Crossroads International Church Singapore Dr. Rick Griffith

26 March 2017 Message 7 of 12

NLT 40 Minutes

**Be Hopeful**

Title

***The Prophecy of Zephaniah***

**Topic:** Hope

**Subject:** How should we respond to the LORD’s balance?

**Complement:** Be hopeful yet repentant.

**Purpose:** The listeners will repent from sin with hope.

**Attribute:** We worship the God of balance.

**Reading:** Zephaniah 3:19

**Song:** “Mighty to Save”

# Introduction

### Interest: We all need balance but it’s hard to achieve.

Balance

#### Ask anyone if they want to live a balanced life, and the chances are that he or she will say, “Yes, I want balance. I see the dangers of extremism.”

#### We all hear much about the balance of home and work life.

Scale

#### And, of course, there is the balance in eating.

Hands

##### That means we should eat just as many bad things as good things, right?

##### Seriously, “The Eatwell Plate” is bad grammar but good in that it includes fruit and vegetables, starches, dairy, as well as food and drinks high in fat and/or sugar—plus meat, fish, eggs, and beans.

Frustrated

Index Finger

Plate

#### Yet we all know balance doesn’t come easily—in eating, in work life/home life, in just about any area of life.

#### Most of us want balance in our lives, yet we strive to know how to do it. The reality is that balance comes from being in a perpetual state of imbalance from the extremes.

### Need: Is your view of God balanced? He certainly is the perfect balance, but do you see him that way? As we consider how this applies to what we think of God, each age has had its extremes:

Scale

#### At some points in history, the judgment of God took precedence. He was only seen as a fair and vengeful ruler intent on striking all who do not fear him.

Judge

#### In our present time, clearly the blessing of God is emphasized. Many only will talk of his love, mercy, grace, and especially the prosperity that he gives to the faithful.

Ring

### Background: Judah had seen God judge Israel but was still imbalanced. We have seen that in this series on the Minor Prophets where each prophet showed the need of God’s people to “Be…” (Explain six books so far).

12 Balls

#### Every age needs that balance between God’s judgment and salvation, etc. This is exactly what we see in the prophecy of Zephaniah.

Zephaniah

##### Zephaniah speaks about the day of the LORD as a future period of judgment followed by deliverance.

Day

##### Zephaniah follows the common prophetic judgment/blessing theme rather closely, emphasizing the former. Most of his prophecy conveys judgment upon Judah for its sin (1:1–3:8 uses a chiasm around the day of the LORD theme). This is followed by the hope of ultimate deliverance (3:9-20). His aim is to encourage Judah that while God will judge, He will still restore a remnant in faithfulness to His covenants.

Chart

##### Zephaniah spoke for God between 640-609 BC (Josiah's reign) so the prophecy has divine authority (1:1).

Relatives Diagram

1:1-2  
(2 slides)

##### He actually was related by blood to Hezekiah as the great great grandson.

Temple Court

##### He was prophet #8 and #7 of the Minor Prophets.

Timeline

#### Zephaniah ministered at the close of the darkest years of Judah's history.

##### This was just after the evil Manasseh occupied the throne—a king from whose infamous 55-year rule the nation never recovered. Manasseh made altars to Ashtoreth (Canaanite), Chemosh (Moabite), Milcom (Ammonite), and Baal (Canaanite) deities.

##### Manasseh restored child sacrifice and even sacrificed one of his own sons in the Valley of Hinnom (2 Kings 21:6). Astrology, occultism, witchcraft, spiritism, and divination were common (2 Chron. 33:5-6), and Manasseh even placed a carved idol in the temple (v. 7). His son Amon was named after an Egyptian god.

##### Although Manasseh later made some token efforts at reforming Yahweh worship (cf. 2 Chron. 33:12-19) under the influence of some unnamed prophets of God (v. 18), the people had gone too far into idolatry (v. 17).

Fall

##### After his son Amon assumed the throne briefly (642-640 BC), Josiah became king. The false worship of the earlier part of Josiah's reign still continued during the ministry of Zephaniah (1:4-5, 8, 9, 12). Zephaniah was God's spokesman to turn a people of false worship back to the true God.

### Preview: Zephaniah will show us the two extremes that the LORD carefully balances. So we will see what should Judah do—and what should we do—about these two facets of God’s plan.

Subject

### Subject: Here is the key issue: *How should we respond* to the LORD’s balance?

• Repent

### Text: The whole book of Zephaniah gives us the balance we need.

(How should we respond to the LORD’s balance in his judging us?)

# I. God’s future judgment warns us to repent.

MI

[The LORD will hold you accountable, so change your mind about him now.]

## Judah’s knowledge of judgment (the day of the LORD) due to God's righteous character should lead them to repent (1:2–3:8).

### God will judge the whole earth for its wickedness so Judah should see that is fair to all (1:2-3).

Chart  
(5 slides)

### God will judge Judah for its idolatry and social injustice, so the nation should repent to avoid the terrible calamity (1:4–2:3).

Chart  
(9 slides)

#### Judgment will come on various people in Judah for sins of idolatry and social injustice (1:4-13).

##### Judgment will come on the pagan priests who have led the people into all forms of idolatrous and false worship (1:4-6).

Title

Title

Title

Title

###### Some people are led into Baal worship (1:4).

###### Some people have gotten involved in astrology (1:5a).

Zeph 2

(3 slides)

###### Some people have a religious syncretism that mixes Yahweh worship with that of the Ammonite god Milcom/Molech (1:5b).

###### All the people have simply rejected Yahweh, having turned their back on Him (1:6).

##### Judgment will come on the princes and aristocracy who evidence their disobedience by adopting foreign dress and practices (1:7-8).

Pagan Customs

##### Judgment will come on those who oppress fellow citizens by robbing them to offer objects up for pagan worship (1:9).

##### Judgment will come on the people throughout the city and the merchants in the business area who have grown rich by oppressing others (1:10-11).

##### Judgment will come on the indifferent that feel that God could keep neither His promises nor His threats (1:12-13).

#### The day of the LORD will have terrible bloodshed and celestial signs that will ravage the earth (1:14-18).

#### Judah should gather together in humble and righteous repentance to try to avert the day of the LORD (2:1-3).

### God will judge the nations around Judah for prideful mistreatment of Judah, who will inhabit some of their territory (2:4-15).

Chart  
(20 slides)

#### Judgment will come on Philistia in the west so that the devastated land will be inhabited by a remnant of Judah (2:4-7).

#### Judgment will come on Moab and Ammon in the east for their arrogance against Judah, who will also inhabit their land (2:8-11).

#### Judgment will come on Ethiopia in the south who will die from an invading army (2:12).

#### Judgment will come on the arrogant Assyrians in the north through the Babylonians, who will leave Nineveh inhabited only by wild beasts (2:13-15).

### God will judge Jerusalem for arrogantly spurning God's righteous and just warnings against its depraved spiritual condition (3:1-7).

Chart  
(10 slides)

#### Jerusalem is spiritually depraved (3:1-4).

#### God's judgment of the other nations is fair and just, so He will also be fair and just with Jerusalem (3:5-6).

#### God gave Jerusalem chances to repent, but in vain since the city spurned His warnings (3:7).

3:8

(3 slides)

### God will judge the whole earth so Judah should wait upon God (3:8).

## You should ***repent.***

REPENT!

Title

Title

Title

Title

### Repentance literally means a change of mind—don’t trust yourself but change your mind to trust God instead. The “fruits of repentance” then mean a change of behavior based on whom you lean on.

3:9-20  
(10 slides)

### The basics are in 2:3:

#### Seek the LORD. Don’t seek idols.

#### Seek righteousness. Don’t seek what is expedient.

#### Seek humility. Don’t lift up yourself but lift up others.

### Have you changed your mind about whom you trust—and that shows in a humble, pure life?

### The NT in 1 Corinthians 3 says that your works will be like materials set on fire. That’s a severe warning. Only the lasting ones will last and be rewarded.

(So God balances both judgment and reward. This book speaks of how we should respond to the LORD’s balance. We saw first that the majority of this book says that God’s future judgment warns us to repent. Yet there is good news of reward also. How should we respond to the LORD’s balance in his blessing us?)

MPI

# II. God’s future deliverance encourages us to hope.

MP

[The LORD will reward you, so live with anticipation now.]

## Judah could have confidence that God would preserve a remnant and restore them (3:9-20).

### The day of the LORD includes worship by a remnant from the nations beyond Egypt (3:9).

### The day of the LORD includes the restoration of a redeemed and restored Judah under the protection of the LORD Himself (3:10-20).

#### The remnant of the nation will be redeemed in humility (3:10-13).

#### Judah should rejoice since the LORD will protect it from enemies forever (3:14-17).

## You can have ***hope.***

Prayer at White House

### After years of turning from God, prayer has now even returned to the White House.

Blessing

Judgment

Chart

### How much do you actually think about what the Bible says about the future?

### God obviously wants us to know much about the future. Did you know that 27% of the Bible referred to the future when it was written? What other book can boast as much?

### In particular, Jesus will return and bring in a 1000-year period of ruling with us on this earth (Rev. 5:10).

Day  
(2 slides)

### But how does this give you hope?

#### Does it affect how you use your money? Do you “lay up for yourself treasures in heaven” as a result?

#### How does it impact your use of time? Do you say, “That movie isn’t necessarily wrong, but I could us my time much better by investing God’s Word into others!”

Subject

(How should we respond to the LORD’s balance?)

# Conclusion

MI

### Be hopeful yet repentant (MI). Balance your anticipation with right thinking.

KOG  
(2 slides)

### Zephaniah speaks of the coming kingdom.

### How should we respond to the LORD’s balance (MPs)?

MPI

#### God’s future judgment warns us to repent.

MPII

#### God’s future deliverance encourages us to hope.

### What to do?

2:1-3

#### Seek what God seeks in Zephaniah 2:3.

#### Be hopeful. You have a lot to look forward to!

3:17

### Prayer

Prayer

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### The name Zephaniah (hy"n>p;c.) literally means "Yahweh hides" or "Yahweh treasures up" (BDB 861b; or "protects," cf. Heater).

### Zephaniah's name may recall the suppression of prophetic activity under the wicked King Manasseh, as the prophet may very well have had to be “hidden of the LORD” in order to survive the purges of the impious king (LaSor, 431, n. 1). Such a name may have been helpful in providing hope for the prophet and the people during dark days.

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### Most of us want balance in our lives, yet we strive to know how to do it. The reality is that balance comes from being in a perpetual state of imbalance from the extremes.

### As we consider how this applies to what we think of God, each age has had its extremes.

#### At some points in history, the judgment of God took precedence. He was only seen as a fair and vengeful ruler intent on striking all who do not fear him.

#### In our present time, clearly the blessing of God is emphasized. Many only will talk of his love, mercy, grace, and especially the prosperity that he gives to the faithful.

#### “Zephaniah’s prophecy has two major themes: (a) the bold declaration of God’s imminent wrath, which implies a serious call to repentance, and (b) the comforting words of the prophet that even in judgment God will not forget his covenantal mercies but will restore His people at a future time” (John D. Hannah, “Zephaniah,” *BKC*, 1:1525).

### The reality is that every age needs that balance between God’s judgment and salvation, etc. This is exactly what we see in the prophecy of Zephaniah (show chart).

### Zephaniah follows the common prophetic judgment/blessing theme rather closely, emphasizing the former. Most of his prophecy conveys judgment upon Judah for its sin (1:1–3:8 uses a chiasm around the day of the LORD theme). This is followed by the hope of ultimate deliverance (3:9-20). His aim is to encourage Judah that while God will judge, He will still restore a remnant in faithfulness to His covenants.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### Occasion: Zephaniah ministered at the close of the darkest years of Judah's history after the evil Manasseh occupied the throne—a king from whose infamous 55-year rule the nation never recovered. Manasseh made altars to Ashtoreth (Canaanite), Chemosh (Moabite), Milcom (Ammonite), and Baal (Canaanite) deities. He restored child sacrifice and even sacrificed one of his own sons in the Valley of Hinnom (2 Kings 21:6). Astrology, occultism, witchcraft, spiritism, and divination were common (2 Chron. 33:5-6), and Manasseh even placed a carved idol in the temple (v. 7). His son Amon was named after an Egyptian god.

### Although Manasseh later made some token efforts at reforming Yahweh worship (cf. 2 Chron. 33:12-19) under the influence of some unnamed prophets of God (v. 18), the people had gone too far into idolatry (v. 17). After his son Amon assumed the throne briefly (642-640 BC), Josiah became king. The false worship of the earlier part of Josiah's reign still continued during the ministry of Zephaniah (1:4-5, 8, 9, 12). Zephaniah was God's spokesman to turn a people of false worship back to the true God.

# Questions

### When was this reign of Josiah in Judah’s history (1:1)?

#### Zephaniah ministered during the reign of Josiah (640-609 BC; 1:1b) and since Nineveh had not yet fallen (2:13-15), his prophecy pre-dates the fall of the great city in 612 BC.

#### Also, his preaching about the idolatrous practices in Judah and Jerusalem make it likely that his prophecy preceded Josiah's reforms following the discovery of the book of the Law (622 BC).

#### Therefore, the likely dates of composition are 640-622 BC. This means that Jeremiah (called in 627 BC) and Zephaniah could have been contemporaries.

### To whom did Zephaniah write (1:1)?

#### The northern kingdom had fallen to the Assyrians approximately one hundred years earlier (722 BC).

#### That means that Zephaniah had to direct his preaching to the southern kingdom of Judah about four decades before Judah fell to Babylon.

### What period is this when the whole earth will be judged like this (1:2-3)?

#### Prophecies like this refer to the future seven-year Tribulation talked about in detail in Revelation 6­­–19.

#### This will be the only time when the entire world will be judged.

### What is meant by the “day of the LORD” that appears throughout this book?

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

God has the perfect balance as both fair judge and gracious redeemer.

# Possible Illustrations

### The confirmation hearings of Neil Gorsuch have captured the attention of the watching world this week. Many of his interrogators have sought to find out whether he is “on their side.” However, his response has been consistent in declaring that he is “on the side of the law.” So the issue isn’t really whether he is “on their side” but rather whether they are on the side of the law!

### The issue with how we relate to Ultimate Judge is not whether he is on our side to uphold our biases. The issue is whether we are on the side of truth. When that happens, this Judge will rule in our favor and we will see his mercy more than his wrath.

# Possible Applications

### How do you look at God? Do you have a balanced view of him? Is he both judge and savior to you?

### If you insist on living like a pagan, then you will die like a pagan (Huang Sabin). This is because God will seem harsh to you.

### However, if you place your faith in Christ, you will see God’s salvation.

# Old Testament Survey Notes

**Zephaniah**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the LORD** | | | | | | |
| **Judgment** | | | | | **Salvation** | |
| **1:1–3:8** | | | | | **3:9-20** | |
| **Day of Punishment** | | | | | **Day of Praise** | |
| **D-Day** | | | | | **V-Day** | |
| **Judgment and slavation**  **Destruction** | | | | | **Deliverance** | |
| **Ruin** | | | | | **Restoration** | |
| **God’s Righteousness** | | | | | **God’s Faithfulness** | |
| **Warning** | | | | | **Encouragement** | |
| Earth  1:1-3 | Judah  1:4–2:3 | Nations  2:4-15 | Jerusalem  3:1-7 | Earth  3:8 | Remnant Regathered  3:9-10 | Redeemed & Restored  3:11-20 |
| **Judah, Nations, and Whole Earth** | | | | | | |
| **c. 630 BC** | | | | | | |

**Key Word: Day**

**Key Verse: “Gather together…before the day of the LORD’s wrath comes upon you. Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD’s anger” (Zephaniah 2:1-3).**

**Summary Statement:**

**Zephaniah prophesies the day of the LORD judgment upon Judah, the surrounding nations, and the entire earth to exhort Judah to repent because of God's righteous character and His promise of a remnant in a national restoration.**

**Application:**

**If you insist on *living* like a pagan, then you will *die* like a pagan (Huang Sabin)**

**Zephaniah**

**Introduction**

**I. Title**: The name Zephaniah (hy"n>p;c.) literally means "Yahweh hides" or "Yahweh treasures up" (BDB 861b; or "protects," cf. Heater). Zephaniah's name may recall the suppression of prophetic activity under the wicked King Manasseh, as the prophet may very well have had to be “hidden of the LORD” in order to survive the purges of the impious king (LaSor, 431, n. 1).

**II. Authorship**

A. External Evidence: We know nothing about Zephaniah except what is in this prophecy.

B. Internal Evidence: That Zephaniah is the author is indisputable (1:1), but his residence in Jerusalem can only be inferred from his use of the phrase "this place" (1:4) and the familiarity he had with the city (1:9-10). As the great great grandson of King Hezekiah (1:1), Zephaniah remains the only prophet of royal descent and also the only prophet related to the king under whose reign he prophesied (in this case Josiah). Perhaps the author states his extensive four-generation genealogy to substantiate his intimate knowledge of the sins of Jerusalem's leaders (1:11-13; 3:3-5; cf. LaSor, 431).

**III. Circumstances**

A. Date: Zephaniah ministered during the reign of Josiah (640-609 BC; 1:1b) and since Nineveh had not yet fallen (2:13-15), his prophecy pre-dates the fall of the great city in 612 BC. Also, his preaching about the idolatrous practices in Judah and Jerusalem make it likely that his prophecy preceded Josiah's reforms following the discovery of the book of the Law (622 BC). Therefore, the likely dates of composition are 640-622 BC. This means that Jeremiah (called in 627 BC) and Zephaniah could have been contemporaries.

B. Recipients: The northern kingdom had fallen to the Assyrians approximately one hundred years earlier (722 BC). Zephaniah's preaching was directed towards the southern kingdom of Judah about four decades before Judah fell to Babylon.

C. Occasion: Zephaniah ministered at the close of the darkest years of Judah's history after the evil Manasseh occupied the throne—a king from whose infamous 55-year rule the nation never recovered. Manasseh made altars to Ashtoreth (Canaanite), Chemosh (Moabite), Milcom (Ammonite), and Baal (Canaanite) deities. He restored child sacrifice and even sacrificed one of his own sons in the Valley of Hinnom (2 Kings 21:6). Astrology, occultism, witchcraft, spiritism, and divination were common (2 Chron. 33:5-6), and Manasseh even placed a carved idol in the temple (v. 7). His son Amon was named after an Egyptian god.

Although Manasseh later made some token efforts at reforming Yahweh worship (cf. 2 Chron. 33:12-19) under the influence of some unnamed prophets of God (v. 18), the people had gone too far into idolatry (v. 17). After his son Amon assumed the throne briefly (642-640 BC), Josiah became king. The false worship of the earlier part of Josiah's reign still continued during the ministry of Zephaniah (1:4-5, 8, 9, 12). Zephaniah was God's spokesman to turn a people of false worship back to the true God.

**IV. Characteristics**

A. As noted above, Zephaniah is unique in that it is the only prophecy by a man of royal blood (who prophesied to his relative made king).

B. Zephaniah's predominant theme is the same as that of Joel—the day of the LORD. This technical term refers to a time still future for Israel in which the nation will be disciplined followed by blessings in the kingdom era (see p. 639).

Zephaniah is a short prophecy, yet it uses the phrase “day of the LORD” more than any other prophet. Variations of the NIV term occur 23 times in only three chapters (almost 8 times/chapter):

***Term Chapter 1 Chapter 2 Chapter 3***

"day of the LORD" 1:7, 8, 14b

"great day of the LORD" 1:14a

"that day" 1:9, 10, 15 2:2a 3:11, 16

"at that time" 1:12 3:19, 20

"a day" 1:15 (5 times), 16

"day of the LORD's wrath" 1:18 2:2b

"day of the LORD's anger" 2:3

"the day" 3:8

**Argument**

Zephaniah follows the common prophetic judgment/blessing theme rather closely, emphasizing the former. Most of his prophecy conveys judgment upon Judah for its sin (1:1–3:8 uses a chiasm around the day of the LORD theme). This is followed by the hope of ultimate deliverance (3:9-20). His aim is to encourage Judah that while God will judge, He will still restore a remnant in faithfulness to His covenants.

**Synthesis**

**Day of the LORD**

**1:1–3:8 Judgment**

1:1 Introduction

1:2-3 Judgment upon whole earth

1:4–2:3 Judgment upon Judah

2:4-15 Judgment upon nations

3:1-7 Judgment upon Jerusalem

3:8 Judgment upon whole earth

**3:9-20 Salvation**

3:9-10 Remnant from the nations

3:11-20 Redeemed and restored Judah

**Outline**

**Summary Statement for the Book**

**The response of Judah to God’s righteous judgment (the day of the LORD) and eventual restoration of a remnant should be to repent with hope.**

# The response of Judah to God’s righteous judgment (the day of the LORD) should be to repent (1:1–3:8).

## Zephaniah spoke for God between 640-609 BC (Josiah's reign) so the prophecy has divine authority (1:1).

## God will judge the whole earth for its wickedness so Judah should see that is fair to all (1:2-3).

## God will judge Judah for its idolatry and social injustice, so the nation should repent to avoid the terrible calamity (1:4–2:3).

### Judgment will come on various people in Judah for sins of idolatry and social injustice (1:4-13).

#### Judgment will come on the pagan priests who have led the people into all forms of idolatrous and false worship (1:4-6).

##### Some people are led into Baal worship (1:4).

##### Some people have gotten involved in astrology (1:5a).

##### Some people have a religious syncretism that mixes Yahweh worship with that of the Ammonite god Milcom/Molech (1:5b).

##### All the people have simply rejected Yahweh, having turned their back on Him (1:6).

#### Judgment will come on the princes and aristocracy who evidence their disobedience by adopting foreign dress and practices (1:7-8).

#### Judgment will come on those who oppress fellow citizens by robbing them to offer objects up for pagan worship (1:9).

#### Judgment will come on the people throughout the city and the merchants in the business area who have grown rich by oppressing others (1:10-11).

#### Judgment will come on the indifferent that feel that God could keep neither His promises nor His threats (1:12-13).

### The day of the LORD will have terrible bloodshed and celestial signs that will ravage the earth (1:14-18).

### Judah should gather together in humble and righteous repentance to try to avert the day of the LORD (2:1-3).

## God will judge the nations around Judah for prideful mistreatment of Judah, who will inhabit some of their territory (2:4-15).

### Judgment will come on Philistia in the west so that the devastated land will be inhabited by a remnant of Judah (2:4-7).

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### Judgment will come on the arrogant Assyrians in the north through the Babylonians, who will leave Nineveh inhabited only by wild beasts (2:13-15).

## God will judge Jerusalem for arrogantly spurning God's righteous and just warnings against its depraved spiritual condition (3:1-7).

### Jerusalem is spiritually depraved (3:1-4).

### God's judgment of the other nations is fair and just, so He will also be fair and just with Jerusalem (3:5-6).

### God gave Jerusalem chances to repent, but in vain since the city spurned His warnings (3:7).

## God will judge the whole earth so Judah should wait upon God (3:8).

# The result of Judah knowing God will preserve a remnant and restore them should be hope (3:9-20).

## The day of the LORD includes worship by a remnant from the nations beyond Egypt (3:9).

## The day of the LORD includes the restoration of a redeemed and restored Judah under the protection of the LORD Himself (3:10-20).

### The remnant of the nation will be redeemed in humility (3:10-13).

### Judah should rejoice since the LORD will protect it from enemies forever (3:14-17).

### Judah will be gathered again and restored to the land as preparation for entrance into the Millennial Kingdom (3:18-20).

**Judgment and Blessing in the Prophets**

The dual themes of judgment and blessing appear in every prophetical book. This is because God always balances His justice with His mercy! If one can grasp these two concepts in the prophets (with their related covenants), then a much better understanding of the OT will result.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Judgment** | **Blessing** |
| **Explanation** | **Retribution for Sin** | **Restoration from Sin** |
| **Recipients** | **Nations and Israel** | **Nations through Israel** |
| **Covenant** | **Mosaic** | **Abrahamic** |
| **Nature of the Covenant** | **Conditional** | **Unconditional** |
| **God’s Attribute** | **Justice** | **Faithfulness** |
| **Key Covenant Texts** | **Exod. 19–20; Deut. 28** | **Gen. 12:1-3; 15:17-21; 17:8** |
| **Isaiah** | **1–39** | **40–66** |
| **Jeremiah (J-B-J pattern)** | **1–29, 34–52** | **30–33** |
| **Lamentations** | **1:1–5:18** | **5:19-22** |
| **Ezekiel** | **1–32** | **33–48** |
| **Daniel** | **1–7** | **8–12** |
| **Hosea (pattern twice)** | **1:1–2:13; chs. 4–13** | **2:14–3:5; ch. 14** |
| **Joel** | **1:1–2:17** | **2:18–3:21** |
| **Amos** | **1:1–9:7** | **9:8-15** |
| **Obadiah** | **1-14 (vv.)** | **15-21 (vv.)** |
| **Jonah** | **1:1–3:9** | **3:10–4:10** |
| **Micah (pattern thrice)** | **1:1–2:11; 3:1-12; 6:1–7:6** | **2:12-13; 4:1–5:15; 7:7-20** |
| **Nahum (J-B-J pattern)** | **1:1-11; chs. 2–3** | **1:12-15** |
| **Habakkuk** | **1–2** | **3** |
| **Zephaniah** | **1:1–3:8** | **3:9-20** |
| **Haggai (pattern twice)** | **1:1-15; 2:10-19** | **2:1-9; 2:20-23** |
| **Zechariah** | **1:1-6** | **1:7–14:21** |
| **Malachi** | **1–3** | **4** |

**The Day of the LORD**

**I. Usage**

A. The “day of the LORD” concept appears in each prophetic book in the Old Testament, although not always by that same term.

B. The judgment aspect receives detailed treatment in Zephaniah, Joel, and Revelation 6–19. Some believe that the “Lord’s day” of Revelation 1:10 also refers to this period (cf. 2 Thess. 2:2-3).

**II. Definition**

A. The day of the LORD is “the time of Yahweh’s final intervention in history when He will judge the wicked, deliver the righteous, and establish His kingdom” (Hobart Freeman, *An Introduction to the OT Prophets*, 146).

1. *Judgment*

a. Primarily it refers to a destruction of Israel’s enemies (Zeph. 2–3; Amos 1:3–2:3; Joel 3; Zech. 12–14; Isa. 13:6, 9; 14:28-32; 17:1ff.; 20:1-6; 31:1-5; Jer. 46:10; Ezek. 30:3ff.).Freeman, 146-47

b. However, it also includes punishment of the rebellious and disobedient in the nation of Israel (Jer. 30:7; Amos 5:18-20). It is a judgment for sins (Zeph. 1:17) as a day of terror (1:15).

c. The Great Tribulation of Revelation 6–19 finds so many parallels with descriptions by the OT prophets that the two judgments must certainly be the same period. The day is a time of universal judgment (Zeph. 1:2-3; 2:4-15; 3:8) with great convulsions of nature (Zeph. 1:15).

d. Ultimately the day of the LORD will end in a destruction of the world (2 Pet. 3:10).

2. *Deliverance*

a. Israel’s salvation from Gentile oppressors will occur through God who preserves and delivers a remnant of Israel (Joel 2:32; Zech. 14; Zeph. 3:8-20; Isa. 2, 11, 65-66; Amos 9:11-15; Ezek. 20:33-44, etc.).

b. This salvation is to enable Israel to enter into the kingdom in which God will fulfill all His promises to Abraham (cf. class notes, 336-37).

c. The deliverance includes many blessings (Deut. 30:3-9) that also apply to Gentiles (Zeph. 3:9). As a result, a remnant will be redeemed (Zeph. 3:16-17).

d. Final salvation after judgment will be in the new heaven and earth (2 Pet. 3:11-13).

3. Diagram

*Judgment + Salvation = Day of the LORD*

Great Tribulation + Christ’s Return/ = Day of the LORD

Millennium

B. The day of the LORD also had a nearer aspect to the prophets, depicting an imminent (Zeph. 1:14), impending disaster–generally through the Assyrians or Babylonians. Sometimes even both the near and far aspects appear together in a dual sense. God did not clearly reveal whether a near or far perspective was to be understood so as to encourage repentance.

C. For further study see Greg A. King, “The Day of the LORD in Zephaniah,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152 (January-March 1995): 16-32.

**Be Hopeful**

***The Prophecy of Zephaniah***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# *Exegetical Idea*: The response of Judah to God’s righteous judgment (the day of the LORD) and eventual restoration of a remnant should be to repent with hope.

# The response of Judah to God’s righteous judgment (the day of the LORD) should be to repent (1:1–3:8).

## The following prophecy came to Zephaniah between 640-609 BC (Josiah's reign) from God Himself which affirms the prophecy’s divine authority (1:1).

## God will judge the whole earth for its wickedness so Judah should see that is fair to all (1:2-3).

## God will judge Judah for its idolatry and social injustice, so the nation should repent to avoid the terrible calamity (1:4–2:3).

## God will judge the nations around Judah for prideful mistreatment of Judah, who will inhabit some of their territory (2:4-15).

## God will judge Jerusalem for arrogantly spurning God's righteous and just warnings against its depraved spiritual condition (3:1-7).

## God will judge the whole earth so Judah should wait upon God (3:8).

# The result of Judah knowing God will preserve a remnant and restore them should be hope (3:9-20).

## The day of the LORD includes worship by a remnant from the nations beyond Egypt (3:9).

## The day of the LORD includes the restoration of a redeemed and restored Judah under the protection of the LORD Himself (3:10-20).

### The remnant of the nation will be redeemed in humility (3:10-13).

### Judah should rejoice since the LORD will protect it from enemies forever (3:14-17).

### Judah will be gathered again and restored to the land as preparation for entrance into the Millennial Kingdom (3:18-20).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will repent from sin with hope.

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest: We all need balance but it’s hard to achieve.

### Need: Is your view of God balanced?

### Background: Judah had seen God judge Israel but was still imbalanced.

#### Zephaniah spoke for God between 640-609 BC (Josiah's reign) so the prophecy has divine authority (1:1).

#### Zephaniah speaks about the day of the LORD as a future period of judgment followed by deliverance.

### Preview: Zephaniah will show us the two extremes that the LORD carefully balances. So we will see what should Judah do—and what should we do—about these two facets of God’s plan.

### Subject: *How should we respond* to the LORD’s balance?

### Text: The whole book of Zephaniah gives us the balance we need.

(How should we respond to the LORD’s balance in his judging us?)

# I. God’s future judgment warns us to repent.

## Judah’s knowledge of judgment (the day of the LORD) due to God's righteous character should lead them to repent (1:2–3:8).

### God will judge the whole earth for its wickedness so Judah should see that is fair to all (1:2-3).

### God will judge Judah for its idolatry and social injustice, so the nation should repent to avoid the terrible calamity (1:4–2:3).

### God will judge the nations around Judah for prideful mistreatment of Judah, who will inhabit some of their territory (2:4-15).

### God will judge Jerusalem for arrogantly spurning God's righteous and just warnings against its depraved spiritual condition (3:1-7).

### God will judge the whole earth so Judah should wait upon God (3:8).

## You should ***repent.***

(How should we respond to the LORD’s balance in his blessing us?)

# II. God’s future deliverance encourages us to hope.

## Judah could have confidence that God would preserve a remnant and restore them (3:9-20).

### The day of the LORD includes worship by a remnant from the nations beyond Egypt (3:9).

### The day of the LORD includes the restoration of a redeemed and restored Judah under the protection of the LORD Himself (3:10-20).

#### The remnant of the nation will be redeemed in humility (3:10-13).

#### Judah should rejoice since the LORD will protect it from enemies forever (3:14-17).

## You can have ***hope.***

(How should we respond to the LORD’s balance?)

# Conclusion

### Be hopeful yet repentant (MI).

### Main Points

### What to do?

#### Seek what God seeks in Zephaniah 2:3.

#### Be hopeful. You have a lot to look forward to!



**Rick Griffith**

26 March 2017

Message 7 of 12

**Be Hopeful**

***The Prophecy of Zephaniah***

# Introduction

### We all need balance but it’s hard to achieve.

### Is your view of God balanced?

### Judah had seen God judge Israel but was still imbalanced.

#### Zephaniah spoke for God between 640-609 BC (Josiah's reign) so the prophecy has divine authority (1:1).

#### Zephaniah speaks about the day of the LORD as a future period of judgment followed by deliverance.

### *How should we respond* to the LORD’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

# I. God’s future judgment warns us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## Judah’s knowledge of judgment (the day of the LORD) due to God's righteous character should lead them to repent (1:2–3:8).

### God will judge the whole earth for its wickedness so Judah should see that is fair to all (1:2-3).

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### God will judge the whole earth so Judah should wait upon God (3:8).

## You should ***repent.***

# II. God’s future deliverance encourages us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## Judah could have confidence that God would preserve a remnant and restore them (3:9-20).

### The day of the LORD includes worship by a remnant from the nations beyond Egypt (3:9).

### Rick SSD:Users:griffith:Desktop:Screen Shot 2017-03-26 at 1.10.19 PM.pngThe day of the LORD includes the restoration of a redeemed and restored Judah under the protection of the LORD Himself (3:10-20).

#### The remnant of the nation will be redeemed in humility (3:10-13).

#### Judah should rejoice since the LORD will protect it from enemies forever (3:14-17).

## You can have ***hope.***

(How should we respond to the LORD’s balance?)

# Conclusion

### Be hopeful yet \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Main Idea).

### What to do?

#### Seek what God seeks in Zephaniah 2:3.

#### Be hopeful. You have a lot to look forward to!

**Thought Questions**

1. Read the prophecy and contrast what you can find about these two themes:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Judgment** | **Blessing** |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |

1. What do you need to do to better balance your views of judgment and hope?

Text

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