

# Survey of Zephaniah

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## Introduction

1. The author is clearly Zephaniah who could possibly be the great-great-grandson of King Hezekiah (1:1). If this is the case he would be the only prophet of royal descent.
  
2. The name Zephaniah means “Yahweh hides.” The primary theme of the book is that Yahweh hides and cherishes his faithful remnant in the day of his wrath (1:2-7 along with 2:3 and 3:12-13).
  
3. Time period: “In the days of Josiah” (1:1). Josiah was the last good king of Judah (c. 640-609 B.C.). The destruction of Nineveh (612 B.C.) was still a future event (2:13). Zephaniah probably wrote around 630 B.C. since he lists sins most likely describing the days prior to the reforms under Josiah (1:3-13; 3:1-7). Thus, Zephaniah’s ministry prepares the way for the revivals under Josiah: the first, in Josiah’s twelfth year as king (2 Chr. 34:3-7) and the second, six years later (2 Chr. 34:8-35:19).

Prophets	Time	Spoke To
Jonah→ Amos→ Hosea	Pre-exilic	Israel
Isaiah→ Micah→ Nahum→ Habakkuk→ Zephaniah→ Jeremiah	Pre-exilic	Judah
Ezekiel→ Daniel→ Obadiah	Exilic	Judah/ nation
Haggai→ Zechariah→ Joel→ Malachi	Post-exilic	Judah

4. Zephaniah

was a

contemporary of Jeremiah and Habakkuk. Soon after his ministry and Josiah’s reforms God’s people reverted to their evil ways and God brought forth his righteous vengeance.

## Outline

1. A Vision of Vengeance (1:1-3:8)
2. A Vision of Victory (3:9-20)

## Main Points and Applications

1. Since God plans to destroy all the earth for its sin, there is nothing to keep him from a *sooner* judgment against Judah and its capital city of Jerusalem (1:4, 11-15; cf. Matt. 24:30 with Zeph. 1:15).

2. Those whom God judges do not typically expect judgment (1:12). Their heart conviction is that God will not respond to them one way or the other. Why do people believe they will escape God's wrath? Remember Zephaniah's contemporaries did not have a habit of studying God's Word (2 Chr. 34:8-35:19).
3. God issues a call to repentance with the possibility of being spared by his mercy (2:1-3). We should never presume upon God's mercy, he does not have to spare us of his wrath. Zephaniah uses the phrase, "Perhaps you will be hidden" (vs. 3). We do not deserve preferential treatment even if we have both an American Express and a Platinum Plus MasterCard (1:18). In what ways are we prone to presume upon God's mercy and neglect faithful obedience to him?
4. Zephaniah again moves from the general to the specific, from judgment upon the surrounding nations (2:4-15) to judgment upon Jerusalem (3:1-7). What are the sins of God's people in 3:1-7? What does it mean for God "to do no injustice" (3:5)?
5. In Zephaniah 3:12-13 we find a description of God's treasured remnant. In what ways does this describe or not describe us?
6. What is the hope of joy and victory in the time of God's righteous vengeance (3:14-17)? Our only hope is that our Redeemer condescends to earth to dwell in our midst (3:15, 17; Matt. 1:23).