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Zephaniah

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Zephaniah

Chapter 1

¹This is the word of Yahweh that came to Zephaniah son of Cushi son of Gedaliah son of Amariah son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah.

²"I will utterly remove everything from the surface of the earth—this is the declaration of Yahweh.

³I will destroy man and beast; I will destroy the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, the stumbling blocks along with the wicked.

For I will cut off man from the surface of the earth—this is the declaration of Yahweh.

⁴I will reach out with my hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

I will cut off every remnant of Baal from this place and the names of the idolatrous priests along with the priests,

⁵the people on the housetops who bow down to worship the heavenly bodies, and the people who bow down and swear to Yahweh but who also swear by Milcom.^[1]

⁶and those who have turned away from following Yahweh, those who neither seek Yahweh nor ask for his guidance."

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

⁸"It will come about on the day of Yahweh's sacrifice, that I will punish the officials and the sons of the king, and everyone dressed in foreign clothes.

⁹On that day I will punish all those who leap over the threshold, those who fill the house of their master with violence and deceit.

¹⁰So it will be on that day—this is the declaration of Yahweh—that a cry of distress will come from the Fish Gate, wailing from the Second District, and a great crashing sound from the hills.

¹¹Wail, O inhabitants of the Market District, for all the merchants will be ruined; all those who weigh out silver will be cut off.

¹²It will come about at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps and punish the men who are like wine left to thicken on its dregs and say in their heart,

'Yahweh will not do anything, either good or evil.'

¹³Their wealth will become plunder, and their houses will be an abandoned devastation!

They will build houses but not live in them, and plant vineyards but not drink their wine.

¹⁴The great day of Yahweh is near, near and hurrying quickly!

The sound of the day of Yahweh will be bitter; the warrior cries aloud there!

¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath, 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.

¹⁶It will be a day of trumpet blast and battle cry

against the fortified cities and against the high battlements.

¹⁷For I will bring distress upon mankind, so that they will walk about like blind men

because they have sinned against Yahweh.

Their blood will be poured out like dust, and their inner parts like dung.

¹⁸Neither 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 he will bring a complete, a terrible end of all the inhabitants of the earth."

1:5 ^[1], but some modern versions read , the name of a pagan god that many people worshiped.

Chapter 2

¹Gather yourselves together, yes, gather, O nation without shame—

²before the decree takes effect and that day passes like the chaff,

before the burning anger of Yahweh comes upon you, before the day of the anger of Yahweh comes upon you.

³Seek Yahweh, all you humble people on earth who do his commands!

Seek righteousness. Seek humility,

and perhaps you will be hidden on the day of the anger of Yahweh.

⁴For Gaza will be abandoned, and Ashkelon will turn into a devastation.

They will drive out Ashdod at noon, and Ekron will be uprooted!

⁵Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast, the nation of the Kerethites! Yahweh has spoken against you,

Canaan, land of the Philistines. I will destroy you until no inhabitant remains.

⁶So the seacoast will become pastures, with meadows for shepherds and folds for flocks.

⁷The coastal region will belong to the remnant of the house of Judah,

who will pasture their flocks on it. Their people will lie down in the evening in the houses of Ashkelon, for Yahweh their God will care for them and restore their fortunes.

⁸"I have heard the taunts of Moab and the reviling of the sons of Ammon when they taunted my people and made boasts against their territory.

⁹Therefore, as I live—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel—Moab will become like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah; a place of nettles and salt pits, deserted forever.

But the remnant of my people will plunder them, and the remainder of my nation will take possession of them."

¹⁰This will happen to them in return for their pride, since they taunted and boasted against the people of Yahweh of hosts. ¹¹Then Yahweh will be awesome against them, for he will starve all the gods of the earth. Everyone will bow down to him, everyone from his own place, nations on every shore.

¹²You also, O Cushites, will be pierced by my sword,

¹³and he will stretch out his hand against the north and destroy Assyria, and he will make Nineveh an abandoned devastation, a dry waste like the desert.

¹⁴Then herds will lie down in her midst, every animal of the nations, both the desert owl and the screech owl will rest in the top of her columns. A call will sing out from the windows; rubble will be in the doorways; her carved cedar beams will be exposed.

¹⁵This is the exultant city that lived securely, that said in her heart, "I am, and nothing is my equal." How she has become a horror, a place for beasts to lie down in. Everyone that passes by her will hiss and shake his fist at her.

Chapter 3

¹Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled, the oppressing city.

²She listens to no voice, she does not accept correction. She does not trust in Yahweh and will not draw near to her God.

³Her officials are roaring lions in her midst. Her judges are evening wolves who leave nothing to be gnawed upon in the morning.

⁴Her prophets are insolent and treacherous men. Her priests have profaned what is holy and have done violence to the law.

⁵Yahweh is righteous in her midst. He does no wrong.

Morning by morning he will dispense his justice; each dawn he does not fail. Yet unrighteous people know no shame.

⁶"I have cut off nations; their fortresses are ruined.

I have laid waste their streets, so that no one passes over them.

Their cities are destroyed, without a man, without an inhabitant.

⁷I said, 'Surely you will fear me and accept correction.

Then your dwelling will not be cut off by all that I have planned to do to you.'

But all the more they were eager to behave corruptly in all their deeds.

⁸Therefore wait for me—this is the declaration of Yahweh—for the day when I rise up to seize the prey.

For my decision is to gather the nations, to assemble the kingdoms,

to pour out on them my indignation—all of my burning anger;

for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth will be consumed.^[1]

⁹But then I will give to the peoples purified lips,

that all of them may call upon the name of Yahweh to serve him shoulder to shoulder.

¹⁰From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshipers—the daughter of my scattered people—will bring offerings due me.

¹¹In that day you will not be put to shame for all your deeds by which you rebelled against me,

since at that time I will remove from among you your proud, exalting ones,

and you will never again act arrogantly on my holy mountain.

¹²But I will leave among you a humble and lowly people,

and they will find refuge in the name of Yahweh.

¹³The remnant of Israel will do no injustice and speak no lies,

and no deceitful tongue will be found in their mouth;

so they will graze and lie down, and no one will make them afraid."

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!

¹⁵Yahweh has taken away the judgments against you; he has driven out your enemies!

The king of Israel, Yahweh, is among you. You will never again fear evil!

¹⁶In that day it will be said to Jerusalem,

"Do not fear, O Zion. Do not let your hands fall limp.

¹⁷Yahweh your God is among you, a mighty one to save you.

He will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing.

18The sorrows for the appointed feasts I will remove from you;

they are a burden and a reproach to you.^[2]

19Behold, I am about to deal with all your oppressors.

At that time, I will rescue the lame and gather up the outcast.

I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

20At that time I will bring you in; at that time I will gather you together.

I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,"

says Yahweh.

3:8 ^[1] . However, some ancient and modern versions have .

3:18 ^[2]

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