

3/17/17

Zephaniah 2

The natural division of the book of Zephaniah fall into three.

- I. The announcement of the great day of judgment for the world and Judah. Zeph. 1:1-2:3
- II. The call to repent to Judah, plus the pagan nations judgment. Zeph. 2:4-3:8
- III. The promise of restoration to Israel after judgement. Zeph. 3:9-20

But you could also divide it to include Judah with the pagan nation, due to the fact that she was living a idolatrous pagan nation, even a Amos does or the northern Kingdom of Israel. Zeph. 2:1-3:8

This section of judgment against the pagan nation are said to be mostly poetry, except for 2:10-11, it is prose.

2:1-3 The day of the Lord and repentance for Judah.

- 2:1** The invitation of repentant to Judah.
- 1) This is a double imperative command, phrase “gather yourselves” marked the emphatic importance of their obedience. vs. 1a-c
 - a) The root word of the phrase “gather together” is “qash”, meaning stubble.

b) They were about to be cast into the fire of God’s judgment.

c) This command was to turn from sin and return back to God, to repent of their sinful state, a change of mind, to turn around “metanoia” in the Greek.

d) God knew the nation as a whole would not repent, but there would be individuals that would.

2) The nation of Judah was addressed by her corrupt condition, “O undesirable nation”. vs. 1d

a) The word undesirable “kacaph”, means to not long after or yearn for, due to her unattractive state of sinful corruption.

b) Judah had acted like a unfaithful adulterous wife by her whoredoms.

1)) God through Jeremiah recalled the kindness of her youth, the love of her betrothal, as she pursued God in holiness. Jer. 2:1-3

2)) “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down,” says the LORD.” Jer. 6:15

2:2 The urgency is marked by the limited time.

1) Zephaniah used now the word “before”, three times giving emphasis the the

importance of the time left for repentance.

vs. 2a

* If this is at the time of Hoshiah's reform, it is 621 B.C. , the first siege of Jerusalem was in 606 B.C. , fifteen years away.

2) Zephaniah warned emphasizing the decree is issued "chaq ledheth", the proclamation of Judah's destruction brought to be or birthed.

vs. 2a-b

* By the instrument of Babylon, 506, 596, 586 B.C. , but the direct hand of God, as a harvest of chaff.

3) Zephaniah warned emphasizing the severity of the judgment by God's fierce anger for his displeasure of breaking the covenant of Sinai. vs. 2c

a) The word "before" as we noted speaks of a short time before the fulfillment.

b) The phrase fierce anger "charown aph", indicates the heat of God's burning displeasure, breathing through the nose hard.

c) Given to idolatry, sacrificing their children to arms of Moloch, heirs to royalty imulating the fashion of foreigners, prophets were insolent and treacherous, priests polluted the temple and violated the law. Zeph. 1:2-5; Zeph. 1:8; Zeph. 3:4

4) Zephaniah warned emphasizing the horrific prophetic day of Yahweh's anger. vs. 2d

a) The Day of the LORD remember has a two-fold meaning, short-term for Judah

by the hand of Babylon and long-term for the entire world at the Tribulation and Great-Tribulation.

b) The Day of the LORD is the central theme of Zephaniah, appearing seven times. Zeph. 1:7, 8, 10, 14, 18; 2:2; 3:8

* The phrase appears in Joel, Obediah, and many others, as well as the New Testament.

c) The word anger "aph", here has the idea of patience and the longsuffering of God with Judah' unfaithfulness and evil.

2:3 The benefit to the righteous who seek God will be to be hidden from His wrath.

1) The context of "seeking the Lord", is in repentance. vs. 3a

2) "All you meek of the earth", refers to those who at hearing of the message to repent see themselves as guilty before God and in poverty of spirit to deserve salvation and cast themselves upon God's grace and mercy and those who were walking to continue to uphold justice. vs. 3b-c

3) They were to seek righteousness and humility, to do right towards their fellow man and having a proper view of self, sinful and rebellious. vs. 3d

4) The potential benefit is declared, It may be that they would be hidden in the day of the LORD'S anger.

a) Some in the Babylonian captivity.

b) Others were left in the land. 2Kings 25:12

- c) Still others were preserved in captivity.
- d) During the Great Tribulation God will do the same for Israel in the city of Petra. Is 16:1; Rev. 12
* We are hidden with Christ in God. Col. 3:3

2:4-3:8 The judgment of the nations.

- * There are many list of judgment against the Gentile nations in the prophets.
- 1) Jeremiah has in his fourth division collected prophecies of judgment on the surrounding Gentile nations. Jer. 45-51
 - a) Egypt. Jer. 46
 - b) Philistia. Jer. 47
 - c) Moab. Jer. 48
 - d) Ammon. Jer. 49:1-6
 - e) Edom. Jer. 49:7-22
 - f) Damascus. Jer. 49:23-27
 - g) Kedar. Jer. 49:28-32
 - h) Hazor. Jer. 49:28-33
 - i) Elam. Jer. 49:34-39
 - j) Babylon. Jer. 50-51
- 2) Ezekiel has the future judgment of the Gentile nations. Ezk. 25-32
 - a) Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia. Ezk. 25
 - b) Tyrus and Zion. Ezk. 26-28
 - c) Egypt. Ezk. 29-32
 - d) The Judgment of Edom. Ezk. 35
 - e) The judgment of Gog. Ezk. 38-39
- 3) Amos has his list of judgment against the Geneile nations. Amos 1-2
 - a) Damascus. Amos 1:2-5

- b) Gaza. Amos 1:6-8
- c) Tyre. Amos 1:9-10
- d) Edom. Amos 1:11-12
- e) Ammon. Amos 1:13-15
- f) Moab. Amos 2:1-3
- g) Judah. Amos 2:4-5
- h) Israel. Amos 2:6-16

2:4-7 The judgment of the Philistine cities.

- 1) Four of the five major cities are named. vs. 4
* Josh. 13:3; Amos 1:6-8; Zech. 9:5-7
 - a) Gath is the fifth city that is not named, some believe it is because of the parallelism in the proetical structure, other point out it was already subjugated?
 - b) This is the area along the Mediterranean sea coast, west of Judah.
 - c) The Philistines invaded the area about 1200 B.C. having migrated from Crete and were the constant enemies of Israel and Judah. 1Sam. 30:14; Ezk. 25:16
* Pathrusim, and Casluhim (from whom came the **Philistines** and Caphtorim). Gen. 10:14
 - d) There is a play on words in the Hebrew of the fate that awaited them, called Paronomasia.
 - 1)) Gaza “Azzah” would be forsaken “Azab”.
 - 2)) Ashkelon “Ashq@lown” would be desolate “sh@mamah” waste.

- 3)) Ashdod “Ashdowd” would be driven out “garish” expel, rejected.
* At noon day “tsahar”, at siesta time, being caught unawares.
- 4)) Ekron “Eqrawn” would be uprooted “aqar” torn out of its soil.
* Jer. 25:20, 47:1, 5
- e) The Gaza strip is still a constant problem and danger to Israel, since the P.L.O. through Hamas, Isis, etc.
- 2) The Woe judgment for the entire area of the Philistines. vs. 5
 - a) The Cherethites on the seacoast were related to the Philistines. vs. 5a-b
* They were mercenaries, part of David’s bodyguards. 1Sam. 30:14; 2Sam. 8:18
 - b) The word of Yahweh was against them to leave no inhabitant. vs. 5c-g
- 3) The coast of the land of the Philistinse would be given over to the remnant of Israel after the captivity to feed their flocks. Vs. 6-7c
- 4) God would intervene for Israel and bring them back after the 70 captivity. vs. 7d-e

2:8-11 The cities of Moab and Ammon.

- * They descendanted from Lot and his daughters by incest, modern day Jordan. Gen. 19
- 1) God was aware of the bitter hatred of Moab and Ammon against Israel. vs. 8
 - a) Yaweh had heard the reproach of Moab. vs. 8a

- 1)) The word reproach “cherpah”, means to taunt or scorn to ridicule and demean. Jer. 48; Amos 2:1-3
- 2)) The Moabites were the descendants of Lot by his oldest daughter. Gen. 19:37
- 3)) They dwelt on the east side of the Jordan, south of the Ammonites, around the Dead Sea area.
- 4)) King Balak hired Balaam the prophet to curse Israel. Num. 22-24
* Judges 3:12-30; 1Sam. 12:9, 2Kiings 3:5-27, 13:20
- b) Yahweh had heard the insults of Ammon. vs. 8b
 - 1)) The word insult “gidduwph”, means to revile or speak disrespectfully to provoke, cutting up pregnant women in Gilead to occupy Israeli land. Amos 1:13-15; Jer. 49:1-6
 - 2)) The Ammonites were also the descendants of Lot by his younger sister. Gen. 19:38
 - 3)) They also dwelt on the east side of the Jordan River, north of the Moabites.
 - 4)) There are different conflicts recorded. Judges 10:6-11:33; 2Sam. 10:1-11:1, Neh. 2:1, 19; 4:3, 7
- c) Yahweh took their hatred against His people personal. vs. 8c-d
 - 1)) By the reproaches and insults, both nations reproached “My people”.

- 2)) They made arrogant threats against their borders, constantly harassing, provoking and making their national security unstable. Amos. 1:13
- 2) God promised their extinction. Zeph. 1:9
- The word “Therefore” marks the conclusion of God’s verdict. vs. 9a
 - God swore by Himself, “as I live” guaranteeing the certainty of the judgment. vs. 9b
 - The identity of the One speaking, “Says the LORD of hosts”, the Captian of the armies of heaven, “the God of Israel”, the Creator and protector of the nation. vs. 9c-d
 - The destruction of Moab would be like Sodom, Ammon like Gomorrah, overtaken by weeds and saltpits, a perpetual desolation. vs. 9e-h
* The southern coast of the Dead Sea abounds in rock salt.
 - The remnant of the nation of Israel would plunder and posses them. vs. 9i-j
- 3) God declared He judged them because of their pride, their reproachful words and their attitude of arrogance, self-importance, against His people. vs. 10
- Isaiah and Jeremiah speak of her pride. Is. 16:6; 25:11; Jer. 48:26, 29-30
 - The One speaking again is, “the LORD of hosts”, the Captian of the armies of heaven.

- 4) God stated His horrific judgment and ultimate worship. vs. 11
- The word awesome “yare”, means to be made afraid, the fear of God would come upon them. vs. 11a
 - The reference to reducing to nothing all the gods of the earth, certainly is to the gods of Moab and Ammon that were no gods at all, short-term. vs. 11b
* Idols that are so called gods. 1Cor. 8:4-6
 - But long-term to the ultimate Day of the Lord at the Millennium to worship Jesus by the plurality of all nations, “*People shall worship Him, Each one from his place, Indeed all the shores of the nations.*” vs. 11c-e
* The nations will go up to Jerusalem once a year to worship at the feast of Tabernacles, if not they will have no rain. Zech. 14:16-17
- 2:12** The judgment of the Ethiopians.
- This is the briefest of the judgments, only one verse.
 - God declared, “You Ethiopians also, You shall be slain by My sword.”
 - The area is to the south, in the south of Egypt, the upper Nile River region.
 - The descendents of Cush, the grandson of Noah through Ham. Gen. 10:6
 - Babylon was God’s instrument. Ezk. 30:4-5

2:13-15 The judgment of Assyria.

- 1) The judgment now is to the north, stretching out His hand against Assyria to destroy her. vs. 13a-b
 - a) Assyria was the ruling empire, powerful and cruel, ruled by Tiglath-Pileser, Sargon, Sennacarib, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, but it was about to be super-ceeded by Babylon.
 - b) God was about to begin the “Time of the Gentiles” by Babylon, the head of gold.
 - c) The north was always the direction of Israel’s enemies and the most vulnerable area of Jerusalem.
- 2) The capital city of Ninevah on the Tigris River would be made desolate, as dry as a wilderness. vs. 13c-e
 - a) At this point it was still in the future, so we can be sure Zephaniah spoke this before 612 B.C. when Nivevah was destroyed.
 - b) The book of Nahum and Jonah give many of the details about the entire city of Nineveh repenting and then the details of her judgment for returning to a life of sin! Nah. 1:2, 8. 10; 3:15
- 2) The city will become desolate. Zeph. 2:14
 - a) Nahum the prophet give great details. Nah. 3
 - b) The entire region even to the present day has never been developed or flourish, but still bears the judgment of God.

- 3) The summary statement of the destruction of Nineveh. vs. 15
 - a) She thought herself properous and safe, “This is the rejoicing city That dwelt securely.” vs. 15a
 - b) She arrogant in pride, “That said in her heart, “I *am it*, and *there is* none besides me.” vs. 15b-d
 - c) She did not excpet her destruction, “How has she become a desolation, A place for beasts to lie down!” vs. 16e-f
 - d) She is remembered as foolish, “Everyone who passes by her Shall hiss and shake his fist.” vs. 15g
 - 1)) Such would be for Babylon. Is. 47:8-9
 - 2)) Also religious and commercial Babylon of the Anti-Christ in the Great-Tribulation. Rev. 17-18