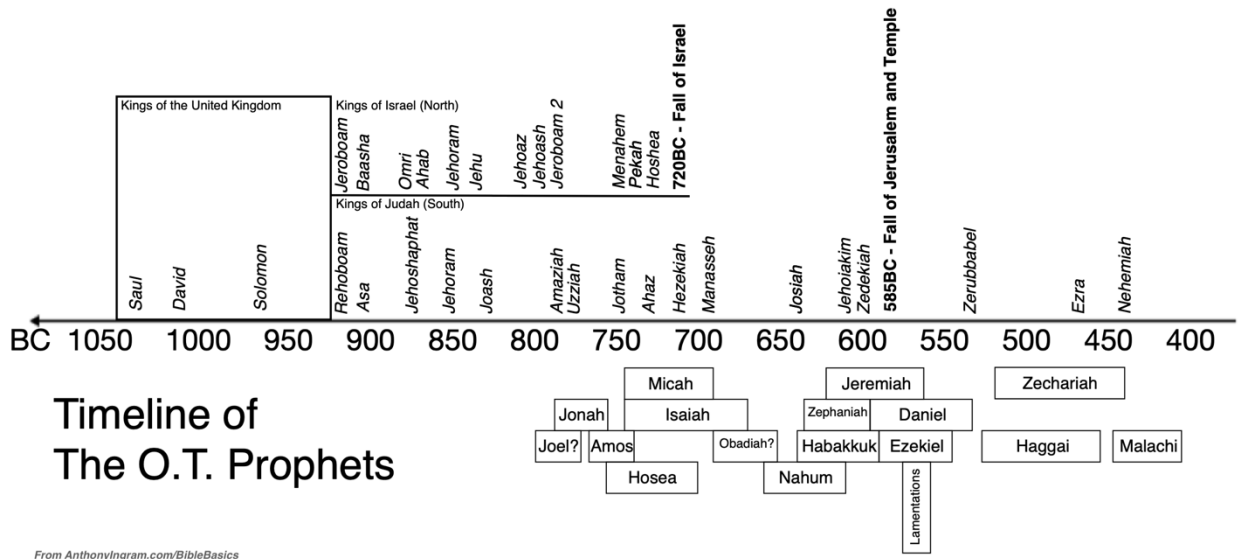


Zephaniah: Step up, Look, & Choose!

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Zephaniah 1:2-3 (NIV)

“I will sweep away everything from the face of the earth,” declares the LORD. ³“I will sweep away both man and beast; I will sweep away the birds in the sky and the fish in the sea — and the idols that cause the wicked to stumble.”

Zephaniah 1:15-17a (MSG)

“Judgment Day is payday—my anger paid out: a day of distress and anguish, a day of catastrophic doom, a day of darkness at noon, a day of black storm clouds, a day of bloodcurdling war cries, as forts are assaulted, as defenses are smashed. I’ll make things so bad they won’t know what hit them. They’ll walk around groping like the blind. They’ve sinned against God!”

Zephaniah 2:3 (NIV)

“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 3:1-8 (NIV)

“Woe to the city of oppressors, rebellious and defiled! ²She obeys no one, she accepts no correction. She does not trust in the LORD, she does not draw near to her God. ³Her officials within her are roaring lions; her rulers are evening wolves, who leave nothing for the

morning. ⁴ Her prophets are unprincipled; they are treacherous people. Her priests profane the sanctuary and do violence to the law.” ⁷ “I said to the city, ‘Surely you will fear me and accept correction!’ Then her dwelling would not be cut off, nor all my punishments come upon her. But they were still eager to act corruptly in all they did. ⁸ ‘Therefore wait for me,’ declares the LORD, ‘for the day I will stand up to testify. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them – all my fierce anger. The whole world will be consumed by the fire of my jealous anger.’”

Zephaniah 3:14-15 (CEV)

“Celebrate and shout with all your heart! ¹⁵ The LORD has taken away your punishment, He has turned back your enemy!”

- Zephaniah begins with prophecies of destruction, a call to stop compromise and complacency, and a warning of the coming judgement of the Lord. The book ends with God taking delight in the people, removing their burdens and sorrows from them, rescuing them, giving them honour and praise among the nations, and restoring their fortunes.

1. Zephaniah saw! He recognized what was happening! And he was telling the listeners & readers: LOOK! Recognize the danger ahead!

- What is God’s desire?
 - God is looking for a people who would come to Him and serve Him
 - God is looking for a people who is humble, will trust God, and will do no wrong
 - God is looking for close, personal, relationship!

2. A second major theme of the book is Choose! Choose!

- We make a choice! We choose to make a long obedience in the same direction. Many, repeated decisions in the same direction.
 - Not to try harder! - Mental acuity or more effort won’t do it.
 - Not do more! – Works or being productive doesn’t do it.
 - Not have more! – Wealth, connections and resources can’t do it.
 - But a **right relationship** does! And the first step is come to Jesus.

Call to action

1. Repent if I have gone on my own way.
2. Ask God to help us humble ourselves and build a connecting relationship with Him.
3. Ask God for help in living out His direction and word for us.