



Southwell
Minster

*The Cathedral and Parish Church
of the Blessed Virgin Mary*



GROWING
DISCIPLES

Wider Younger Deeper

Zephaniah

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Welcome & Introduction

Part One: Context – 1:1

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.

- ✿ Zephaniah: ‘YHWH hides,’ or ‘YHWH treasures’:
Treasured saints Ps 83:4
Hiding his servants from evil Ps 27:5
Jerusalem Ezek 7:22

- ✿ Son of Cushi

כּוּשִׁי

הַכּוּשִׁי

- ✿ Son of Hezekiah (cf 2Kings 18-20?)
- ✿ King Josiah (2Kings 22-23)

Encouraging God’s people to turn from the ways of the world and return to the true worship of their God

Q: From your reading of Zephaniah, how would you describe its central message?

Q: What big ideas, images or concepts does Zephaniah use to communicate that message?

Part Two: The Poor / The Humble in the Minor Prophets

- ✿ Social Justice texts?
- ✿ More than Social Justice?
- ✿ The 'special case' of the poor?

2:3 Seek the LORD, all you **humble of the land**, who do his commands...

3:12 I will leave in the midst of you a people **humble** and lowly

- ✿ Economic Poverty?
- ✿ Spiritual Humility?

Vs the **arrogant proud**

1:3 Wicked

1:4-6 Spiritually bankrupt (cf 3:2)

3:3, 11 Politically unscrupulous (cf 2:8)

1:8, 10-11 Commercially corrupt/exploitative (cf 1:18)

So, the 'poor/humble'? ... The downtrodden

Picture painted by **contrast**

Chapter 1 The bustling, wealthy city (see above)

Chapter 2 The destitute countryside:

2:1 'Gather' – e.g. straw, sticks, stubble

2:2 'Chaff' - ?gleaning

2:1 'Shameless' – rhymes with 'silver'

It is **only** the 'poor' who are 'humble'...

Q: What do you make of that conclusion – that in Zephaniah, the poor are accepted by God not because of their poverty, but because of the humility they demonstrate (even if that humility comes as a result of their poverty)?

Q: What do you think this means in terms of the mission of today's church amongst those who are less fortunate and privileged?

Part Three: The Day of the LORD in the Minor Prophets

Cataclysmic Judgement

Against nations
Against Israel
For Israel (judge enemies=save own people)
Historical moment... future promise
Terrible
Anguish (Zeph 1:15)
Devastating Ruin

Day of the LORD in Zephaniah? Cosmic

1:2

Merismus, e.g. 1:3

1:2-2:3	Jerusalem judged
2:3-3:8	Nations judged
3:9-20	Jerusalem AND nations redeemed

Zephaniah and Genesis

Merismus & Gen 1

Zeph 1 & The Flood

All Nations & Gen 10

Zeph 3:9 *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...* Babel undone?

God's purifying judgment restores creation – re-making as it always should have been.

Part Four: Connecting the Dots - The Poor/Humble ON the Day of the LORD in Zephaniah

Zeph 3:11-12

Salvation through a faithful remnant...

...and so many Gospel chords:

- ✿ Mary's Song (Luke 1)
- ✿ The ultimate 'faithful remnant'... of one man
- ✿ The total reversal of Babel (Zeph 3:9) fulfilled at Pentecost

Q: On the Day of the LORD, salvation will come through a faithful remnant. What does that tell us about who or what the Church is supposed to be today?

Q: What encouragement have you found from seeing how some of Zephaniah is most fully fulfilled in Jesus?

(And a final note about the Beatitudes).

Rejoice – in the Song of Joy (Zeph 3:14-20)