

God's Plan for Israel's Enemies Zephaniah 2

I. Who am I (Zephaniah 1:1)

A. Son of a King – Great grandson of King **Hezekiah**

B. Days of **Josiah**

C. May have led to the **Temple Revival (II Kings 22-23 II Chronicles 34-35)**

II. The great day of the Lord - God will consume (destroy) Judah (Zephaniah 1:1-4a)

A. For worshipping **Idols (Zephaniah 1:4b-5)**

B. For not **Seeking God (Zephaniah 1:6)**

C. For wearing Strange (**foreigner's**) clothes (**Zephaniah 1:8**)

D. For **violence (Zephaniah 1:9-11)**

E. For **laziness (Zephaniah 1:12-18)**

F. **Escape** is offered (Zephaniah 2:1-3)

1 **Gather yourselves together**, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;

2 Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger come upon you.

3 **Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.**

III. God lashes out on Israel's **enemies** (Zephaniah 2:4-18)

A. **Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron (Zephaniah 2:4)**

1. 4a For **Gaza(strong)** shall be **forsaken(become destitute)**,

Alexander the Great besieged and captured the city in **332 BCE**. Most of the inhabitants were killed during the assault, and the city, which became a center for Hellenistic learning and philosophy, was resettled by nearby Bedouins.(**Wikipedia.com History of Gaza**)

2. 4b and **Ashkelon(the weighing place)** a **desolation(wasted)**:

Ashkelon was conquered in **604 BC**, and the city was destroyed. Its people, as well as the residents of the other Philistine cities, were relocated to Mesopotamia. This ended the 600 years of the Philistine presence in Israel. (**biblewalks.com**)

3. 4c they shall drive out **Ashdod(gangster)** at the noon day,

An **Assyrian** general Tartan gained control of Ashdod in **711**,^{[9][10]} and forced the "usurper" *Yamani* to flee. Mitinti was king at the time of **Sennacherib**, and Akhimilki in the reign of Esarhaddon. Psammetichus of Egypt is reported to have besieged the great city Azotus for twenty-nine years (Herodotus, ii. 157); the biblical references to *the remnant of Ashdod* (Jeremiah 25:20; cf Zephaniah 2:4) are interpreted as an allusion to this event. (<https://religion.fandom.com/wiki/Ashdod>)

4. 4d and **Ekron(eradication)** shall be rooted up.

Apparently, in the second half of the seventh century B.C.E., the Philistine pentapolis became a tetrapolis. We infer this from the prophetic forecast of the destruction of Ekron together with Ashdod, Ashkelon and Gaza, because Gath is no longer mentioned (Jeremiah 25:20; Zephaniah 2:4; Zechariah 9:5-7). (<https://www.baslibrary.org/biblical-archaeology-review/16/1/1>)

B. **Punishment for Cherethites, and Philistines (Zephaniah 2:5-7)**

1. **The Lord will destroy Israel's enemies (Zephaniah 2:5-6)**

5 Woe(**alas**) unto the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the **Cherethites(executioner)**! the word of the LORD is against you; O **Canaan(humiliated)**, the land of the **Philistines**, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.

6 And the sea coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.

2. The Lord will **rescue** His People (Zephaniah 2:7)

7 And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of **Ashkelon** shall they lie down in the evening: **for the LORD their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity.**

C. Punishment for Moab and Ammon (Zephaniah 2:8-11)

8 I have heard the **reproach of Moab**, and the **revilings of the children of Ammon**, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border.

9 Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely **Moab shall be as Sodom**, and the children of **Ammon as Gomorrah**, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.

10 This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the LORD of hosts.

11 The LORD will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.

Moab - Moab had become a tributary of Assyria by the late 8th century BC and was conquered by the Babylonians in **582 BC**, upon which the Moabites disappeared from history.

Ammon - Archaeology and history indicate that Ammon flourished during the period of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (**626 to 539 BC**). This contradicts the view, dominant for decades, that Transjordan was either destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar II, or suffered a rapid decline following Judah's destruction by that king. Newer evidence suggests that Ammon enjoyed continuity from the Neo-Babylonian to the Persian period of **550 to 330 BC**.

D. Punishment for Ethiopia (Zephaniah 2:12)

12 Ye **Ethiopians** also, ye shall be slain by my sword.

E. Punishment for Assyria with **Nineveh** (Zephaniah 2:13-15)

13 And **he will stretch out his hand against the north**, and destroy **Assyria**; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.

14 And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the **cormorant(pelican)** and the bittern shall lodge in the upper **lintels(the capital of a column)** of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for he shall uncover the cedar work.

15 This is **the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly**, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is **she become a desolation**, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by **her shall hiss, and wag his hand.**