

*(83) Adult Sunday School Class
Zephaniah, chpts. 1-3
Prophets, pp. 177-184*



The Book of Zephaniah (not to be confused with the Book of Zechariah) is one of the shortest books in the Bible, only three chapters long and 53 verses in all. But its brevity does not weaken its powerful message of judgment, “the Day of the Lord” is coming!

The ministry of Zephaniah takes place during the reign of King Josiah, the last good king of Judah (640-609 BC). The prophet describes a coming time when God will intervene and bring about a terrible wrath on those who have rejected Him but salvation and blessing to those who trust in Him.

Zephaniah accuses Judah of violating God’s Covenant due to idolatry, social injustice, and religious ritualism. As a result, a terrible judgment is coming as part of the “Day of the Lord” (a phrase mentioned multiple times), and the prophet is pleading for them to repent. “Gather around, before it’s too late... If you do right and are humble, perhaps you will be safe on that day when the Lord unleashes His anger” (2:1-3).

But the coming judgment to which Zephaniah speaks concerning the “Day of the Lord” is not isolated to Judah and Jerusalem alone, includes judgment on all the nations of the world (2:4-15). Some scholars attest to the horrific fall of Judah which took place in 586 BC (a generation later) as a partial fulfillment while other elements regarding “all nations” are yet to be fulfilled (perhaps during Christ’s return?).

Zephaniah’s message is about “Day of the Lord,” coming judgment in the harshest of terms. But the book ends on an uplifting note for God’s people. Zephaniah pictures God as singing and rejoicing with excitement over those who are saved (3:17).

Did you ever contemplate over the idea that when we first see God that He will be overflowing with joy to meet you and He breaks out in a joyful song? Amazing...