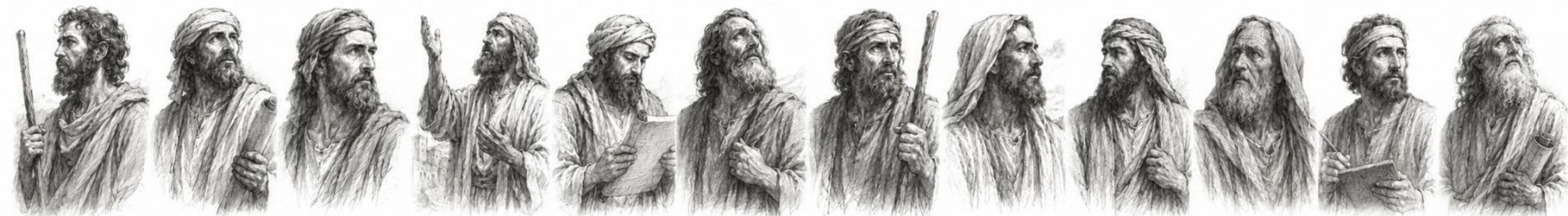


The Twelve



HOSEA

JOEL

AMOS

OBADIAH

JONAH

MICAH

NAHUM

HABAKKUK

ZEPHANIAH

HAGGAI

ZECHARIAH

MALACHI

A STUDY ON THE MINOR PROPHETS

CORE TRAINING - WED NIGHTS

FALL 2026

Main Theme:

The coming “Day of the LORD” will bring judgment on Judah and all nations because of sin, but through that judgment God will purify a faithful remnant and ultimately bring salvation, restoration, and blessing to His people and the nations.

Zephaniah (621-612BC)

Contemporary Prophets

Zephaniah

Zeph 1:1

Prophecies during Josiah's reign; judgment, repentance, restoration.

Jeremiah

Jer 1:2

Called in Josiah's 13th year and continued through later kings.

Nahum

Nahum 1-3

Assyria / Nineveh; generally dated before Nineveh's fall in 612 BC.

Habakkuk

Hab 1-3

Late-seventh-century setting is commonly proposed; exact date is debated.

Who is Zephaniah?

Zeph. 1:1

“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.”

What this verse establishes:

He is a prophet active during Josiah’s reign.

His genealogy is unusually long: four generations are named.

Hezekiah is the final ancestor named in the line.

Hezekiah Connection:

The text does not explicitly say “King Hezekiah.” Because the genealogy reaches back to a famous Hezekiah and is unusually detailed, many interpreters identify him with the Judean king Hezekiah.

Josiah Prophecy—Given 300 Years Earlier

“Now behold, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of the Lord, while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. He cried against the altar by the word of the Lord, and said, “O altar, altar, thus says the Lord, ‘Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.’”

1 Kings 13:1-2

Josiah Prophecy—Fulfilled 300 Years Later

“Furthermore, the altar that was at Bethel and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, even that altar and the high place he broke down. Then he demolished its stones, ground them to dust, and burned the Asherah. Now when Josiah turned, he saw the graves that were there on the mountain, and he sent and took the bones from the graves and burned them on the altar and defiled it according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these things.”

2 Kings 23:15-16

Josiah Prophecy—Fulfilled 300 Years Later

The Prophecy:

1 Kings 13:2

Josiah by name

+

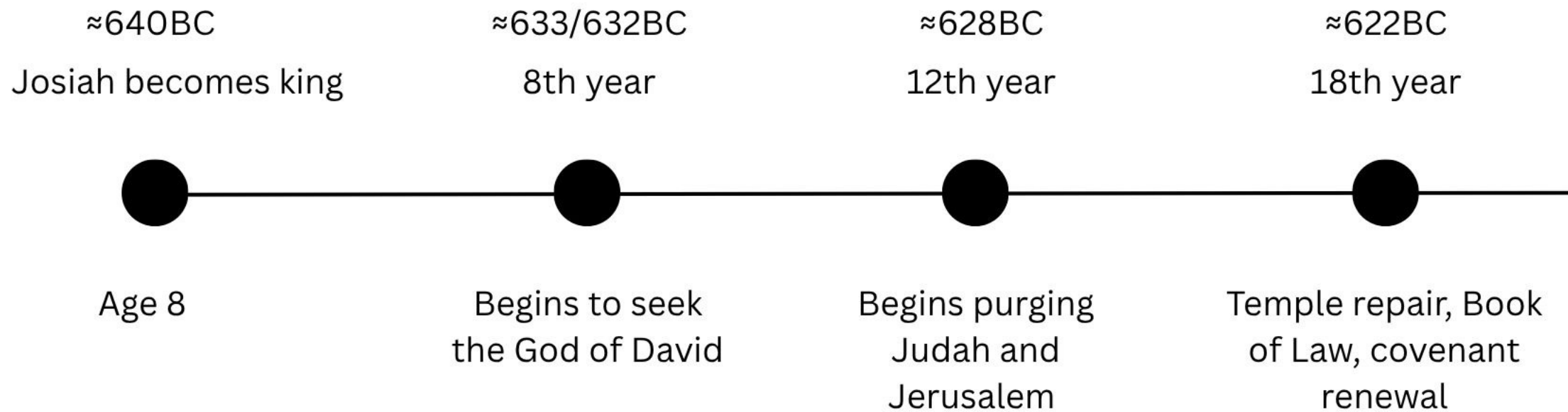
Bones burned on the altar

The Fulfillment:

2 Kings 23:15-18

“he burned the bones from the
tombs on the altar and defiled
it.”

Josiah as King—The Reform Era



Key Texts: 2 Chron 34:3-8 & 2 Kgs 22-23

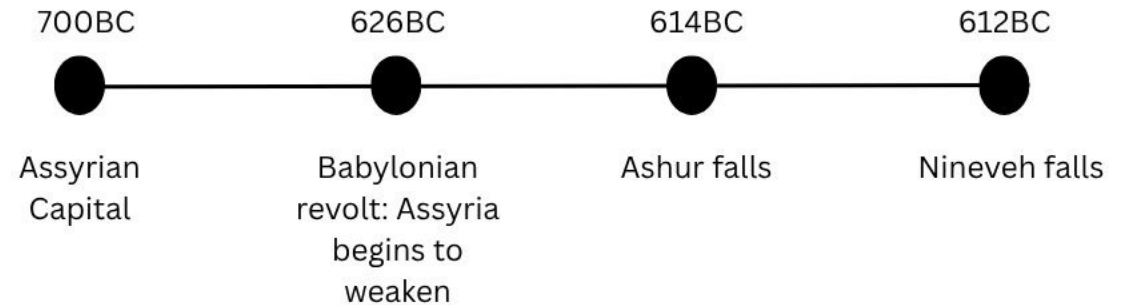
Nineveh—Clarifying the Date

Zeph 2:13

“And He will stretch out His hand against the north And destroy Assyria, And He will make Nineveh a desolation...”

The wording presents Nineveh’s destruction as a coming act of divine judgment. That makes the pre-612 BC setting especially significant for historical dating.

Nineveh Timeline



Nineveh strengthens the case for a prophecy delivered before its destruction —not after.

Zephaniah and Deuteronomy: References & Allusions

Zephaniah	Deuteronomy	Connection
Zephaniah 1:5	Deuteronomy 6:13	Exclusive loyalty to the LORD; swearing by His name.
Zephaniah 1:13	Deuteronomy 28:30, 39	Building houses without inhabiting them; planting vineyards without enjoying the wine.
Zephaniah 1:15	Deuteronomy 28:53–57; 32:35	Day of distress, wrath, trouble, and judgment.
Zephaniah 1:17	Deuteronomy 28:29	People grope / walk like the blind.
Zephaniah 1:18	Deuteronomy 7:16; 28:38–39	Wealth cannot deliver from God's judgment.
Zephaniah 2:3	Deuteronomy 4:29; 30:1–3	Seeking the LORD and responding humbly.
Zephaniah 2:7	Deuteronomy 30:3	Restoration / restoration of fortunes.
Zephaniah 2:9	Deuteronomy 29:23	Land becoming desolate under covenant judgment.
Zephaniah 2:11	Deuteronomy 4:19	False worship involving heavenly objects.
Zephaniah 3:5	Deuteronomy 32:4	The LORD is righteous and does no injustice.
Zephaniah 3:7	Deuteronomy 4:30; 30:1–3	Turning / returning to the LORD amid judgment.
Zephaniah 3:10	Deuteronomy 30:11–14	Distant peoples coming to serve / call upon the LORD; thematic connection.
Zephaniah 3:19–20	Deuteronomy 30:3–5	Gathering and restoration of scattered people.

Main Theme:

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Zephaniah (621-612BC)

“Day of the Lord” said or alluded to 29 times

The “Day of the LORD” in Zephaniah

The book moves from an imminent judgment horizon to a future judgment and future eschatological restoration horizon.

Passage	Reference / Phrase	What Is Being Described?	Timing
Zephaniah 1:7	“The day of the LORD is near”	Judgment upon Judah and Jerusalem.	Near future
Zephaniah 1:8–9	“On the day of the LORD's sacrifice”	Judgment of Judah's leaders and those practicing rebellion.	Near future
Zephaniah 1:10–13	“On that day”	Judgment throughout Jerusalem.	Near future
Zephaniah 1:14–18	“The great day of the LORD is near”	Great judgment, distress, destruction, and wrath.	Near future; language reaches beyond it
Zephaniah 2:2–3	“Before the day of the LORD's anger”	Call to repentance before judgment.	Near future
Zephaniah 3:8	God gathers the nations	God assembles nations and kingdoms for judgment.	Distant future judgment
Zephaniah 3:9–10	Nations turn to the LORD	Peoples receive purified lips and worship the LORD.	Distant future / eschatological
Zephaniah 3:11–13	Purified remnant	A humble and purified remnant of God's people is preserved.	Future restoration
Zephaniah 3:14–20	Israel restored	God restores His people and dwells among them.	Future / ultimate restoration ₁₄

Outline

1. Heading (1:1)
2. The Day of Yahweh's Judgment (1:2-3:8)
 - a. Judgement on the World (1:2-3)
 - b. Judgment on Judah (1:4-2:3)
 - i. The cause of Judah's judgment (1:4-6)
 - ii. The course of Judah's judgment (1:7-13)
 - iii. The imminence and horrors of Judah's judgment (1:14-18)
 - iv. A call to repentance (2:1-3)

Outline

c. Judgement on Israel's Neighbors (2:4-15)

i. Philistia (2:4-7)

ii. Moab and Ammon (2:8-11)

iii. Ethiopia (2:12)

iv. Assyria (2:13-15)

d. Judgment on Jerusalem (3:1-7)

e. Judgment on All Nations (3:9-20)

3. The Day of Yahweh's Blessing (3:9-20)

a. The purification of the nations (3:9)

b. The transformation of Israel (3:10-20)

i. Israel's Purification (3:10-13)

ii. Israel and Yahweh's Rejoicing (3:14-17)

iii. Israel's Regathering (3:18-20)

Zeph. 3:1-8—Judgment

“What sorrow awaits rebellious, polluted Jerusalem, the city of violence and crime! No one can tell it anything; it refuses all correction. It does not trust in the Lord or draw near to its God. Its leaders are like roaring lions hunting for their victims. Its judges are like ravenous wolves at evening time who by dawn have left no trace of their prey. Its prophets are arrogant liars seeking their own gain. Its priests defile the Temple by disobeying God’s instructions. But the Lord is still there in the city and he does no wrong. Day by day he hands down justice, and he does not fail. But the wicked know no shame.”

Zeph. 3:1-8—Judgment

“I have wiped out many nations, devastating their fortress walls and towers. Their streets are now deserted; their cities lie in silent ruin. There are no survivors— none at all. I thought, ‘Surely they will have reverence for me now! Surely they will listen to my warnings. Then I won’t need to strike again, destroying their homes.’ But no, they get up early to continue their evil deeds. Therefore, be patient,” says the Lord. “Soon I will stand and accuse these evil nations. For I have decided to gather the kingdoms of the earth and pour out my fiercest anger and fury on them. All the earth will be devoured by the fire of my jealousy.”

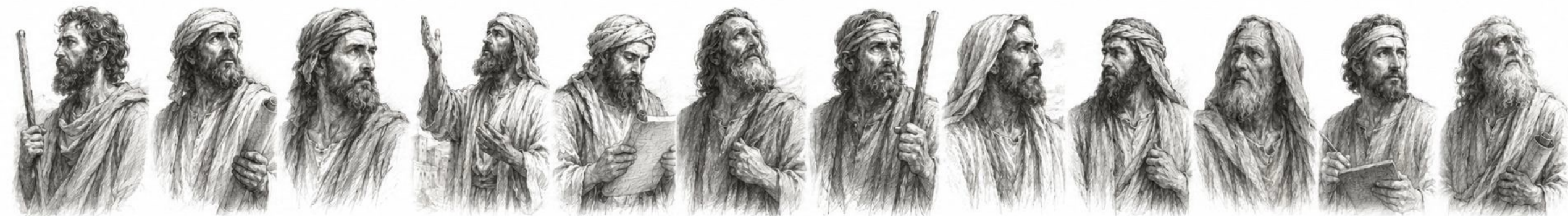
Zeph. 3:9-20—Restoration

“Then I will purify the speech of all people, so that everyone can worship the Lord together. My scattered people who live beyond the rivers of Ethiopia will come to present their offerings. On that day you will no longer need to be ashamed, for you will no longer be rebels against me. I will remove all proud and arrogant people from among you. There will be no more haughtiness on my holy mountain. Those who are left will be the lowly and humble, for it is they who trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel will do no wrong; they will never tell lies or deceive one another. They will eat and sleep in safety, and no one will make them afraid.” Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! For the Lord will remove his hand of judgment and will disperse the armies of your enemy. And the Lord himself, the King of Israel, will live among you! At last your troubles will be over, and you will never again fear disaster.”

Zeph. 3:9-20—Restoration

“On that day the announcement to Jerusalem will be, “Cheer up, Zion! Don’t be afraid! For the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.” “I will gather you who mourn for the appointed festivals; you will be disgraced no more. And I will deal severely with all who have oppressed you. I will save the weak and helpless ones; I will bring together those who were chased away. I will give glory and fame to my former exile wherever they have been mocked and shamed. On that day I will gather you together and bring you home again. I will give you a good name, a name of distinction, among all the nations of the earth, as I restore your fortunes before their very eyes. I, the Lord, have spoken!”

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