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Zephaniah

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Zephaniah

Zephaniah 1

Zephaniah 1:1

ULT

¹ The word of Yahweh which was to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the Son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, the king of Judah.

UST

¹ Yahweh's message came to Zephaniah son of Cushi, the grandson of Gedaliah, and the great-grandson of Amariah, whose father was King Hezekiah. Yahweh gave this message during the time when King Amon's son Josiah was the king of Judah.

What did God tell Zephaniah he would do to the birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea and to man? (vv1-2)

God said He would destroy them and cut them off.

Zephaniah 1:2

ULT

² "I will utterly take away everything from upon the face of the earth—the declaration of Yahweh.

UST

² Yahweh said, "I will sweep away everything that is on the earth.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 1:3

ULT

³ I will take away man and beast. I will take away the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea and the stumbling blocks along with the wicked, and I will cut off man from upon the face of the earth—the declaration of Yahweh.

UST

³ I will sweep away people and animals. I will sweep away birds and fish. I will get rid of wicked people; so that there will be no more wicked people on the earth."

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 1:4**ULT**

⁴ I will stretch out with my hand against Judah and against all of those living in Jerusalem. I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal, the name of the idol priests along with the priests,

UST

⁴ "These are some of the things that I will do: I will punish the people who live in Jerusalem and other places in Judah, and destroy everything that has been used in the worship of Baal and and cause people to no longer remember the names of the pagan priests or the other priests who have turned away from me.

What is the name of the idol of which God said he would cut off every remnant?

He would cut off every remnant of Baal.

Zephaniah 1:5**ULT**

⁵ those who are bowing down on the housetops to the army of the heavens, and those who bow down, who swear by Yahweh and also swear upon Milcom, ^[1]

UST

⁵ I will get rid of those who go up on the roofs of their houses and worship the sun, moon, and stars, and those who claim to worship me but also swear using the name of their king.

Who did the ones on the housetops worship?

The ones on the housetops worship the heavenly bodies.

Zephaniah 1:6**ULT**

⁶ and those who turn from after Yahweh, and who do not search for Yahweh and do not seek him."

UST

⁶ Finally, I will get rid of all those who previously worshiped me but no longer do; those who no longer seek my help or request me to tell them what they should do."

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 1:7**ULT**

⁷ Be silent before the Lord Yahweh! For the day of Yahweh is near. For Yahweh has prepared the sacrifice and set apart his invited ones.

UST

⁷ Be silent in front of Yahweh the Lord, because it will soon be the time when Yahweh will judge and punish people. Yahweh has prepared himself to get rid of the people of Judah; they will be like animals that are set apart to be slaughtered for sacrifices, and he has chosen their enemies to be the ones who will get rid of them.

What are the people to do in the presence of Yahweh?

They were to be silent in the presence of Yahweh.

Zephaniah 1:8**ULT**

⁸ "It will happen on the day of Yahweh's sacrifice, I will visit upon the officials and upon the sons of the king, and upon everyone who dresses in foreign clothes.

UST

⁸ Yahweh says, "On that day when I will get rid of the people of Judah, I will punish their officials and the king's sons, and all those who worship foreign gods—

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 1:9**ULT**

⁹ I will also visit upon all those who leap upon the threshold in that day, those who fill the house of their master with violence and deceit.

UST

⁹ including those who show that they revere their god Dagan by avoiding stepping on the threshold of his temple, and those who do violent things and tell lies in the temples of their gods."

Who did Yahweh say he would punish on the day of sacrifice?

Yahweh will punish the princes and the king's sons, everyone dressed in foreign clothes, those who leap over the door sill, and those who fill their master's house with violence and deceit.

Zephaniah 1:10**ULT**

¹⁰ It will happen on that day—the declaration of Yahweh— a sound of a cry from the Fish Gate, a wailing from the Second {District}, and a great ruin from the hills.

UST

¹⁰ Yahweh also says, “On that day, people will cry out at the Fish Gate of Jerusalem. People will wail in the Second Quarter of the city, and people will hear a loud crash of buildings collapsing in the hills.

What sounds will come up from the Fish Gate and the Second Quarter in that day?

A cry of distress, and wailing will come in that day.

Zephaniah 1:11**ULT**

¹¹ Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar District, for all the people of Canaan will be destroyed, all of those who weigh silver will be cut off.

UST

¹¹ All you people who live in the market area of Jerusalem should wail, because all those who sell goods for money will be slaughtered.

What will happen to the merchants in that day?

They will be ruined, and all those who are weighed down with silver will be cut off.

Zephaniah 1:12**ULT**

¹² And it will happen at that time, I will search Jerusalem with lamps and visit upon the men who are thickening on their sediment, who are saying in their heart, ‘Yahweh will not do good and he will not do wrong.’

UST

¹² It will be as though I will light lanterns to search in dark places in Jerusalem for those who have become very satisfied with their behavior and complacent about their sins. They think that I, Yahweh, will do neither good nor bad things, as if I do not even exist!

What did some of the men in Jerusalem say about Yahweh?

They said, “Yahweh will not do anything, either good or evil!”

Zephaniah 1:13**ULT**

¹³ And it will happen, their wealth will be for plunder, and their houses will be for a ruin. And they will build houses but not reside, and plant vineyards but not drink their wine.

UST

¹³ So I have decided that armies will come and carry off their valuable possessions, after destroying their houses. The people will build new homes, but they will not live in them; they will plant vineyards again, but they will never drink any wine made from grapes that grow."

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 1:14**ULT**

¹⁴ The great day of Yahweh is near, near and hurrying quickly! The sound of the day of Yahweh; bitter is the one crying out there, a warrior!

UST

¹⁴ It will soon be the day when Yahweh will punish people. It will be here quickly. It will be a time when even brave soldiers will cry loudly.

What day will be a day of fury, a day of anguish, and a day of darkness? (vv14-15)

The great day of Yahweh will be a day of fury, anguish, and darkness.

Zephaniah 1:15**ULT**

¹⁵ That day is a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and gloomy skies.

UST

¹⁵ It will be a time when God shows that he is very angry, a time when people experience much distress and trouble. It will be a time when many things are ruined, destroyed, and when everyone goes away. It will be a time when it is very gloomy and dark, when the clouds are very black.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 1:16**ULT**

¹⁶ A day of a trumpet blast and a battle cry against the fortified cities and against the high towers.

UST

¹⁶ It will be a time when soldiers will blow trumpets to call other soldiers to battle. Your enemies will tear down the walls around your cities and the high towers at the corners of those walls.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 1:17**ULT**

¹⁷ For I will bring distress upon mankind, and they will walk like the blind, for they have sinned against Yahweh. Their blood will be poured out like dust, and their inner parts like dung.

UST

¹⁷ Because you sinned against Yahweh, he will cause you to experience great distress; you will walk around groping as blind people do. Your blood will flow from your bodies like falling soil, and your corpses will lie on the ground and rot.

Whose blood will be poured out like dust on the day of Yahweh?

Those who have sinned against God.

Zephaniah 1:18**ULT**

¹⁸ Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the wrath of Yahweh. In the fire of his jealousy the whole earth will be consumed. For, a destruction—surely it will be hastened—he will make all the inhabitants of the earth.”

1:5 ^[1]

UST

¹⁸ At the time that Yahweh shows that he is very angry with you, you will not be able to save yourselves by giving silver or gold to your enemies. Because Yahweh is very jealous, he will send a fire to burn up the entire world, and he will completely get rid, in a most terrifying way, of all the wicked people who live on the earth.

What will not be able to save them on that day?

Their silver and their gold will not be able to save them.

Zephaniah 2

Zephaniah 2:1

ULT

¹ Gather yourselves together! Gather, O undesired nation,

UST

¹ You people of Judah who ought to be ashamed, gather together to ask God to be merciful to you.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:2

ULT

² before the decree is brought forth, {and} that day passes like chaff, before the burning anger of Yahweh comes upon you, before the day of the anger of Yahweh comes upon you.

UST

² Yahweh is very angry with you, so gather together now, before he punishes you—before he punishes you and sweeps you away as the wind blows away the chaff.

What must the people do to avoid the fierce anger of Yahweh's wrath? (vv2-3)

The people must seek righteousness and humility to avoid Yahweh's wrath.

Zephaniah 2:3

ULT

³ Seek Yahweh, all you humble ones of the earth who do his commands. Seek righteousness. Seek humility. Perhaps you will be hidden on the day of the anger of Yahweh.

UST

³ All you people in Judah who are humble, worship Yahweh and obey what he has commanded. Try to do what is right and to be humble. If you do that, perhaps Yahweh will protect you on the day when he punishes people.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:4**ULT**

⁴ For Gaza will be abandoned, and Ashkelon for a ruin. Ashdod, at noon, they will drive her out, and Ekron will be uprooted!

UST

⁴ When Yahweh punishes Philistia, the cities of Gaza and Ashkelon will lose all their inhabitants. Ashdod will be attacked and the people will be driven away at noon, when they are resting. The people of the city of Ekron will also be driven out.

What will happen to those who will not heed the warning of Yahweh? (vv4-5)

All peoples who will not heed the warning of Yahweh will be uprooted and destroyed.

Zephaniah 2:5**ULT**

⁵ Woe to those living in the territory of the sea, the nation of the Kerethites! The word of Yahweh is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines. I will destroy you {so that} there is no one residing.

UST

⁵ And terrible things will happen to you people of Philistia who live near the sea, because Yahweh has said he will punish you, also. He will get rid of all of you; not one of you will survive!

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:6**ULT**

⁶ Then the territory of the sea will be pastures of meadows of the shepherds, and pens of flocks.

UST

⁶ The land of Philistia near the sea will become a pasture, a place for shepherds and their sheep pens.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:7**ULT**

⁷ The territory will be for the remnant of the house of Judah. They will shepherd upon them, in the houses of Ashkelon they will lie down in the evening, for Yahweh their God will care for them and return their fortunes.

UST

⁷ The people of Judah who survive will possess that land. At night they will sleep in the deserted houses in Ashkelon. Yahweh will take care of them; he will enable them to prosper again.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:8**ULT**

⁸ “I have heard the reproach of Moab and the reviling of the sons of Ammon when they reproached my people and made themselves great against their border.

UST

⁸ Yahweh, commander of the angel armies, the God of the Israelites, says this: “I have heard the people of Moab and Ammon insult my people and plan to conquer my people’s country.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:9**ULT**

⁹ Therefore, as I live—the declaration of Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel— {I swear} that Moab will become like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah, a place overgrown with nettles and salt pits, and a ruin forever. The remnant of my people will plunder them, and the remainder of my nation will take possession of them.”

UST

⁹ So now, as surely as I live, I will destroy Moab and Ammon as I destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Their land will be a place where there are nettles and salt pits; it will be ruined forever, with none of their people living there! My people who survive will take away all their valuable possessions and also occupy their land.”

What cities will Moab and Ammon become like?

Moab will become like Sodom, and the people of Ammon like Gomorrah.

Zephaniah 2:10**ULT**

¹⁰ This will be to them in place of their pride, for they taunted and made themselves great against the people of Yahweh of armies.

UST

¹⁰ The people of Moab and Ammon will get what they deserve for being proud, because they made fun of the people who belong to Yahweh, commander of the angel armies.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:11**ULT**

¹¹ Yahweh will be feared among them, for he will make all the gods of the earth lean. The coastal nations will bow down to him, every man from his own place.

UST

¹¹ Yahweh will cause them to be terrified when he destroys all the gods of their countries. Then people from every nation will worship Yahweh, each in his own country.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:12**ULT**

¹² Also you, O Cushites, they will be pierced of my sword,

UST

¹² Yahweh says that he will also slaughter the people of Ethiopia.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:13**ULT**

¹³ and he will stretch out his hand against the north and destroy Assyria, and he will make Nineveh a ruin, a dry place like the desert.

UST

¹³ Yahweh will punish and destroy Assyria, that land northeast of us, and cause its capital Nineveh to become ruined and deserted, and as dry as the desert.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 2:14**ULT**

¹⁴ Then herds will lie down in her midst, every animal of the nations, both the desert owl and the hedgehog will rest on her pillars. A call will sing out in the windows, devastation will be in the doorways. For the woodwork will be exposed.

UST

¹⁴ Flocks of sheep and herds of cattle and many kinds of wild animals will lie down there. Owls and crows will sit on the columns of the destroyed buildings, and they will hoot through the windows. There will be rubble in the doorways, and the valuable cedar beams in the roofs of the buildings will become visible.

What kind of birds will nest in the top of Assyria's pillars?

Owls will nest in the tops of Assyria's pillars.

Zephaniah 2:15**ULT**

¹⁵ This is the exultant city that lived securely, that said in her heart, "I am, and another there is not besides me." How she has become a dreadful thing, a dwelling-place for beasts. Everyone passing by will hiss and shake his fist at her.

UST

¹⁵ The people of Nineveh used to be happy and proud, thinking that they were very safe. They were always saying, "Our city is the greatest city; there is no city as great as ours!" But now it will become a horrible place to see, a place where wild animals make their dens. And everyone who passes by there will hiss and scorn that city, and shake their fists to show that they detest that city very much.

What will become of the exultant city?

The exultant city will become a horror, a place for beasts to lie down in.

Zephaniah 3

Zephaniah 3:1

ULT

¹ Woe to the rebellious and defiled city, the one that is oppressing.

UST

¹ Terrible things will happen to Jerusalem, the city whose people have rebelled against Yahweh and who have become unacceptable to him because of the sins that they have committed. They act violently toward others and they oppress other people.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:2

ULT

² She does not listen to any voice, she does not accept correction. She does not trust in Yahweh, she does not draw near to her God.

UST

² The people there pay no attention to the prophets whom Yahweh has sent to tell them the wrong things that they are doing and try to correct them. The people in Jerusalem do not trust in their God or worship him.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:3

ULT

³ Her officials are roaring lions in her midst. Her judges are evening wolves, they do not gnaw until the morning.

UST

³ Their leaders are like roaring lions; they are like wolves that attack during the evening, and eat everything that they kill, with the result that the next morning there is nothing left of those animals to eat.

What are the princes of the violent city like?

The princes of the violent city are like roaring lions.

Zephaniah 3:4**ULT**

⁴ Her prophets are reckless and treacherous men. Her priests profane what is holy and do violence to the law.

UST

⁴ The prophets in Jerusalem are proud, and the priests give messages that no one should trust. They make the temple unholy by doing things that are against the law of Moses.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:5**ULT**

⁵ Yahweh is righteous in her midst. He does not do injustice. Morning by morning he will give his justice for light, he does not fail. Yet the unrighteous do not know shame.

UST

⁵ But Yahweh is also in the city, and he never does what is wrong. He treats people justly, day after day; but wicked people are never ashamed about their wrongdoing.

When will Yahweh dispense justice?

Yahweh will dispense justice from morning to morning.

Zephaniah 3:6**ULT**

⁶ "I have cut off nations, their towers have been desolated. I have destroyed their streets, no one passes over them. Their cities are ruined, without a man, there is no one residing.

UST

⁶ Yahweh says this: "I have destroyed many nations; I have destroyed their strong city walls and towers. Now I have caused the streets in those cities to be completely deserted. Those cities are ruined and there is no one still alive there. They are all dead.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:7**ULT**

⁷ I said, 'Surely you shall fear me and receive correction. Then her dwelling will not be cut off {by} everything that I have visited upon her.' However, they awoke early, they corrupted all their deeds.

UST

⁷ So I said to myself, 'Because of what I have done to those other nations, surely the people of Jerusalem will honor me now and allow me to correct them. If they do that, I will not destroy them; I will not punish them like I said that I would do.' But in spite of knowing how I punished those other nations, they were still eager to get up early each morning and continue to perform evil deeds."

What did Yahweh hope the people would do?

Yahweh hoped the people would fear him and accept correction.

Zephaniah 3:8**ULT**

⁸ Therefore wait for me—the declaration of Yahweh—for the day of my rising up for plunder. For my decision {is} to gather the nations, to assemble the kingdoms, to pour out on them my indignation—all of the burning of my anger. For in the fire of my jealousy all of the earth will be consumed. ^[1]

UST

⁸ This is what Yahweh declares: "Wait for the day when I will take action to plunder you! I have decided to gather the people of the kingdoms of the earth and cause them to know that I am very angry with them. All over the earth I will punish and destroy people; I will burn them up with my anger as if it were fire!

What decision has Yahweh made about the nations?

Yahweh has decided to assemble the nations and pour out his anger and wrath on them.

Zephaniah 3:9**ULT**

⁹ Then I will give to the peoples purified lips, {for} all of them to call upon the name of Yahweh {and} to serve him {as} one shoulder.

UST

⁹ When that happens, I will cause all people to be changed and enable them to speak only what is pure, in order that everyone can worship me as one people.

What will Yahweh then call the people to do?

Yahweh will call the people to serve him standing shoulder to shoulder.

Zephaniah 3:10**ULT**

¹⁰ From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshipers, the daughter of my scattered ones, will bring my offerings.

UST

¹⁰ Then my people who were forced to go to other countries, those who live along the upper part of the Nile River in Ethiopia, will come to me and bring offerings to me.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:11**ULT**

¹¹ In that day you will not be put to shame because of all of your deeds by which you rebelled against me, but at that time I will remove from your midst your proud, exalting ones, and no longer will you be acting arrogantly on my holy mountain.

UST

¹¹ At that time, you people in Jerusalem will no longer be ashamed about what has happened to you, because you no longer will be rebelling against me. I will get rid of all the people among you who are very proud. No one on Zion, my holy hill, will strut around proudly anymore.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:12**ULT**

¹² And I will leave in your midst a humble and weak people, and they will seek refuge in the name of Yahweh.

UST

¹² Those who are still alive in Israel will be poor and humble; they will trust in me.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:13**ULT**

¹³ The remnant of Israel will not do injustice and they will not speak lies, and a tongue of deceit will not be found in their mouth. But they will graze and lie down, and there will be no trembling."

UST

¹³ Those people who are still alive in Israel will not do anything wrong; they will tell no lies or deceive anyone. They will eat and sleep safely, because no one will cause them to be afraid."

How will the remnant of Israel change after this?

The remnant of Israel will no longer commit injustice and speak lies.

Zephaniah 3:14**ULT**

¹⁴ Shout joyfully, O daughter of Zion! Cheer loudly, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with your whole heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!

UST

¹⁴ You people who live in Jerusalem and other places in Israel, sing and shout loudly! Be glad, and rejoice with all your inner being,

Why should Israel sing and cheer? (vv14-15)

Israel should sing and cheer because Yahweh has taken away their punishment.

Zephaniah 3:15**ULT**

¹⁵ Yahweh has taken away your judgments, he has removed your enemies. The king of Israel, Yahweh, is in your midst. You will never again fear harm!

UST

¹⁵ because Yahweh will take away the charges against you, and he will make your enemies go far away from you! Yahweh himself, the king of the Israelites, will live among you, and you will never again be afraid that others will harm you.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:16**ULT**

¹⁶ In that day it will be said to Jerusalem, "Do not fear, O Zion! Do not let your hands become limp!

UST

¹⁶ At that time, other people will say to us people of Jerusalem, "You people of Jerusalem, do not be afraid; do not become weak or discouraged."

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:17**ULT**

¹⁷ Yahweh your God is in your midst, the strong one will bring salvation. He will rejoice over you with gladness, he will make quiet with his love. He will exult over you with rejoicing.

UST

¹⁷ Yahweh your God will live among you. He is mighty, and he will rescue you. He will be very happy about you; because he loves you, he will cause you to rest without being anxious. He will sing loudly to rejoice about you,

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:18**ULT**

¹⁸ The griefed of the festivals I removed from you, they are a tribute to her, a reproach. ^[2]

UST

¹⁸ like people who are happy at a festival. Yahweh says, "I will no longer allow any enemies to destroy you. You will no longer be defeated or ashamed.

(There are no questions for this verse.)

Zephaniah 3:19**ULT**

¹⁹ Behold, I am dealing with all your oppressors in this time. I will rescue the lame and gather up those casted out. I will appoint them for praise, and their shame for a name in all the earth.

UST

¹⁹ Truly, I will severely punish all those who oppressed you. I will rescue those who are helpless and those who were forced to go to other countries, just as a shepherd would rescue his lost sheep. I will give them praise and honor in every country where they were exiled, places where they had been disgraced.

Who will Yahweh rescue from those who have mistreated Israel?

Yahweh will rescue the lame and gather together the outcast.

Zephaniah 3:20**ULT**

²⁰ At that time I will bring you, in the time of my gathering you. Then I will appoint you for a name and for praise among all the peoples of the earth, in my restoring your fortunes before your eyes," says Yahweh.

3:8 ^[1]

3:18 ^[2]

UST

²⁰ At that time, I will gather you together and bring you back home to Israel. I will cause you to greatly praised and honored among all the nations of the earth. You will see when I bring your people home again." This is what Yahweh, has declared!

Why will all the nations respect and praise Israel?

All the nations will respect and praise Israel when they see that Yahweh has restored them.

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