

## A. SERMON SLIDES

Slide 1: Title

Zephaniah

It Gets Worse Before It Gets Better

Slide 2:

Zephaniah 1:1-3 (ESV)

The 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.

“I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth,” declares the LORD.

“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.

Slide 3:

Zephaniah 3:11-20 (ESV)

“On that day you shall not be put to shame because of the deeds by which you have rebelled against me;

for then I will remove from your midst

your proudly exultant ones,

and you shall no longer be haughty

in my holy mountain.

But I will leave in your midst

a people humble and lowly.

They shall seek refuge in the name of the LORD,

those who are left in Israel;

they shall do no injustice

and speak no lies,

nor shall there be found in their mouth

a deceitful tongue.

For they shall graze and lie down,

and none shall make them afraid.”

Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion;

shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,

O daughter of Jerusalem!

The LORD has taken away the judgments against you;

he has cleared away your enemies.

Slide 4:

The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;  
you shall never again fear evil.  
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:  
“Fear not, O Zion;  
let not your hands grow weak.  
The LORD your God is in your midst,  
a mighty one who will save;  
he will rejoice over you with gladness;  
he will quiet you by his love;  
he will exult over you with loud singing.  
I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival,  
so that you will no longer suffer reproach.  
Behold, at that time I will deal  
with all your oppressors.  
And I will save the lame  
and gather the outcast,  
and I will change their shame into praise  
and renown in all the earth.  
At that time I will bring you in,  
at the time when I gather you together;  
for I will make you renowned and praised  
among all the peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes  
before your eyes,” says the LORD.

Slide 5:

Things are going to get really, really, really bad, and then things are going to get really, really, really good.

Slide 6:

I. Author and Context

Zephaniah = "He whom Jehovah has hidden"

Great, great grandson of King Hezekiah

Slide 7:

Zephaniah and Josiah (Prophet and King) leading people back to God.

Slide 8:

II. Theme of the Book

"DAY OF THE LORD"

(Day of Wrath and Mourning)

Slide 9:

III. Moral/Legal Case for Wrath

Slide 10:

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1) Religious Leaders Compromised and Truth Forsaken (1:4-9)

Slide 11:

III. Moral/Legal Case for Wrath

1) Religious Leaders Compromised and Truth Forsaken (1:4-9)

2) Delighting/Promoting Inequitable Market Systems (1:10-13)

Slide 12:

Zephaniah 1:12 (ESV)

"The LORD will not do good, nor will he do ill."

Slide 13:

III. Moral/Legal Case for Wrath

1) Religious Leaders Compromised and Truth Forsaken (1:4-9)

2) Delighting/Promoting Inequitable Market Systems (1:10-13)

3) Trust in State/Military Power (1:14-16)

Slide 14:

Priests will become sacrifices

Rich will become poor

Brave will become cowards

Slide 15:

IV. The Way Through His Wrath

Zephaniah 2:1 (ESV)

"Gather together, yes, gather,  
O shameless nation"

Slide 16:

Zephaniah 2:3 (ESV)"perhaps you may be hidden  
on the day of the anger of the LORD."

Slide 17:

Psalm 32:7 (ESV)

You are a hiding place for me;

you preserve me from trouble;

you surround me with shouts (songs) of deliverance.

Slide 18:

Dies Irae, Dies Illa

(video)

## B. GROUP DISCUSSION

1) Let's talk about the Wrath of God. Are we tired of hearing about it? Why or why not? Do you think that fear and dread of punishment and sin is a right first step into salvation, or do you think it is the love and grace of God that is a more right first step into salvation?

2) The 3 areas that Zephaniah mentions to diagnose a national spiritual cancer that must be eradicated are the following:

Please talk about each one in light of our own country

- a) Spiritual leadership malpractice (No more truth)
- b) Unjust market practices (God doesn't care anyway)
- c) Security in military strength (We don't need His protection)

3) God is seen in the final day of judgment as the One who brings the eradication, and the One in whom we can hide for possible protection. Explain the tension between absolute security in Christ, but, also, Zephaniah's view of end judgment in 2:3.

Please also read I Corinthians 3:12-15, as Paul pictures a "Day" when the Lord must purge His people.

How do we balance security and entitlement?

4) Prayer and Praise