
Zephaniah

Author

Zephaniah is the great great grandson of Hezekiah and is a cousin of King Josiah. Zephaniah means “He has hidden” or “the Lord hides” He was active during the reign of Josiah (640-609 BC).

Book Background

King Josiah promoted spiritual revival [[2Chr 34:3-7](#)]; however, the outwardly impressive changes did not reflect the hearts of the people [[2Kings 22:15-20](#)].

Book Outline

Look Within Zeph 1:1-2:3	Wrath on Judah <ul style="list-style-type: none">• God will judge• The day is near• Seek God before it is too late
Look Around Zeph 2:4-3:8	Wrath on Nations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Philistia, Moab, Ammon• Ethiopia, Assyria
Look Beyond Zeph 3:9-20	Healing after Wrath Millennial Restoration <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversion of Gentiles• Restoration of Israel• New Jerusalem

Book Highlights

God alerted Zephaniah that the Day of the Lord was near [[Zeph 1:7-18](#)]. Zephaniah asked the people to look **within** at how they had rejected God and to seek Him before it was too late [[Zeph 2:2-3](#)] He told about the consequences of their sin and why God must discipline them [[Heb 12:6](#)].

Zephaniah told them to look **around** at the nations that God would judge [[Zeph 2:8-9](#)] and that they were not exempt from discipline. The Jews taught that Jerusalem was “the” place of worship. Zephaniah introduced the thought that spiritual worship does not depend on a place [[Zeph 2:11](#)].

Zephaniah encouraged them to look **beyond** themselves to the future restoration of Israel [[Zeph 3:17](#)].

Key Verses

Zeph 2:2-3 ... Before the Lord's fierce anger comes upon you, Before the day of the Lord's anger comes upon you! Seek the Lord, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden In the day of the Lord's anger. (NKJV)

Zeph 2:8-9 “I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the insults of the people of Ammon, with which they have reproached My people, and made arrogant threats against their borders. Therefore, as I live,” Says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, “Surely Moab shall be like Sodom, and the people of Ammon like Gomorrah—overrun with weeds and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation. The residue of My people shall plunder them, and the remnant of My people shall possess them.” (NKJV)

Zeph 3:17 The Lord your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing. (NKJV)

Personal Reflection and Application

The prevailing cultural attitudes today are similar to those in Zephaniah's time. Many people don't believe that God intervenes either to do good or bad ([Zeph 1:12](#)).

Believers may not be prophets like Zephaniah; however, we have the Holy Spirit to bring light to those around us. Reflect on your life and how well you use the opportunities God gives you to reflect His light.

Small Group Conversation Guide

What can we do to see beyond religious activity and seek a right heart attitude ([Zeph 2:2-3](#))?

Discuss examples of how God demonstrates His love for us by disciplining us ([Heb 12:6](#)).

In what ways can we bring joy to God ([Zeph 3:17](#))? Close your eyes for 30 seconds and try to imagine what it would be like to have God sing to you. How does knowing God's desire to rejoice in you change your perspective on daily living?

Leadership Principles from Zephaniah

Confront Tough Issues

There may come a time when God wants you to confront tough issues. As with Zephaniah, not everyone will agree with you ([Zeph 2:4-15](#)).

- Will you speak as God desires?
- What will you do to be sure you are leaning on God rather than operating in your own strength?
- How will you manage the conflict you may face?

Something to Find in Each Chapter

As you read through the book, it may help to have something to find in each chapter. Try these:

01. What Zephaniah foretold about "the day of the Lord"	02. How people could hide from "the day of the Lord"
03. How God planned to restore and purify His people	