

ZEPHANIAH (Student Edition)

- I. The Judgment In the Day of the Lord 1:1--3:8
 - A. The Judgment on the Whole Earth 1:1-3
 - B. The Judgment on the Nation of Judah 1:4--2:3
 - 1. Causes of the Judgment 1:4-13
 - 2. Description of the Judgment 1:14-18
 - 3. Call to Repentance 2:1-3
 - C. The Judgment on the Nations Surrounding Judah 2:4-15
 - 1. Judgment against Gaza (West) 2:4-7
 - 2. Judgment against Moab and Ammon (East) 2:8-11
 - 3. Judgment against Ethiopia (South) 2:12
 - 4. Judgment against Assyria (North) 2:13-15
 - D. The Judgment on Jerusalem 3:1-7
 - 1. Jerusalem's Wickedness 3:1-4
 - 2. The Lord's Justice 3:5-7
 - E. The Judgment on the Whole Earth 3:8
- II. The Salvation in the Day of the Lord 3:9-20
 - A. The Promise of Conversion 3:9-13
 - B. The Promise of Restoration 3:14-20

AUTHOR & WHEN THE BOOK WAS WRITTEN-

Zephaniah the prophet wrote this book that bears his name. In his introduction (1:1), the author traces his ancestry back four generations to _____, a former king of Judah noted for his faithfulness to God. Zephaniah must have been proud that he was related to this beloved ruler, who had led his people back to worship of the one true God. The prophet Zephaniah shows keen familiarity with the city of Jerusalem (1:10-11). Since he was a member of the _____, he was probably a resident of _____. It must have troubled him deeply to pronounce God's prophecies of judgment against his beloved city.

According to the arrangement of the Hebrew Scriptures, Zephaniah was the _____ of the prophets to write before the captivity. The book also tells how Zephaniah the prophet ministered during the days of Josiah, a godly king who reigned over the nation of Judah from about 641 to about 609 B.C. Most scholars place the writing of the book at about _____.

ABOUT THE BOOK-

This book belongs to a dark period in Judah's history. About 100 years before Zephaniah's time, Judah's sister nation, the northern kingdom of Israel, had fallen to a foreign power because of its sin and idolatry. Zephaniah sensed that the same thing was about to happen to the southern kingdom of Judah-and for precisely _____.

Under the leadership of two successive evil kings, Manasseh and Amon, the people of Judah had fallen into worship of false gods. The people were _____ in their temporary _____. Not even a brief

religious renewal under the good king Josiah was enough to turn the tide of paganism and false worship that carried Judah toward certain destruction. Josiah's reforms seemingly were more _____ than _____ for the people.

Into this complacent atmosphere, the devastating message of Zephaniah comes like a searing blast. This book shows God as searching the streets of Jerusalem with lamps to find _____. He will punish (1:12).

Zephaniah continually makes reference to "the day of the Lord" that will come-hence, this book has meaning for the _____. In summing up the teaching he gives regarding the end, we may summarize it as follows: (a) that it is a day of _____ (1:15), (b) it is imminent (1:14), (c) it is a judgment _____ (1:17), (d) it falls upon all creation (1:2, 3; 2:4-15; 3:8), (e) it is accompanied by great convulsions in nature (1:15), (f) a remnant of redeemed Hebrews and foreigners will escape from its terrors (Zeph 2:3; 3:9-13). The terrors of the end days will fall upon all and people from _____ will be won to the Lord (Zeph 3:9, 10). These will not be compelled to come to Jerusalem to worship (Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1); they may worship Him "every one from his place" (Zeph 2:11), which reminds of Jesus' words in John 4:21.

While this message of doom called the people of God to repentance, the book also picks up on Habakkuk's theme of "in wrath, remember mercy." God does promise in Zephaniah that He will _____ the faithful remnant (3:9). In fact, God assures them that a humbled people will never again be made afraid by anyone, for He has cast out their enemy. (3:13-15). God then bids them to sing, shout and to rejoice with all their hearts. _____!

In jubilation God sings and dances and shouts for joy as He tells them of His love. And the book ends with a tender promise: "I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes," says the LORD (3:20).

BASIC THEMES & TRUTHS & APPLICATIONS-

There are so many lessons to learn from this book! Here are several: _____ . If the call to repent is continually ignored, God's judgment must come.

_____ as evidenced by John 3:16.

To settle into the complacency of _____ (1:10-13) and to participate in the ritual of a well-structured religious life without obeying _____, receiving _____, or drawing near to Him (3:2) is always a possibility. Not knowing you have such spiritual emptiness is most tragic.

Even to the rebellious, God offers _____ (2:1-3). The remnant who humble themselves and seek righteousness _____ in the day of the Lord's anger, gathered to Him and healed, and will have God dwelling in their midst.

We should always _____! We should reject any form of complacency by persevering in seeking God with passion every day.

Complacency is the result of _____ in past _____ with the Lord so that _____ are made.

Zephaniah also brings out a great lesson to all who would be leaders in 3:2-4.

An unteachable attitude is the tip of the iceberg of ungodliness. The clearest evidence that someone does not trust the Lord or really seek Him diligently is a _____.

We should avoid being among those who speak loudly and promise great things, but _____ or do not bear fruit in the long run. All leaders should avoid any form of arrogance or pride in our ministries and should not profane the ministry by mishandling the Word of God in any way- especially by teaching _____ as God's Word.

A POSSIBLE KEY WORD-

Considering our discussion above, the key phrase could be: _____. This phrase is continually used!

KEY VERSE(S) & CHAPTER-

Zephaniah brings out the dual nature of God, balancing God's justice and mercy. Hence, my key verse summarizes this: _____. As to key chapter, I chose _____ because it records the dual aspects of the day of the Lord, judgment and restoration.

JESUS REVEALED IN THE BOOK-

Ultimately, Jesus is _____ on the day of the Lord, as mentioned in 2:3. Also, the rejoicing over a saved remnant in 3:16-17 is reminiscent of the work of Jesus in saving us- see Luke 15:7. In fact, this picture of a rejoicing Jesus in salvation is also seen in _____.

THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALED IN THE BOOK-

Besides the office and ministry of the prophetic, the Holy Spirit can be seen working in Zephaniah bringing the conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment (see John 16). Also, the Holy Spirit is the one who _____ and brings them together to _____ - a clear reference to the _____ where the same happened to people from _____!