

Major Lessons from the Minor Prophets

Zephaniah: The Justice of God & the Judgment of Man

Overview:

His heritage ...

His era ...

A summary ...

His message:

- 1) An announcement of God's _____
- 2) An _____ for God's wrath
- 3) A prophecy of coming _____ *
- 4) A call to _____

Zephaniah 1:1-18 (ESV)

¹The word of the LORD that came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah. ²"I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth," declares the LORD. ³"I will sweep away man and beast; I will sweep away the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, and the rubble with the wicked. I will cut off mankind from the face of the earth," declares the LORD. ⁴"I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal and the name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests, ⁵those who bow down on the roofs to the host of the heavens, those who bow down and swear to the LORD and yet swear by Milcom, ⁶those who have turned back from following the LORD, who do not seek the LORD or inquire of him." ⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. ⁸And on the day of the LORD's sacrifice— "I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire. ⁹On that day I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold, and those who fill their master's house with violence and fraud. ¹⁰"On that day," declares the LORD, "a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate, a wail from the Second Quarter, a loud crash from the hills. ¹¹Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar! For all the traders are no more; all who weigh out silver are cut off. ¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good, nor will he do ill.' ¹³Their goods shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them." ¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. ¹⁵A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. ¹⁷I will bring distress on mankind, so that they shall walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the LORD; their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. ¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them on the day of the wrath of the LORD. In the fire of his jealousy, all the earth shall be consumed; for a full and sudden end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

The Bible and **God's Wrath**

The wrath of God is prevalent in Scripture, appearing over _____ in the Old Testament alone.

What is it?

Wrath is a function of God's _____.

Wrath is a result of man's _____ (Romans 1:18-19, Ephesians 2:3)

Our _____ demands that wrath be put aside. The word for that is _____.
(1 John 2:2)

God's wrath and _____ are not symmetrical. (1 John 4:7-8)

God is _____, but not _____ (dispassionate)

In Christ, we are not _____ wrath anymore. (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10)

4 **objects of God's wrath** in Zephaniah:

The hypocritically _____ - 1:4-6

- Idolaters ...
- Adulterers ...
- Apostates ...

The sinful _____ - 1:8-9

- The indistinguishable from the world ...
- The religiously compromised ...

The _____ and _____ - 1:11

The _____ and _____ - 1:12

How does this speak to our times?

Should we also fear God's judgment?

The outpouring of **wrath**: 1:14-18

- Immediate and now _____
- Future and yet-to-be _____?

Repentance and Hope: God's offer of life

Zephaniah 2:1-3 (ESV)

¹ Gather together, yes, gather, O shameless nation, ² before the decree takes effect — before the day passes away like chaff— before there comes upon you the burning anger of the LORD, before there comes upon you the day of the anger of the LORD. ³ Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the LORD.

What does this passage promise?

- 1) God's _____ are final. There is a _____ to his patience.
- 2) A day of judgement is coming. _____ will be of no use then.
- 3) You can _____ and be delivered.

What does it mean to “seek the Lord”? What is necessary?

At least these things:

- 1) _____ over sin

Job 8:5 (ESV)

⁵ If you will seek God and plead with the Almighty for mercy ...

Psalm 34:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

- 2) _____

Psalm 10:4 (ESV)

⁴ In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him ...

- 3) Not _____, but _____!

Philippians 3:9 (ESV)

⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith ...

Acts 17:22-31 (ESV)

²² So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸ for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’” ²⁹ Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

Next week: Zephaniah Part 2 – The God of the Nations