**The Book of Zephaniah**

**Introduction**

   Zephaniah is the ninth book in the twelve minor prophets. It is the last of Israel’s pre-exile books.

**Chapter One**

**The Day of the LORD**

**1 The word of the LORD which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.**

   Zephaniah prophecied at the same time as the Prophet Jeremiah and his lineage here traces him back to Hezekiah. He prophesied to Judah during the time of King Josiah. He was a descendant of Judah's previous king. Since he was a contemporary of Jeremiah (the weeping prophet) then his prophecies would be similar in nature.

**2 I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the LORD. 3 I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.**

    This book prophecies the judgment of Judah by God at the hands of the kingdom of Babylon. It also has a secondary prophecy concerning the judgment of God on Israel during the Tribulation Period. Babylon's invasion was a dress rehearsal for Israel in the Tribulation Period being persecuted by the Anti-Christ.

**4 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests; 5 And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham; 6 And them that are turned back from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him.**

   The LORD is not sparing anyone in this destruction, not even those that call upon him. That's how far Judah had departed from following the LORD with their whole heart and no amount of last second repentance would deter the LORD from keeping his word to Judah.

   Baal influence would be wiped out in the land, those people who would go on their housetops to look to the stars for guidance (the host of heaven) would not do so for another 70 years while they were out of the land.

   Others worshipped Molech (Malcham), and the LORD had enough of it, and his wrath was about to fall. These pagan deities’ names will be remembered no more when Israel enters into her kingdom but only after the terrible time of Jacob's Trouble.

**7 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests. 8 And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD'S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.**

   If you look in Revelation 19:17-18 you find another great sacrifice where guests will be invited to a great feast where the birds will feed on the flesh of Israel's enemies.

   Everyone that reads chapter of nineteen of the book of the Revelation sees the feast and begins to rejoice. Go back and read the whole chapter again in context and ask yourself if that feast is really what you have been taught it was. It's not.

   Do you remember what Jesus said in his parable about the kingdom of heaven, when a king made a marriage for his son, and someone showed up without the proper wedding garment on? What happened to him? Matthew 22:1-14

   He was bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness. Here it is Israel that will be the sacrificed and it is Israel's flesh that will be eaten when Babylon comes upon Israel to destroy their city and to take them into captivity.

**9 In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit. 10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills. 11 Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off.**

   The fish gate is mentioned three other times in the scriptures, all prior to the time of Zephaniah's writing. 2 Chronicles 33:14, and in Nehemiah 3:3, 12:39. There were twelve gates built by Nehemiah when Israel returned to the land.

**12 And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil. 13 Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.**

   To be settled on their lees means to be content with their Atheism. Content with their sin. So the LORD is going to take it all away.

**14 The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. 15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.**

    If you want to know what the day of the LORD is these verses rap it all up. It is the great day of the LORD which sets it apart from all others because of the events that occur in it.

     If you wish to do a more intense study on the day of the LORD, you only need to begin your search right here. Search out the words, wrath, trouble, distress, wasteness, desolation, darkness, gloominess, clouds, thick darkness, trumpet and alarm and you will surely find a vast amount of information concerning the day of the LORD.

**17 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.**

   The day of the LORD is mentioned in the previous verses as a day of distress, and it will cause all men to stumble through the rubble of the devastation that the LORD causes to fall upon them.﻿

**18 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 shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.**

   Of course Zephaniah is speaking of the Babylonian captivity that is about to take place but that is just the dress rehearsal for what is yet to come upon Israel in the seventieth week of Daniel.

**Chapter Two**

**Hid in the day of the LORD'S anger**

**1 Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; 2 Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger come upon you.**

    Israel is the nation not desired, and she is told twice to gather themselves together. In the tribulation period the believers will need to gather themselves and flee from the wrath to come into the wilderness.

   In Matthew 3:1-14 John the Baptist tells Israel before Christ came on the scene about a time prior to the return of Christ when the LORD will gather the chaff (the lost who were not producing fruits of righteousness) and burn it up. He would also cut down any tree not producing fruit and burn it up as well.

**Matthew 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 12 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: 12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.**

**3 Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in day of the LORD'S anger.**

   The day of the LORD'S anger is the time of the great tribulation period, and during that time the remnant of Israel that seek the LORD will be hid in the wilderness for the last three and a half years.

    There Jesus will supernaturally protect them and provide for them as he did for 40 years as they wandered in the wilderness. Who is it that will seek the LORD according to this verse? The meek. Do you remember the promise of Jesus to them?

**Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.**

    The meek will be hidden in the day of the LORD's anger (the tribulation period), and they will all enter into their promised kingdom when the Messiah returns to set it up and reign.﻿

**4 For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up. 5 Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the LORD is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.**

   The land of the Philistines was in the land of Canaan. It was named the land of Palestine much later by the Romans because of their hatred concerning Israel's past rebellion against the Roman Empire.

   Whether or not the modern day Palestinians are the Philistines of Rome's day is debatable, but it doesn't matter at the time when this event takes place. God is going to destroy Canaan, the land of the Philistines. Whoever is there (the modern day Palestinians) will be destroyed in the day of the LORD.

   The word Palestine is mentioned only once in the Bible in Joel 3:4 as a place on the coast of the Mediterranean sea. A city is called Palestina three times in the Bible.

   Once in Exodus 15:14 as Israel has crossed the Red sea and twice in Isaiah 14 as a city that will be destroyed when Christ returns. Notice what Psalm 83 says about those who come against Israel:

**Psalm 83**

**1 A Song or Psalm of Asaph. Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. 2 For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. 3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.**

   God's hidden ones are the little flock that is hid in the wilderness for three and a half years. The devil and the antichrist make numerous attempts to destroy the remnant of believing Israel (the Israel of God), but he will never succeed because God has promised his eternal protection to them.

**4 They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. 5 For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: 6 The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; 7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; 8 Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah.**

   Just who are the ones in the tribulation period that will come against believing Israel? Look at verses four through eight and you have your answer. These are all Muslim nations today. When Zephaniah delivered these prophecies 2500 years ago, they were all pagan idol worshippers serving a multitude of false gods.

     Something happened that caused them all to unite under one god, Allah, when Muhammed had his revelations that all the other gods were idols, so he consolidated the Arabs with the sword under one banner. The banner of the Moon god, the crescent moon is the symbol of their god. Allah is not the God of the Bible.

**9 Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison: 10 Which perished at Endor: they became as dung for the earth. 11 Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna: 12 Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.**

   Verses nine through eleven are an amazing study of the enemies of Israel in the days of the judges and should be read for better understanding of what is going on with these names mentioned here. It does not turn out well for them.

**13 O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind. 14 As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire; 15 So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm. 16 Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD. 17 Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish: 18 That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.**﻿

   The goal of God is for mankind to know who it is that is truly their Creator, who loved them enough to send his Son to die for them. He alone can save them, and his name is JEHOVAH.

    All other gods are devils masquerading as God, and they have condemned billions to a Christ less eternity. All those who sincerely seek for truth he will reveal himself to them.

   Most want nothing to do him, however. They will be god of their own life. No one will tell them how to live.

**Back to Chapter Two**

**6 And the sea coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks**.**7 And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the LORD their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity.**

   Who are the sea coasts for? The remnant of Israel. Those in the little flock of believers that endure unto the end of the tribulation period. Some may argue that this scripture was fulfilled in the return from the Babylonian captivity, and it was in part but not in whole.

   When God speaks prophetically, he speaks to the current issue being faced and often to the one that this even is only the dress rehearsal for:

**Job 33:14 For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. 15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; 16 Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,**

   If a Jew wants to find another Jew that endured the time of Jacob's trouble they can head to the coast as they will own beach front property in the kingdom.﻿

**8 I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border. 9 Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.**

   It is God who set the borders (boundaries of the nations) and God alone, and he did it to divide man from uniting against him by all being united under a leader (Satan) who would turn them away from their Creator.

**Exodus 23:31 And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before the**e.

**Deuteronomy 32:8 When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel**

   Ammon is the capital city of Amman in modern day Jordan. Moab is also part of Jordan. They will be possessed by the remnant of God's people, but not before it is destroyed as Sodom and Gomorrah were.﻿

**10 This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the LORD of hosts.11 The LORD will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.**

    What a day that will be when all the other gods will be starved out of existence in his glorious kingdom. Remember what happens to Satan during the thousand year reign of Christ? He will be bound so he cannot deceive the nations with his fallen ones masquerading as God/s to the people of this earth.

**12 Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword. 13 And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. 14 And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for he shall uncover the cedar work. 15 This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.**

   The judgment of the sheep and goat nations will happen, and they will receive punishment or reward for how they have treated Israel throughout her days, and especially in the time of Jacob's trouble. Remember Jesus' words concerning the judgment of nations:

**Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.**

**Chapter Three**

**Woe**

**1 Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! 2 She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God. 3 Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. 4 Her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.**

    This is not a prophecy against some other nation here, this is for Israel and the oppressing city (Jerusalem), and for her priests and the false prophets. I can easily see false prophets springing up all over Israel in the time of Jacob's trouble as the remnant has fled into the wilderness. It will be in Israel's future, as it was in their past. One last time.

**5 The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame. 6 I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.**

**The judgment of the Sheep and Goat nations**

**7 I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings. 8 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.**

   Notice it says all the earth, not just the Middle East, shall be devoured with the fire of God's jealousy. It will not be local but universal devastation when the LORD makes his enemies his footstool in the kingdom. There will be no mistaking who is in charge in that day.

**The Day of the LORD**

**9 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.**

At Babel, the tongue on man was confounded and here at the onset of the kingdom the LORD will return to mankind a pure language. He is speaking to the Gentiles here because all of Israel will know the LORD in the kingdom. I believe they will all speak Hebrew.

   This verse is speaking about the Gentiles having a perfect language turn unto them because all of Israel will be saved at that time and none of them will need to call upon the LORD for all shall know the LORD according to Jeremiah:

**Jeremiah 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.**

   The new covenant will be written in Israel's heart during the kingdom, and they will know to do right because God's word is written in their heart instead of on some cold tablets of rock.﻿

**10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.**

    The daughter of his dispersed is a reference to the children of those dispersed. The next generation who were out of the land because of the sins of their parents, not their own.

**11 In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.**

   Israel was saying as many do today, "We are God's chosen people!" Mount Zion is the place of God's holy mountain. The LORD would not come against his own. The Jews were not the original inhabitants of the land, the wicked Canaanites were. God dispossessed them from the land because of their perversion.

**12 I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.**

   How will they be afflicted and poor? Because they will be the ones who enter into the kingdom who have come through great tribulation (afflicted) and during that time they will not be able to buy or sell during those days unless they take the mark of the beast.

**13 The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.**

**The Song of the Kingdom**

**14 Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. 15 The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. 16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. 17 The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. 18 I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. 19 Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. 20 At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.**

    Notice the similarities of what happened to Job. Job is a type of the nation of Israel going through the time of Jacob's trouble and entering into their rest in the latter days.

**Job 42:10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.**

**The End**

    To submit this test simply copy it **along with your answers typed in bold font** and paste them into the body of an email and send it to:﻿ **tests@dofgbi.org**

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**Chapter One Test**

1. What king was reigning during Zephaniah's day?

2. What king was Zephaniah related to?

3. Who was Zephaniah a contemporary of?

4. Who was Zephaniah a prophet to? Israel or Judah

5. Is Zephaniah's prophecy only about his day or does it also contain prophecy concerning the time of Jacob's trouble (the tribulation period)?

6. Who were the Chemarims?

7. What is the day of the LORD's sacrifice and what does it have in common with Revelation 19:17-18?

8. Will Israel be dispersed again during the tribulation period?

**Chapter Two Test**

1. Where will the Jews in the end times be hidden (protected) in the last days?

2. Who will inherit the kingdom? Type out the verse that proves this.

**Chapter Three Test**

1. Who is it in the kingdom that will have a pure language turn unto them so that they might call upon the name of the LORD?

2. Why can verse nine not be talking about Israel in their kingdom?

3. What does Jeremiah chapter 31 tell us will happen at this time?

4, Who is the daughter of the Lord's dispersed and what is she bringing to Jerusalem?

5. What does chapter three end with that also happened when the LORD destroyed the Egyptian army?

6. What is Job a type of?