

ZEPHANIAH

The Argument

Seeing the great rebellion of the people, and that there was now no hope of amendment, he denounceth the great judgement of God, which was at hand, shewing that their countrey shulde be utterly destroyed, and they caried away captives by the Babylonians. Yet for the comfort of the faithful he prophecied of God's vengeance against their enemies, as the Philistims, Moábites, Assyrians and others, to assure them that God had a continual care over them. And as the wicked shulde be punished for their sinnes and transgressions: so he exhorteth the godlie to pacience, and to trust to find mercie by reason of the free promise of God made unto Abrahám: and therefore quietly to abide til God shewe them the effect of that grace, whereby in the end they shulde be gathered unto him, and counted as his people and children.

Chapter 1

Threatenings against Judáh and Jerusalém, because of their idolatry.

The word of the Lord, which came unto Zephaniáh the son of Cushí, the son of Gedaliáh, the son of Amariáh, the son of Hizkiáh, in the daies of *Josiáh, the son of *Amón King of Judáh.
2 I will surely destroy all things from off the land, saith the Lord.
3 I will destroy man and beast: I will destroy the ^afoules of the heaven, and the fish of the sea, and ruins *shalbe* to the wicked, and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the Lord.
4 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judáh, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalém, and I will cut off the remnant of Báal from this place, & the names of the ^bChemarims with the Priests,
5 And them that worship the hoste of heaven upon the house tops, & them that worship & swear by the Lord, and by ^cMalchám,
6 And them that are turned back from the Lord, and those that have not sought the Lord, nor inquired for him.
7 Be still at the presence of the Lord God: for the day of the Lord is at hand: for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, *and* hath sanctified his ghestes.
8 And it shalbe in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will visit the princes and the King's children, and all such as are clothed with ^dstrange apparell.
9 In the same day also will I visit all those that ^edance upon the threshold so proudly, which fill their master's houses by cruelty and deceit.
10 And in that day, saith the Lord, there *shalbe* a noise, *and* cry from the ^ffish gate, and an howling from the second *gate*, and a great destruction from the hills.
11 Howl ye inhabitants of ^gthe low place: for the company of the marchants is destroyed: all they that bare silver, are cut off.
12 And at that time will I search Jerusalém with ^hlights, and visit the men that are frozen ⁱin their dregges, and say in their hearts,

1 *2 Kings 22.1.

1 *2 Kings 21.19.

3 a Not that God was angry with these dumb creatures, but because man was so wicked for whose cause they were created, God makes them to take part of the punishment with him.

4 b Which were an order of superstitious men appointed to minister in the service of Baal, and were as his peculiar chaplains, read 2 Kings 23.5, Hosea 10.5.

5 c He alludes to their idol Molech, which was forbidden Lev. 20.2, yet they called him their king and made him as a god: therefore he here notes them that will both say they worship God, and yet will swear by idols and serve them: which halting is here condemned, as Ezek. 20.39, 2 Kings 17.33.

8 d Meaning the courtiers which did imitate the strange apparel of other nations to win their favor thereby, and to appear glorious in the eyes of all other, read Ezek. 23.14.

9 e He means the servants of the rulers which invade other men's houses and rejoyce and leap for joy when they can get any prey to please their master withal.

10 f Signifying that all the corners of the city of Jerusalem should be full of trouble.

11 g This is meant of the street of the merchants which was lower then the rest of the place about it.

12 h So that nothing shall escape me.

12 i By their prosperity they are hardened in their wickedness.

The Lord will neither do good nor do evil.

13 Therefore their goods shalbe spoiled, and their houses waste: *they shal also build houses, but not inhabit *them*, and they shal plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

14 The great day of the Lord *is* near: it *is* near, and hasteth greatly, *even* the voice of the day of the Lord: *the strong man shal cry there bitterly.

15 *That day *is* a day of wrath, a day of trouble and heaviness, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of obscurity and darkness, a day of clouds and blackness,

16 A day of the trumpet and alarm against the strong cities, and against the high towers.

17 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shal walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord, and their blood shalbe poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dongue.

18 *Neither their silver nor their gold shal be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath, but *the whole land shal be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shal make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Chapter 2

He moveth to return to God, 5 Prophecying destruction against the Philistims, Moábites and others.

Gather ^ayour selves, even gather you, ô nation not worthy to be loved,
2 Before the decree come forth, *and ye be* as chaff that passeth in a day, & before the fierce wrath of the Lord come upon you, & before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.
3 Seek ye the Lord all the meek of the earth, which ^bhave wrought his judgement: seek righteousness, seek lowliness, if so be that ye may be hid in the day of the Lord's wrath.

4 For ^cAzzáh shal be forsaken, and Ashkelón desolate: they shal drive out Ashdód at the noon day, and Ekrón shal be rooted up.

5 Wo unto the inhabitants of the sea ^dcoast: the nation of the Cherethims, the word of the Lord *is* against you: ô Canáan, the land of the Philistims, I will even destroy thee without an inhabitant.

6 And the sea coast shalbe dwellings *and* cottages for shepherds and shepefolds.

7 And *that* coast shal be for the ^eremnant of the house of Judáh,

13 *Deut. 28.30, Amos 5.11.

14 k They that trusted in their own strength and contemned the Prophets of God.

15 *Jer. 30.7, Joel 2.11, Amos 5.18.

18 *Ezek. 7.19.

18 *Ch. 3.8.

Chapter 2

1 a He exhorts them to repentance and wills them to descend into themselves and gather themselves together, lest they be scattered like chaff.
3 b That is, which have lived uprightly and godly according as he prescribes by his word.

4 c He comforts the faithful in that, that God would change his punishments from them unto the Philistims their enemies and other nations.

5 d That is, Galilea: by these nations he means the people that dwelt near to the Jews and instead of friendship were their enemy: therefore he calls them Canaanites whom the Lord appointed to be slain.

7 e He shows why God would destroy their enemies, because their country might be a resting place for his Church.

to feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelón shal they lodge toward night: for the Lord their God shal visit them, and turn away their captivity.

8 I have heard the reproach of Moáb, and the rebukes of the children of Ammón, whereby they upbraided my people, and ^fmagnified them selves against their borders.

9 Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord of hostes, the God of Israél, surely Moáb shal be as Sodóm, and the children of Ammón as Gomoráh, *even* the breeding of nettles and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my folk shal spoil them, and the remnant of my people shal possess them.

10 This shal they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified them selves against the Lord of hostes' people.

11 The Lord *will* be terrible unto them: ⁹for he will consume all the gods of the earth, and every man shal worship him from his place, *even* all the yles of the heathen.

12 Ye Morians also shalbe slain by my sword with them.

13 And he will stretch out his hand against the North, and destroy Asshúr, & will make Nineveh desolate, & waste like a wilderness.

14 And flocks shal lie in the middes of her, and all the beasts of the nations, and the ^hpellicane, and the [^]owl shal abide in the upper posts of it: the voice of *birds* shal sing in the windows, *and* desolations *shalbe* upon the posts: for the cedars are uncovered.

15 This is ^tthe rejoycing city that dwelt careless, that said in her heart, I am, and there *is* none besides me: how is she made waste, and the lodging of the beasts! every one that passeth by her, shal hiss and wag his hand.

Chapter 3

4 Against the governors of Jerusalém. 8 Of the calling of all the Gentiles. 13 A comfort to the residue of Israél.

Wo to her that is filthy and polluted, to the robbing ^acity. 2 She heard not the voice: she received not correction: she trusted not in the Lord: she drue not near to her God.

3 Her princes within her *are* as roaring ^{*}lions: her judges *are* as ^{*}wolves in the evening, which [^]leave not the bones til the morrow.

4 Her prophets are light, *and* wicked persons: her priests have polluted the Sanctuary: they have wrested the Law.

5 The [^]just Lord *is* in the middes thereof: he wil do none iniquity: every morning doeth he bring his judgement to light, he faileth not: but the wicked wil not learn to be ashamed.

6 I have [^]cut off the nations: their towers are desolate, I have made their streets waste, that none shal pass by: their cities are

8 f These nations presumed to take from the Jews that country which the Lord had given them.

11 g When he shall deliver his people and destroy their enemies and idols, his glory shall shine throughout all the world.

14 h Read, Is. 34.11.

14 [^]Or, hedgehog.

15 i Meaning, Nineveh, which rejoicing so much of her strength and prosperity, should be thus made waste and God's people delivered.

Chapter 3

1 a That is, Jerusalem.

3 ^{*}Ezek. 22.27 Mic. 3.11.

3 ^{*}Hab. 1.8.

3 b They are so greedy that they eat up bones and all.

5 c The wicked thus boasted that God was ever among them, but the Prophet answers that that can not excuse their wickedness for God will not bear with their sins: yet that he did patiently abide and sent his Prophets continually to call them to repentance, but he profited nothing.

6 d By the destruction of other nations he shows that the Jews should have learned to fear God.

destroyed without man *and* without inhabitant.

7 I said, Surely thou wilt fear me: thou wilt receive instruction: so their dwelling should not be destroyed how soever I visited them, but ^ethey rose early *and* corrupted all their works.

8 Therefore ^fwait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for I am determined to gather the nations, and that I will assemble the kingdoms to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce wrath: for all the earth shalbe devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

9 Surely ⁹then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him [^]with one consent.

10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, the ^hdaughter of my dispersed, praying unto me, shal bring me an offering.

11 In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for [^]all thy works, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the middes of thee them that rejoyce of thy pride, and thou shalt no more be proud of mine holie Mountain.

12 Then will I leave in the middes of thee an humble and poor people: and they shal trust in the Name of the Lord.

13 The remnant of Israél shal do none iniquity, nor speak lies: neither shal a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shalbe fed, and lie down, and none shal make them afraid.

14 Rejoyce, ô daughter Zión: be ye joyful, ô Israél: be glad and rejoyce with all ^thine heart, ô daughter Jerusalém.

15 The Lord hath taken away thy [^]judgements: he hath cast out thine [^]enemie: the King of Israél, *even* the Lord *is* in the middes of [^]thee: thou shalt se no more evil.

16 In that day it shalbe said to Jerusalém, Fear thou not, ô Zión: let not thine hands be faint.

17 The Lord thy God in the middes of thee *is* mightie: he wil save, he wil rejoyce over thee with joy: he wil quiet him self in [^]his love: he wil rejoyce over thee with joy.

18 After a certain time will I gather the afflicted that were of thee, *and* them that bare the reproach for [^]it.

19 Behold, at that time I wil bruise all that afflict thee, and I wil ^psave her that halteth, and gather her that was cast out, and I wil get them praise and fame in all the [^]lands of their shame.

20 At that time wil I bring you again, and then wil I gather you: for I wil give you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord.

7 e They were most earnest and ready to do wickedly.

8 f Seeing you will not repent, you shall look for my vengeance aswel as other nations.

9 g Lest any should think them that God's glory should have perished when Judah was destroyed, he shows that he will publish his grace through all the world.

9 [^]Ebr., with one shoulder, as Hos. 6.9.

10 h That is, the Jews shall come aswel as the Gentiles: which is to be understand under the time of the Gospel.

11 i For they shall have full remission of their sins: and the hypocrites which boasted of the Temple, which was also your pride in time past, shall be taken from you.

15 k That is, the punishment for your sin.

15 l As the Assyrians, Caldeans, Egyptians, and other nations.

15 m To defend you as by your sins you have put him away and left yourself naked, as Ex. 32.25.

17 n Signifying, that God delights to show his love and great affection toward his Church.

18 o That is, them that were had in hatred and reviled for the Church and because of their religion.

19 p I will deliver the Church which now is afflicted, as Micah 4.6.

19 q As among the Assyrians and Caldeans which did mock them and put them to shame.