

7. Zephaniah – Hide Yourself in the LORD!

“Zephaniah” Means “Hide Yourself in The LORD” – Discuss: What does this phrase mean to God’s people during times of destruction and despair? Read 2:3

Zephaniah lived during the kingship of Josiah, king of Judah, 640-609 B.C. The northern kingdom of Israel had already been exiled in 722 B.C. Despite the many reforms of the good King Josiah, the idolatry and sin of King Manassah before Him still remain among the people and officials. This prophecy of the Day of the LORD anticipates the coming Babylonian armies and the exile of Judah into Babylon.

Zephaniah’s Message: “The Day of the LORD comes! Hide Yourself in the LORD and You will sing songs of praise in that Day.”

(J. Sidlow Baxter, Explore the Book)

1:1-2:3 LOOK WITHIN! – Wrath Coming On Judah

2:4-3:8 LOOK AROUND! – Wrath Coming On All The Nations

3:8-3:20 LOOK BEYOND! – After, Healing For Those Who Wait

1:1-2:3 LOOK WITHIN!

1:2-6 These verses describe an undoing of creation (Genesis 1). This is described in similar language to the flood. What does the word apostasy mean to / look like to you? How does apostasy begin?

Josiah attempted to reform the worship, religion, and government of Judah. What are the idols of our day and time that need to be smashed and swept away?

What does verse 6 say that the ultimate sin of Judah is?

1:7 What does Zephaniah say that our response should be when we hear the day of the LORD is near? Do you think this is the typical reaction of people in such dire circumstances? Why or why not?

A.W. Tozer said that every revolution without begins with a revolution within. What do you think he meant and would you agree? How does that affect the church’s preaching and admonition?

2:4-3:8 LOOK AROUND!

These are the nations listed in the coming judgment: (2:4-15)
Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Cush, Assyria... Then, in 3:1-7, Zephaniah includes Jerusalem in the list. He calls Jerusalem “the oppressing city.” Why would Jerusalem be included and listed last among all these pagan nations?

3:1-2 What warning does this section give to the church today? Where does Zephaniah say that the “woe” problems begins?

3:3-5 How do these problems manifest themselves in the church?

3:8-3:20 LOOK BEYOND!

3:8 What does the LORD say we are supposed to do during such times?

3:9 What are we waiting for the LORD to do?

Do you see a need to purify the speech of God’s people today? What would this look like in a church setting?

3:11-12 On the Day of the LORD, who will be removed and who will remain?

3:14-17 Compare v.14 and v.17 What do the LORD and His people have in common in this day?

What do you think it means to “be quieted by His love”?

3:19-20 Who does the LORD aim to rescue?

What does the LORD transform their shame into? How do you think this will shape their worship and attitude?

If ch 1-2 are about the city Jerusalem which was destroyed by the Babylonians and again by Rome, then what do you think these last verses of hope are talking about?