

# A LOOK AT THE BOOK ZEPHANIAH

Ralph Porter  
© 2002

## **AUTHOR**

Zephaniah served as a prophet during the reign of Josiah.

His lineage is traced back to Hezekiah.

Although Zephaniah's royal descendency is debated, the evidence seems to support this view.

It is opposed because of the failure to add "the king" to Hezekiah's name and because he would be the only prophet of royal lineage.

Those who favor this view argue that it is even more unusual for a prophet to include his ancestry in such detail.

The only satisfactory explanation is to show his relationship to the royal line.

## **DATE**

The book was written during the early part of Josiah's reign (640-609 B.C.), probably before the great reforms.

## **BACKGROUND**

It appears that Zephaniah may have been instrumental in causing Josiah's reforms.

The conditions at the time the book was written show low morals and religious apostasy.

## **PURPOSE AND THEME**

The author's purpose was to call the people to repentance.

The message of the book is that in spite of appearances to the contrary, God is in control of the world.

He will demonstrate His control by bringing immediate judgment on the wicked and eventual restoration of His people.

The announcement of judgment is presented through references to the day of the Lord.

There is a dramatic contrast between the immediate judgment and the eventual restoration.

As in all the warnings of judgment previous to the captivity, the purpose is to call God's people to return to Him and thus avoid judgment.

ZEPHANIAH

GOD CONTROLS THE WORLD

Ralph Porter

ANNOUNCEMENT OF JUDGMENT 1	INVITATION TO REPENTANCE 2:1-3	JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS 2:4-15	DIVINE PROGRAM FOR ISRAEL 3
Historical Introduction 1:1		Coastal Regions 2:4-7	Judgment on Israel 3:1-7
Summary of Judgment 1:2-3		Moab and Ammon 2:8-11	Cause of judgment 3:1-4 Response of the Judge 3:5-7
Causes of Judgment 1:4-13		Ethiopia 2:12	Judgment on the Nations 3:8 Restoration on Israel 3:9-20
Description of Judgment 1:14-18		Assyria 2:13-15	Repentance 3:9 Regathering 3:10 Conversion 3:11-12 Just conduct 3:13a Prosperity 3:13b Millennial celebration 3:14-19 Restoration summarized 3:20