

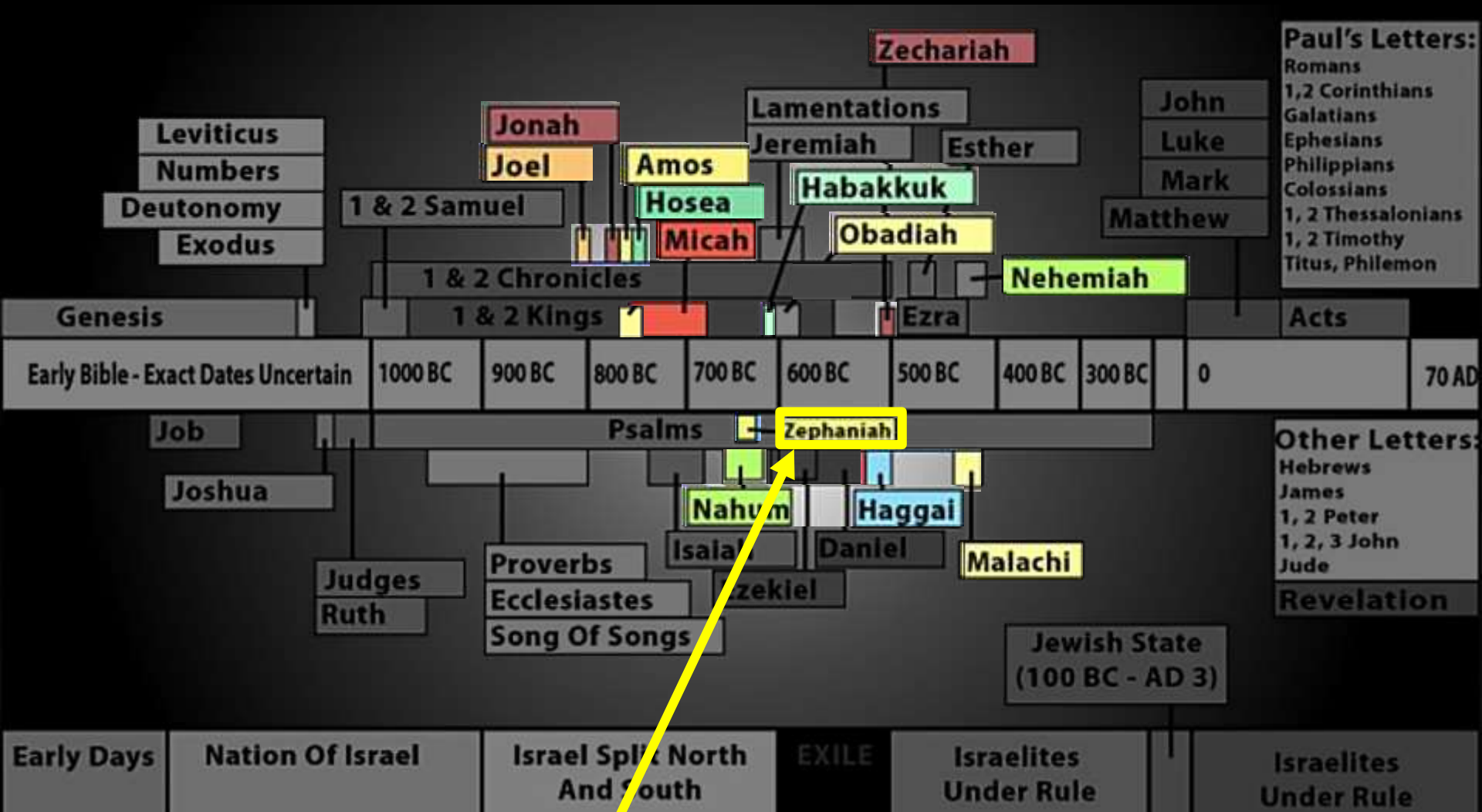


THE BOOK OF

# Zephaniah

*A verse by verse study*

# Ministry of the Minor Prophets



**Zephaniah:** c.640 - 612 B.C.

# Zephaniah

- Written during the reign of Josiah
  - c.640 B.C. - 609 B.C.
  - But before the destruction of Nineveh in 612 B.C.
- Last of the pre-exile prophets
- His name means “*Jehovah hides* [those who are His]”
  - i.e., “protects” or “treasures.”



# Zephaniah

- Zephaniah was the great grandson of king Hezekiah, so a distant cousin of Josiah
  - He traces his genealogy back through four generations to king Hezekiah (Ch1 v1).
    - Possibly to demonstrate his right to speak and his understanding of the corruptness of Judah's kings
- Hezekiah & Josiah were Godly kings, but between their reigns there had been over half a century of evil rule by Amon and Manasseh.

# Zephaniah

- Threefold Theme:
  - 1) The sin of Israel
  - 2) Judgment on Israel's neighbours (Gentile nations)
    - 6 specific nations are mentioned by name
      - Philistines / Cherethites / Moabites / Ammonites / Ethiopians / Assyrians
  - 3) The restoration under Messiah
- 24 x “I will / He will” statements of the LORD



# Zephaniah

- Key phrase: “the day of the LORD” 2x
  - Occurs 21x in the Bible
    - Isaiah 2:12; 13:6; 13:9
    - Jeremiah 46:10
    - Ezekiel 13:5; 30:3
    - Joel 1:15; 2:1; 2:11; 2:31; 3:14
    - Amos 5:18; 5:20
    - Obadiah 1:15
    - Zephaniah 1:7; 1:14;
    - Zechariah 14:1
    - Malachi 4:5
    - Acts 2:20
    - 1 Thessalonians 5:2
    - 2 Peter 3:10

צפניה

# Zephaniah

- Key phrase: “the day of the LORD”
  - Specifically referenced 12x
    - Chapter 1:7 - the day of Jehovah
    - Chapter 1:8 - the day of Jehovah's sacrifice
    - Chapter 1:9- the same day
    - Chapter 1:10 - that day
    - Chapter 1:14- the great day of Jehovah
    - Chapter 1:15-16- a day of wrath, of trouble and distress
    - Chapter 1:18- the day of Jehovah's wrath
    - Chapter 2:2 - the day of Jehovah's anger
    - Chapter 2:3 - the day of Jehovah's anger
    - Chapter 3:8 - the day that I rise up to the prey, says Jehovah
    - Chapter 3:11- that day
    - Chapter 3:16- that day



# Zephaniah

- These prophecies span history, speaking to Israel, at the time of Zephaniah, but also speaking of our time
- *“The whole book makes it clear that Zephaniah looks far ahead of the imminent destruction of Jerusalem on to that dreadful day of Jehovah, the day of His anger and judgment, upon which however will follow the blessing of the millennial reign of peace”.* - Arend Remmers



# Law of Double Reference

- *“This law observes the fact that often a passage or a block of Scripture is speaking of two different persons or two different events that are separated by a long period of time.”*

# Overview of the Book

- Judgment on Judah foretold Ch 1
- Judgment on the Gentiles forewarned Ch 2
  - Specifically judgment for their treatment of ‘God’s people’ (cf Matt 25 “Sheep & Goats”)
    - “My people” x4 / “God of Israel” / “The people of the LORD of hosts” / “The LORD their God”
  - A way of escape from God’s wrath promised!
- The National re-gathering and restoration of Israel promised Ch 3
  - “her God” / “the King of Israel” / “The LORD thy God”





THE BOOK OF

# Zephaniah

Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup> The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

**Zephaniah 1:1**

King Hezekiah

Amariah

Gedaliah

Cushi

Zephaniah

Manasseh 55y

Amon 2y

Josiah 31y

Habakkuk  
Jeremiah



# The Power of Preaching

- Jonah's preaching led to one of the greatest revival's in history – Nineveh
- Micah's preaching brought repentance during the reign of Hezekiah...
- It appears that Zephaniah's preaching was in no small way a catalyst for the national repentance and transformation under Josiah

# The Power of Preaching

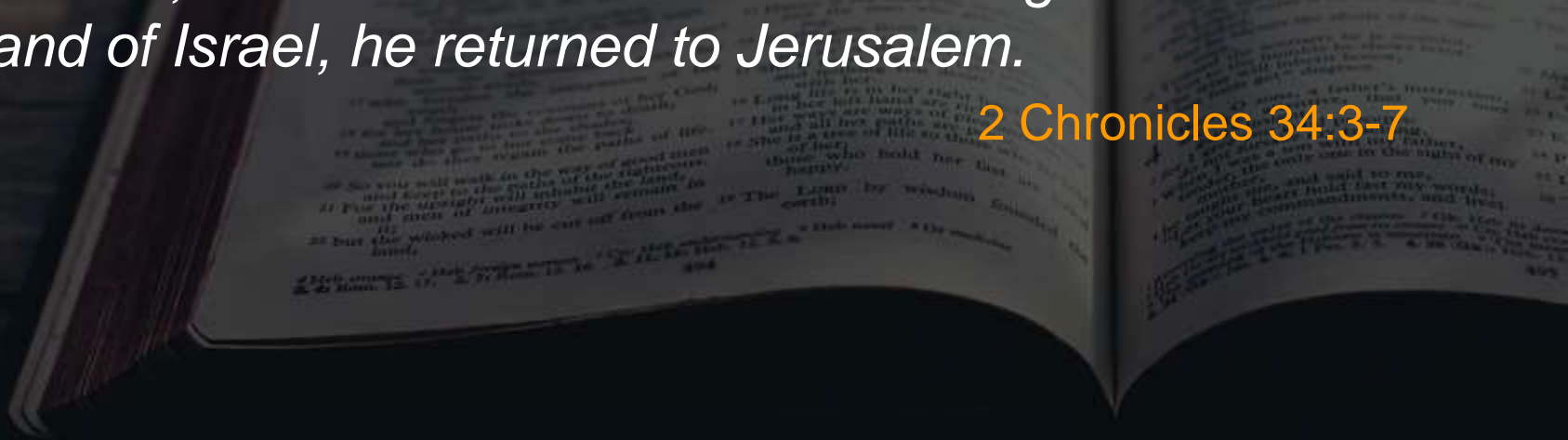
- *[Josiah] began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strowed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.*



# The Power of Preaching

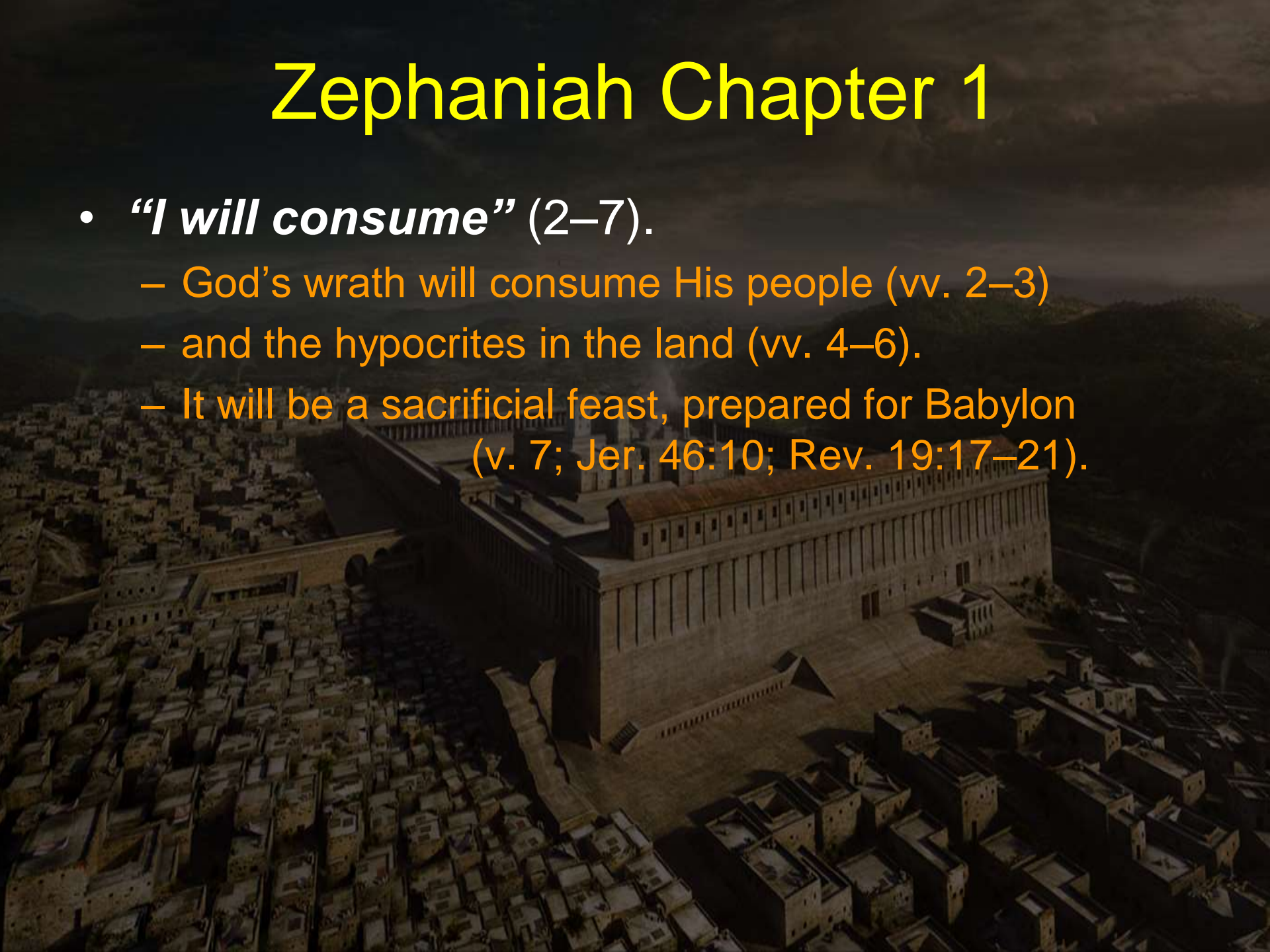
- *And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about. And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.*

2 Chronicles 34:3-7



# Zephaniah Chapter 1

- ***“I will consume”*** (2–7).
  - God’s wrath will consume His people (vv. 2–3)
  - and the hypocrites in the land (vv. 4–6).
  - It will be a sacrificial feast, prepared for Babylon (v. 7; Jer. 46:10; Rev. 19:17–21).





2 I will utterly consume all things from off the land,  
saith the Lord.

3 I will consume man and beast; I will consume the  
fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the  
stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off  
man from off the land, saith the Lord.

## Zephaniah 1:2-3

- *A tragic beginning of a terrible sermon. Hard knots must have hard wedges; hard hearts, heavy menaces; yea, handfulls of hell fire must be cast into the faces of such, that they may awake out of the snare of the devil, by whom they are held captive - Trapp*
- Hebrew. “gathering I will gather all things”,
  - Lit. “I will pack up, I will take mine own, and be gone”

4 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests;

5 And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham;\*

6 And them that are turned back from the Lord; and those that have not sought the Lord, nor enquired for him.

\*Malcham = Molech (Ammonites)

## Zephaniah 1:4-6

- Satan tried in vain to get God to ‘stretch out His hand’ against Job... Now God takes the initiative against Judah

7 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God:  
for the day of the Lord is at hand: for the Lord hath  
prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.

Zephaniah 1:7

- *When his hand is upon thy back let thy hand be on thy mouth. Chat not against him, murmur not at his menaces, but stand mute before him. He is the Lord God - Trapp*
- On the near horizon was the coming judgment on Judah.
  - The 'invited' guests being the Babylonians...
- In the distance is the coming Tribulation
  - The guests being the fowls of the air



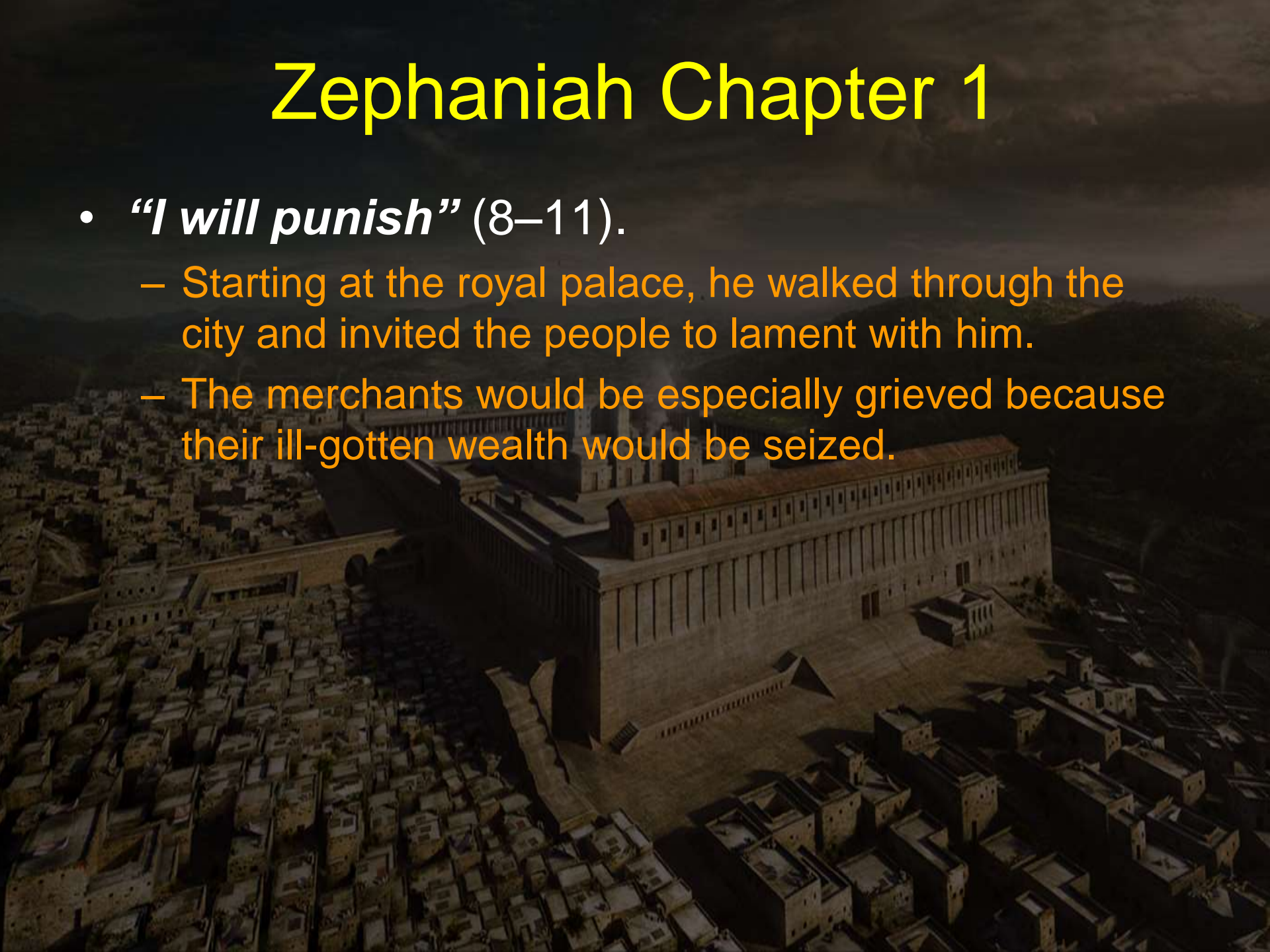
# The Day of the Lord

- 17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;
- 18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

**Revelation 19:17-18**

# Zephaniah Chapter 1

- ***“I will punish”*** (8–11).
  - Starting at the royal palace, he walked through the city and invited the people to lament with him.
  - The merchants would be especially grieved because their ill-gotten wealth would be seized.



8 And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

**Zephaniah 1:8**

- *After the death of Josiah the kingdom of Judah saw no prosperity, and every reign terminated miserably; until at last King Zedekiah and the king's children were cruelly massacred at Riblah, when Nebuchadnezzar had taken Jerusalem. - Clarke*



9 In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills.

## Zephaniah 1:9-10

- v9. speaks of the pride and arrogance – assumption
- ‘Fish gate’ – the way the Chaldeans entered Jerusalem

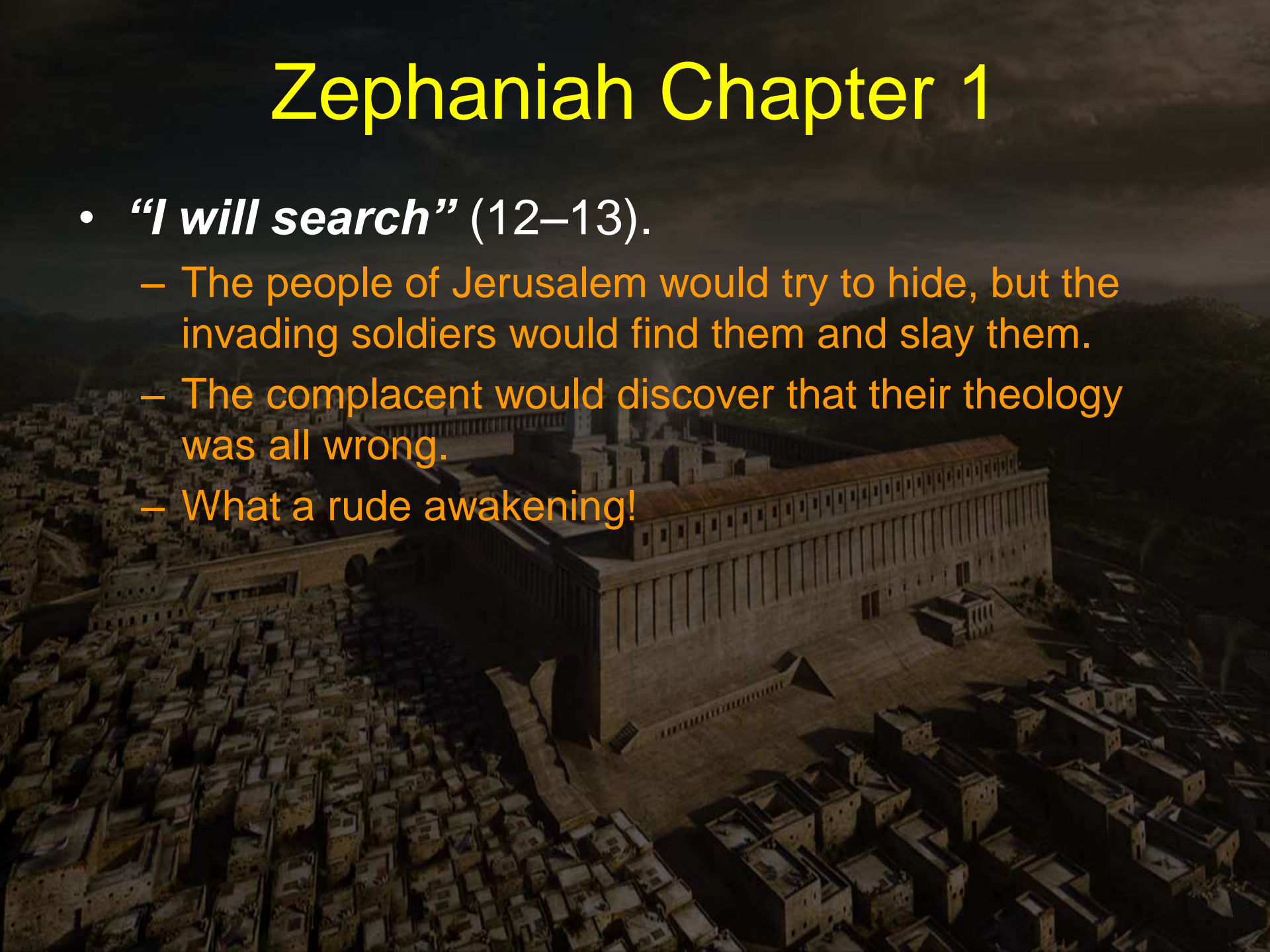
<sup>11</sup> Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off.

**Zephaniah 1:11**

- Maktesh = a quarter of Jerusalem where they hulled rice, corn,
- The idiom seems to be that the merchants in Jerusalem would be crushed as grain is pounded in a mortar.

# Zephaniah Chapter 1

- ***“I will search”*** (12–13).
  - The people of Jerusalem would try to hide, but the invading soldiers would find them and slay them.
  - The complacent would discover that their theology was all wrong.
  - What a rude awakening!





12 And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.

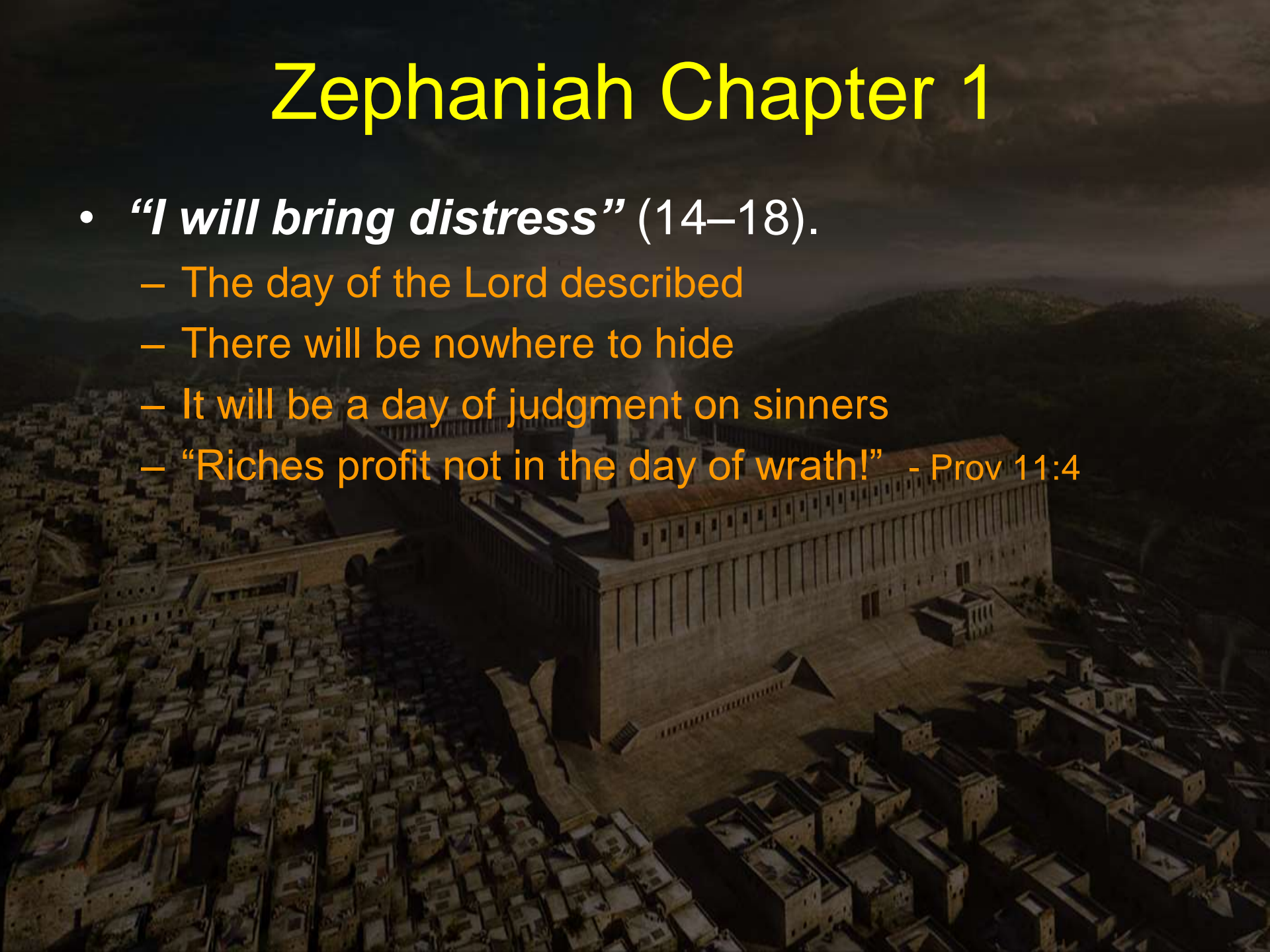
13 Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

### Zephaniah 1:12-13

- The futility of rejecting the Word of God.
- In gaining the world they lose it all

# Zephaniah Chapter 1

- ***“I will bring distress”*** (14–18).
  - The day of the Lord described
  - There will be nowhere to hide
  - It will be a day of judgment on sinners
  - ***“Riches profit not in the day of wrath!”*** - Prov 11:4



14 The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

15 That day is a day of wrath,  
a day of trouble and distress,  
a day of wasteness and desolation,  
a day of darkness and gloominess,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness,

16 A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.

**Zephaniah 1:14-16**



17 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.

18 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

### Zephaniah 1:17-18

- This was true of Jerusalem in 606 B.C...
- ...and will be true of the coming Tribulation

# The day of the LORD

6 Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

7 Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt:

8 And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.

**Isaiah 13:6-11**

# The day of the LORD

<sup>9</sup> Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall **destroy the sinners thereof out of it.**

<sup>10</sup> For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

**Isaiah 13:6-11**



# The day of the LORD

<sup>11</sup> And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

<sup>12</sup> I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

Isaiah 13:6-11

# The day of the LORD

- It is a time of God's wrath
- It is God's judgment on a wicked, unbelieving and Christ-rejecting world
- It is also a time that God will use to turn Israel back to Himself



THE BOOK OF

# Zephaniah

Chapter 2



# Zephaniah Chapter 2

- Judgment on the Gentiles
  - Because of their sins, the nations around Judah would also feel the wrath of God.
  - The other prophets had warned them that judgment was coming (Isa. 14–20; Jer. 46–49; Amos 1–2), but the Gentiles did not repent.
  - God would punish their mistreatment of His people (v. 8; Gen. 12:1–3), their pride (v. 10), and their worship of false gods (v. 11).
  - In His mercy, God calls them to repent

<sup>1</sup> Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;

<sup>2</sup> Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.

**Zephaniah 2:1-2**

- Yet again, God's mercy is seen!
- He gives warning and opportunity to repent before His wrath falls.
- Note, this is specifically to the gentile nations!

<sup>3</sup> Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.

**Zephaniah 2:3**

- The call goes out to seek God while He may be found
- Who are the meek?
- The humble, who give up the right to themselves
- They do what's right... and continue therein
- **The promise is to escape God's wrath!**



# Not Appointed to Wrath

- 1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.
  - 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
  - 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.
- 
- 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

**1 Thessalonians 5:1-9**

# Not Appointed to Wrath

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

**Luke 21:36**

# The Rapture

**13** But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

**14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

**15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18



# The Rapture

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

# The Rapture

<sup>20</sup> Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

<sup>21</sup> For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

**Isaiah 26:20-21**

# The Rapture

<sup>5</sup> For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

**Psalm 27:5**



# The Jewish Wedding

## 'Kiddushin'

- Jewish word for 'Marriage'
- Meaning 'Sanctification'
- In **1 Thess 4:3**, God's Will for us, is our sanctification – and abstaining from fornication



# The Jewish Wedding



## 'Ketubah' (Betrothal)

- Similar to our engagement, but far more serious  
The Ketubah is a marriage contract between the groom and his bride.

In the contract, the groom undertakes to give all that he has in order to provide for every need of his bride, not only while he is alive, but also in the event of his death.

# The Jewish Wedding

## 'Ketubah' (Betrothal)

- Similar to our engagement, but far more serious  
To mark this contract, the groom and bride drink from a cup of wine.





# The Jewish Wedding

## 'Ketubah' (Betrothal)

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

**Matthew 26:27-29**

# The Jewish Wedding



## Interval

- between the Ketubah and Huppah

It is customary for the Chatan (groom) and Kallah (bride) to remain apart for the time leading up to the wedding day.

During this time the groom will return to his father's house to prepare a room for his bride.

# The Jewish Wedding

## Interval

<sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

<sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

John 14:2-3



# The Jewish Wedding



## Interval

- Cleansing of the bride

Meanwhile, the bride will go to the 'Mikveh' (bath) to cleanse herself spiritually and enter marriage in a state of complete purity – 'without spot or blemish'.

One part of the ritual includes removing all manmade things (such as jewellery and nail polish etc) and then being fully immersed in water. She is supervised and assisted during the ritual to ensure it is done correctly.

# The Jewish Wedding

## Interval

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

**Ephesians 5:25-32**

# The Jewish Wedding

## Interval

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

**Ephesians 5:25-32**

- Our helper is the Holy Spirit
- *'He shall be with you and in you'* (John 14:17)



# The Jewish Wedding

## The 'Huppah'

- The Wedding

At the appointed time the groom will return with a shout and the blast of a rams horn, to claim his bride and take her back to his father's house, to the place he has prepared



# The Jewish Wedding

## The 'Huppah'

**16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

**17** Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

# The Jewish Wedding



## 'Marriage Supper'

- Seven Day Feast

After the marriage ceremony, the marriage supper begins which will last for seven days



# The Jewish Wedding



## 'Sheva Brachot'

- The Wedding Blessing

After the seven day feast, the wedding blessing is pronounced

After 7 years, the wedding blessing is pronounced for Christ and His Bride

# The Jewish Wedding

## 'Sheva Brachot'

<sup>6</sup> And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

<sup>7</sup> Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

**Revelation 19:6-9**

# The Jewish Wedding

## 'Sheva Brachot'

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Revelation 19:6-9



# The Jewish Wedding

## Incredible Model

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

Matthew 22:2

- God is the Father
- Jesus is the heavenly Bridegroom
- The Church is His Bride

# The Model In Zephaniah

- Israel were heading for judgment
- The priests had rejected God's word
- False prophets were promising peace
- They denied judgment was coming
- They were burning incense & embracing Idolatry
- God would allow Israel to go through this 'tribulation' to bring them back to Him
- The gentiles were long overdue judgment
- But God promised the meek that they could escape the coming wrath if they sought Him!





THE BOOK OF

# Zephaniah

*To be continued...*