

ZEPHANIAH

Introduction:

1. Overview of the Book

A) Zephaniah – a descendent of Hezekiah (Zeph. 1:1)

> Hezekiah was a great king but his pride played a part in Israel's fall to the Babylonians (2 Kings 20:12-21)

B) Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of Josiah (Zeph. 1:1d)

> Josiah reigned over Judah from about 640-609 B.C.

Babylon / Nebuchadnezzar begin their assault on Judah in 605 B.C.

> Josiah was a great king who brought great reforms to Judah (2 Kings 22:1-20)

Zephaniah prophesied during Josiah's reign

Even a good and passionate king like Josiah couldn't avert the destruction that would come upon Judah.

C) Zephaniah is a prophecy about God's coming judgment

> The day of the Lord (Zeph. 1:14-18)

D) Zephaniah offers a ray of hope for those who will seek the Lord (Zeph. 2:1-3)

E) Zephaniah is a prophecy about God's coming day of blessing

The day when the King of Israel will reign (Zeph. 3:14-20)

2. The Heart of Judah's Sin

A) God is irrelevant.

> God will do nothing good or bad (Zeph. 1:12)

Either He does not exist, does not care, or is incapable of doing anything of significance

> Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die.

This folly was revealed and rebuffed in the book of Ecclesiastes

B) Zephaniah's message reveals that God is not irrelevant

> God's judgment of the earth (Zeph. 2:2-3)

Reminds me of God's judgment in the days of Noah (Gen. 6:5-8)

Reminds me of God's judgment at the end of the ages (2 Peter 3:3-10)

> Zephaniah's pronouncement against Judah (Zeph. 1:4-2:3)

> Zephaniah's pronouncement of judgment upon the surrounding nations (Zeph. 2:5-15)

> Zephaniah's pronouncement of judgment upon Jerusalem (Zeph. 3:7)

APPLICATION

God's coming judgment is even more alarming and severe than what we read in Zephaniah

Each of us will give an account of ourselves (Romans 14:12)

OUR ONLY HOPE? Forgiveness. Justification. In Christ.

God is not mocked (Galatians 6:7-8)

God is not some impotent spiritual being who has no opinion nor say about what we do

He is the righteous judge of heaven and earth

Therefore, righteous living is eternally worth while (Galatians 6:9-10)

In no way intent upon meriting our salvation ... but intent upon living significant lives

The people of Judah thought God could do nothing good and He could do nothing evil.

And then a "day of the Lord" came in the form of Babylon and God destroyed Jerusalem and the proud inhabitants were exiled into far away lands ... just as God said.

We can be just as sure that THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE DAY OF THE LORD will come (2 Peter 3:8-14)

Just as God said.