




LOGOS

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Zephaniah



Session 6: Zephaniah

11 July 2023



The Book of the Twelve

8<sup>th</sup> Century BCE – Isaiah

Amos

Hosea

Micah

7<sup>th</sup> Century BCE – Jeremiah

Nahum

Zephaniah

Habakkuk

6<sup>th</sup> Century BCE – Ezekiel

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

The outliers- likely postexilic

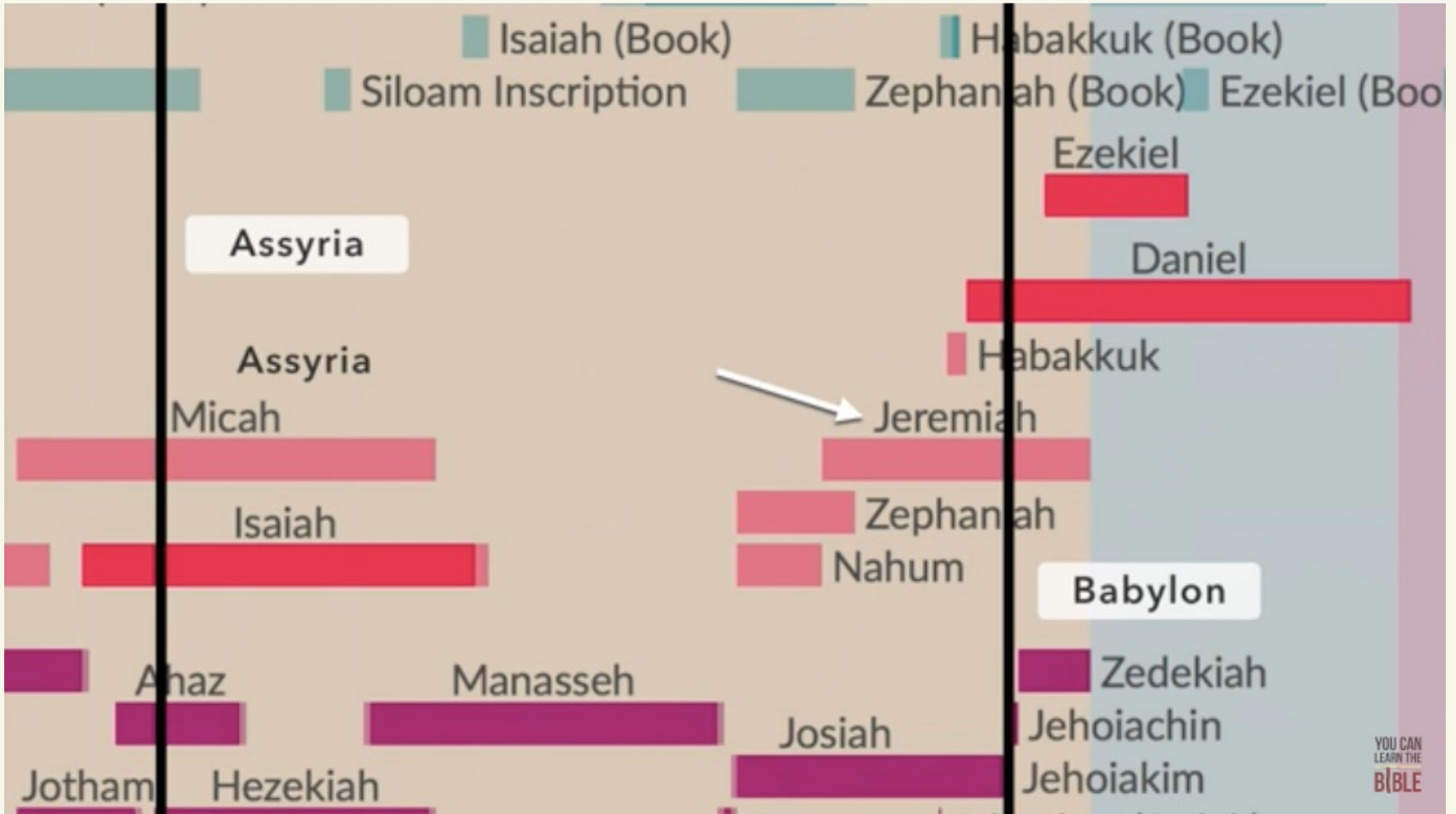
Jonah

Obadiah

Joel

# LOGOS

Zephaniah





# Authorship and Setting

Zephaniah Ben Cushi – mixed ancestry, Hebrew and African.

Well preserved text. Some minor later editing.

Contemporary of Jeremiah.

Lived in Jerusalem and had connections to the Temple and royal family.



# Structure

## Oracles

1 Judgement on Judah / Day of the Lord

2 Judgement on enemies

3 Wickedness of Jerusalem / conversion of other nations / hopeful restoration

# Zephaniah 1

**1** The word of the Lord that came to Zephaniah son of Cushi son of Gedaliah son of Amariah son of Hezekiah, in the days of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah.

## **The Coming Judgement on Judah**

**2** I will utterly sweep away everything  
from the face of the earth, says the Lord.

**3** I will sweep away humans and animals;  
I will sweep away the birds of the air  
and the fish of the sea.

I will make the wicked stumble.

I will cut off humanity from the face of the earth, says the Lord.

**4** I will stretch out my hand against Judah,  
and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem;  
and I will cut off from this place every remnant of Baal  
and the name of the idolatrous priests;

<sup>5</sup> those who bow down on the roofs  
to the host of the heavens;  
those who bow down and swear to the Lord,  
but also swear by Milcom;

<sup>6</sup> those who have turned back from following the Lord,  
who have not sought the Lord or inquired of him.

<sup>7</sup> Be silent before the Lord God!  
For the day of the Lord is at hand;  
the Lord has prepared a sacrifice,  
he has consecrated his guests.

<sup>8</sup> And on the day of the Lord's sacrifice  
I will punish the officials and the king's sons  
and all who dress themselves in foreign attire.

<sup>9</sup> On that day I will punish  
all who leap over the threshold,  
who fill their master's house  
with violence and fraud.

<sup>10</sup> On that day, says the Lord,  
a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate,  
a wail from the Second Quarter,  
a loud crash from the hills.

<sup>11</sup> The inhabitants of the Mortar wail,  
for all the traders have perished;  
all who weigh out silver are cut off.

<sup>12</sup> At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,  
and I will punish the people  
who rest complacently on their dregs,  
those who say in their hearts,  
'The Lord will not do good,  
nor will he do harm.'

<sup>13</sup> Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste.  
Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them;  
though they plant vineyards,  
they shall not drink wine from them.



# The Great Day of the Lord

<sup>14</sup> The great day of the Lord is near,  
near and hastening fast;  
the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter,  
the warrior cries aloud there.

<sup>15</sup> That day will be a day of wrath,  
a day of distress and anguish,  
a day of ruin and devastation,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness,

<sup>16</sup> a day of trumpet blast and battle cry  
against the fortified cities  
and against the lofty battlements.

# Zephaniah 2

Gather together, gather,

O shameless nation,

<sup>2</sup> before you are driven away

like the drifting chaff,

before there comes upon you

the fierce anger of the Lord,

before there comes upon you

the day of the Lord's wrath.

<sup>3</sup> Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land,

who do his commands;

seek righteousness, seek humility;

perhaps you may be hidden

on the day of the Lord's wrath.

<sup>4</sup> For Gaza shall be deserted,  
and Ashkelon shall become a desolation;  
Ashdod's people shall be driven out at noon,  
and Ekron shall be uprooted.

<sup>5</sup> Ah, inhabitants of the sea coast,  
you nation of the Cherethites!

The word of the Lord is against you,  
O Canaan, land of the Philistines;  
and I will destroy you until no inhabitant is left.

<sup>6</sup> And you, O sea coast, shall be pastures,  
meadows for shepherds and folds for flocks.

<sup>7</sup> The sea coast shall become the possession  
of the **remnant** of the house of Judah,  
on which they shall pasture,  
and in the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down at evening.  
For the Lord their God will be mindful of them  
and restore their fortunes.

<sup>8</sup> I have heard the taunts of Moab  
and the reviling of the Ammonites,  
how they have taunted my people  
and made boasts against their territory.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore, as I live, says the Lord of hosts,  
the God of Israel,  
Moab shall become like Sodom  
and the Ammonites like Gomorrah,  
a land possessed by nettles and salt-pits,  
and a waste for ever.

The **remnant** of my people shall plunder them,  
and the survivors of my nation shall possess them.

<sup>10</sup> This shall be their lot in return for their pride,  
because they scoffed and boasted  
against the people of the Lord of hosts.

<sup>10</sup> This shall be their lot in return for their pride,  
because they scoffed and boasted  
against the people of the Lord of hosts.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord will be terrible against them;  
he will shrivel all the gods of the earth,  
and to him shall bow down,  
each in its place,  
all the coasts and islands of the nations.

<sup>12</sup> You also, O Ethiopians,  
shall be killed by my sword.

<sup>13</sup> And he will stretch out his hand against the north,  
and destroy Assyria;  
and he will make Nineveh a desolation,  
a dry waste like the desert.

14 Herds shall lie down in it,  
every wild animal;  
the desert-owl and the screech-owl  
shall lodge on its capitals;  
the owl shall hoot at the window,  
the raven croak on the threshold;  
for its cedar-work will be laid bare.

15 Is this the exultant city  
that lived secure,  
that said to itself,  
'I am, and there is no one else'?  
What a desolation it has become,  
a lair for wild animals!  
Everyone who passes by it  
hisses and shakes the fist.

## Zephaniah 3

### **The Wickedness of Jerusalem**

Ah, soiled, defiled,  
oppressing city!

<sup>2</sup> It has **listened to no voice**;  
it has accepted no correction.

It has not trusted in the Lord;  
it has not drawn near to its God.

<sup>3</sup> The officials within it  
are **roaring lions**;  
its judges are evening wolves  
that leave nothing until the morning.

<sup>4</sup> Its prophets are reckless,  
faithless persons;  
its priests have profaned what is sacred,  
they have done violence to the law.

<sup>5</sup> The Lord within it is righteous;  
he does no wrong.

Every morning he renders his judgement,  
each dawn without fail;  
but the unjust knows no shame.

<sup>6</sup> I have cut off nations;  
their battlements are in ruins;  
I have laid waste their streets  
so that no one walks in them;  
their cities have been made desolate,  
without people, without inhabitants.

<sup>7</sup> I said, 'Surely the city will fear me,  
it will accept correction;  
it will not lose sight  
of all that I have brought upon it.'  
But they were the more eager  
to make all their deeds corrupt.



<sup>8</sup> Therefore wait for me, says the Lord,  
for **the day when I** arise as a witness.

For my decision is to gather nations,  
to assemble kingdoms,  
to pour out upon them my indignation,  
all the heat of my anger;  
for in the fire of my passion  
all the earth shall be consumed.

<sup>9</sup> At that time I will change the **speech** of the peoples  
to a **pure speech**,  
that all of them may **call** on the name of the Lord  
and serve him with one accord.

<sup>10</sup> **From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia**  
**my suppliants, my scattered ones,**  
**shall bring my offering.**

<sup>11</sup> On that day you shall not be put to shame  
because of all the deeds by which you have rebelled against me;  
for then I will remove from your midst  
your proudly exultant ones,  
and you shall no longer be haughty  
in my holy mountain.

<sup>12</sup> For I will leave in the midst of you  
a people humble and lowly.

They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord—

<sup>13</sup> the remnant of Israel;

they shall do no wrong

and utter no lies,

nor shall a deceitful tongue

be found in their mouths.

Then they will pasture and lie down,  
and no one shall make them afraid.

## A Song of Joy

<sup>14</sup> Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

<sup>15</sup> The Lord has taken away the judgements against you,  
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;  
you shall fear disaster no more.

<sup>16</sup> On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.

<sup>17</sup> The Lord, your God, is in your midst,  
a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness,  
he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing

<sup>18</sup> as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,  
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

<sup>19</sup> I will deal with all your oppressors  
at that time.

And I will save the lame  
and gather the outcast,  
and I will change their shame into praise  
and renown in all the earth.

<sup>20</sup> At that time I will bring you home,  
at the time when I gather you;  
for I will make you renowned and praised  
among all the peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes  
before your eyes, says the Lord.

# Group Discussion

# Themes

## Remnant

Some of the people remain true and become the remnant that survives and returns to flourish under Yahweh's covenant.

## Religious focus

Judgement on temple worship, festivals, religious hypocrisy.

## The Day of the Lord

A day of judgement and a day of salvation.

## Noise

Singing, silence, animals, the return of worship.

## Noise

Singing, silence, animals, the return of worship

- 1.7 Be **silent** before the Lord God!  
For the **day of the Lord** is at hand;
- 1.10 On **that day**, says the Lord,  
a **cry** will be heard from the Fish Gate,  
a **wail** from the Second Quarter,  
**a loud crash** from the hills.
- 1.14 the **sound** of the day of the Lord is bitter,  
the warrior **cries** aloud there.
- 1.16 ...a day **of trumpet blast and battle cry**  
against the fortified cities
- 2.14 ...the owl shall **hoot** at the window,  
the raven **croak** on the threshold;  
for its cedar-work will be laid bare.
- 2.15 What a desolation it has become,  
a lair for wild animals!  
Everyone who passes by it  
**hisses** and shakes the fist.

## Noise

Singing, silence, animals, the return of worship

3.1-3 Ah, soiled, defiled,  
oppressing city!  
It has **listened to no voice**;  
it has accepted no correction.  
The officials within it  
are **roaring lions**;

3.9 At that time I will change the **speech** of the peoples  
to a **pure speech**,  
that all of them may **call** on the name of the Lord  
and serve him with one accord.

3.13 the **remnant** of Israel;  
they shall do no wrong  
and **utter** no lies,  
nor shall a **deceitful tongue**  
be found in their mouths.





# Noise

Singing, silence, animals, the return of worship

3.14 **Sing** aloud, O daughter Zion; **shout**, O Israel!

3.17 ...he will **rejoice** over you with gladness,  
he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with **loud singing**

3.18 as on a day of festival.

3.19 ...and I will change their shame into **praise**  
and renown in all the earth.

3.17 ...he will **rejoice** over you with gladness,  
he will be **silent** in his love/ he will **quiet** you with his love/ he will renew you in his love;  
he will exult over you with **loud singing**