

Zephaniah 1:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them (כֶּסֶם וְזָהָבם kasapam u'zehabam)—Wealth is impotent before God's wrath. This echoes Ezekiel 7:19: 'They shall cast their silver in the streets.' What secured social status becomes useless for purchasing salvation.

The fire of his jealousy (אֵשׁ קִנְיָתוֹ esh kin'ato)—God's jealousy is not petty envy but righteous zeal for His own glory and His people's exclusive devotion. The term qin'ah describes a husband's jealousy over his wife (Numbers 5:14), appropriate since Israel's idolatry was spiritual adultery. **A speedy riddance** (כָּלָה נִבְהָלָה kalah nivhalah)—a terrified end, a complete and sudden destruction.

Historical Context

In 586 BC, Judah's wealthy elite who had exploited the poor (Zephaniah 1:8-9) saw their treasures plundered by Babylonians. Archaeological evidence shows treasures buried in haste, never recovered—silent testimony to wealth's impotence before judgment.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What false securities (savings, insurance, investment portfolios) do you unconsciously trust for ultimate deliverance?
2. How does understanding God's 'jealousy' as holy zeal rather than petty envy change your view of His commands for exclusive worship?
3. What would a 'speedy riddance' look like for modern idolatries—materialism, nationalism, or self-righteousness?

Interlinear Text

גַּם H1571	כֶּסֶף מ H3701	גַּם H1571	זָהָב מ H2091	לֹא H3808	יֹכֵל ל H3201	לְהַצִּיל מ H5337
Neither	their silver	nor	their gold	shall be able	to deliver	
בְּיוֹם H3117	עֲבַר ת H5678	יְהוָה H3068	וּבֵּאֵשׁ H784	קִנְאָתוֹ H7068		
them in the day	wrath	of the LORD'S	by the fire	of his jealousy		
תֹּאכֶל ל H398	כָּל H3605	הָאָרֶץ: H776	כִּי H3588	כָּל ה H389	אֵן H389	נִבְהָלָה H926
shall be devoured	but the whole land	riddance	even a speedy			
יַעֲשֶׂה ה H6213	אֵת H853	כָּל H3605	יֹשְׁבֵי י H3427	הָאָרֶץ: H776		
for he shall make	of all them that dwell	but the whole land				

Additional Cross-References

Zephaniah 3:8 (References Lord): 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.

Ezekiel 7:19 (Judgment): They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity.

Proverbs 11:4 (Judgment): Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.

Matthew 16:26 (Parallel theme): For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Genesis 6:7 (References Lord): And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

Isaiah 1:24 (References Lord): Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

Psalms 79:5 (References Lord): How long, LORD? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire?

Psalms 78:58 (Parallel theme): For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

Job 21:30 (Judgment): That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

Proverbs 18:11 (Parallel theme): The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

