

# Zephaniah

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Author: Zephaniah · Written: c. 640-609 BC · Category: Minor Prophets

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## Introduction

Zephaniah announces the Day of the LORD with terrifying intensity—a day of wrath, distress, and universal judgment. Writing during the moral and spiritual darkness before Josiah's reforms, he exposes Judah's syncretism, violence, and complacency with devastating clarity. **The book presents the Day of the LORD as both imminent historical judgment and ultimate eschatological reckoning**, a theme that dominates prophetic literature and finds fulfillment in Christ's two comings. Yet even amid the darkest descriptions of divine wrath in Scripture, Zephaniah concludes with one of the most beautiful pictures of restoration—God rejoicing over His redeemed people with singing.

Zephaniah was of royal descent, tracing his lineage four generations to Hezekiah (likely King Hezekiah), making him a contemporary of Jeremiah and a relative of King Josiah. He prophesied during Josiah's reign (640-609 BC), probably before the reforms of 621 BC. The previous two kings—Manasseh (55 years) and Amon (2 years)—had institutionalized idolatry. Baal worship flourished alongside worship of Yahweh; the 'host of heaven' (astral deities) received homage; Molech/Milcom worship involved child sacrifice. **This syncretism—blending worship of the true God with pagan practices—provoked divine fury more than outright paganism would have.** The people assumed they could worship Yahweh while also hedging their spiritual bets with other gods.

The book's structure moves from particular (Judah) to universal (all nations) and back to particular (Jerusalem's restoration). Judgment begins with God's own people, extends to surrounding nations, returns to indict Jerusalem specifically, then concludes with promises of restoration for a purified remnant. **This pattern demonstrates that privilege brings responsibility—those who know God's will but disobey face greater accountability than ignorant pagans.** Yet judgment's purpose remains ultimately redemptive, clearing away corruption to make room for a people who serve God in truth.

The 'Day of the LORD' theme dominates the book. This day is 'near' (1:7, 14), 'bitter' (1:14), characterized by 'wrath,' 'trouble,' 'distress,' 'wasteness,' 'desolation,' 'darkness,' and 'gloominess' (1:15). The language is apocalyptic, describing cosmic upheaval. Yet this Day has both near and far fulfillments—Josiah's reforms and Babylon's invasion in the near term, ultimate judgment at Christ's return in the far term. **The prophets often saw events telescoped together, not distinguishing between preliminary fulfillments and ultimate consummation.** What began with Babylon's invasion will culminate when Christ returns to judge the living and the dead.

## Book Outline

- **Judgment on Judah** (1:1-2:3) — Day of wrath described, call to seek the LORD
- **Judgment on Nations** (2:4-15) — Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Cush, Assyria
- **Jerusalem's Sin and Restoration** (3) — Woe to the city, promise of purified remnant, rejoicing

## Key Themes

- **The Day of the LORD as Universal Judgment:** Zephaniah presents the Day of the LORD as 'near' (1:7, 14), a day of wrath and distress affecting not just Judah but 'all the earth' (1:18). **This is not merely political catastrophe but divine intervention in history**, when God personally acts to judge sin and vindicate His character. The day encompasses both historical judgments (Babylon's invasion) and eschatological culmination (Christ's return). The comprehensive nature of this judgment—'I will utterly consume all things from off the land' (1:2)—underscores its seriousness.
- **Syncretism and Religious Corruption:** The people worship both 'the LORD and... Malcham' (1:5), blend covenant faith with pagan practices, and assume God's indifference. **This half-hearted, compromised religion provokes God more than outright paganism.** Syncretism—mixing true worship with false—violates the first commandment's demand for exclusive devotion. The complacent attitude 'The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil' (1:12) reflects practical atheism: acknowledging God's existence while denying His activity.
- **The Humble Remnant Who Seek the LORD:** Amid universal judgment, God preserves those who 'seek the LORD' with humility and righteousness (2:3). **The remnant is defined not by ethnicity but by character**—they are 'meek,' pursue 'righteousness,' and genuinely seek God. The invitation 'Seek ye the LORD... seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger' offers hope. Those who humble themselves before God finds refuge in Him.
- **Judgment on the Nations:** Chapter 2 pronounces judgment on surrounding nations: Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Cush, and Assyria. **God judges not only His covenant people but all nations according to their treatment of Israel and their moral conduct.** This universal scope demonstrates that all humanity is accountable to God, whether they acknowledge Him or not. The fall of mighty Nineveh ('the joyous city that dwelt carelessly') warns that no nation is exempt from divine judgment.
- **Restoration and Joy:** The book's final chapter reverses the doom, promising removal of judgments, restoration of fortunes, and God dwelling in the midst of His people. **The transformation from 'I will consume' (1:2) to 'I will restore' (3:20) demonstrates that judgment is not God's final word.** The restored people will have 'pure speech' to call on the LORD's name together (3:9), suggesting both cleansed worship and unity among diverse peoples.
- **God Rejoicing Over His People:** The book's most remarkable verse pictures God rejoicing over His redeemed people 'with joy,' resting in His love, and 'rejoicing over

thee with singing' (3:17). **This reversal is stunning: the God of terrifying wrath becomes the God who sings for joy over His beloved.** This demonstrates that judgment serves redemption—clearing away what hinders relationship so that love can flourish. God delights in His people when they are purified and faithful.

- **Pride and Humility:** Pride characterizes those judged: Moab and Ammon's arrogance (2:10), Nineveh's self-sufficient boasting (2:15), Jerusalem's refusal to receive correction (3:2). In contrast, the remnant is 'afflicted and poor' people who trust in the LORD's name (3:12). **God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.** The call to 'seek meekness' (2:3) reflects this kingdom principle that the way up is down, that exaltation comes through humiliation.
- **Pure Worship Restored:** God promises to 'turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent' (3:9). **This reverses Babel's confusion and anticipates Pentecost's unity.** Pure speech suggests cleansed worship, truthful communication, and unified purpose. The vision of diverse peoples serving God together points toward the church's multi-ethnic composition and the final gathering of all nations before the throne.

## Key Verses

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. 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.

— Zephaniah 1:14-15 (This is Scripture's most concentrated description of **the Day of the LORD's terror**. The repetition ('near... near... hasteth greatly') creates urgency. Seven-fold characterization (wrath, trouble, distress, wasteness, desolation, darkness, gloominess) emphasizes comprehensiveness. Even the mighty warrior cries bitterly—strength cannot save. This day finds dual fulfillment in Babylon's invasion and ultimate judgment at Christ's return. The language influenced the medieval hymn Dies Irae and shapes eschatological expectations throughout Scripture.)

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 the day of the LORD's anger.

— Zephaniah 2:3 (Amid doom, this verse offers **hope through seeking God with humility**. The three-fold 'seek' (LORD, righteousness, meekness) defines proper response to coming judgment. 'It may be' does not express uncertainty about God's protection but acknowledges human inability to manipulate divine mercy—we cannot presume but can trust. Being 'hid in the day of wrath' pictures divine shelter for those who humble themselves before God. This anticipates the New Testament teaching that Christ is our hiding place from judgment.)

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.

— Zephaniah 3:9 (This promise reverses Babel's curse and anticipates **Pentecost's unity**. 'Pure language' (or 'purified lip') suggests cleansed worship and truthful communication. The universal scope ('all people') and unified purpose ('one consent,' literally 'one shoulder') point toward the church's multi-ethnic composition. What began in confusion will end in clarity; what was scattered will be gathered; diverse peoples will serve the one true God together. This vision finds progressive fulfillment in the gospel's spread and ultimate fulfillment in the new creation.)

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.

— Zephaniah 3:17 (This verse presents one of Scripture's most beautiful pictures of **God's emotional life and delight in His people**. The progression moves from power ('mighty') to salvation ('he will save') to emotional engagement (rejoicing, resting in love, singing). God is not emotionally distant but passionately involved—He doesn't merely tolerate His people but celebrates them with song. This reversal from the God of terrifying wrath (chapter 1) to the God who sings for joy demonstrates that judgment serves love, clearing obstacles to relationship so that covenant joy can flourish.)

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.

— Zephaniah 1:12 (This verse exposes **practical atheism**—acknowledging God's existence while denying His active involvement. 'Settled on their lees' (sediment in wine) pictures complacency, stagnation, and false security. They think God is indifferent ('will do neither good nor evil'), a deistic deity uninvolved in human affairs. God's response is thorough investigation ('search with candles') and certain judgment. This warns against treating God as irrelevant or assuming His patience equals approval. Divine forbearance is not divine indifference.)

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.

— Zephaniah 1:7 (The command to 'hold thy peace' (be silent) before God creates **solemn reverence**. The metaphor of sacrifice and invited guests is grimly ironic—Judah and the nations are not the worshipers but the sacrifice itself; the guests are those summoned to execute judgment (Babylon). This reversal demonstrates that empty religious ritual cannot avert judgment when the heart is corrupt. The Day of the LORD demands silent awe, not presumptuous celebration. Coming judgment requires repentance, not complacency.)

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.

— Zephaniah 2:15 (Nineveh's fall demonstrates that **arrogant self-sufficiency invites divine judgment**. The claim 'I am, and there is none beside me' parodies divine prerogative—language reserved for God alone (Isaiah 45:6). Security ('dwelt carelessly') based on power rather than righteousness proves illusory. The transformation from celebrated city to desolate wasteland, from object of fear to object of scorn, warns all nations that pride goes before destruction. No empire, however powerful, can withstand God.)

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

— Zephaniah 3:12-13 (The remnant's character contrasts starkly with corrupt Israel: **humble rather than proud, truthful rather than deceitful, dependent on God rather than self-sufficient**. Their poverty is not primarily economic but spiritual—they recognize their need and trust in God's name. The promise of security ('none shall make them afraid') demonstrates that true safety comes not from wealth or power but from righteous relationship with God. This remnant anticipates the church—a people called out from the world, characterized by humility, truth, and trust.)

## Historical Context

Zephaniah was of royal descent (great-great-grandson of Hezekiah) and prophesied during Josiah's reign (640-609 BC), likely before the reforms of 621 BC. Manasseh's 55-year reign had institutionalized idolatry. Pagan worship flourished alongside worship of the LORD—Baal, host of heaven, and Molech were served. The international scene was also unstable as Assyria weakened and new powers emerged.

## Literary Style

Zephaniah is characterized by urgency and intensity. The Day of the LORD terminology dominates, painted in darkest colors. The universal scope of judgment is striking—from Judah outward to all nations and back to Jerusalem. The book's structure moves from judgment to hope, from wrath to singing. The dramatic contrast between 1:15's 'day of darkness' and 3:17's 'God rejoicing' is theologically profound.



## Theological Significance

Zephaniah makes profound contributions to biblical theology's understanding of the Day of the LORD, divine judgment, and eschatological hope. The book teaches that **the Day of the LORD is both imminent and ultimate**—it has historical fulfillments (like Babylon's invasion) but awaits final consummation at Christ's return. This 'already/not yet' pattern characterizes biblical eschatology. Believers experience foretastes of final realities but await complete fulfillment. The 'day of wrath' that fell on Judah prefigures the day when all humanity stands before God's judgment seat.

The emphasis on **syncretism as particularly offensive** reveals God's jealousy for exclusive devotion. Half-hearted religion that mixes truth with error provokes divine fury more than outright paganism. The people worship 'the LORD and Malcham' (1:5), assuming they can serve multiple deities simultaneously. **This violation of the first commandment demonstrates that monotheism is not merely numerical (one God) but practical (exclusive devotion)**. God will not share His people's allegiance with rivals, no matter how those rivals are incorporated into religious practice.

Zephaniah's teaching on **practical atheism**—'The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil' (1:12)—exposes a subtle form of unbelief. These are not theoretical atheists denying God's existence but practical atheists denying His active involvement. They acknowledge God but live as though He were irrelevant, neither blessing obedience nor punishing sin. **This deistic deity who winds up the universe and walks away is foreign to Scripture**. The God of the Bible is intensely involved, seeing all, searching with candles (1:12), and personally executing judgment.

The **remnant theology** in Zephaniah defines the faithful not by ethnicity or religious affiliation but by character—they are 'afflicted and poor' people who 'trust in the LORD's name' (3:12). This anticipates the New Testament revelation that the true Israel is defined by faith rather than physical descent (Romans 9:6-8; Galatians 3:7-9). The remnant's characteristics—humility, truthfulness, trust—mark genuine believers in every age.

The promise of **'pure speech'** (3:9) reverses Babel's confusion, anticipates Pentecost's unity, and points toward ultimate reconciliation. Language and communication, corrupted at Babel as judgment for pride, will be cleansed so that all peoples can 'call upon the name of the LORD' and 'serve him with one consent.' This vision of universal worship in truth finds progressive fulfillment as the gospel creates one body from diverse nations (Ephesians 2:11-22) and ultimate fulfillment when every tongue confesses Christ's lordship (Philippians 2:10-11).

Perhaps most remarkably, Zephaniah reveals **God's emotional engagement with His people**—He 'rejoices over thee with joy' and 'joys over thee with singing' (3:17). This stunning portrait of divine delight demonstrates that God is not emotionally aloof but passionately involved with His beloved. The transformation from terrifying Judge (chapter 1) to singing Lover (chapter 3) shows that judgment serves redemption. God clears away corruption not from malice but from love, making room for the relationship that brings Him (and us) joy.

## Christ in Zephaniah

Zephaniah points to Christ as the ultimate fulfillment of the Day of the LORD. **The 'day of wrath'** described in 1:14-18 finds dual fulfillment at Christ's two comings. His first coming brought judgment on Jerusalem (AD 70) and inaugurated the last days; His second coming will bring final judgment and cosmic renewal. The Day of the LORD that Zephaniah saw as a single event proves to have two phases—Christ's suffering (judgment falling on Him as substitute) and Christ's glory (judgment falling on His enemies).

**Christ as the refuge** for those who 'seek the LORD' (2:3) offers Himself as the hiding place from wrath. Those who trust in Him are 'hid' when judgment falls—not because judgment is canceled but because it fell on Christ in their place. The call to 'seek the LORD... seek righteousness, seek meekness' finds fulfillment in coming to Christ, who is our righteousness and who embodies perfect meekness.

The **remnant of the 'afflicted and poor'** who trust in God's name (3:12) describes those who come to Christ in faith. The Beatitudes echo this: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' 'blessed are the meek.' Those who recognize their spiritual poverty and humble themselves find the kingdom. Christ Himself is the ultimate 'afflicted and poor' one (Isaiah 53), identifying with the humble remnant.

**The promise of pure speech** (3:9) finds fulfillment at Pentecost, when the Spirit enabled disciples to speak in diverse tongues, reversing Babel. The church, speaking different languages but unified in proclaiming Christ, demonstrates the restoration of communication. Ultimately, the new creation will feature redeemed humanity from every tribe and tongue worshiping together in perfect harmony (Revelation 7:9-10).

Most beautifully, **God rejoicing over His people with singing** (3:17) describes the Father's delight in those united to Christ. We are beloved in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6). The Father's joy over the Son extends to all who are in the Son. Christ's work makes possible this reconciliation and celebration. The God who sang over creation ('the morning stars sang together,' Job 38:7) sings over new creation—His redeemed people.

**The King in the midst** (3:15) is Christ, Immanuel—'God with us.' The presence of God dwelling among His people, promised throughout the Old Testament, becomes reality when the Word becomes flesh. Christ tabernacles among us (John 1:14), and through His Spirit continues to dwell in His church. The ultimate fulfillment awaits the new Jerusalem, where 'the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them' (Revelation 21:3).

**Judgment on the nations** (chapter 2) anticipates Christ as judge of all the earth. He will execute judgment on those who oppress His people and refuse His lordship. The proud will be humbled, the arrogant brought low. Yet judgment also creates opportunity—the nations that survive judgment will serve God (3:9-10), fulfilled as Gentiles enter the kingdom through faith in Christ.

## Relationship to the New Testament

The New Testament extensively develops Zephaniah's Day of the LORD theme. **2 Peter 3:10** describes the day of the Lord coming 'as a thief,' when 'the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.' This echoes Zephaniah's cosmic destruction (1:2-3, 18). Peter uses Zephaniah's imagery to motivate holy living—knowing judgment is coming, we should live in anticipation of 'new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness' (2 Peter 3:13).

**Matthew 24:29-31** parallels Zephaniah's Day of the LORD language in describing Christ's return: darkened sun and moon, falling stars, cosmic shaking. What Zephaniah prophesied finds fulfillment when the Son of Man comes in glory. The warning to be ready because the day comes unexpectedly echoes Zephaniah's urgency.

**Romans 2:5** applies Zephaniah's principle of stored-up wrath: 'treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath.' Those who presume on God's patience, thinking His delay means approval, accumulate judgment. The certainty and terribleness of that day should motivate repentance now.

**Revelation 6:17** directly echoes Zephaniah: 'For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?' When Christ opens the sixth seal, earth-dwellers cry for rocks to hide them from 'the wrath of the Lamb.' The Day of the LORD Zephaniah prophesied reaches climax in Revelation's apocalyptic visions. Zephaniah's question 'who can abide the day of his coming?' (anticipated in Malachi 3:2) finds answer: only those washed in the Lamb's blood.

**Acts 2:17-21** quotes Joel about the Day of the LORD but incorporates themes Zephaniah developed. Peter's Pentecost sermon announces that 'the last days' have begun—the Day of the LORD has been inaugurated, though not yet consummated. The call to 'call on the name of the Lord' for salvation echoes Zephaniah 3:9.

**Philippians 2:11** envisions every tongue confessing Christ's lordship, fulfilling Zephaniah's vision of purified speech and universal worship (3:9). What Zephaniah saw as restoration for Israel expands to include all nations. The 'pure language' becomes the confession 'Jesus Christ is Lord.'

**The Beatitudes** (Matthew 5:3-5) bless the 'poor in spirit' and the 'meek,' who will 'inherit the earth.' This echoes Zephaniah's remnant of 'afflicted and poor people' who 'trust in the LORD's name' (3:12). Jesus pronounces blessed those whom the world despises—the humble, the mourning, the persecuted—just as Zephaniah identifies the remnant by their lowly character.

**1 Thessalonians 5:2-3** warns that 'the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night' when people say 'Peace and safety,' then 'sudden destruction cometh.' This parallels Zephaniah's warnings to those settled in complacency, thinking God won't act. Both prophets emphasize the day's sudden, unexpected arrival for those unprepared.

**Hebrews 12:26-29** quotes Haggai but develops themes from Zephaniah: God will shake not only earth but heaven, removing all that can be shaken. The proper response is 'fear and reverence,' serving God acceptably because 'our God is a consuming fire.' Zephaniah's terrifying Day produces holy reverence among those who know judgment is coming.

## Practical Application

Zephaniah challenges contemporary believers with several urgent applications. First, **the book warns against syncretism**—blending worship of God with devotion to cultural idols. Just as ancient Judah worshiped 'the LORD and Malcham,' modern believers face temptation to serve God while also pursuing wealth, status, entertainment, or ideology as ultimate goods. Christianity mixed with materialism, nationalism, or self-fulfillment is the syncretism Zephaniah denounces. God demands exclusive devotion, not shared allegiance.

**The exposure of practical atheism** (1:12) confronts those who acknowledge God verbally while living as though He were irrelevant. Thinking 'The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil' treats God as uninvolved, making His existence practically meaningless. This challenges comfortable Christianity that attends services and affirms creeds while assuming God won't actually intervene in daily life. Zephaniah insists God is actively involved, searching with candles, and will certainly act.

**The call to seek the LORD with humility** (2:3) offers hope for those willing to humble themselves. 'Seek the LORD... seek righteousness, seek meekness' defines proper response to coming judgment. This is not self-salvation but recognition of need—the proud demand God accept them as they are; the humble cast themselves on His mercy. Modern believers face the same choice: arrogant self-sufficiency or humble dependence on grace.

Zephaniah's **vision of the Day of the LORD** motivates holy living. If judgment is certain, present behavior matters tremendously. 2 Peter 3:11 draws this conclusion: 'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?' The Day's terror should produce both evangelistic urgency (warning others) and personal purity (living in light of coming judgment).

The **remnant's characteristics**—afflicted, poor, trusting, truthful—challenge prosperity-focused Christianity. God preserves not the wealthy and powerful but the humble and faithful. Success by worldly standards does not indicate divine favor. The remnant's poverty (3:12) is primarily spiritual—they recognize their need for God. This calls believers to examine whether we depend on God or on our resources, intelligence, and achievements.

**The promise of God rejoicing over us** (3:17) transforms how we understand our relationship with God. He is not a reluctant forgiver barely tolerating us but a joyful Father delighting in His children. This should produce both wonder (that the holy God finds joy in sinners saved by grace) and security (His love is passionate and personal,

not distant and dutiful). We are not merely servants but beloved children over whom God sings.

The **vision of purified worship** (3:9) challenges the church to examine whether our worship is pure or corrupted. Do we approach God on His terms or ours? Is worship about His glory or our experience? Are diverse peoples unified in Christ or divided by preferences? The call to 'serve him with one consent' challenges factionalism and self-focus in corporate worship.

Finally, **the certainty that God will complete His purposes** (3:20) provides hope amid discouragement. God promises to restore fortunes, gather the outcast, and make His people 'a name and a praise among all people of the earth.' When present circumstances seem bleak, when the church appears weak, when evil seems triumphant, Zephaniah reminds us that God's final word is restoration and celebration. History moves toward the day when God dwells among His people, and all wrongs are made right.



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# Chapter 1

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## The Great 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.

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.

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.

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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.

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.

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11 Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off.

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.

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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.

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.

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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.

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## Chapter 2

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### A Call to Repentance

- 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.
  - 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 the day of the LORD'S anger.
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### Judgment on the Nations

- 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.
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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.

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.

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.

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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.

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.

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.

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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.

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## Chapter 3

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### Woe to Jerusalem

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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### Jerusalem's Restoration

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

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.

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### **Song of Joy**

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.

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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.