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The Day of the Lord

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 /1913 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **June 5, 2016**

Zephaniah 1:4-6, 14-16; 2:3

Introduction: ZEPHANIAH, ninth in order of the minor prophets, prophesied "in the days of Josiah" (Zephaniah 1:1 B.C. he name means "**Jehovah hath guarded,**" literally, "**hidden**" (Psalms 27:5, Psalms 83:3 his father, but also his grandfather, and great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather, implies that the latter were persons of note, or else the design was to distinguish him from **another Zephaniah** of note at the **time** of the **captivity**).

He must have flourished in the EARLIER part of **Josiah's reign**. In Zephaniah 2:13-15 B.C.; and in Zephaniah 1:4 specially that of Baal. Now Josiah's reformation began in the **twelfth** and was completed in the **eighteenth year** of his reign. Zephaniah, therefore, in denouncing **Baal worship**, co-operated with that GOOD KING in his efforts... ..The prophecy begins with the **nation's sin** and the **fearful retribution** coming at the hands of the **Chaldeans**.
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/zephaniah-0.html>)

Thought 1. They broke God's Covenant and are about to receive certain curse written in it.

Zephaniah 1:1, *The **WORD** of **the LORD** which came unto **Zephaniah** (**Jah** has secreted [concealed: **HID**]) the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah (**Hezekiah**), in the days of **Josiah** the son of Amon, **king** of Judah.*

NOTE: It appears to be quite obvious that Zephaniah's reason for including so many of his ancestors in this verse was for the purpose of indicating his **royal descent** from the good king Hezekiah of Judah. It is barely possible that there could have been another reason. His father was Cushi, which means "**an Ethiopian or a Cushite.**" The offspring resulting from a Hebrew girl's marrying a foreigner "would not have been accepted in the Jewish community unless he could show a **pure Jewish pedigree** for **at least three generations** (Deut. 23:8)." (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/zephaniah-1.html>)

Zephaniah 1:2-3, *I will utterly **consume** (snatch away) ALL things FROM OFF the land, saith the LORD. 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** (destroy) **man** from off the **land** (earth), saith the LORD.*

NOTE: It is in the Hebrew, gathering I will **gather all things**, &c. q. d. g. **I will pack up**, I will take mine own, and be gone. Converram et convasabo omnia, I will sweep away all by the besom (broom) of **my wrath**, and leave a clean hand behind me, for the **sins** of those that dwell therein.

Ver. 3. I will consume man and beast] Heb. **I will gather** {as Zephaniah 1:2} them, and **cast them away** as they do the sweepings of the house. See the word used in this sense,

Psalms 26:9, "Gather not my soul with sinners," &c. God gathered his people for a better purpose; both while they are alive, Psalms 27:10, and when they die, Isaiah 57:1. The righteous is taken away (Heb. gathered) from the evil to come: as a **shepherd gathereth his sheep when a storm is coming**; or as a master of a family doth his jewels, when his house is on fire. But as for the wicked, they are gathered too, but it is for slaughter, as beasts in a pound, malefactors (criminals) in a prison; and at the last day **the tares shall be gathered** and **bundled up together** for **hell's furnace**, Matthew 13:41-42. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jtc/zephaniah-1.html>)

Matthew 13:24-25, 28-30, Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which **sowed GOOD seed** in his field: But while men slept, his **enemy** came and **sowed TARES** among the WHEAT, and went his way.

... The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and **gather them up?** But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the TARES, ye root up also the WHEAT with them. **Let BOTH GROW together** until **the harvest:** and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together **FIRST** the **tares**, and bind them in bundles to **burn them:** but gather the **wheat** into my BARN.

NOTE: This word is thought to mean darnel (*Lolium temulentum*), a **ryegrass** which **LOOKS** much **like wheat** in its **EARLY STAGES** of **growth**. (Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable_of_the_Tares)

Matthew 13:38-42, The **field** is the **world**; the GOOD SEED are the children of the kingdom; but the TARES are the children of the wicked one; The **enemy** that sowed them is the **devil**; the **HARVEST** is the **END** of the WORLD; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the **tares** are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the **END** of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his **angels**, and they shall **gather** out of his kingdom **all things that OFFEND**, and them which do INIQUITY; And shall **cast them** into a **furnace of FIRE:** there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Thought 1. We must understand that many BABY Christians LOOK just like the children of Satan when they DO certain things that are SINS. When that happens, you really can't SEE the difference between them and the "world!" As a matter of fact, because of particular SINS committed by them, some people say, "There's NO WAY he, or she, can be a Christian!"

However, their faith in Jesus is genuine and they ARE saved! But, the good news is God knows his children, including the babies who need to grow up. I'm reminded of a time after I had grown up "a little." I was at church by myself in prayer and meditation, and some things baby Christians were doing came to mind and I found myself saying, "Them SO-CALLED Christians!" And immediately I heard the stern and upset voice of our Father say, "They're NOT so-called Christians! They're Christians! They're just BABIES! Somebody put up with YOU! Now, you put up with them!" Needless to say, that jerked out all the slack! The point is God knows his children, and his angels also know. Paul knew and thanked God for the babies!

2 Timothy 2:19-20 ...The Lord KNOWETH them that **ARE HIS**. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ **depart from iniquity**. But in a **great house** there are not only vessels of GOLD and of SILVER, but **also** of **WOOD** and of **EARTH**; and **SOME** to honour, and **SOME to DISHONOUR**.

1 Corinthians 1:4, **I THANK MY GOD** always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ...

1 Corinthians 3:1, And I, **BRETHREN**, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto **carnal (unregenerate)**, even as unto **BABES in Christ**.

Zephaniah 1:4, 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 (idolatrous priest)** with the priests...

NOTE: ...**stretch out mine hand** - indicating some remarkable and unusual work of vengeance (Isaiah 5:25, "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still;" Isaiah 9:12; Isaiah 9:17; Isaiah 9:21).

Isaiah 5:24-25, Therefore as the **fire** devoureth the stubble, and the **flame** consumeth the CHAFF, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have **cast away the LAW** of the **LORD** of hosts, and **despised** the **WORD** of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but **his hand is stretched out still**.

Upon **Judah** - including **Benjamin**. These two tribes are to suffer, which thought themselves perpetually secure, because they escaped the captivity in which the **ten tribes** were involved.

And upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem - the fountainhead of the evil. God **"begins at his sanctuary"** (Ezekiel 9:6); and those who are nigh Him (Lev. 10:3, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me"). **"Judgment** must begin at the house of God" (1 Peter 4:17).

1 Peter 4:17-18, For the time is come that **judgment must begin** at the **house** of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that OBEY NOT the gospel of God? And if the **RIGHTEOUS** **scarcely** (*scantly: narrowly*) **be saved**, where shall the UNGODLY and the **SINNER** appear?

Thought 1. We're narrowly saved because faith IN Jesus is the ONLY way to be!

I will cut off the remnant of Baal - the **remains** of **Baal-worship**, which as yet Josiah was unable utterly to eradicate in remoter places. Baal was the Phoenician tutelary (guardian) god. His name means lord; and the **feminine deity** corresponding, and generally associated with him, was **Ashtoreth**. As he was represented by the SUN, so she was the goddess answering to the MOON and the REST of the **heavenly hosts**. In fact, it was the **worship of nature**: a worship to which correspond the pantheism (the doctrine that the universe is God) and scientific exaltation of nature and her laws in our own days, as if God were the slave of His own world and its laws, instead of its Lord, Creator, and Sustainer, who can at will modify, alter, and suspend the order of the present system of things, according to His own sovereign pleasure, and in furtherance of the higher moral laws, in subserviency to which the **laws of nature** exist. From the time of the Judge (Judges 2:13) Israel had fallen into this idolatry; and Manasseh lately had set up this idol WITHIN Yahweh's temple itself (2 Kings 21:3; 2 Kings 21:5; 2 Kings 21:7).

2 Kings 21:1, 3-5, **Manasseh** was twelve years old when he began to reign... .. he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the **host** of heaven, and **served them**. And he **built altars** **IN the house of the LORD**, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven **IN** the **two courts** of the **house** of the LORD.

Chemarims - **idol priests**, who had not reached the age of **puberty**; meaning '**ministers** of the gods'... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/zephaniah-1.html>)

Zephaniah 1:5, 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 (a king)**...

NOTE: ...**worship the host of heaven** - Saba: whence, in contrast to Sabeanism, Yahweh is called Lord of Sabaoth.

Upon the house-tops - which were FLAT (2 Kings 23:5-6; 2 Kings 23:12; Jer. 19:13, "All the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the hosts of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods." So also "unto Baal." The flat roofs, **open** to the **sun** and **heavenly hosts**, were chosen as the **natural scene** of **worshipping** those luminaries; so that, in fact, every house became an idolatrous sanctuary; (Jer. 32:29).

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/zephaniah-1.html>)

NOTE: And them that worship ... the Lord - but with a **divided heart** and **service**; "that swear by (rather to) the Lord," swear fealty (faithfulness, as of a friend to a friend, or of a **wife** to her **husband**) and **loyal allegiance** to Him, while they do acts which deny it, in that "they swear by Malcham," better (it is no appellative although allied to one) "**their king**", most probably, I think, "**Moloch.**"

... The kindred and equally horrible worship of "Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon" 1 Kings 11:7, was **brought in by Solomon in his decay**, and endured until his high place was defiled by Josiah 2 Kings 23:13-14. It is probable then that this was "**their king**", of whom Zephaniah speaks, whom Amos and after him Jeremiah, called "their king;" but speaking of Ammon. Him, the king of Ammon, Judah adopted as "their king." They owned God as their king in words; Molech they owned by their deeds; "they worshiped and swore fealty to the Lord" and they "**swore by their king;**" his name was familiarly in their mouths; to him they appealed as **the Judge and witness** of the **truth** of **their words**, his displeasure they invoked on themselves, if they swore falsely. Cyril:

"Those in error were wont (accustomed) to swear by heaven, and, as matter of **reverence** to **call out, By the king and lord Sun.**' Those who do so must of set purpose and willfully DEPART FROM the love of God, since **the LAW** expressly says, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and serve Him alone, and **SWEAR by His Name**" Deut. 6:13.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/zephaniah-1.html>)

Zephaniah 1:6, And them that are **turned back** from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him.

NOTE: ...**turned back from the Lord**; and **those that have not sought the Lord** -positive and negative apostasy. POSITIVE, in forsaking the Lord for idols; NEGATIVE, in ceasing to "seek" after Him in real prayer. The latter is the forerunner of the former: many who do not go so far as **open apostasy** are virtually guilty of it, inasmuch as they do not "**inquire for**" the Lord. This verse describes more comprehensively those guilty of **defection** from Yahweh in ANY WAY (Jer. 2:13; Jer. 2:17, "My people have committed TWO evils; they have forsaken ME, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water").

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/zephaniah-1.html>)

Thought 1. Even under God's New Covenant, he speaks of those who will "depart from the FAITH." Some have taught that this is NOT possible. But, scripture says differently. The letter to the Hebrews was written to warn them of the danger of leaving Christ for the Law.

Luke 8:13, They on the **rock** are they, which, when they hear, **receive** the **word** with joy; and these have no root, which **for a WHILE believe**, and in time of **temptation (experience of evil)** **fall away (desert** (leave permanently), **DEPART, withdraw self).**

Hebrews 3:12, Take heed, brethren, lest there be IN any of **you** an **evil heart** of UNBELIEF, in **DEPARTING FROM** the living God.

Hebrews 6:4-6, For it is **impossible** for those who were once **enlightened**, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made **partakers** of the Holy Ghost,

And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, **If** they shall **FALL AWAY**, to renew them again unto **repentance**; seeing they **crucify to themselves** the Son of God afresh, and put him to an **OPEN shame**.

Fall away defined 3895, to fall aside, to apostatize [to commit apostasy].

Apostasy, an abandonment of what one has VOLUNTARILY professed (openly and **FREELY** declared or acknowledged): a total desertion or departure.

Hebrews 10:23, 26-27, Let us **hold fast** the profession of our faith without wavering... For if **we sin wilfully** after that we have **received** the **knowledge** of the **truth**, there remaineth no more **sacrifice** for sins; But a certain fearful looking for of **judgment** and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Thought 2. Jesus' **sacrifice** is the only one that Jehovah God will **accept**.

Hebrews 10:35, **Cast not AWAY** therefore your **confidence (assurance** [FAITH, belief]), which hath great recompence of **reward**.

Romans 11:18-22, Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest **not** the root, but the **root** thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were **broken off**, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of **unbelief** they were broken off, and thou standest by **FAITH**. Be **not** highminded, but **fear**: For if God spared **not** the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare **not** thee. Behold therefore the **goodness** and **SEVERITY** (harshness) of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, **IF** thou **CONTINUE** in his goodness: **otherwise** thou also shalt be **CUT OFF**.

Zephaniah 1:7-13, *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. 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. In the same day also will I **punish** all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with **violence** and **deceit**. 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. Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are **cut down**; all they that bear silver are cut off. 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 (settlings of wine, dregs)**: that say in their HEART, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil. Therefore their goods shall become a **booty (spoil [plunder taken from an enemy])**, 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.*

NOTE: All which God had threatened in the **LAW** shall be fulfilled. God, in the fulfillment of the **punishment**, which He had foretold in the law Leviticus 26:32-33; Psalm 52:7. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/zephaniah-1.html>)

Leviticus 26:27-28, 32-33, And if ye will **NOT** for all this **hearken** unto me, but walk contrary unto me; Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will **chastise (punish)** you seven times for your sins. ... And I will bring the land into desolation: and your **enemies** which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will **scatter you** among the **heathen**, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.

Zephaniah 1:14, *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.*

NOTE: **The voice of the day of the Lord** - i.e., Yahweh ushering in that day with a **roar** of vengeance against the guilty (Jeremiah 25:30; Amos 1:2, "The Lord will roar from Zion,

and utter his voice from Jerusalem"). They who will NOT now heed (Zephaniah 1:12) His voice by His prophets, must heed it when uttered by the **avenging foe (ENEMY)**.

Vengeance, The infliction of pain on another, in return for an injury or offense. Such infliction, when it proceeds from malice or more resentment, and is NOT necessary for the purposes of JUSTICE, is revenge, and a most heinous crime. When such infliction proceeds from a mere LOVE of JUSTICE, and the necessity of punishing offenders for the support of the laws, it is vengeance and is warrantable and JUST. In this case, vengeance is a just retribution, recompense or punishment. In this latter sense the word is used in Scripture, and frequently applied to the punishments inflicted by God on sinners.

The mighty man shall cry there bitterly - in **hopeless despair**; the might on which Jerusalem now prides itself shall then fail utterly.

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/jfu/zephaniah-1.html>)

Zephaniah 1:15-16, *That day is a **day of wrath**, a day of **trouble** and **distress**, a day of wateness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of the **trumpet** and **alarm** against the fenced cities, and against the **high towers (angle, bulwark** [fortification; that which defends from attack]).*

NOTE: A day of the trumpet - namely, of the **besieging enemy** (Amos 2:2, "Moab shall die with tumult (commotion, disturbance of a multitude, usually accompanied with great noise, uproar and confusion of voices), with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet"). **And alarm** - the war shout (Maurer). ...**against the high towers** - literally, angles; because city walls did not used to be built in a direct line, but with sinuous (bending in and out) curves and angles, so that besiegers advancing might be assailed (attacked with violence), not only in front, but on both sides, caught as it were in a 'cul-de-sac;' towers were built especially at the angles. So Tacitus describes the walls of Jerusalem ('History,' 5:11, 5). (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/jfu/zephaniah-1.html>)

Zephaniah 1:17-18, *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. 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.*

Zephaniah 2:1-3, *Gather yourselves together, yea, **gather together**, O nation not desired; 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.*

Seek ye the LORD, all ye **meek (HUMBLE)** of the earth, which have wrought his **judgment**; **SEEK** righteousness,

SEEK meekness (humility): it may be ye shall **be hid** in the day of **the LORD'S anger**.

NOTE: It may be ye shall be hid - (Isaiah 26:20; Amos 5:6). This phrase does not imply doubt of the deliverance of the godly, but expresses the difficulty of it, as well that the ungodly may see the certainty of their doom, as also that **the faithful** may value the more the **grace** of God in their case (1 Peter 4:17-19), and be stirred up to greater diligence to make their **calling** and **election SURE** (Calvin). So accordingly it came to pass the meek and despised "poor of the land" were "left" by the captain of the Babylonian guard, amidst the general overthrow and captivity of the Jewish nation, "to be vinedressers and farmers" (2 Kings 25:12). (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/jfu/zephaniah-2.html>)

James 4:6, But he giveth more GRACE. Wherefore he saith, God **resisteth (OPPOSE)** the **PROUD**, but giveth **grace (favor)** unto the **HUMBLE (lowly** [submissive]).