

# The Book of Zephaniah

## Chapter 2

### Chapter 2

- vs. 1-3 – This paragraph is addressed to the kingdom of Judah.
  - vs. 1 – God is commanding those that have rejected Him to gather for judgment. The idea of gathering is like gathering sticks or stubble to be burned.
  - vs. 2 – God's sovereignty is on display here. He has commanded the those that have rejected Him and do not heed His instruction, yet they still are subject to His divine plan. There is no escape from the judgment to come.
  - vs. 3 – The only hope in the day of judgment is for those that will repent and follow the Lord. This same truth is highlighted so many times in Scripture, such as the Flood or the Passover.
- vs. 4-15 – These verses are addressed to the nations around Judah.
  - vs. 4-7 – The destruction of Philistia is foretold
    - vs. 4 – Four of the principal cities of the Philistines are mentioned (Gath is left out, perhaps it had already fallen). The image is here is of sudden and complete removal. Nebuchadnezzar would accomplish this in 586 B.C.
    - vs. 5 – Cherethites – a people mentioned a few times in Scripture (see examples in I Samuel 30:14, II Samuel 8:18, and Ezekiel 25:16). They are related to or perhaps part of the Philistines. My theory is that this is a more general term for the peoples that had settled in the Holy Land after migrating from the Aegean Sea region.
    - vs. 5-6 – The devastation of Philistia has continued throughout history. There have been no major civilizations settled there since they were destroyed.
    - vs. 7 – The Jews will control the former territory of Philistia. This is not true today and I think it is looking into the Millennial Kingdom.
  - vs. 8-11 – The destruction of Moab and Ammon is foretold
    - vs. 8 – These kingdoms were east of Judah and constantly pressuring the Jews for more territory or power.
    - vs. 9 – a promise of sudden and utter destruction like would befall Philistia and that the Jews would eventually possess their territories also (which has not happened yet). Nebuchadnezzar conquered and destroyed them in 582 B.C.
    - vs. 10 – The didn't just reject God, they did so will malice and contempt.
    - vs. 11 – this promise must be of the Millennial Kingdom when Christ rules all the world.
  - vs. 12-15 – the destruction of Ethiopia (Cush) and Assyria is foretold
    - Why are these two kingdoms included?

- Assyria was the mightiest world power at the time, but they were fading. Nahum prophesied about this same time about the coming fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C. to the Babylonians. Perhaps Judah hoped they could trust in the current power to maintain the *status quo*.
- Ethiopia (Cush) was a powerful African kingdom south of Egypt, and sometimes including it. Perhaps they are included as showing God's judgment from the far south to the far north, or perhaps because Judah thought them a powerful ally that could deliver them.
- vs. 12-13 – “God's sword” is Babylon, chiefly through Nebuchadnezzar. They are the instrument God is wielding to dispense judgment.
- vs. 14-15 – the utter destruction of Nineveh. It was completely lost to history and still a place of ruins. See also the book of Nahum regarding prophecies of its demise.