

Purity Through Judgment

Zephaniah 1:1-2:3



Zephaniah 1:1-3

The word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah son of Cushi,
son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah,
in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah:
“I will completely remove all things from the face of the earth,”
declares the LORD. I will remove man and beast;
I will remove the birds of the sky And the fish of the sea,
And the ruins along with the wicked;
And I will cut off man from the face of the earth,”
declares the LORD.

Zephaniah 1:4-6

So I will stretch out My hand against Judah
And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place,
And the name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests.

And those who bow down on the housetops
to the host of heaven, And those who bow down
and swear to the LORD and yet swear by Milcom,

And those who have turned back from following the LORD,
And those who have not sought the LORD or inquired of Him.

Zephaniah 1:7-9

Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near, for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests. Then it will come about on the day of the LORD'S sacrifice that I will punish the princes, the king's sons and all who clothe themselves with foreign garments. And I will punish on that day all who leap on the temple threshold, who fill the house of their lord with violence and deceit.

Zephaniah 1:10-13

“On that day,” declares the LORD, “There will be the sound of a cry from the Fish Gate, a wail from the Second Quarter, and a loud crash from the hills. Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar, for all the people of Canaan will be silenced; all who weigh out silver will be cut off. It will come about at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are stagnant in spirit, who say in their hearts, ‘The LORD will not do good or evil!’ Moreover, their wealth will become plunder and their houses desolate; Yes, they will build houses but not inhabit them, and plant vineyards but not drink their wine.

Zephaniah 1:14-16

Near is the great day of the LORD,
Near and coming very quickly;
Listen, the day of the LORD!

In it the warrior cries out bitterly.

A day of wrath is that day, a day of trouble and distress,
a day of destruction and desolation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities
and the high corner towers.

Zephaniah 1:17-18

I will bring distress on men so that they will walk like the blind,
Because they have sinned against the LORD; and their blood
will be poured out like dust and their flesh like dung.

Neither their silver nor their gold will be able
to deliver them on the day of the LORD'S wrath;
and all the earth will be devoured in the fire of His jealousy,
for He will make a complete end,
Indeed a terrifying one, of all the inhabitants of the earth.”

Zephaniah 2:1-3

Gather yourselves together, yes, gather,
O nation without shame, before the decree takes effect
— The day passes like the chaff —
Before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you,
before the day of the LORD'S anger comes upon you.
Seek the LORD, all you humble of the earth who have carried
out His ordinances; seek righteousness, seek humility.
Perhaps you will be hidden in the day of the LORD'S anger.



First things first...

Background

Political/Military History

Though Assyria had crushed the northern kingdom in 720, their empire was in decline.

Egypt was reasserting itself in the region while Babylon was also growing in power and influence. Judah was surrounded by enemies large and small.

Political/Military History

King Manasseh had ruled Judah from 697-643 and had led the nation into wicked idolatry.

Josiah became king at 8 and ruled from 640-609.

While repairing the temple (~628) “the book of the law” (probably Deuteronomy) was found, and Josiah began implementing sweeping reforms.

Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of Josiah.

Zephaniah 1:1

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2 Kings 22-23

2 Chronicles 34-35

After Zephaniah's Work...

Egypt would join a beleaguered Assyria and be routed by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish in 609 marking the ascendancy of Babylon.

Josiah would go out to fight Egypt on their way to Carchemish and be killed by Egyptian archers.

His sons would undo his reforms in Judah.

Babylon would utterly destroy Jerusalem and deport its people in 586.



First things first...

Background

Circumstances in Judah

Zephaniah 1:4-6

So I will stretch out My hand against Judah
And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place,
And the name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests.
And those who bow down on housetops to the host of heaven,
And those who bow down and swear to the LORD
and yet swear by Milcom,
And those who have turned back from following the LORD,
And those who have not sought the LORD or inquired of Him.

Zephaniah 1:4-6

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And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

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and yet swear by Milcom,
And those who have turned back from following the LORD,

And **those who have not sought the
LORD or inquired of Him.**

Deuteronomomic Warnings

Deuteronomy 6:12-15

Watch yourself, that you do not forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name. You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.

Big Idea

God is the Sovereign King who has taken from among the nations a people for Himself whom He will purify by judgment and whom He will gather and restore as one people to rejoice in His presence for all time.



Purity Through Judgment

The Pronouncement of Judgment

The prophets of the LORD served
as His prosecuting attorneys, indicting
the people for their idolatries and
pronouncing
the sentence of judgment.

Zephaniah 1:7

Be silent before the Lord GOD!
For **the day of the LORD is near**,
for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
He has consecrated His guests.

Zephaniah 1:14

Near is the great day of the LORD,
Near and coming very quickly;
Listen, the day of the LORD!

The Pronouncement of Judgment Against Judah and Jerusalem





Zephaniah 1:4

So I will stretch out My hand against Judah
And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Zephaniah 1:10-11

“On that day,” declares the LORD, “There will be the sound of a cry from the Fish Gate, A wail from the Second Quarter, And a loud crash from the hills. Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar, For all the people of Canaan will be silenced; All who weigh out silver will be cut off.

Zephaniah 1:12-13

It will come about at that time that
I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
And I will punish the men who are stagnant in spirit,
who say in their hearts,
“The LORD will not do good or evil!”
Moreover, their wealth will become plunder
And their houses desolate;
Yes, they will build houses but not inhabit them,
And plant vineyards but not drink their wine.

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And their houses desolate;

**Yes, they will build houses but not inhabit them,
And plant vineyards but not drink their wine.**

Deuteronomy 28:30

You shall betroth a wife, but another man will violate her;
you shall build a house, but you will not live in it;
you shall plant a vineyard, but you will not use its fruit.

The Pronouncement of Judgment

Against Judah and Jerusalem

Against the world



Zephaniah 1:2-3

“I will completely remove all things
From the face of the earth,” declares the LORD.

“I will remove man and beast;
I will remove the birds of the sky
And the fish of the sea,
And the ruins along with the wicked;
And I will cut off man from the face of the earth,”
declares the LORD.

Zephaniah 1:2-3

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From the face of the earth,”** declares the LORD.

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And the fish of the sea,
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Genesis 6:7

The LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.”

Zephaniah 1:2-3

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From the face of the earth,”** declares the LORD.

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From the face of the earth,” declares the LORD.

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And the fish of the sea,
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From the face of the earth,” declares the LORD.

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I will remove the birds of the sky
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And the ruins along with the wicked;
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What about us?

2 Peter 3:10

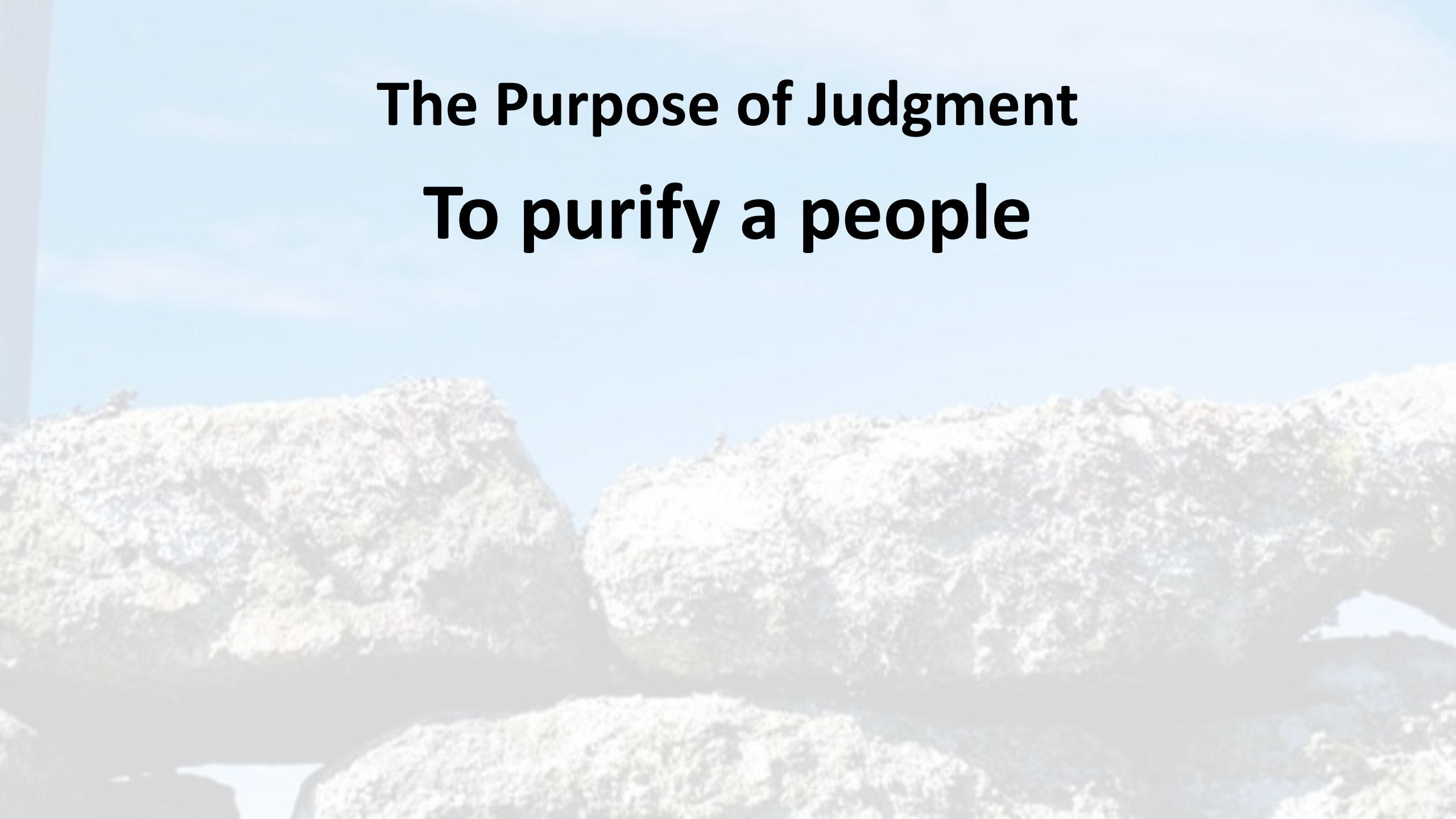
But the day of the Lord will come like a thief,
in which the heavens will pass away with a roar
and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat,
and the earth and its works will be burned up.



Purity Through Judgment

The Pronouncement of Judgment

The Purpose of Judgment



The Purpose of Judgment

To purify a people

Zephaniah 3:8-9

“Therefore wait for Me,” declares the LORD,
“For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed,
My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms,
to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger;
for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal.
For then I will give to the peoples purified lips,
that all of them may call on the name of the LORD.

Judgment

Zephaniah 3:8-9

“Therefore wait for Me,” declares the LORD,
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Purification

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For then I will give to the peoples purified lips,
that all of them may call on the name of the LORD.

This will be the LORD's doing

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My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms,
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For then **I will give** to the peoples purified lips,
that all of them may call on the name of the LORD.

The judgment of Judah looks forward to
the judgment of Christ on the cross.

It is God's judgment of Christ
that will purify His people!

The response to judgment?

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The Purpose of Judgment

To purify a people

To purify the world



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the fire of My zeal.”**

Zephaniah 3:15

The LORD has taken away His judgments against you,
He has cleared away your enemies.
The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
You will fear disaster no more.”

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The LORD's judgment of the
world will purify it by
removing all evil from it!

2 Peter 3:7

But by His word the present heavens
and earth are being reserved for fire,
**kept for the day of judgment
and destruction of ungodly men.**



Purity Through Judgment

The Pronouncement of Judgment

The Purpose of Judgment

The Product of Judgment

The Product of Judgment Restoration



Zephaniah 3:19-20

“Behold, I am going to deal at that time
with all your oppressors,
I will save the lame and gather the outcast,
and I will turn their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

At that time I will bring you in,
even at the time when I gather you together;
Indeed, I will give you renown and praise
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,”
Says the LORD.

Zephaniah 3:19-20

“Behold, I am going to deal at that time
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Says the LORD.

Matthew 11:4-5

Jesus answered and said to them,
“Go and report to John what you hear and see:
the blind receive sight and the lame walk,
the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear,
the dead are raised up,
and *the poor have the gospel preached to them.*”

Zephaniah 3:19-20

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**when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes,”**

Says the LORD.

Jesus accomplished this at His first coming and is accomplishing this as He gathers His Church and will accomplish this when He returns.

The Product of Judgment

Restoration

Jubilation



Zephaniah 3:14-15

Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion!

Shout in triumph, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,

O daughter of Jerusalem!

The LORD has taken away His judgments against you,

He has cleared away your enemies.

The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;

You will fear disaster no more.

Zephaniah 3:14-15

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O daughter of Jerusalem!

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He has cleared away your enemies.**

The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;

You will fear disaster no more.

This is the basis of our jubilation
now and should move us ***now*** to
join with God's people in exultation!

Zephaniah 3:17

The LORD your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior.
He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love,
He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.

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The LORD your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior.

He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love,

He **will rejoice over you with
shouts of joy.**

What an amazing thought that
the LORD of the universe would
exult and rejoice over us!

This is due to Christ!

Conclusion:

The LORD's judgment *will come*;
how will you prepare?

Zephaniah 2:1-3

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