



Minor Prophets

Lesson 9

Zephaniah Chapters 1-3

After the death of Hezekiah, the religious reforms that he established quickly deteriorated. The mixing of pagan worship with the worship of Yahweh increased, and therefore, the moral and spiritual health of the nation diminished. Once again, God raised up a king that would give the people an opportunity to return to Him. King Josiah carried out religious reform in Judah that was unprecedented. After finding the Book of the Law, he restored Temple worship, reestablished religious festivals, removed idolatrous worship, and created a

political atmosphere where God's rule was applied. But his influence was soon undermined when his wicked sons came to power. Judah quickly fell back into her idolatrous ways. The prophet Zephaniah rises up in the nation of Judah to declare that God will not tolerate her rebellion for long; judgment is inevitable. This had been the reason for Israel's demise, and Judah was falling into the same trap. God would have His Day, and Judah, as well as the nations around her, would experience His wrath.

READ ZEPHANIAH CHAPTERS 1-3

1. *Who was king during Zephaniah's ministry? Zephaniah 1:1*

2. *Read 2 Kings 21:18-26. Describe Amon and his reign.*

3. *Read 2 Kings 22-23:3. How was Josiah different than Amon?*

4. *How might prophesying during the time of Josiah differed from what it may have been during the time of Amon?*

Remember:

The northern kingdom has fallen to Assyria so the prophets from here on out will be speaking to Judah, which is in the same downward spiral of sin that Israel experienced.

5. *What does Zephaniah say is now some of the specific idolatrous practices of Judah? 1:4-6*



According to 1 and 2 Kings, Milcom was known as the “detestable god of the Ammonites.” One of Israel’s great sins was that they maintained high places of worship to this god in their land. 1 Kings states that Solomon had actually built and maintained a high place of worship for Milcom (1 Kings 11:5,7,33). Many theologians believe he is the same god as Molech because Milcom comes from the word “melek” which means king. Others believe they were worshiped separately.

6. *Describe the Day of the Lord from Zephaniah 1:14-18. Compare what Paul says about the day of the Lord in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.*

7. *What was Zephaniah’s recommendation of a right response in 2:3?*

8. *Locate on a map the cities mentioned in Zephaniah 2:4-12. According to 2:10, why is the Lord angry with these nations and intends to destroy them?*

9. *What is God's warning in verse 13-15 to Assyria that at that time soon be coming to pass?*

10. *It is assumed that the city referred to in Zephaniah 3:1-7 is Jerusalem. What four reasons does God give for her downfall in verse 2?*

1)

2)

3)

4)

11. *In what ways could these four things apply to the Church today? What is our responsibility in countering that?*

12. *From Zephaniah 3:9-20 give phrases that reveal God's love, mercy and grace which is our hope as well as theirs.*

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
