

Zephaniah

The name Zephaniah means “Yahweh has hidden” may indicate that the prophet was born during the atrocities perpetrated by Manasseh.

Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of Josiah, his kinsman, [**Zephaniah 1:1**].

Josiah came to the throne at the age of eight years [640BC] and was largely influenced by Hilkiah the high priest.

It may be presumed that Zephaniah also had influence on the young King Josiah who in his eighteenth year ordered the renovation of the Temple during which the Book of the Law was found. When read before the king and the people of Jerusalem, these scriptures brought about a reformation in the life of the nation.

Zephaniah 1:4 [NIV] *“I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all who live in Jerusalem. I will cut off from this place every remnant of Baal, the names of the pagan and the idolatrous priests,”*

This indicates the ministry of Zephaniah started early in the reign of Josiah, before the Book of the Law was found and all traces of Baal worship were destroyed for the rest of Josiah’s reign.

Zephaniah 1:5 [New King James] *“Those who worship the host of heaven on the housetops; those who worship and swear oaths by the LORD, but who also swear by Milcom;”*

Very like today and many previous generations, people have become polytheistic, worshipping, using the name of the True God yet also using pagan practices in that worship, the use of statues, bowing before images, wearing of mitre by bishops, the symbol of the fish god Dagon, etc.

[Please download and study articles with title ‘Obelisks, Temples And Towers In Religion’, ‘Mother And Child Worship’, ‘Mary Worship’ all under heading ‘Religion’ on this website.]

Exodus 20:1-6 [New King James] *“And God spoke all these words, saying: ‘I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.’”*

The True Creator God commands we are to worship Him only, not adding the pagan practices of false gods to our worship.

The warning we find in the record of Zephaniah’s prophecy for his generation can be applied to our own generation.

Zephaniah 3:1-4 [New King James] *“Woe to her who is rebellious and polluted, to the oppressing city! She has not obeyed His voice, she has not received correction; she has not trusted in the LORD, she has not drawn near to her God. Her princes in her midst are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves that leave not a bone till morning. Her prophets are insolent, treacherous people; her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.”*

Every nation is described in these verses in a world that has been blinded by the present ruler of the earth at the present time, Satan, [**2 Corinthians 4:4**; **1 John 5:19**], and his ministers [**2 Corinthians 11:14-15**] who together have deceived the whole world, [**Revelation 12:9**].

The day of God's wrath against a rebellious world will come, it is near to every generation, but specifically to those still alive at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Zephaniah 1:14-18 [New King James] *“The great day of the LORD is near; it is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm against the fortified cities and against the high towers. I will bring distress upon men, and they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD; their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like refuse. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy, for He will make speedy riddance of all those who dwell in the land.”*

Compare this with the warning given by Jesus Christ, [Matthew 24:3-14, 21-22, 29-30].

What does Zephaniah recommend we do in the face of such a future?

Zephaniah 2:3 [New King James] *“Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. **It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the LORD's anger.**”*

There was still time for the people who received this warning from Zephaniah in his generation.

There is still time for our generation to take the same wise advice.

The wrath of the Creator God is real, it will come upon all who refuse to take Zephaniah's warning seriously and apply his recommendation to their life.

Zephaniah finishes his prophecies with hope for all who respond to his warnings, [Zephaniah 3:8-20].

This too can be applied to all who seek forgiveness for their sins by confessing them to the Creator God and seeking the cleansing power of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ being a substitute for our deserved eternal death, [Romans 6:23], then offering their lives to God out of gratitude for what He has done for them, the grace He has extended to them, [Romans 12:1].

God will then begin to change their lives through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, to a life that is acceptable to Him, a Holy God, [Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 12:2].

Please heed the message that the Creator God has given to all human beings through Zephaniah, and become a part of the World Tomorrow that will start at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 21:1-8 [New King James] *“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’ Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful.’ And He said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.’”*