

Zephaniah 1:1

Background to Zephaniah and “The Word of the Lord Came to Zephaniah”

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All verses are from the New King James Version, 1985 Thomas Nelson

2 Chron 20:31 So Jehoshaphat was king over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. 32 And he walked in the way of his father Asa, and did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the Lord. **33 Nevertheless the high places were not taken away, for as yet the people had not directed their hearts to the God of their fathers.**

2 Chron 24:15 But Jehoiada [*High Priest who was a good influence on Joash*] grew old and was full of days, and he died; he was one hundred and thirty years old when he died. 16 And they buried him in the City of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and His house. **17 Now after the death of Jehoiada the leaders of Judah came and bowed down to the king. And the king listened to them.** 18 **Therefore they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served wooden images and idols; and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their trespass.** 19 **Yet He sent prophets to them, to bring them back to the Lord; and they testified against them, but they would not listen.**

2 Chron 26:23 So Uzziah rested with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which belonged to the kings, for they said, "He is a leper." Then Jotham his son reigned in his place. 2 Chronicles 27:1 Jotham was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerushah the daughter of Zadok. 2 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Uzziah had done (although he did not enter the temple of the Lord). **But still the people acted corruptly.**

2 Chron 32:32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah [*a very good king*], and his goodness, indeed they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. 33 So Hezekiah rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the upper tombs of the sons of David; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem honored him at his death. **Then Manasseh [*the worst king of Judah and the one that caused Zephaniah to prophesy to Judah*] his son reigned in his place.** 2 Chronicles 33:1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. 2 But he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. 3 For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. 4 He also built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, "In Jerusalem shall My name be forever." 5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. 6 Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire [*burned his sons alive in worship to idols - abortion in their day*] in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom [*south side of temple mount*]; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. **Go to verse 9** So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.

Lev 20:1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: 'Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives any of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. 3 I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given some of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name. 4 And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives some of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him, 5 then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech. 6 'And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people. 7 Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God. 8 And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the Lord who sanctifies you. **Deut 32:16** They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. 17 They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to gods they did not know, to new gods, new arrivals that your fathers did not fear. 18 Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you. 19 "And when the Lord saw it, He spurned them, because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters. **2 Kings 21:16** Moreover Manasseh **shed very much innocent blood**, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the Lord.

2 Chronicles 33:10 And the Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. 11 Therefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. 12 Now when he was **in affliction**, he implored the Lord his God, and **humbled himself greatly** before the God of his fathers, 13 and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God. **Go to verse 15** He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord and in Jerusalem; and he cast them out of the city. 16 He also repaired the altar of the Lord, sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel. **17 Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the high places**, but only to the Lord their God. 18 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers *[including Isaiah]* who spoke to him in the name of the Lord God of Israel, indeed they are written in the book of the kings of Israel. 19 Also his prayer and how God received his entreaty, and all his sin and trespass, and the sites where he built high places and set up wooden images and carved images, before he was humbled, indeed they are written among the sayings of Hozai *[now lost writings]*. 20 So Manasseh rested with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house. Then his son Amon reigned in his place.

2 Kings 24:3 Surely at the commandment of the Lord this *[the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Babylonians]* came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, 4 and also **because of the innocent blood that he had shed**; for he had filled Jerusalem *[could this also apply to America and the world - with 50 million babies per year?]* with innocent blood, which the **Lord would not pardon**.

2 Chronicles 33:21 Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. 22 But he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done; for Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and served them. 23 And he did not humble himself before the Lord, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more. 24 Then his servants conspired against him, and killed him in his own house. 25 But the people of the land executed all those who had conspired against King Amon. Then the people of the land

made his son Josiah king in his place. **2 Chron 34:1** Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. 2 And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. 3 For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young [16 years old], he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images.

2 Chronicles 36:11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. 12 He did evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and **did not humble himself before Jeremiah** the prophet, who spoke **from the mouth of the Lord**. 13 And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear an oath by God; but he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the Lord God of Israel. **14 Moreover all the leaders of the priests and the people transgressed more and more, according to all the abominations of the nations, and defiled the house of the Lord which He had consecrated in Jerusalem.**

Zeph 1:1 The word of the Lord which came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah [*not the same Gedaliah as in Jeremiah*], the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.