) Illumination has to do with the spiritual understanding of God’s revelation by His Holy Spirit. 1Cor. 2:9-16

- 2) The man is Zephaniah “Ts@phanyah”, which means Yahweh hides.

1:1a-d The family lineage of Zephaniah is four generations.

- 1) Cushi is his father.
- 2) Gedaliah is his grand-father.
- 3) Amariah is his great-grand-father.
- 4) Hezekiah is his great, great-grand-father, who was king of Israel.

1:1e-f The time of Zephaniah’s prophecy.

- 1) The days of Josiah was when Zephaniah received his prophecy.
- 2) The person named Josiah is identified as the king of Judah.
 - a) Josiah King of Judah during reigned from 638-608 B.C.
 - b) Exactly when is not certain, but from the internal evidence some think about the reform period 636-21 B.C.

1:2-13 The Day of the Lord.

1:2-3 The scope of the Day of the Lord is universal, world-wide.

- 1) The proclamation of the certain destruction is stated first. vs. 2
 - a) God indicates four times He will bring about the destruction by the phrase “I will”. vs. 2-3
 - b) The extent “utterly consume everything.” vs. 2a

- c) The authority is according to the word of the LORD, "Says the LORD". vs. 2b
- 2) The identification of the complete destruction. vs. 3
 - a) The word consume "cawph", means to cease or come to an end, state three times. vs. 2-3
 - b) The affirmation of the total destruction is given by the particulars, man, beast, birds, fish and the stumbling blocks of the wicked. vs. 3a-d
 - * Recalling God's creation and destruction by the flood. Gen. 1, 6-8
 - c) The authority is stated again, "Says the LORD". vs. 3e

1:4-6 The judgment against the sin of idolatry that defiles and polluted God's people.

- 1) The culprit is named by God, "I will stretch out My hand against Judah, And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem." vs. 4a-b
 - a) Judah was the southern kingdom, made up of Benjamin and Judah.
 - b) Jerusalem is the capital city of the Kingdom.
 - c) The severe judgment was related to her measure of high privilege and light she possessed about their God.
- 2) The removal of every shrine and altar of the worship of Baal would follow, "I will cut off every trace of Baal from this place." vs. 4c
 - a) Baal was the supreme male divinity of the Phoenicians or Canaanites, a fertility god.

- * His consort being Ashtoreth.
- b) Jezebel had introduced the worship with Ahab her husband. 1Kings 18:31-33
- c) Remember Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. 1Kings 18:22-40
- 3) The obliteration of any remembrance of those practicing the false worship of idolatry. vs. 4d-6
 - a) The priests, "the names of the idolatrous priests with the *pagan* priests." vs. 4d
 - 1)) The priest of God had apostatized.
 - 2)) The pagan "Kamar" priest had corrupted the priests of God.
 - b) The worshippers of the host of heaven on the housetops. vs. 5a
 - 1)) The practice of astrology on their flat roofs.
 - 2)) The practice was to seek direction and guidance by the stars and planets, a practice of Assyria and Babylon.
 - 3)) Jeremiah prophesying at the same time exposed and condemned the worship on the rooftops. Jer. 19:13; 32:29
 - c) Those worshipping and swearing oaths by the LORD, but also swear by Milcom." vs. 5b-c
 - 1)) This is called syncretism, Manasseh the son of Hezekiah did worse than all the nations in idolatrous worship, passing his own children through the fire. 2Kings 21:6

- 2)) Milcom is Molech, to whom they would offer up their infant children in sacrifice on his burning arms. Lev. 18:21; 2Kings 23:10; Jer. 23:10; 32:35
- d) Those who turn back from following the Lord. vs. 6a
* Ezk. 8:15-18; 14:1-7
- e) Those not having sought the Lord or inquired of Him. vs. 6b-c
* God answered them according to the multitudes of their idols. Ezk. 14:4

1:7-9 The judgment of the royal court.

- 1) The command to be silent and humble in the presence of the LORD in their judgment by Him, due to their blasphemous ignorance about the holiness of God. vs. 7a
* “But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.” Hab. 2:20
- 2) The judgment was very near, “For the Day at the LORD is at hand”. indicating imminent and near.” vs. 7b
* “Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good *is* the day of the LORD to you? It *will be* darkness, and not light. It *will be* as though a man fled from a lion, And a bear met him! Or *as though* he went into the house, Leaned his hand on the wall, And a serpent bit him!” Am. 5:18-19

- 3) The reason being the LORD had prepared a sacrifice and invited His guests. vs. 7c-d
a) The sacrifice is the nation of Judah. Is. 34:6; Jer. 46:10, Ezk. 39:17
b) The guests are the Babylonians, the instrument of God’s judgment. Hab. 1:6-8; Rev. 19:17-21
- 4) God would punish the princes and the king’s children. vs. 8a-b
* Probably not Josiah’s for they were 10 and 12. 2Kings 23:31-36
- 5) These princes and children of the King had allowed the pagan influences to turn them from God, they even dress as them. vs. 8c
- 6) Those who leap over the threshold. vs. 9
a) The practice was to not provoke the gods who guarded the house, as Dagan. 1Sam 5:4-5
b) The context here is probably to rob the house.

1:10-13 The judgment of merchants and traders.

- 1) God revealed the severe suffering in the judgment. vs. 10
a) “On that day” the sound of lamentable sorrow and wailing would be heard from Fish Gate and wailing from the 2nd quarter of city. vs. 10a-d
1)) The Fish Gate is the Gate of Damascus on the north, the most vulnerable part of the city. Neh. 3:3
2)) The second quarter also in the north.

- b) “On that day” there would be a loud crashing from the hills. vs. 10e
- 1)) There is the Mount of Olives, Mount Scopus and others.
 - 2)) “As the mountains surround **Jerusalem**, So the LORD surrounds His people From this time forth and forever.” Ps. 125:2
- 2) God called the merchants to wail at the loss of their livlyhood. vs. 11
- a) The word Maktesh means “a mortar” or “deep hollow” to indicate a valley iin the area.
 - b) This is the area of the market district, the Cheese Maker Valley, as a bridge connected the temle to the upper city.
- 3) God “on that day” search out all the guilty people. vs. 12
- a) God at that time would search Jerusalem with lamps, indicating no one would escape. vs. 12a
 - b) God would punish the men who had become corrup and indiferent. vs. 12b
 - 1)) The phrase “settled in complacency” indicates like wine that is not poured from vessel to vessel to remove the dredges and souring the wine, ruining it, so the men had not cultivated their life with God.
 - 2)) “Moab has been at ease from his youth; He has settled on his dregs, And has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, Nor has he gone into

captivity. Therefore his taste remained in him, And his scent has not changed.” Jer. 48:11

- c) The evidence is by what they say,”Who say in their heart, ‘The LORD will not do good, Nor will He do evil.’” vs. 12c-d
- 4) God proclaimed the consequences of such a life. vs. 13
 - a) All their material things would become spoil for the Babylonians. vs. 13a
 - b) All their houses become desolate. vs. 13b
 - c) They shall build houses, but not get to live in them. vs. 13c
 - d) They shall plant vineyards, but not drink their wine. vs. 13d

1:14-18 The nature of the Day of the Lord.

1:14 A day of judgment, short-term for Judah. long-term the seven year tribulation.

- 1) The day is called, “The great day of the LORD”, due to his righteous judgment over His people. vs. 14a
* Amos 5:20; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14, 18; Mal. 4:5
- 2) The day is said to be “near” two times for emphasis and affirmed by the fact that it would come quickly or suddenly. vs. 14b-c
- 3) The sound on the day of the LORD would be a bitter cry, not for women and children, but rather the mighty men. vs. 14d-e

1:15 A day of great despair.

- 1) A day of wrath, a day of reckoning. vs. 15a
- 2) A day of trouble and distress, a day of desparation. vs. 15b
- 3) A day of devastation and desolation, a day of loosing everything. vs. 15c
- 4) A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of paying the high price of their sins. vs. 15d
- 5) A day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of hopelessness. vs. 15e

1:16 A day of warning the entire nation.

- 1) The trumpet was the form of alarm of the coming judgment by the hand of Babylon against the fortified cities. vs. 16a
- 2) The towers the vantage point to see the enemy and warn the people, but judgment would also be against the high towers. vs. 16b
 * All the adjectives are negative and found through out the Old and New Testament. Amos 5:18, 20; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31-32; 3:14; Obed 15; Mal. 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1Thess. 4:17-5:2, 2Pet. 3:10; Rev. 6:17

1:17 The righteous judgment of God executed.

- 1) The judge, "I will bring distress upon men." vs. 17a
- 2) The consequences, "And they shall walk like blind men." vs. 17b
 * People will be handed over to the lie, the Anti-Christ and not repent of their sorceries, fornication, etc. 2Thess. 2:8-12; Rev. 9:20-21

- 3) The reason, "Because they have sinned against the LORD." vs. 17c
- 4) The punishment, "Their blood shall be poured out like dust, And their flesh like refuse." vs. 17d-e

1:18 The inability to pay tribute to escape the judgment.

- 1) Money does not solve every problem, "Neither their silver nor their gold Shall be able to deliver them In the day of the LORD'S wrath." vs. 18a
 * "They will throw their silver into the streets, And their gold will be like refuse; Their silver and their gold will not be able to deliver them In the day of the wrath of the LORD; They will not satisfy their souls, Nor fill their stomachs, Because it became their stumbling block of iniquity." Ezk. 7:19
- 2) The holiness of God would be vindicated, "But the whole land shall be devoured By the fire of His jealousy." vs. 18b
- 3) The captivity would be total, "For He will make speedy riddance Of all those who dwell in the land." vs. 18c