

ZEPHANIAH

Conversational Yahveh Covenant

1:¹ A Message from Yahveh to Zephaniah Ben-Cushi
(Ben-Gedaliah Ben-Amariah) Ben-Hezekiah
at the Time of Josiah Ben-Amon, King of Judah

The Coming Judgment on Judah

²*"I'll remove everything
from the earth,"* Yahveh says,
³*"people and animals,
birds in the sky,
fish in the sea.
I'll destroy sinful people.*
⁴*"I'll reach out against Judah
and those who live in Jerusalem.
I'll remove the remnant of Baal from this place
and the idolatrous priests,
⁵the ones that bow down on housetops to the host in the sky,
that swear to Yahveh and swear by Milcom too,
⁶the ones that quit following Yahveh,
that haven't sought him or inquired from him."* **Zeph 1:1-6**

The Near Day of Yahveh

⁷Be silent in front of the Lord Yahveh!
His day is near;
he's prepared a sacrifice
and consecrated his guests.
⁸*"On the day of my^Y sacrifice,
I'll punish the officials, the king's sons in Judah,
everyone that dresses in foreign clothes,
⁹that breaks into houses,
and fills their masters' homes with violence and deceit.*
¹⁰*On that day,"* Yahveh says,
*"there'll be cries from the Fish Gate,
wails from the Second Quarter,
loud crashes from the hills.* **Zeph 1:7-10**

¹¹*Wail, people in the marketplace,
because your merchants will be wiped out;
every tradesman that weighs out silver will be gone.*

¹²*I'll search Jerusalem with lanterns
and punish people that are complacent about their sin,
who tell themselves
that Yahveh won't do anything to them good or bad.*

¹³*Their wealth will become plunder,
and their houses demolished.
They'll build houses, but not live in them;
they'll plant vineyards, but not drink their wine."* **Zeph 1:11-13**

¹⁴That great day of the LORD is near and coming fast,
a bitter day: even soldiers will cry out bitterly,

¹⁵a day of anger,
a day of distress and anguish,
destruction and desolation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
clouds and dense blackness,

¹⁶a day of bugle blasts and battle cries
against fortified towns and high battle towers **Zeph 1:14-16**

¹⁷He'll bring such a distress on you
that you'll stumble around like you're blind,
because you've sinned against him.
Your blood will pour out and become like dust,
and your flesh will be like manure on the ground.

¹⁸Your silver and gold won't save you
at the time of Yahveh's wrath;
he'll consume the whole region with his burning anger
and make a complete, terrifying end
for people living in the land. **Zeph 1:17-18**

A Call for Repentance

2:¹Get together,
go ahead, assemble, shameless nation,
²before the decree takes effect—
before that day *of repentance* passes by like chaff—
before Yahveh's burning anger comes down on you.

³Look to him,
 you humble in the land
 who've followed his commands.
 Aspire to goodness and humility;
 maybe Yahveh will protect you when his anger comes. **Zeph 2:1-3**

Judgment Against Philistia

⁴Gaza will be abandoned;
 Ashkelon, desolate.
Ashdod will be driven out at midday;
 Ekron, uprooted.
⁵Misfortune awaits people along the coast,
 nation of Cherethites!
 Yahveh's message speaks against you,
 Canaan, land of the Philistines;
 I'll destroy you till there's no one left.
⁶The seacoast will be open range
 with camps for shepherds and folds for flocks.
⁷It will serve as pasture
 for the remnant from Judah.
 In the evening they'll lie down in the houses in Ashkelon,
 because Yahveh will take care of them
 and restore their fortune. **Zeph 2:4-7**

Judgment Against Moab and Ammon

⁸*"I've heard Moab taunting my people and Ammon insulting them;
 they've become arrogant about my people's territory.*
⁹*"So, as I live," Yahveh of Hosts, the God of Israel says,
 "Moab will be like Sodom,
 the Ammonites like Gomorrah—
 a place full of nettles and salt pits,
 a permanent wasteland.
 The remnant of my people will plunder them;
 the remainder of my nation will take their land." **Zeph 2:8-9***
¹⁰That's what they'll get for their arrogance because they've taunted the people of Yahveh of Hosts. ¹¹He'll terrify them and starve all the gods everywhere. Nations the world over will bow to him, each in their own land.

Judgment Against Nubia and Assyria

¹²“I’ll slay the Nubians with my sword,” says Yahveh.

¹³“I’ll reach out to the north to destroy Assyria
and make Nineveh a ruins, arid like a desert.

¹⁴Herds of wild animals will lie down in it;
buzzards and desert owls will roost on its columns.
Birds will chirp in its vacant windows;
rubble will block its doorways;
its cedar paneling will be exposed to the elements—

¹⁵the jubilant city that lived securely
and said to itself, ‘Nobody compares with me.’

What a wasteland it will become,
a haven for wild animals!

Anyone that goes by will gasp
and gesture in contempt.”

Zeph 2:10-15

The Future of Jerusalem

3¹Misfortune awaits the rebellious, defiled, tyrannical city, *Jerusalem*,

²that wouldn’t take advice or accept instruction,
that didn’t trust in Yahveh or come near to its God.

³Its officials are roaring lions;
its judges are ravening wolves at dusk
that leave nothing over till morning.

⁴Its prophets are reckless, devious men;
its priests profane the sanctuary and violate the Law.

⁵Yahveh is good within it;
he still doesn’t do anything unjust.
Every morning he hands down justice without fail,
but they’re never ashamed of their unjust verdicts.

Zeph 3:1-5

⁶“I’ve destroyed nations;
their towers lie in ruins.
I’ve made their streets deserted;
nobody goes by there anymore.
Their towns have been laid waste;
nobody lives in them.

⁷I said, ‘Surely, they’ll respect me now
and accept my instruction
so their homes won’t get destroyed

along with everything else I'd appointed for them.'
But they were eager to corrupt everything they did. **Zeph 3:6-7**

⁸*"So wait for me to attack my prey," Yahveh says.*
I've decided to gather nations and kingdoms,
to pour out my indignation on them, my burning anger;
I'll consume them with fiery zeal.

⁹*Then I'll purify the people's lips*
so they can call on me^Y
and serve me together.

¹⁰*From beyond the rivers in Nubia,*
those who worship me—
descendants of my scattered people—
will bring me offerings.

¹¹*At that time, you won't need to be ashamed*
of all the things you did when you rebelled against me;
I'll have removed arrogant, celebrating people from you
so you'll never again be haughty on my holy mountain.

¹²*But among you I'll leave humble, common people*
who will take refuge in me^Y.

¹³*The ones remaining in Israel will do no wrong,*
tell no lies,
or have deceit among them;
They'll graze and bed down in safety;
nobody will make them afraid." **Zeph 3:8-13**

¹⁴*Shout for joy, Jerusalem!*
Cry out in triumph, Israel!
Celebrate with all your heart.

¹⁵*Yahveh has canceled your condemnation*
and cleared away your foes.
The King of Israel is among you;
you need not dread disaster anymore. **Zeph 3:14-15**

¹⁶*At that time, he'll tell Jerusalem,*
"Don't be afraid, Zion;
don't let your hands get weak."

¹⁷*Yahveh your God is among you*
as a victorious soldier.

*I'll celebrate over you
and renew my love for you;
I'll celebrate over you with happy songs
¹⁸like on festival days.*

*"I'll remove disaster from you, Zion;
you won't be ashamed of being in exile.
¹⁹At that time, I'll deal with your oppressors,
save the lame, gather the outcast,
and turn their shame into praise and renown
the world over.*

*²⁰Then I'll bring you home,
gather you together,
and give you renown among the nations
when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes,"*

Yahveh says.

Zeph 3:16-20