

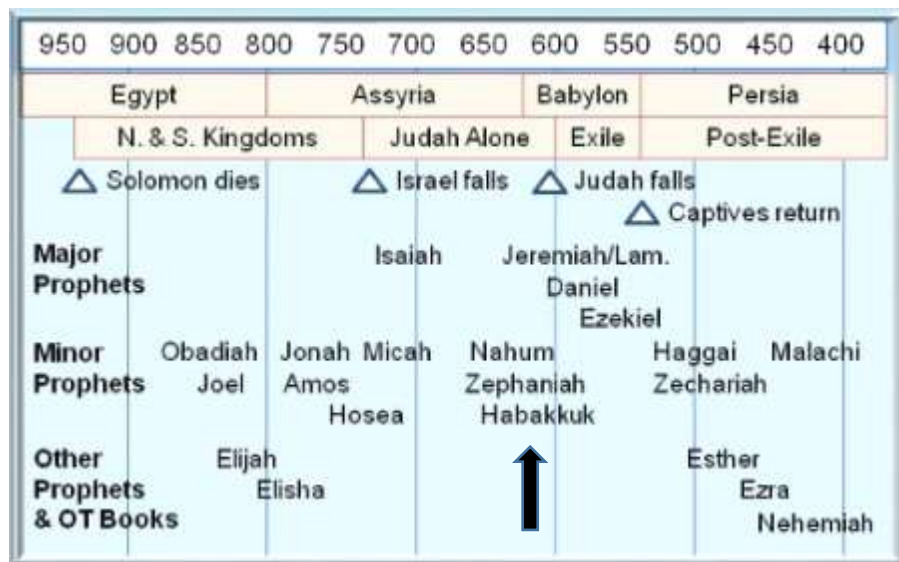
Zephaniah

God warns that he will judge Israel and the surrounding nations, but also that he will restore them in peace and justice.

Author: Zephaniah, probably of royal blood, according to Zeph. 1:1

In Zephaniah – Jesus is the Warrior who Saves

"The LORD your God is with you, The Mighty Warrior who saves.
Zephaniah 3:17 He will take great delight in you, He will quiet you with his love,
He will rejoice over you with singing."



The map above points out the major places mentioned in Zephaniah

TEACHER: 3 CHAPTERS

Zephaniah, *the 9th minor prophet*, and was of royal blood (he was a prince of Judah), through King Hezekiah. Josiah was king of Judah at the time this prophecy was delivered. The northern tribes were in exile thanks to Assyria, and although Josiah was a Godly king, the people of Judah were often worshipping false gods. Here we first learn God will eventually destroy the Earth by fire.

CH. 1

STUDENT:

This is the message that the LORD gave to Zephaniah during the time that Josiah son of Amon was king of Judah. (Zephaniah was descended from King Hezekiah through Amariah, Gedaliah, and Cushi.)

²The LORD said, "I am going to destroy everything on earth,

³all human beings and animals, birds and fish. I will bring about the downfall of the wicked. I will destroy everyone, and no survivors will be left. I, the LORD, have spoken. (GNT)



TEACHER:

Then the Lord gives a list of those who will not survive the purge.

STUDENT:

"I will punish the people of Jerusalem and of all Judah.

1. I will destroy the last trace of the worship of Baal there, and no one will even remember the pagan priests who serve him.
2. I will destroy anyone who goes up on the roof and worships the sun, the moon, and the stars.
3. I will also destroy those who worship me and swear loyalty to me, but then take oaths in the name of the god Molech.
4. I will destroy those who have turned back and no longer follow me,
5. Those who do not come to me or ask me to guide them." (GNT *edited to list form by the author*)

TEACHER:

The Lord continues His pronouncement of judgement against those who doubt His resolve.

STUDENT:

I will punish the people who are self-satisfied and confident, who say to themselves, 'The LORD never does anything, one way or the other.' ¹³ Their wealth will be looted and their houses destroyed. They will never live in the houses they are building or drink wine from the vineyards they are planting."

¹⁴ The great day of the LORD is near—very near and coming fast! (GNT)

TEACHER:

Jesus re-iterated the same mentality. "Just as in the days of Noah, they were marrying and given in marriage..." God promised not to destroy the world with a flood. Next time we now learn, It will be with fire.

STUDENT:

On the day when the LORD shows his fury, not even all their silver and gold will save them. The whole earth will be destroyed by the fire of his anger. He will put an end—a sudden end—to everyone who lives on earth. (GNT)

TEACHER:

On that day, we don't want to be living on Earth. That's for sure! Let us make sure that we use our lives, so that we are not living in Heaven alone when we die. God pleads with His people to come to Him.

STUDENT:

CH. 2

Shameless nation, come to your senses.....³ Turn to the LORD, all you humble people of the land, who obey his commands. Do what is right, and humble yourselves before the LORD. Perhaps you will escape punishment on the day when the LORD shows his anger. (GNT)

TEACHER:

With every judgement, we always see the call for repentance. The loop hole that if we repent, he is faithful and just to forgive us. To redeem us. Remember Jonah and the Whale.

STUDENT:

The LORD Almighty says, "I have heard the people of Moab and Ammon insulting and taunting my people, and boasting that they would seize their land. ⁹ As surely as I am the living LORD, the God of Israel, I swear that Moab and Ammon are going to be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah. They will become a place of salt pits and everlasting ruin, overgrown with weeds. Those of my people who survive will plunder them and take their land." (GNT)

TEACHER:

After pronouncing judgement on the surrounding nations, God turns His attention towards Judah and Jerusalem.

CH. 3

STUDENT:

Jerusalem is doomed, that corrupt, rebellious city that oppresses its own people. ² It has not listened to the Lord or accepted his discipline. It has not put its trust in the Lord or asked for his help. ³ Its officials are like roaring lions; its judges are like hungry wolves, too greedy to leave a bone until morning. ⁴ The prophets are irresponsible and treacherous; the priests defile what is sacred, and twist the law of God to their own advantage. ⁵ But the Lord is still in the city; he does what is right and never what is wrong. Every morning without fail, he brings justice to his people. And yet the unrighteous people there keep on doing wrong and are not ashamed. (GNT)

TEACHER:

After God explains the "why," He explains the "how"

STUDENT:

"Just wait," the LORD says. "Wait for the day when I rise to accuse the nations. I have made up my mind to gather nations and kingdoms in order to let them feel the force of my anger. The whole earth will be destroyed by the fire of my fury. (GNT)

TEACHER:

After God explains the "why & how" He explains the "purpose."

STUDENT:

"Then I will change the people of the nations, and they will pray to me alone and not to other gods. They will all obey me. ¹⁰ Even from distant Ethiopia my scattered people will bring offerings to me. ¹¹ At that time you, my people, will no longer need to be ashamed that you rebelled against me. I will remove everyone who is proud and arrogant, and you will never again rebel against me on my sacred hill. ¹² I will leave there a humble and lowly people, who will come to me for help. ¹³ The people of Israel who survive will do no wrong to anyone, tell no lies, nor try to deceive. They will be prosperous and secure, afraid of no one." (GNT)

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TEACHER:

The purpose for all of this judgement is so that God can have a family.
Zephaniah ends with a song of Joy and rejoicing.

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STUDENT:

¹⁴ Sing and shout for joy, people of Israel!
Rejoice with all your heart, Jerusalem!
¹⁵ The LORD has stopped your punishment;
he has removed all your enemies.
The LORD, the king of Israel, is with you;
there is no reason now to be afraid.
¹⁶ The time is coming when they will say to Jerusalem,
"Do not be afraid, city of Zion!
Do not let your hands hang limp!
¹⁷ The LORD your God is with you;
his power gives you victory.
The LORD will take delight in you,
and in his love he will give you new life
He will sing and be joyful over you,
¹⁸ as joyful as people at a festival." (GNT)

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STUDENT:

The LORD says, "I have ended the threat of doom
and taken away your disgrace ¹⁹ The time is coming!
I will punish your oppressors;
I will rescue all the lame and bring the exiles home.
I will turn their shame to honor, and all the world will praise them.
²⁰ The time is coming!
I will bring your scattered people home;
I will make you famous throughout the world and make you prosperous once again."
The LORD has spoken. (GNT)

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NEXT LESSON HAGGAI

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"The Lord your God is with you; his power gives you victory."

Zephaniah 3:17

THE GOOD THE BAD AND THE UGLY

