

In That Day
Zephaniah 1:10-15

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Current events are often aired in the media from the perspective of bad news. It sells. Bad news might affect us so we listen. Zephaniah begins with bad news. It gets our attention. Let us read Zephaniah chapter 1.

There is suffering all around us. Yet what we suffer is minimal compared to what Christians suffer in Pakistan, Mexico or other cultures that are at times hostile to Bible-believing Christians. But suffering is not something we should necessarily shun when it is provided by God. If we are walking by faith in dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit, then suffering is meant to help us grow in the Christian life.

James 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

James 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

James 1:4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

1 Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice always;

1 Thessalonians 5:17 pray without ceasing;

1 Thessalonians 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

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Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Romans 8:19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Do you love God? Are you walking by faith dependence on the Holy Spirit being guided by Bible doctrine?)

Philippians 4:19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:20 Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Perhaps you remember a story I recounted about a young believer who asked a pastor how she could grow rapidly in the Christian life. His answer was to pray for great suffering. She was taken aback with that answer. Perhaps we don't want to pray for suffering. God will provide it when our spiritual maturity can handle it. In the Tribulation, there will be great suffering causing believers to either mature rapidly or to revert to a

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life lived depending on the sin nature rather than relying on God's provision.

Read Job chapter 42. A point to keep in mind: What did you learn from personal suffering? What did Dorothy learn at the end of the Wizard of Oz?

A transition to today's lesson includes a passage that indicates God can and does judge a nation for evil or it can bless it. A nation can suffer because it does not "obey His voice."

Jeremiah 18:7 At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it;

Jeremiah 18:8 if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it. (Example: Nineveh in the book of Job)

Jeremiah 18:9 Or at another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant it;

Jeremiah 18:10 if it does evil in My sight by not obeying (literally "hear") My voice, then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it. (Example: Sodom and Gomorrah where the righteous Lot lived)

As some pastors have said, the problem is not just that there are not enough believers in America today; the problem is that the Christians in the nation are not "hearing" (obeying) the Word of God. Obedience of

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faith. Romans 1:5; 16:26. As goes the believers in the nation, so goes the nation. Are you part of the solution by walking by faith; or are you part of the problem walking in dependence on the flesh?

Today's lessons starts by overlapping with last week's message concerning the Day of the Lord and the "sacrifice." The connections with other prophets both Old Testament and New Testament need to be made.

So, here is the text in Zephaniah to start with concerning the sacrifice in the Tribulation.

**Zephaniah 1:7 Be silent before the Lord God!
For the day of the Lord is near, For the Lord
has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated
His guests.**

**Zephaniah 1:8 "Then it will come about on the
day of the Lord's sacrifice That I will punish
the princes, the king's sons And all who
clothe themselves with foreign garments.**

**Zephaniah 1:9 "And I will punish on that day
all who leap on the temple threshold, Who fill
the house of their lord with violence and
deceit.**

There are similar events narrated in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Revelation and Matthew. Dr. John Walvoord cautioned that these may not all refer to the same event but perhaps two different events in the Tribulation. In any case, these events will happen in the Tribulation. There will be great judgments resulting in the deaths of millions of unbelievers who will attempt hostile action against Israel.

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Ezekiel 39:17 “As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God, ‘Speak to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field, “Assemble and come, gather from every side to My sacrifice which I am going to sacrifice for you, as a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood.”

Note that here in Ezekiel, there is a sacrifice which results in a feast of eating flesh and blood.

Ezekiel 39:18 You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, as though they were rams, lambs, goats and bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan.

Ezekiel 39:19 So you will eat fat until you are gluttoned, and drink blood until you are drunk, from My sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.

Ezekiel 39:20 You will be gluttoned at My table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all the men of war,” declares the Lord God.

There is a very similar passage in Revelation.

Revelation 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God,

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Revelation 19:18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.”

Revelation 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

Revelation 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

Revelation 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Dr. John Walvoord relates the Revelation passage to Matthew 24 (Tribulation/Millennium passage):

Matthew 24:28 Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

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Now, starting with Zephaniah 1:10, the results of judgments will be heard from specific locations.

Zephaniah 1:10 “On that day,” declares the Lord, “There will be the sound of a cry from the Fish Gate, A wail from the Second Quarter, And a loud crash from the hills.

This verse starts out, in the English, with the second of the 24 references to the Day of the Lord in the book of Zephaniah. ¹

References to the day of the Lord as a time of Judgment	References to the day of the Lord as a time of blessing
The day of the Lord 1:7, 14 (2)	
The day of the Lord's sacrifice 1:8	
That day 1:9, 10, 15	That day 3:11, 16
That time 1:12	That time 3:19,20
A day of the Lord's wrath 1:18	
The day 2:2; 3:8	
The day of the Lord's anger 2:2, 3	The time 3:20
A day 1:15 (5), 16	

The second phrase, in the English, is the “declares the Lord” which was actually a noun which might be best translated in this context as “Proclamation of Yahweh/Lord.”

In verse 8 there is a verb translated “it will come about” in the NASB. This shows up in verses 8, 10 and 13 in the NASB. It is smoothed into the English of verse 10 as “there will be.” That translation missed the same word in verse 12. In the King James it is translated “it will come to pass.” This seems to me to be on a par with the translation in English, “Behold.” It doesn’t really communicate well. In keeping with Zephaniah’s seeming hyperbole, it might be better translated as “This

¹ Constable, Thomas, Dr. Constable's Notes on Zephaniah 2023 edition, pp 22-23

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will happen!” And here is another of Zephaniah’s “lists.” He sets them up by repeating a word or phrase. We have seen that with the term “Proclamation of Yahweh.” We will also see that with variations on the term “Day of the Lord.”

Zephaniah 1:8 (Revised) “This will happen! on the day of the Lord’s sacrifice That I will punish (with a judgment) the princes, the king’s sons (official turncoat leaders) And all who clothe themselves with foreign garments (official turncoat government officers).

Zephaniah 1:10 “This will happen! On that day,” declares the Lord, “There will be the sound of a cry from the Fish Gate, A wail from the Second Quarter, And a loud crash from the hills.

Zephaniah 1:12 “This will happen! at that time That I will search Jerusalem with lamps, And I will punish the men Who are stagnant in spirit, Who say in their hearts, ‘The Lord will not do good or evil!’

Zephaniah 1:13 “This will happen!, their wealth will become plunder And their houses desolate; Yes, they will build houses but not inhabit them, And plant vineyards but not drink their wine.”

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Here is another list crafted by Zephaniah out of literary style. In this case he has used the repetition of a verb to indicate the surety of God's actions. This is similar to what we saw previously with the "Proclamation of Yahweh." It crafted a list of five proclamations that God made. In essence, God's Proclamations are another way of saying, "this will happen."

So, there are three repeated phrases in the Hebrew that come together in verse 10. Literally, then, in a literal translation of the Hebrew, "It will happen! On that day (Day of the Lord) Proclamation of Yahweh." A very intense introduction to the actions that now occur.

Zephaniah 1:10 "This will happen! On that day," declares the Lord, "There will be the sound of a cry from the Fish Gate, A wail from the Second Quarter, And a loud crash from the hills.

What will happen?

1. Sound of a cry from the Fish Gate
2. Wail from the Second Quarter
3. Loud crash from the hills

Sound connected to a location that can be seen. Sound and sight. In France some of the chateaus have sound and light shows. Very impressive when done well.

The Fish Gate is a northern entrance into the walled city of Jerusalem. There may have been a fish market there in ancient times. It is interesting that the commentators have much speculation around the location of these place names.

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The Second Quarter, which is second (?play on words?) in the list, is likely south of the Fish Gate inside the wall. It is the location of the prophetess Huldah that responded to Josiah’s request for information concerning the book of the Law discovered in the Temple. 2 Chronicles 34:22.

The hills are not further specified. Jerusalem claims to be one of the cities in the world which is founded on seven hills:

Hill	Name²
Hill One	Mount of Olives Northern Summit: “Scopus”
Hill Two	Mount of Olives Middle Summit: “Nob” (Some sources indicate this is the Mount of Olives and do not associate the Northern or Southern summits with the Mount of Olives)
Hill Three	Mount of Olives Southern/Highest Summit: “Mount of Corruption/Offense” (2Kg 23:13)
Hill Four	Mount Zion (middle ridge between the Kedron and Tyropoen Valleys)
Hill Five	"Ophel Mount"
Hill Six	the “Rock” around which "Fort Antonia" was built
Hill Seven	“new” Mount Zion, the southwest hill

² <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p000201.htm> reformatted and edited.

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From the context, one may infer as did one commentator that the hills mentioned in verse 10 are inside Jerusalem. If so, then the Fish Gate is in the north; the Second Quarter is south of that and the hills are south or south east of those. Each location is following the route of an invader. It is also the route toward the temple. Or the reverse of the route of Jews rushing to escape Jerusalem at the point of the abomination of desolation. Jesus said the Jews in Judea were to flee to the mountains (Matt 24:15-16)

As a Christian, why do I care? Someday, I would like to visit the city of Jerusalem. Most visitors want to follow in the steps of Jesus or see historical landmarks. Certainly that holds an allure for me. But I would like to stand at the Fish Gate and read about future history. I would stand where people in the Tribulation will cry out because of the suffering they endure as a result of rejecting their Savior. In the future there will be a Jewish temple on the temple mount. I will be there before it happens, knowing from God's Word that it will actually happen. It reminds me of that sentence uttered in the movie I, Robot: "Everything the follows is a result of what you see here."

The thought of verse 10 continues in verse 11.

**Zephaniah 1:11 "Wail, O inhabitants of the
Mortar, For all the people of Canaan will be
silenced; All who weigh out silver will be cut
off."**

Now, instead of hearing the sounds of anguish, there is the command to wail.

Mortar. As with the other place names in this context, this one is difficult to pin down. Most commentators guess at something. Literally, the words means "hollow place" as translated by the Young's Literal

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Translation. If the meaning is stretched to mean “depression” and if it is to be located in the environs of Jerusalem, then perhaps there is a street leading generally from the Temple Mount area toward the Fish Gate which is in a depression.

Will be silenced. In these two verses is the sound of anguish from suffering. Then in this verse, they will be silenced.

This is not a verse to be quickly passed over. There is great suffering and then it is ended in death.

Have you ever heard the screams of a dying animal in great pain like a dog that was hit by a car? And then there is silence when it dies. Great tears of sadness fill your eyes. So here, why don't they just trust in their Messiah Savior? It doesn't have to be this way.

**Zephaniah 1:12 “It will come about at that time
(This will happen! Day of the Lord) That I will
search Jerusalem with lamps, And I will
punish the men Who are stagnant in spirit,
Who say in their hearts, ‘The Lord will not do
good or evil!’**

At some point in your life, you will have to decide to believe in Jesus as Savior or to not believe. That decision seals your eternal destination.

**Zephaniah 1:13 “Moreover, their wealth will
become plunder And their houses desolate;
Yes, they will build houses but not inhabit
them, And plant vineyards but not drink their
wine.”**

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Here we have a blatant reference to Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy 28:30 You shall betroth a wife, but another man will violate her; you shall build a house, but you will not live in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but you will not use its fruit.

This brings up the issue of parallels between Zephaniah and Deuteronomy. Many commentators have commented on this. I covered this when I taught Zephaniah chapter 1 previously. Below are included slides from those lessons³:

#	Zephaniah	Deuteronomy
1	1:13“Moreover, their wealth will become plunder And their houses desolate; Yes, they will build houses but not inhabit them, And plant vineyards but not drink their wine.”	28:30 You shall betroth a wife, but another man will violate her; you shall build a house, but you will not live in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but you will not use its fruit.
2	1:13“Moreover, their wealth will become plunder And their houses desolate; Yes, they will build houses but not inhabit them, And plant vineyards but not drink their wine.”	28:39 You shall plant and cultivate vineyards, but you will neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm will devour them.
3	1:15 A day of wrath is that day, A day of trouble and distress , A day of destruction and desolation, A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness,	28:53 ... during the siege and the distress by which your enemy will oppress you. 28:55...during the siege and the distress by which your enemy will oppress you in all your towns. 28:57 ...during the siege and the distress by which your enemy will oppress you in your towns.

³ Robertson, Palmer, The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, Wm. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids, 1990, pp254-255

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#	Zephaniah	Deuteronomy
4	1:15A day of wrath is that day, A day of trouble and distress, A day of destruction and desolation, A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness,	4:11 You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the <i>very</i> heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud and thick gloom.
5	1:17 I will bring distress on men So that they will walk like the blind, Because they have sinned against the Lord; And their blood will be poured out like dust And their flesh like dung.	28:29 and you will grope at noon, as the blind man gropes in darkness, and you will not prosper in your ways; but you shall only be oppressed and robbed continually, with none to save you.
6	1:18 Neither their silver nor their gold Will be able to deliver them On the day of the Lord's wrath; And all the earth will be devoured In the fire of His jealousy, For He will make a complete end, Indeed a terrifying one, Of all the inhabitants of the earth.	32:21-22 21 'They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation, 22 For a fire is kindled in My anger, And burns to the lowest part of Sheol, And consumes the earth with its yield, And sets on fire the foundations of the mountains.

#	Zephaniah	Deuteronomy
7	3:5 The Lord is righteous within her; He will do no injustice. Every morning He brings His justice to light; He does not fail. But the unjust knows no shame.	32:4 "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.
8	3:17 "The Lord your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.	28:63; 30:9 It shall come about that as the Lord delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so the Lord will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you will be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it.
9	3:20 "At that time I will bring you in, Even at the time when I gather you together; Indeed, I will give you renown and praise Among all the peoples of the earth, When I restore your fortunes before your eyes," Says the Lord.	26:19 and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to the Lord your God, as He has spoken."

There is likely a historical link to the discovery of the book of the Law in the Temple.

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The point of course, is to remind the people that the Jews have a covenant relationship with God. Because the Jews, at least most of the Jews in the Tribulation, will have abandoned the covenant, God is free to enforce the penalties of the covenant.

Deuteronomy 27:9 Then Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying, “Be silent and listen, O Israel! This day you have become a people for the Lord your God.

Deuteronomy 27:10 You shall therefore obey the Lord your God, and do His commandments and His statutes which I command you today.”

Deuteronomy 28:15 “But it shall come about, if you do not obey the Lord your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

Zephaniah 1:14 Near is the great day of the Lord, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the Lord! In it the warrior cries out bitterly.

Near. Near is the dictionary meaning of this word. But in this context, it might be construed as approaching or even as imminent.

In what follows, the refrain of “day” for Day of the Lord has the rhythm or beat as in the music of “Jaws.”