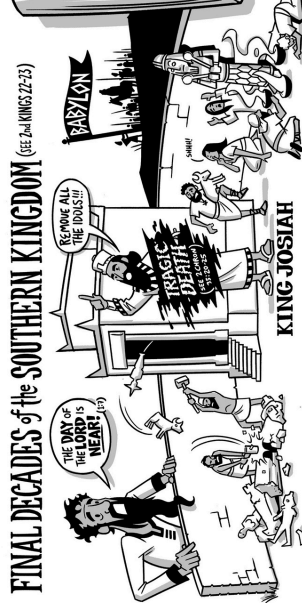


FINAL DECADES of the SOUTHERN KINGDOM (SEE 2nd KINGS 22-23)



KING JOSIAH

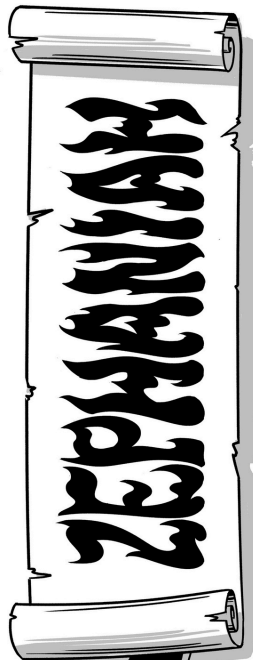


1-2:3 JUDGMENT ON JERUSALEM

ZEPHANIAH DOESN'T SAY WHO, BECAUSE HE WANTS TO HIGHLIGHT GOD'S ROLE.



2:3 HOPE FOR THE REMNANT



ZEPHANIAH CONTAINS VERY INTENSE IMAGES OF GOD'S



2:4-3:8 JUDGMENT ON THE NATIONS & JERUSALEM

...AGAIN!



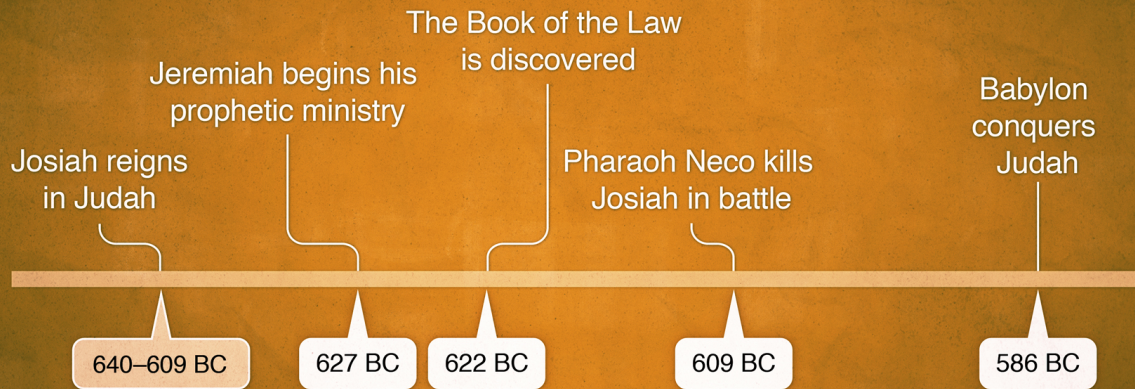
3:9-20 HOPE FOR THE NATIONS & JERUSALEM

created by the Bible Project

WEEK 7

TIMELINE

ZEPHANIAH



*All dates are approximate





ZEPHANIAH

- Zephaniah means "hidden by Yahweh".
- He tells us that he was of royal blood, the great-great-grandson of King Hezekiah, and that he prophesied during the reign of King Josiah.
- Lack of mention of Josiah's reformation suggests that Zephaniah prophesied during the early part of Josiah's reign, before the cleansing of the temple in 622.
- *Contemporary with Jeremiah in much the same way that Isaiah and Micah were contemporary.*
 - In the interim, Habakkuk and Nahum were prophesying, and they were directed primarily at foreign nations.
 - This would have been during the reign of Manasseh, which discouraged dissent and criticism, and might have been a reason for reduced prophetic activity.
 - Jeremiah and Zephaniah were then a re-emergence of prophetic witness to announce the coming judgment on Judah during the Babylonian period.

BACKGROUND

- In the years 697-642BC, the king in Judah was Manasseh.
- He did not learn from Israel's lesson. He officially sponsored a religious syncretism that allowed Baalism and other pagan practices to go from the fringes of Israelite religious life to be re-instituted.
- A whole generation knew only Manasseh as their king, and this system of religious syncretism.
- This helps us understand why King Josiah's reforms in 622 would have been so shocking—succeeding in changing religious practice and eliminating foreign elements.
- Because at this point, Assyria was waning and Babylon was becoming more powerful, Judah had much freedom from Assyria.
- But because the reforms did not change the hearts of the people, freedom from bondage did not usher in an ideal Davidic king.
- Instead, it marked a transition from Assyrian control to Babylonian control.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

- To initiate change in Judah by pronouncing judgment on wickedness.
- This punishment was combined with His intention to restore Judah.
- Focuses on the “coming day of the Lord”. Zephaniah believed this day was coming soon.
- He denounced Judah’s corrupt officials and continued rebellion against God.
- While judgment is a given, he was vague about the form that the judgment would take.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

- Amos and Zephaniah are the only minor prophets to feature a series of oracles against the nations.
- In Amos, they pronounce judgment on Israel and Judah.
- In Zephaniah, we see God's intention to judge all the nations.
- God's intention to judge Judah was part of his intention to judge all the nations.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

- Used by the prophets to indicate the time when the current state of affairs would be replaced by the Lord's intended order of things.
- Most oracles represent movement towards this ideal conclusion.
- As prophecy unfolds, we learn that this is not through one immense intervention of God but through a process of dealing with inequities.
- There might be a number of "days of the Lord" before THE day of the Lord that will inaugurate a new order that will never be destabilized.
- So the fall of Assyria and Babylon or the destruction of Jerusalem would all be days of the Lord.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

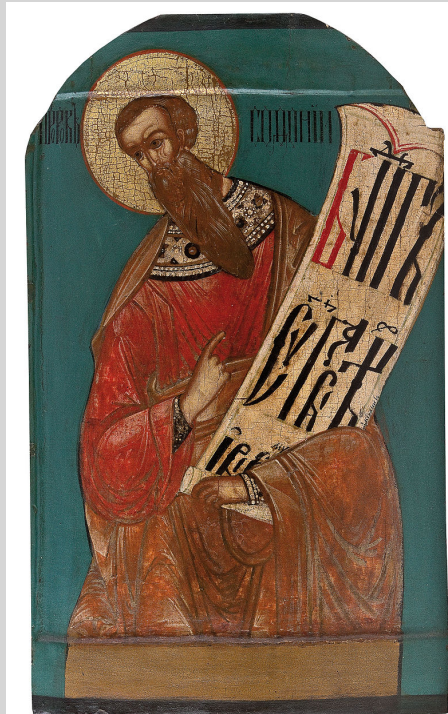
- In the day of the Lord, justice will be done.
- It is a positive time for those who have been victims, but a day of reckoning for the oppressors.
- It can reverse or restructure the way that things are and can have political, social, spiritual, and cosmic consequences.
- It is a world "upside down".
- The people always anticipated that the day of the Lord would be one of rejoicing, and their enemies would be destroyed, and their nation would be exalted above other nations.

JUDGEMENT IN ZEPHANIAH

- The people worship a starry host and swear by Molech.
- Judah will be punished; it is inevitable and imminent.
- However, Judah will not be alone in that time of wrath.
- The other nations that have spurned Yahweh will also receive judgment.
 - Philistines (2:4-7) by Nebuchadnezzar, 604.
 - Moab and Ammon (2:8-11)
 - Cushites (2:12)
 - Assyria (2:13-15). Nineveh was still standing at the time of Zephaniah, but it fell in 612.

- **Zephaniah turns to Judah**

- He calls out rulers, prophets, and priests alike for their lack of regard for the covenant (3:1-17).
- While Yahweh had frequently delivered his people, they refused to honor and fear him.
- Yahweh would assemble the nations for judgment, and Judah would also feed his fury.
- But from both the pagan world and Judah, there would emerge a remnant that would bless His name and make him known in all the Earth (3:14-20).



ZEPH 2:1-5: THE SITUATION IN JUDAH

- Contrasts the injustice in Jerusalem with the righteousness of God's presence within the city.
- He looks forward again to a time when the Lord's protection and deliverance will come again.
 - "The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save." (3:17)