

ABATT
Zephaniah
 Christian Life Assembly
 Jim Hoffman

1

Faithful On-line Member

John
Riddlesberger



2

The Minor Prophets

Prophet	Date of Writing	Prophesied to:
Obadiah	845-750	Israel/Edom
Joel	835-796	Judah
Jonah	793-753	Niniveh
Hosea	753-715	Israel
Amos	760-755	Israel/Judah
Micah	770-710	Israel/Judah
Nahum	663-612	Niniveh
Habbakuk	610-605	Judah/Nations
Zepheniah	635-625	Judah/Assyria/Nations
Haggai	520	Judah
Zechariah	520-470	Judah
Malachi	460-410	Judah

3

The Minor Prophets

Isaiah 6:8-13 Roughly, 740 BC

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." And he said, "Go, and say to this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed. "Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And he said: "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, and the Lord removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled." The holy seed is its stump.

4

4

The Minor Prophets

Isaiah was apprised of the people's hardness of heart by the Lord Almighty, who not only knew what would occur but had planned it; for he is King. The words of God to Isaiah are quoted in each of the Gospels and twice by Paul. Each quotation is given as a comment on the rejection of God's word in Christ. Three of the Gospel references all occur in connection with the parable of the sower, which, like here, anticipates widespread failure to make proper response to God's word, but which also, as here (v.13), shows cause for hope. The holy seed of the vision finds its NT counterpart in the good soil of the parable.

Expositor's Bible Commentary

5

5

The Minor Prophets

- Just like Pharaoh failed to cooperate with the plan of God in the face of multiple plagues and eventually exhausted God's patience, so too had Israel.
- God is great and God is good, but you had better not presume upon his **goodness**, or you will soon feel his **greatness**.
- The redemption plan of God was on schedule, and it was going to stay on schedule with, or without Israel's cooperation.

6

6

The Minor Prophets

- Josiah was king when Zephaniah prophesied – Josiah was a godly king, yet Zephaniah’s message is still one of judgment.
- Why? Because the people of God had gone too far in their rebellion – Isaiah said as much 100 years prior.
- The fact that his people still had occasional bubbles of righteousness was not going to change God’s decree – **God was not surprised by Josiah.** 😊

7

7

The Minor Prophets

- Not every day in Judah leading up to the Babylonian invasion was horrible – in fact it seems as though most of the people were too caught up in their sin to notice.
- So, when we wonder why they didn’t repent in hopes of avoiding judgment we should understand their view of themselves was rather normal.
- This is America today – mostly secular and spiritually blind. 😞

8

8

The Minor Prophets

- The book of Zephaniah was written between 635 and 625 BC. – roughly 30 years before the exile to Babylon.
- Zephaniah was the author – 1:1 The Lord gave this message to Zephaniah when Josiah son of Amon was king of Judah.
- Josiah was one of the few good kings in Judah, he began to reign at 8 years old, and without any living examples of Godly kingship, he decided to obey God.

9

9

The Minor Prophets

- Judah is in their usual state – that of being involved in idolatry and in need of repentance.
- In 1st Thessalonians 1:9 we have a concise example of repentance in Paul's words – **“how ye turned to God from idols”**.
- What Zephaniah sees in his day is the opposite – **he was witness to his people turning to idols from God.**

10

10

The Minor Prophets

- Zephaniah 1:2 “I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth,” declares the Lord. 3 “I will sweep away man and beast; I will sweep away the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, and the rubble with the wicked. I will cut off mankind from the face of the earth,” declares the Lord. ESV
- What Zephaniah prophesies above is a sort of inverse creation story – instead of creation, there is all sorts of destruction.

11

11

The Minor Prophets

The language of Zephaniah here is such that he is likely prophesying about the coming Babylonian invasion AND “the Day of the Lord” - that time when God will settle all accounts either through the cross or at the Great White Throne.

12

12

The Minor Prophets

Idolatry was a big problem - see Zephaniah 1:5 **those who bow down on the roofs to the host of the heavens, those who bow down and swear to the Lord *and* yet swear by Milcom (Molech).**



Molech lived only in the imaginations of the pagans.

13

The Minor Prophets

- Judah was trying to be part Jew and part pagan.
- God shares his throne with no one and no thing – Molech was a pagan god and what the verse tells us is God had noticed and was not disinterested.
- Today, we call this form of worship “Syncretism” where two or more systems of beliefs are combined.

14

14

The Minor Prophets

Unitarian Universalists are agnostic, theist, atheist, and everything in between.



15

15

The Minor Prophets

- Zeph 1:4b I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal and the name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests.
- **God’s people had turned to idolatry** – I assume there is a reason why the 1st commandment is “thou shall have no other gods before me”.
- The command is not that Jehovah must be first, but that he must be God alone.

16

16

The Minor Prophets

- Zeph 1:6b “who do not seek the Lord or inquire of him.”
- **God’s people had stopped praying** – if you want to weaken any relationship just stop communicating.
- The people of God did not seek the Lord - they probably still believed in God but had no interest in obeying him.

17

17

The Minor Prophets

- Zeph 1:7 Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. ESV
- To be silent before God might seem like an odd request of people who had stopped praying.
- His people had become indifferent to him, but God was not indifferent to them – he still had a redemption plan to complete!

18

18

The Minor Prophets

- Zeph 1:12b "I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will he do ill.'"
 - **God's people had stopped believing in retribution for sin** – they assumed God's interest in righteousness was like theirs, half-hearted.
 - To the people of Judah, God existed to benefit them at death - not to obey today.

19

19

The Minor Prophets

Antinomianism

The word antinomianism comes from two Greek words, anti, meaning "against"; and nomos, meaning "law." Antinomianism means "against the law." Theologically, antinomianism is the belief that there are no moral laws God expects Christians to obey.

(from GotQuestions.org)

20

20

The Minor Prophets

- Zephaniah 1:18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath. In the fire of his jealousy the whole world will be consumed, for he will make a sudden end of all who live in the earth. NLT
- This prophecy has a near and far fulfillment – near for all those alive and listening in Zephaniah's day, and far for those alive and listening in the last days.
- God's judgment on sin is certain – he cannot be bought off with the very things he has made.

21

21

The Minor Prophets

- Chapter 2 is the account of the destruction and judgment on Judah's enemies. (Philistia, Moab, Ethiopia, and Assyria)
- The account of these judgments extends into chapter 3 where Jerusalem and all nations are judged by God.
- In Zephaniah's day, it may have felt like sin is running roughshod over civilization and God does not seem to care – but that would be wrong.

22

22

The Minor Prophets

The fact that God was known to use Israel's enemies to chasten them should not be construed to mean their enemies were virtuous – they weren't, and the likes of Philistia, Moab, Ethiopia, and Assyria would themselves have accounts to settle with God.

23

23

The Minor Prophets

- Zephaniah 2:3 "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."
- As a general statement lost people do not seek God, but his saints do.
- "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Jesus of Nazareth

24

24

The Minor Prophets

- Zeph 3:2 is speaking of Jerusalem and we read, “She listens to no voice; she accepts no correction. She does not trust in the Lord; she does not draw near to her God”. ESV
- What a scathing assessment of the people of God – listens to no one, accepts no correction, trusts no one, and has no desire to be close to God.
- That folks, is a graphic picture of a people who are far from God and in desperate need of repentance.

25

25

The Minor Prophets

- Zeph 3:8 “Therefore wait for me,” declares the Lord, “for the day when I rise up to seize the prey. For my decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out upon them my indignation, all my burning anger; **for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth shall be consumed.**” ESV
- If the above sounds like words that might describe Armageddon, it’s because Zephaniah is describing Armageddon and beyond!

26

26

The Minor Prophets

- “**for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth shall be consumed.**”
- 2nd Peter 3:7 **But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire**, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly..... 11 Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 12 **waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!** 13 But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

27

27

The Universe Destroyed and Resurrected

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

28

28

The Minor Prophets

• Zeph 3:9 For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of the Lord and serve him with one accord. ESV

• We had creation in reverse in chapter 1, now we see what could be described as a reverse tower of Babel.

• What if the language God imposes on the masses at the end of the time is what they spoke pre-babel?

29

29

The Minor Prophets

• Zeph 3:14 Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! 15 The Lord has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. ESV

• Here we see the final and total restoration of Israel and all who trust in God – it is a view of life in the Millennial Kingdom.

30

30

The Minor Prophets

- Zephaniah 3:17 The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.
- Again, the context is the Millennial Kingdom where God and his people are once and for all done with the inconsistencies of Israel and the Church.
- Perhaps the best we can ever say of believers this side of heaven is that we are inconsistent at best.

31

31

Questions?

32

32
