ZEPHANIAH

Chapter 1

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah.** Which is (by interpretation) God's secretary, or, hidden one, ***Psalm 27:5; 83:3***. Or, as Jerome and some others will have it, God's watchman, ***Ezekiel 33:7***. A fit name for a prophet.

The son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, &c. These were, if not prophets (as the Jewish doctors make them), yet men famous in the Church (*Hebraei Prophetarum patres, quotquot nominatim recensentur, ipsos quoque prophetas fuisse dicunt*); as were Alexander and Rufus, though they be but mentioned and no more, ***Mark 15:21***.

In the days of Josiah. Who reigned thirty-one years, but, being in his minority, began not to reform religion, much corrupted in the days of his idolatrous father, Amon, till the eighteenth year of his reign, ***2 Kings 22:1; 23:23***, whether before or after the reformation, "the word of the Lord came unto Zephaniah," interpreters agree not. Jeremiah (his contemporary) began not to prophesy till the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign, ***Jeremiah 1:1, 2***, at what time (viz. in his twelfth year) he had begun to reform with a great deal of zeal, ***2 Chronicles 34:3***, but also he met with a great deal of opposition from the princes and people who had been woefully hardened and abituated in their idolatry under Manasseh and Amon, and therefore with much difficulty drawn off. Zephaniah and Jeremiah were singular helps, no doubt, to that peerless king in his zealous undertakings for God. But why he should send to Huldah, the prophetess, rather than to either of them, ***2 Kings 22:13***, what other reason can be given but that she dwelt in the college at Jerusalem, and so was next at hand? And why he went up against Pharaoh Necho, and sent not first to any prophet to ask their advice, what can we say but this, that sometimes both grace and wit are asleep in the holiest and wariest breasts? and that the best of God's saints may be sometimes miscarried by their passion, to their cost?
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Verse 2. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I will utterly consume all things from off the land.** *Exordium plane tragicum.* 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 at his pleasure, ***2 Timothy 2:26***. It is in the Hebrew, gathering I will gather all things, &c. *q. d. g.* I will pack up, I will take mine own, and be gone. *Converram et convasabo omnia,* I will sweep away all by the besom of my wrath, and leave a clean hand behind me, for the sins of those that dwell therein. The doubling of this denunciation, *colligendo colligam,* importeth the certainty, verity, and vehemence thereof.

Saith the Lord. *Dictum Iehovae.* You may believe it, therefore; for every word of his is sure, and cannot be broken, ***John 10:35***, may not be slighted or shifted off, ***Hebrews 12:25***.
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Verse 3. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I will consume man and beast.** Heb. I will gather (*as* ***Zephaniah 1:2***) them, and cast them away as they do the sweepings of the house. See the word used in this sense, ***Psalm 26:9***, "Gather not my soul with sinners," &c. God gathered his people for a better purpose; both while they are alive, ***Psalm 27:10***, and when they die, ***Isaiah 57:1***. The righteous is taken away (Heb. gathered) from the evil to come: as a shepherd gathereth his sheep when a storm is coming; or as a master of a family doth his jewels, when his house is on fire. But as for the wicked, they are gathered too, but it is for slaughter, as beasts in a pound, malefactors in a prison; and at the last day the tares shall be gathered and bundled up together for hell's furnace, ***Matthew 13:41, 42***.

I will consume the fowls of the heaven. Made for man's use, to be to him for food, ***Genesis***

9:2, for health and for delight, as companions of his life; hence it is threatened as a judgment to him to lose them, ***Jeremiah 4:25***, and here.

And the fishes of the sea. Made likewise for man's use to feed him, ***Numbers 11:5, 22; Luke 24:42***; hence the Latin *piscis* of *pasco,* to feed, and the Hebrew *Berechah* for a fishpool; the word signifieth a blessing, ***Genesis 12:2;*** *cf.* ***Nehemiah 2:20***. Now the Lord here threateneth destruction to beasts, birds, and fishes, not by the way of hyperbole, as the Rabbis dream; but because in common calamities, in warlike tumults, and when God will destroy a people indeed, the beasts also are killed, the fowls hunted away, the fishpools wasted, &c. Let those that will not believe this look into Illyricum, Thracia, Macedonia, Greece, and various parts of Turkey, laid utterly desolate and empty both of men and other creatures. Jerome upon this text, and likewise upon ***Hosea 4:3***, affirmeth the same of his native country, wasted so with war, *ut praeter coelum et coenum, et crescentes vipres et condensa silvarum, cuncta perierint,* that besides air and earth, and briers and forests, all was destroyed. And that we may not wonder at this severity of God, hear what the same Father saith elsewhere of his ungracious countrymen (Epist. ad Chremat.): *In men patria deus Venter est, et in diem vivitur, et sanctior est ille qui ditior:* In my country their belly is their god, their glory is in their shame, they mind earthly things: and so their end hath been destruction, and utter desolation, as ***Philippians 3:19***. Gualther's note here is very good; herein we may observe, saith he, the judgment of God and his wonderful providence; that whereas we see in populous places rivers and pools to abound with fish, woods and fields with birds and beasts, though they be continually caught and carried away; yet where there lack men to make use of them, there are few or none to be found. For as they were all made for man, so when men are consumed they also are consumed, as is here threatened. *Non ita temere fieri putemus.* Let us not think this to happend rashly. Let God's hand herein be acknowledged, and his anger appeased by faith in Christ Jesus and repentance from dead works, that our land may be sowed with the seed of men and of beasts.

And the stumblingblocks of the wicked. Those Balaam's blocks, those moments and monuments of idolatry, that so much offend God, and cause offence and ruin to those that worship them (as Eucherius interpreteth it), who are here called wicked, with an accent, and by a speciality.

And I will cut off man from off the land. Even the better sort of men too, who shall be wrapped up together with the wicked in the common calamity. The good figs as well as the bad are packed to Babylon; but with this difference that God will there set his eyes upon the good for good, ***Jeremiah 24:6***, as the grain is cut down as well as the weeds, but for better purpose.

Saith the Lord. Who hath spoken it twice that you may once well observe it, and lay it to heart. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah.** To whom I have so long stretched out my hand in vain to reclaim them, ***Isaiah 65:2; Proverbs 1:25***. If God do but put forth his hand to afflict, as Satan solicited him to do against Job, ***Job 1:11; 2:5***, who can abide it? but if he stretch it out as here, woe be to those that must feel the weight of it! His hand is a mighty hand, ***1 Peter 5:6***, the same that spans the heavens, and holds the earth as a very little thing, ***Isaiah 40:15***. "Lord," saith David (who had felt it in part), "who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath." *q.d.* Let a man fear thee never so much, he is sure to feel thee much more who falleth under the stroke of thine heavy hand. Oh keep out of his fingers, who can crush us to death before the moth, ***Job 4:19***.

And upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Who are therefore worse than others because they should be better; and shall fare the worse for their external privileges wherein they glory.

And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place. That which remained since Josiah's reformation, ***2 Kings 23:3-5***, saith Diodati, shall a nation be born at once? ***Isaiah 66:8***.

And the name of the Chemarims. Baal's chimney chaplains, they are translated idolatrous priests, ***1 Chronicles 23:5***. But because we find them here mentioned as distinct from the priests, therefore many expositors hold that they were certain ministers of their idolatry different from the priests; such as the monks are among the Papists. The Vulgate rendereth it *Aedituos,* underlings to the other priests: Elias in Tisby, saith they were such as were shut up in cloisters, *Chemarim Atrati* they are called, either from their black garments, or because they were smutched with burning incense, or from the brandmarks they had superstitiously set upon their bodies, or because of their pretended fiery zeal and fervency in their religion, such as are the *Sacrifici Seraphici* among the Papists, who falsely and foolishly call them the lights of the world, *sc.* to light them into utter darkness. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops.** Called elsewhere the Queen of heaven, the constellations and heavenly bodies: whom they thought to worship so much the more acceptably, if in an open place and on high, in the very sight of the stars. *Observent ista qui hodie Astrologiam iudiciariam profitentur,* saith Gualther, Let those among us observe this who profess judiciary astrology; for these worship the stars no less than did the heathens of old, and do openly bring in heathenism again; while (first) they call the stars by the names of those heathenish deities, that ought to be abolished; and next, they subject to those stars all events of things, yea, man himself as touching all his manners and fortunes, which the Scripture affirmeth to depend upon the eternal providence of God alone. This is intolerable impiety, and they that fall into it, shall not escape the just judgment of God.

And them that worship and that swear by the Lord (or to the Lord, consecrating themselves as by oath to his service), and that swear by Malcham**.** That is, by their king, as the Egyptians did of old, ***Genesis 42:15***. The Spaniards at this day, in the pride of their monarchy, are grown also to swear by the life of their king. There are a sort of mongrel Christians in the East called Melchites, as one would say of the king's religion, because they resolved to do as Melech the king commanded them, though it were to make a mixture of religions, as these in the text would, and as our late moderators, *Sancta Clara* and others, of whom one said well, that they had made a pretty show, had there been no Bible, to tell us, that the jealous and just God hateth and plagueth halting between two, lukewarmness and neutrality in religion, all dough baked duties, speckled birds, ploughing with an ox and an ass, mingled seeds, linseywoolsey garments, ***Leviticus 19:19***. Upon which text the Douay doctor's note is, here all participation with heretics and schismatics is forbidden. But by Malcham most understand here an idol of the Ammonites, otherwise called Molech, served in Tophet near to Jerusalem, and in the mount of Olives, called therefore the mount of corruption, ***2 Kings 23:13***. Which God could not but see as often as he looked out of the sanctuary. These worshippers of Malcham would not utterly renounce the true God, but they would set up others with him as partners: this would not be endured. Such were of old the Samaritans among the Jews, the Ebionites among the Christians, the Papists to this day, who swear by God and saints, and pray to God and his saints, and commit themselves to them (together with God) as their tutelars and patrons. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And them that are turned back from the Lord.** Not gross idolaters, but yet treacherous backsliders, that fall off from their former forwardness, that turn from the holy commandments, ***2 Peter 2:21***, that depart *a post Dominum,* from after the Lord, as the Hebrew here hath it, apostates, those worst of men, that do not only not fulfil after the Lord, as Caleb, but utterly forsake him. A heavier judgment awaiteth such. "God shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity," ***Psalm 125:5***.

And those that have not sought the Lord, nor enquired after him. Diligently sought him, ***Hebrews 11:6***, zealously inquired after him, as after a lost jewel, ***Jeremiah 29:13***. God will visit for unzealousness; and curse those that do his work carelessly, cursorily, in a perfunctory, formal, bedulling way. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God.** 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, Three in One, and One in Three: thou art also always in his presence, which thou canst not flee from them, ***Psalm 139:7***, therefore see ***Habakkuk 2:20***, (***See Trapp on "Habakkuk 2:20"***) and the rather because God stands over thee with his judgments.

For the day of the Lord is at hand. Wherein he will powerfully declare himself to be a God that cannot lie, and that his wrath is *quo diuturnior eo minacior,* the longer in coming the heavier it lands. This was soon after fulfilled in the death of their good King Josiah, with whom died all the peace and prosperity of that people: and Judea often changed her masters, but not her miseries, till at length she was carried captive to Babylon.

For the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice. That is, a bloody slaughter of you, by the cruel Chaldees, who shall sacrifice you, that have so much gloried in the multitude of your sacrifices: and God shall glorify himself as much now in your just destruction as ever he did in your forefathers' commendable devotion.

He hath bid his guests. The Babylonians, and (after they have filled themselves) the birds and beasts, as ***Revelation 19:17, 18***, so that ye shall have *sepulturam insepultam,* a graceless burial. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice.** Or, good cheer; for at their sacrifices they used to feast their friends; and here the Lord is providing dainties for his guests; viz. the flesh of princes, gallants, courtiers, ***Zephaniah 1:9***, merchants, ***Zephaniah 1:11***, who use to eat the fat and drink the sweet, "nourishing their hearts as in a day of slaughter," ***James 5:5***; and now also for a day of slaughter, when the beasts shall tear their flesh and the birds bare their bones.

That I will punish the princes and the king's children. Who might seem to be safest of any, and farthest off from danger; but God's hand can easily reach them, and shall do with the first, because their faults fly fast abroad upon those two wings of example and scandal. See this threatening fulfilled in Josiah's sons, those degenerate plants, *Heroum filii noxae.* Jehoahaz ambitiously stepped into his father's throne before his elder brother, and was soon after carried down to Egypt, and there slain. Jehoiakim, the elder brother, succeeded him; but rebelling against the King of Babylon, he was carried captive, and dying by the way, was buried with the burial of an ass, being cast out, to be torn by birds and beasts, according to this prophecy, ***Jeremiah 22:19***. Jechoniah came after, and was likewise carried into captivity: but because he hearkened to Jeremiah, persuading him to yield, and to go into voluntary banishment, he had some good days toward his latter end, ***Jeremiah 52:31, 32***. Lastly Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, was made king; who as he was worse than the former, so he sped worse. See ***Jeremiah 39:6, 7***. *Potentes potenter torquebantur.* The powerful are twisted powerfully.

And all such as are clothed with strange apparel. Those gallants, that imitated in their raiment those whom they most inclined to; some the Egyptians, others the Babylonians. A vanity not known in England, they say, till the wars in Holland. And (as *ex malls moribus bonae leges*) then first were great ruffs, with huge wide sets, and cloaks reaching almost to the ankles, no less uncomely than costly, restrained by proclamation (Camd. Eliz. 215). Now, what

so common with our fashion mongers (against whom this is a stinging and a flaming text) than to be clothed with strange apparel, *a la mode de France* especially, and other Popish countries? But what saith one, borrow not (fashions) of the Egyptians; if you do you may get their boils and botches; of the Polonians, lest you get the *plica Polonica* in your hairy scalps; of the French, lest the *lues Gallica* befall you. Oh what enemy of thine hath taught thee so much vanity? said Mr John Fox to his son, returning from his travels, and attired in a loose outlandish fashion. (Hist. of Modern Divin.) Those that affected the Babylonian habit were sent captives to Babylon, ***Ezekiel 23:15***, and those proud dames (whose wardrobe is inventoried, ***Isaiah 3:16-24***) were a cause that the mighty men fell in battle, ***Isaiah 3:25, 26***. Seneca complaineth, that many in his time were more solicitous of their attire than of their good behaviour; and that they had rather the commonwealth should be troubled than their locks and set looks. And doth not our age abound with such fantastic *Cincinnatuli?* {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold.** *i.e.* Great men's officers, who by an absolute power went into other men's houses, and to whom no doors were shut, saith Mr Diodati. These leap upon the threshold, that is, with great impudence and insolence, they invade and spoil other men's houses, and do what they wish, like so many *lurdaines,* or lord danes: neither dare any question or control them. Lo, such things were done in good Josiah's days without his consent or so much as knowledge; for none might be suffered to come to him with a complaint; always being shut up by those great ones about him, whose houses were by that means filled with violence and deceit, that is, with those ill-gotten goods, got by wrench and wile from the right but unrelieved possessors, through the might and sleight of those unconscionable subordinates. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**There shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate.** Called also the first gate, ***Zechariah 14:10***, whereat the Chaldeans entered, and caused a great hubbub, as in such a case is usual.

And an howling from the second. Called by the Chaldee paraphrast the bird gate; there was also one called the horse gate, ***Jeremiah 31:40***. Some understand the text, not of any gate, but of the second part of the city: for there was the upper town and the lower town (whence Jerusalem is of the dual number, *Jerushalajim),* and the tower of David, on the hill of Zion. Others, of the college where Huldah dwelt, ***2 Kings 22:14***, a school of learning, as the Chaldee interpreteth it, and called Mishneh, as you would say, a place of repetition, or of catechizing the younger sort; with whom nothing sticks but what is repeated to them over and over, as the knife goeth over the whetstone. *Shanan et Shauah repetere, sicut in acuendo.* See ***Deuteronomy 6:7***.

And a great crashing (**or shivering, Heb. shebhor**) **from the hills.** Gareb and Goath, ***Jeremiah 31:39***, and the rest that were round about Jerusalem, ***Psalm 125:2***. The prophet's scope is to show that all places shall be full of tumult and outcry upon the approach of the enemy. They, that would not listen to the sweet voice of God, inciting and enticing them to repentance, have now their ears filled with hideous and horrid notes and noises. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh.** Or, of the mortar, or of the low and hollow place, of the base town, where grain was ground in mortars, before mills were in use. These are here called upon to "turn their laughter to mourning, and their joy into heaviness, to weep and howl for the evils that shall come upon them," ***James 4:9; 5:1***, but especially for their sins, the cause of those miseries; for God's judgments upon sinners are feathered from themselves: as a fowl shot with an arrow feathered from her own body.

For all the merchant people are cut down. The merchant men were wont to furnish the mortar men, such as dealt in grain, spicery, and the like. These shall be cut down, as being more like Canaanites (a people devoted to destruction) than Israelites, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of their help, and the sword of their excellency, ***Deuteronomy 33:29***. See ***Hosea 12:13***. (***See Trapp on "Hosea 12:13"***) He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress, see ***Amos 8:5, 6; Micah 6:10-12***. Merchandise well managed is of great use to kingdoms and states, for many reasons. 1. For determining the counsels and strength of other nations. 2. For procuring the love and friendship of foreign princes and people. 3. For exchanging of commodities; for *non omnis fert omnia tellus.* not everything is born from all ground. 4. For gaining experience of many and great matters; this caused Thales, Hippocrates, and Solon to exercise merchandise. 5. It occasioned the building of many famous cities: Massilia for one, as Plutarch writeth. Nevertheless this honourable profession is much abused by those whom Nahum calleth cankerworms, ***Nahum 3:16***, for their covetousness, luxury, oppression, bringing in unnecessary wars (that emasculate and dissolve men's spirits), and heretical books that undo their souls; and, lastly, for their carrying out the wealth of their country to strangers, yea, to enemies sometimes. Hence they are justly cut down by God, and are to be ordered by the magistrates according to ***Leviticus 19:35, 36; Deuteronomy 25:15; Ezekiel 45:9-12***.

All they that bear silver are cut off. The rich traders, that had *marsupia plena* full purse, and carried money in great burdens, these shall be also cut off or silenced, have nothing to say for themselves why they should not be destroyed with the rest, as those that have been *involuti argento,* as the Vulgate translation hath it here, so wrapped up in their money, and affected to it, as that it hath rather possessed them than they it. *Cor habent in aere non in aethere,* "their heart goeth after their covetousness," ***Ezekiel 33:31***. Here they are called *portatores argenti,* silver carriers, sumpter horses, laden with thick clay. Silver is that which the basest element yieldeth, the most savage Indians get, servile apprentices work, Midianitish camels carry, miserable muck worms admire, covetous Jews swallow, unthirsty ruffians spend. It is to be wondered (saith one) that treading upon these minerals we cannot condemn them. They lie furthest from heaven; and the best of them are in India, furthest from the Church; and yet how many doth money make to run quick to the devil on an errand, and pays them home for their pains? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I will search Jerusalem with candles.** Which yet he needs not do, sith the "darkness hideth not front him, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are to him alike," ***Psalm 139:12;*** *cf.* ***Job 34:22; Jeremiah 23:24***. *Deo obscura lucent, muta respondent, silentium confitetur,* Night will convert itself into noon before God, and silence become a speaking evidence. His eyes also are "a flaming fire," that needs no outward light, but sees by sending out a ray; but when Jerusalem is threatened to be searched with lights, the meaning is, that it shall be set all upon a light fire, and the inhabitants ferreted out of their lurking holes, their princes and potentates pulled out of privies and sepulchres by the pursuing enemy, as Jerome out of Josephus here affirmeth they once were. Besides that, they shall be brought to a particular and punctual account for their sins; God will be very exact and accurate with them that way; setting all their evil deeds in order before their eyes, ***Psalm 50:21***, and bringing wrath upon them to the utmost, ***1 Thessalonians 2:16***. This is fearful, ***Psalm 130:3***, and shall be fulfilled especially at the last day, when wicked men shall give an account of every detail, of all their atheistical thoughts, ***Psalm 14:1***, ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him, ***Jude 1:15***, with the whole world flaming about their ears, ***2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Thessalonians 1:8***.

And punish the men that are settled on their lees. *Coagulati,* curded or thickened, congealed and condensed; that are habituated and hardened in their evil practices; that have

got a sward, nay, a hoof upon their hearts; that have brawny breasts and horny heartstrings; that stick stiffly in the mire of their sins, as Moab, ***Jeremiah 48:11***, and being deeply drowned in the world, are desperately divorced from God, whom they basely fancy to be a God of clouts. one that, however he speak big words, yet will do neither good nor hurt.

That say in their heart. As that sapless fellow doth, ***Psalm 14:1***, **לבנ**. Some set their mouths against heaven, and shame not to utter their reasonings and resolutions of this kind. These are *Epicuri de grege porci;* such as was Lucretius, Diagoras, Horace with his

> *—credat Iudaeus Apella.*
> *Non ego, namque deos didici securum agere aevum.*

Let the Jews believe a providence; not I, &c., saith that profane poet. But behold here were Jews, yea, and that in good Josiah's days, that said in their hearts (those feculent hearts of theirs, full of dregs and dross),

The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.

> *"Nec bene pro meritis capitur, nee tangitur ira."*

Of such practical atheists, that say in their hearts there is no God, and live thereafter, there are great store even among us; of such dust-heaps we may find in every corner. And when men are once arrived at this *Terra del Fuego,* this desperate degree of atheism, what wonder though they run riot in all sinful licentiousness. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Therefore their goads shall become a booty.** Their illgotten goods, ***Zephaniah 1:9, 11*** (for a proof of my providence which they blushed not to deny), shall be carried away by the Chaldees, to their unmedicinable sorrow and heartbreak, ***Ecclesiastes 4:1-3***.

And their houses a desolation**.** Because built in blood. See ***Nahum 2:11, 12***.

They shall also build houses, but not inhabit them, &c. *Ex lege mutuatur minas.* That they might the more regard his words, the prophet makes use of the menaces of the law, ***Deuteronomy 28:30, 39***, whereof the prophets were interpreters; applying, as here, the general doctrine thereof to the people of their times. To rebuke or exhort men in good words, in God's own words, is the readiest way to prevail with them; unless they be *Lucifugae scripturarum* (as Tertullian saith of the Marcionites and Valentinians), which yet will take hold of them howsoever, ***Zechariah 1:6***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The great day of the Lord is near, it is near.** It is the "day of the Lord," that fatal day appointed by him to ruin the nation; for with him it is all one, whether it be done against a nation or against a man only, ***Job 34:29***. Next, it is his great day; because therein the great God will set himself to do great matters: how much more at the day of judgment, called also "a great day," ***Revelation 6:17; 16:14***.

This great day is near, yea, very near, it hasteth greatly. It hath wings, and wind under those wings, as ***Zechariah 5:9***; it will be upon men ere they are aware; neither will anything more hasten it than their security and fearlessness. Think the same of the last day, which cannot but be at hand, and then the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off, ***Psalm 37:38***.

Even the voice of the day of the Lord. Methinks I hear it.

> *"Fallor? an arma sonant? non fallimur, arma sonabant.*
> *Mars venit, et veniens bellica signa dedit."*

Jerome speaketh thus to himself, whether I eat, or drink, or sleep, methinks I hear that last trump sounding these words in mine ears, Surgite mortui, venite in iudicium, Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment. A very necessary meditation.

The mighty man shall cry there bitterly. How much more the *turba imbellis,* the weak and cowardly! they shall take up a loud lamentation, and cry with the breaking of their loins. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress.** By this synathroismos, or heap of words, the prophet would frighten and arouse these dead and indolent sinners, settled upon their lees, so wedded and wedged to their wicked practices that nothing can sunder them but an extraordinary touch from the hand of Heaven. See ***Joel 2:1-3;*** *cf.* ***Amos 5:18-20***, (***See Trapp on "Amos 5:18"***) (***See Trapp on "Amos 5:19"***) (***See Trapp on "Amos 5:20"***) and consider what the terror of the Lord's last day will be. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 16. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:16]]{{field-on:Bible}}**A day of the trumpet.** With its horrid *taratantara* and alarm; not of those that shout and praise God, neither with a noise of joy and triumph, as ***Numbers 23:21; Psalm 67:5; Ezra 3:11, 12***; but of those that shout with broken sounds in the day of battle, as ***Amos 1:14***, *in classico,* in a war trumpet with a vociferation and horrible howling, such as the Turks to this day make when they storm a city.

Against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. Wherein ye trust, but in vain. These high towers were built at the corners of the walls. Hence the Hebrew text here hath it, Against the high corners. Great men and such as bear up the weight of the commonwealth are sometimes called by this name, ***1 Samuel 14:38***. Draw ye near hither, all ye chief of the people: Heb. All ye corners. See the like ***Zechariah 10:4; Judges 20:2***. Neither men nor means were ever true to those that trusted them. Our help is in the name of the Lord, that strong tower whereto the righteous run and are safe, ***Proverbs 18:10***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 17. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:17]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men.** The Dutch have a proverb, God puts out the eyes of him whom he intendeth to destroy; *i.e.* he besots and infatuates them, they shall be *consilii et auxilii inopes: in rebus liquidis aqua haerebit:* they grope for the wall like the blind, they grope as if they had no eyes: they stumble at noon day as in the night; they are in desolate places as dead men, ***Isaiah 59:10***. This was long before threatened, ***Deuteronomy 28:28, 29***.

Because they have sinned against the Lord. Sin is the mother of misery. See my Lovetokens.

And their blood shall be poured out as dust. Than which nothing is more vile and abject; the enemy shall make no more of spilling their blood than of sprinkling a little dust, *Copiosissime et abiectissime* most richly and lowly. (Turner.)

And their flesh as dung. Spread upon the land to manure it. The Hebrew word for flesh here may seem to signify worms' meat. Our bodies are no better, why then do we pamper and pink them up? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 1:18]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath.** "We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold," ***1 Peter 1:18***. Money hath drowned many a soul, ***1 Timothy 6:9***, delivered none. See ***Proverbs 11:4; Isaiah 13:17; Ezekiel 7:19***. (***See Trapp on "Proverbs 11:4"***) It is righteousness, and not riches, that delivereth from death, ***Proverbs 10:2***. Money can neither pacify God, nor still the conscience, nor stop the enemy's mouth, but inflame them rather with an unsatisfiable desire of enjoying all, as Rome did the Gauls, and Cyprus the Romans (Sextus Rufus); and as the pearls, usually cast out with the flood, and

gathered at the ebb, drew Caesar's affection for the conquest of Britain (Sueton.).

But the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy. The sins of God's people are not only disobediences, but treacheries, because of the covenant. God is thereby provoked to jealousy, which "is cruel as the grave," or hard as hell; "the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame," ***Solomon's Song 8:6***, the word signifies the consuming flame of God.

For he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land. Swept clean by God with the besom of destruction; so that the land was desolate after them, ***Zechariah 7:14***. Affliction rose not up the second time, ***Nahum 1:9***. See the notes there, and learn to give God the glory of his severity against sin. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 2

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together.** *Excutite vos, iterumque excutite.* Fan yourselves, yea, fan yourselves (Tremell.). The precept is doubled, as it is likewise ***Numbers 3:40; 2 Corinthians 13:5***, to show the necessity of our doing it, as also the utility if well done; and, lastly, our crossness and averseness thereunto, together with God's exceeding great desire that it should be thoroughly done for our greatest good. Grievous things he had threatened in the former chapter; all which to prevent, he here prescribeth them a course of self-examination, and thereupon sound conversion; so true is that of an ancient, *Ideo minatur Deus ut non puniat,* God doth therefore threaten that he may not punish (Isidore). It is as if God should thus say, Behold, thou art in danger of destruction; is it not therefore high time to search, yea, to be serious and exact in the scrutiny? to gather thy dispersed wits together, to summon the sobriety of thy senses before the bar of thy best judgment? to consider and consult what is fit to be done in this case? to have thine eyes in thine head, with Solomon's wise man? ***Ecclesiastes 2:14***; yea, to have thine eyes like the windows in Solomon's temple, broad inward, ***1 Kings 6:4***. Men's minds are naturally as ill set as their eyes; they turn neither of them inward. *Lamiae* or witch-like, they are sharp sighted abroad to discern other men's faults; but blind at home to take notice of their own. Nature shows no sin: What is our iniquity or our sin? said those in Jeremiah, when wrath was even breaking out upon them, ***Jeremiah 16:10***; so ***Hosea 12:8***. Men deal with their souls as some do with their bodies; who, when their beauty is decayed, they desire to hide it from themselves by false glasses, and from others by painting; so their sins, from themselves by false glosses, and from others by excuses. But he that thus hideth his sins cannot prosper, ***Proverbs 28:13***, he must not look for Gaius's prosperity, ***3 John 1:2***, but for further hardness of heart, ***Proverbs 28:14***, and horror of conscience, ***Psalm 32:3***. For God will not rap up men's bones before they are set, nor lap up their sores before they are searched. Wherefore search you, search you, O nation, &c. Search yourselves to the quick, sift you to the bran, lay your hands upon your hearts, thrust them deep into your bosoms, with Moses, so shall you take them out again leprous as snow, ***Exodus 4:6***. Commune with your consciences and be still, or, make a pause, ***Psalm 4:4***, lay a peremptory charge upon them to be true to you, and to do their office impartially, in laying open how many transgressions are wrapt up in your sins, ***Leviticus 16:21***, in bringing them all forth to you, as they in Ezra brought forth the vessels of the sanctuary, by number and by weight, in their circumstances and aggravations, ***Ezra 8:34***. Why should God say unto thee of thy sins, as once Samuel did to Jesse of his sons, Are these all thy children? Conscience, if not charged to the contrary, and well watched, will either lie to thee, as Gehazi did to his master; or, at least, subtract a part of thy sins, as Ananias and Sapphira did a part of the price. Search, therefore, and follow your work close, that ye may say, with Ephraim, ***Jeremiah 31:19***, After that I was made known to myself, I repented; and, with David, I examined my ways, and finding all out of order, "I turned my feet to thy testimonies," ***Psalm 119:59***.

O nation not desired. As not desirable; having nothing of worth in thee wherefore any should be found of thee, or seek any further after thee. Daniel was a man of desires, ***Daniel 9:23***. David a man after God's own heart. Moses fair to God, ***Acts 7:20***. The saints are the desired ones of all nations, as some read that text, ***Haggai 2:7***, *ut veniant desiderati omnium gentium* (Jun.). The precious sons of Zion comparable (not to silver only, as the word here used importeth, but) to fine gold, ***Lamentations 4:2***. As for the wicked, they are all dross, ***Ezekiel 22:18, 19***, and God doth so little desire them, as that he putteth them away, or maketh them to cease as dross, ***Psalm 119:119***, and commandeth others to do the like by them, ***Proverbs 25:4, 5***. Some take the words in the active sense, and render them, O nation not desirous; viz. to search thy ways and turn again to me. Thou that hast no mind to be dealing with thyself, or to draw nigh to me, but hadst as lief be knocked on the head as do either: *Gens vacua desiderio.*

O nation, void of any good desires. Whereas *tota Christiani hominis vita sanctum desiderium est,* the whole life of a good Christian is one continous desire after God, his kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, ***Matthew 6:33***; he followeth after it, ***Proverbs 21:21***, as an apprentice followeth his trade, though he be not his craftsmaster. Some faint desires, luskish longings, short winded wishes, may be found in a wicked man; but they rise not up to the full height of well knit resolution for God. Like they are to meteors that are carried above the earth, but not united to the element of fire; therefore they fall and return to their first principles; like ice, which melteth in the day and hardeneth again in the night; like the sluggard in his bed, that puts out his arm to rise, and then pulls it in again, see ***Psalm 78:34, 38***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Before the decree bring forth.** The decree is great bellied, and will shortly bring forth, if not prevented. There is an execution towards; and if course be not timeously taken, ye are like to pay, not the debt only, but charges and damages. Look to it quickly "before the decree," &c. Here are three cautionary "befores," as there are four comfortable "yets" to be read ***Zechariah 1:17***. God yet offers them mercy, as Alexander did those he warred against, while the lamp burned; and as Tamerlane, while the white flag was hung out. See ***Jeremiah 18:7, 8***.

Before the day pass as the chaff. Before that day of the Lord that is near, very near, ***Zephaniah 1:14, 15***. Pass upon you, and ye become as chaff before the wind, as the dust of the mountains before the whirlwind. O fan you, fan you; for else God will fan you after another fashion; search you, or he will soon search you with candles, ***Zephaniah 1:12***; gather yourselves together, or he will gather your souls with sinners, and your lives with bloody men, ***Psalm 26:9***. Would men but judge themselves God would not judge them, ***1 Corinthians 11:31***; did they but see their sins to confession they should never see them to their confusion, ***Proverbs 28:13***, would they but meet God, as Abigail did David, they might disarm his indignation. Saving a little pains in this case doubleth it; and the best that can come of negligence is repentance. It is better that we should try ourselves, than that he should try us in his furnace of temptation, or other affliction. Do it, therefore, "before the day pass as the chaff," or before the chaff or stubble pass in that day, pass before the wind wherewith God shall winnow you, who would not winnow yourselves. The scholar that will not scan his own verses shall find that, his master will scan them to his cost. And the tradesman that will not cast up his books shall have his books to cast up him at length.

Before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you. As a mighty torrent of fire, such as you are never able to avoid or abide. Abused mercy turneth into fury; neither will God suffer his patience to stand still for a sinning stock. Twice in a breath these hypocrites are here told what to trust unto for more surety. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth.** Here the prophet turneth himself to the better sort; for upon those hypocritical halters aforementioned he had but lost his sweet words; he did but wash a blackamoor. We read not in Scripture of any hypocrite' s conversion; and what wonder? for whereas after sin conversion is left as a means to cure all other sinners, what means to recover him who hath converted conversion itself into sin? This made our Saviour say to his disciples concerning the Pharisees, those cankered hypocrites, "Let them alone," ***Matthew 15:14***, and himself weary of wasting words upon them, called to the multitude and said, "hear ye and understand," ***Zephaniah 2:10***. In like sort this prophet here, "Seek ye the Lord"; for it is past time of day with them to seek him; therefore they shall go with their flocks and their herds to seek the Lord, but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them, ***Hosea 5:6***. Concerning seeking the Lord see. (***See Trapp on "Amos 5:6"***) (***See Trapp on "Amos 5:8"***)

All ye meek of the earth. This is the character, the distinctive note of a true Christian; who, as

he is sure to be afflicted (affliction and meekness grow both upon the same root in the holy tongue), so by affliction he is meekened and mortified, his flesh is crucified with the affections and lusts; and so he is fitted to seek the Lord, to lie at his feet and say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. These meek and lowly ones (ταπεινοὶ, Septuag.) are they whom God will teach, ***Psalm 25:9***, beautify, ***Psalm 149:4***, solace, ***Isaiah 29:19; 61:1***, save: God will save the humble person, ***Job 22:29***. Now meekness and humility are a pair of twin sisters, never asunder (*Sorores collactaneae*) sisters nourished at the same breast. See how they go coupled, ***Matthew 11:29***, and the Seventy render this text, all the lowly of the earth, that are as low as the earth in your own eyes and esteem (ταπεινός, *quasi,* ἐδᾰφεινός, *solo aequatus*).

Which have wrought his judgment. *i.e.* Have been doing at it, *qui fecistis praecepta etsi non prefecistis,* who aim at perfection though ye cannot attain to it, who think upon his commandments to do them, ***Psalm 103:18***, having respect to them all, and wishing well to the work, ***Psalm 118:5, 6***, which God graciously accepteth as a working his judgment, and yet would have you to abound more and more. Wherefore,

Seek righteousness, seek meekness. *i.e.* Further measures of holiness and degrees of grace. Let him that is holy be holy still, let him persevere, grow, and advance forward toward the high prize proposed unto him, taking for his motto that of Charles V, *Plus ultra,* further yet, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, ***2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Timothy 6:11***, "But thou, O man of God" (that is, O godly man, as the life of God is put for a godly life, ***Ephesians 4:18***; see ***2 Kings 4:9***), "fly these things" (what things? heterodoxies, ***1 Timothy 6:3-5***, and love of money, ***1 Timothy 6:9, 10***), "and follow after" (Gr. persecute, pursue, *alacriter et acriter*) eagerly and briskly "righteousness," this is the *totum hominis,* whole of man, ***Ecclesiastes 12:13***, the *bonum hominis,* good of man, ***Micah 7:8***, and by way of distribution comprehendeth, as to God, "godliness and faith"; as to men, "love, patience, meekness."

It may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's wrath. Possibly ye may, probably ye shall be; pardon of sin ye shall be sure of; mitigation also of sorrow, if not prevention; saved ye shall be, or more gently handled, or so inwardly calmed, that ye shall be able to call your souls to rest when others are at their wits' ends. You shall be safe under the cover of God's wings, and in the hollow of his hand; when others, that are without God in the world, shall be as a naked man in a storm, an unarmed man in the field, or as a ship at sea without anchor, subject to dash and split against rocks and quicksands. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Askelon**, &c. Here is dainty rhetoric in the original. This prophet was (as Quintilian saith a good orator ought to be) *Vir bonus, dicendi peritus,* a good man, and a master of speech. The Hebrew tongue seemeth to have been in the prime and flourish when Isaiah, Micah, and Zephaniah prophesied, like as the Latin was about Cicero's time. The Philistines are here threatened, for a terror to the impenitent Jews, who should taste of the same whip, and for the comfort of the godly, who should be hid when these their enemies should be utterly destroyed. Gaza was so forsaken, according to this prophecy, that it was therehence called Gaza, the desert; Askelon, according to its name, became *ignis ignominia,* the reproach of the fire that wasted it, and (as a merciless element) laid it desolate. Ashdod (called in the New Testament Azotus, ***Acts 8:26***) shall also, according to its etymology, be wasted with fire, and her inhabitants driven into a far country as captives at high noon, when the sun, in those hot climates especially, is most parching and scorching; they shall be driven out with all the disadvantage that may be.

And Ekron shall be rooted out. Ekron was the place where Beelzebub, the prince of devils had his throne. The poets put it for hell. *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.* Threatened it is therefore here (not without an elegance that cannot be translated) with utter

extirpation. The grand devil had nested and nestled himself as near the Holy Land as might be; but he shall not long rest there, the Hebrew child (παῖς Ἑβραῖος) will disquiet the great Pan. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Woe to the inhabitants of the sea coast.** These were the Philistines; they lay between the Jews and the sea; God having so disposed of it, that his people might not have much commerce with foreign nations, nor learn their manners. Into havens and maritime towns there is usually a conflux of vices, like as there is of waters into the sea: witness Tyre and Sidon, Corinth, Carthage, Capernaum, &c. Hence that proverb, *maritimi mores;* naval customs, and that censure of such people, *littorales duri, horridi, immanes, latrociniis dediti, omnium denique pessimi,* Those that dwell by the seaside are usually ill-conditioned, ferce, cruel, thievish, and the worst of men. These Philistines were no better, and are therefore here put under a woe, and threatened with utter destruction.

The nation of the Cherethites. *i.e.* Destroyer; so the Philistines had styled themselves, as glorying to have conquered and cut off many people. The old Latin translation rendereth it *Gens perditorum,* The nation of destroyers; so doth Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. Now it comes to their turn to be destroyed, according to ***Isaiah 33:1***. That these Cherethites were a sort of Philistines, see ***1 Samuel 30:14, 16; Ezekiel 25:16;*** That they were valiant men appears by that legion of them that guarded David, ***2 Samuel 8:4***, and were highly esteemed by him, because they stuck to him in his affliction at Gath, and also when Absalom was up in arms, ***2 Samuel 15:18***.

The word of the Lord is against you. And not only against Israel. This was spoken, as for the terror of those Philistines, who thought themselves out of the reach of God's rod, and slighted his word, so for the comfort of the people of God, who thought much that themselves should be so severely dealt with, and the uncircumcised Philistines escape scot free.

O Canaan, the land of the Philistines. Indeed, of the Israelites, ***Joshua 13:3***, but held by force by the Philistines, who were of the stock of the Canaanites, but not subdued; and had detained part of the land from the right owners for eight hundred years and upwards; and now they come to be reckoned with. *Subito tollitur qui diu toleratur.* Suddenly be destroyed who where tolerated for a long time.

I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. No settled inhabitant, that shall fix there, as the word signifieth. Thus *Poena venit gravior, quo mage sera venit,* the longer God stays the heavier he strikes. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And the sea coasts shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds.** It shall be waste and untilled, and therefore unfrequented by any but shepherds, who pitch their tents up and down, where they may best feed their flocks, in desert places.

And folds for flocks. God may do thus in his just judgment upon his enemies, that live in his good land, and not by his good laws; but woe be to our depopulators, that drive out men and put in cattle; that betray towns, as Rome did Carthage, with a distinction, We will save the city, but destroy the town. How dangerous it is to prove Abaddons appeareth by God's punishing hand upon William the Conqueror's issue in New Forest, wherein thirty-six parish churches had been demolished by him, with the removing of all the inhabitants, to make room for beasts, or dogs' game. There his second son, Richard, was gored in hunting by a deer; Rufus, his other son, mistaken for a deer, was by chance shot through with an arrow; Henry likewise, his nephew, while he hotly pursued the chase was struck by a bough into the jaws, and, as Absalom, left hanging until he died. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And the coast shall be for the remnant**

of the house of Judah. Who had not only their own country kept empty for them all the seventy years of captivity, and not any displaced to make room at their return (***See Trapp on "Zechariah 7:14"***) but liberty to make use of the Philistines' country; which was also further subdued by the Maccabees, but especially by the apostles, who preached the gospel, and planted Churches in those parts, as we read in the Acts, ***Acts 8:26, 40; 9:32, 35, 36***.

They shall feed thereupon. They shall go in and out, and find pasture, under the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, who shall feed them daily and daintily among the lilies, by the powerful preaching of the gospel among them, ***John 10:9; 1 Peter 2:25***.

In the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening. *Ubi temporis circumstantia securitatem notat,* saith Gualther, The circumstance of time noteth their spiritual security; evenings are often dark and dangerous. They shall lie down as cattle do, that take no care; they know whom they have trusted, and are fearless.

For the Lord their God shall visit them. Visit and redeem his people, raising up a horn of salvation for them, ***Luke 1:68, 69***. His visits are not empty visits; ***Psalm 8:5***; his favours are not like the winter sun, that lighteth, but heateth not.

And turn away their captivity. To their inexpressible comfort, ***Psalm 126:1***, but especially when Christ, ascending up on high, leadeth captivity captive, ***Colossians 2:14, 15; Ephesians 4:8***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I have heard the reproach of Moab.** How can he but hear who is all ear? who is both above us, and within us, in whom we subsist, ***Colossians 1:17***. And what will he sooner be sensible of than the reproachings of his people? see ***Isaiah 37:28; 57:3, 4***; "But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore." (See how he becalls them.) "Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood?" The Moabites and Ammonites were great jeerers of the Jews, and revilers of their religion. These reproaches, *leniter volant, non leniter violant,* cruel mockings the apostle calleth them, ***Hebrews 11:36***. David felt them as a murdering weapon in his bones, ***Psalm 42:10***. God will call such men to a heavy reckoning one day as deride the power of godliness and the professors thereof. Bede saith, that this was the great sin of the ancient Britons immediately before their destruction by the Saxons; and it is at this day both a presage and desert of our ruin, that as the Turks count all fools to be saints, so men with us account all saints to be fools.

And the revilings of the children of Ammon. How good they were at it we may see in those words of Sanballat and his companion Tobiah the Ammonite, ***Nehemiah 4:2, 3***, words as full of pride and scorn as profane wit or rancoured malice could make them; and they lay so heavy upon Nehemiah's spirit that he could not ease himself but by breathing heavenward: ***Nehemiah 2:4***, "Hear, O our God; for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity," &c. Hear, saith Nehemiah: I have heard it, saith God. "Thou hast seen it," saith the Psalmist, "for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thine hand," ***Psalm 10:14***.

And magnified themselves. By speaking big and blustering words, bubbles of words, great swelling words, full of wind, ***2 Peter 2:18***, these shall find that such words are not wind, but will be required in fire, ***Jude 1:15***. God is an utter enemy to boasting and threatening braggards. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Therefore as I live.** This is God's oath; so, As true as I live, ***Numbers 14:21;*** *cf.* ***Psalm 95:10***, therefore they are to blame that use it in their common talk.

Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, &c. Whereas they think that I either hear not their revilings or regard them not, I shall make Moab and Ammon smart and smoke for them.

Even the breeding of nettles and salt pits. They shall not indeed be consumed with fire from heaven; but their land shall lie waste for a long season. Nettles grow in barren places, and are good for nothing, unless it be the buds at first coming. Pliny writeth, that where salt is digged little good else groweth, see ***Judges 9:45; Psalm 107:34***.

For a perpetual desolation. Certain it is that those nations carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar were never restored; but that in later times a mixed multitude of vagrants out of many nations met there, taking upon them the old title of Arabians, and living by rapine and robbery. Out of these came Mahomet, founder of the Turkish empire and superstition, who overturned the Christian Churches, there planted by the apostles (as was here afore prophesied, "The residue of my people shall spoil them," &c., see ***Zephaniah 2:7***; confer **Galations *1:17***, and soon overrun all the east and south, as Popery did all the west and north, at the same time.) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**This shall they have for their pride.** Moabites were as much noted for their pride as now the Spaniards are; and are therefore here devoted to destruction. Pride goeth before a fall, &c. A bulging wall stands not long; a joint luxated and swelled, till that be down cannot be set. God resisteth the proud, ***1 Peter 5:5***, he bringeth those ungodly down to the ground, ***Psalm 147:6***.

Because they have reproached, &c. And all this out of the pride of their hearts, which breaketh out, as a master pox, in their body; so that the pride of Moab testifieth to his face, and it shall be to him an abomination of desolation. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The Lord will be terrible unto them.** For he shall march forth in battle array against proud persons, ***1 Peter 5:5***, and stain the pride of all their glory (Ἀντιτάσσεται); he will pull them down from their pinnacle of self-exaltation, and make them know themselves to be but men. Attilas, king of the Huns, proudly gave out that the stars fell before him, the earth trembled at his presence, and that he would be the scourge of all nations. But what became of him? He died suddenly by a flux of blood, breaking out at his mouth and choking him, on his weddingday at night. It were easy to instance further, in Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus, Herod, the king of Tyro, &c. "With God is terrible majesty," ***Job 37:22***, "he is terrible to the kings of the earth, while he cutteth off their spirits," ***Psalm 76:12***. Heb. he slippeth them off, as one should slip off a flower between one's fingers, or a bunch of grapes off the vine; so soon is the business done.

For he will famish all the gods of the earth. He will cast them into an atrophy, into a consumption. This was fulfilled partly when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the nations, and proclaimed the true God to be the only God, ***Daniel 4:34***, but principally when Christ came in the flesh, and sent out his apostles to decry those heathen deities, and to preach the everlasting gospel, "saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, a worship him that made heaven, earth, sea, and fountains of waters," ***Revelation 14:7***. Now it was that Satan fell like lightning from heaven, the oracles were silenced, the heathen emperors amazed at the prevailing power of the gospel in despite of them, the very names of most of the gods of the earth were abolished, the temple of Apollo at Delphi fired from heaven; and at that very time when Julian's ambassadors were there to inquire what should be the issue of the Persian war. Thus the heathen superstition fell flat to the ground, their gods were famished for want of worshippers and sacrifices, &c. And the same we hope and wait for to befall the antichristian rout and religion. That idol is grown very lean, and hath lost a collop, as we say. Bellarmine is very sensible, and bewails the business, that ever since we began to count and call the Pope antichrist he hath suffered no small decays and losses in the Christian Churches. He hath

indeed, and more and more shall do, till he be left as lean as a rake, and all his plumes pulled, his credit cracked, his honour laid in the dust.

And men shall worship him. Heb. Bow down to him. He is thy Lord, and bow thou down unto him, ***Psalm 45:11***. Body and soul both must stoop to God; and both at once, ***2 Corinthians 6:14-18***. Swenckfeldians (Stinkfeldians Luther called them, from their ill savour) take away all external service; so do the Nicodemites. Hypocrites draw nigh to God with their lips only, when their hearts are elsewhere; their bodies are *in facellis,* in torment, their hearts *in sacculis,* in a little bag, as ***Ezekiel 33:31***. But the true Israelites give God both inward and outward worship; he doth *ponere dextram in pectore,* as Persius phraseth it; being shod with the preparation of the gospel, he treads it not awry (ὀρθοποδεῖ), neither too much outward, as the formalist, nor too much inward, as the Swenckfeldian. He looks upon our late worship scorners, our high attainers, as the last brood of Beelzebub; and reckons that to cast off ordinances is to cast away the remedy, ***2 Chronicles 36:15, 16; Proverbs 29:1***.

Every one from his place. Not at Jerusalem only, as once, ***John 4:21***, but in all places, pure hands and hearts shall be lifted up, without wrath, without doubting, ***1 Timothy 2:8***; both in church and chamber; any place whatsoever shall be a sufficient oratory, so that God be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and the public not neglected.

Even all the isles of the heathen. That is, all countries, though not encompassed with the sea; for the Jews called all lands islands which they could not come to but by water. That God shall be worshipped in the four corners of the earth. (***See Trapp on "Deuteronomy 6:4"***) It was the last speech of dying Chrysostom, Glory be to God from all creatures. Let the Jesuits at the end of their books subscribe *Laus Deo et beatae Virgini,* Praise to God and happiness to ther Virgin. Let this be the badge of the beast; let us cry, To God alone be glory all the world over. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword.** Which is long enough to reach you, though far remote. The poets feign that Jupiter was wont to be feasted by the Ethiopians; but that shall not save them from God's sore and great strong sword. Nebuchadnezzar, to whom God had given Ethiopia, and Egypt, and Saba as a ransom for his people, ***Isaiah 43:3***. See ***Proverbs 11:8***. (***See Trapp on "Proverbs 11:8"***) The Ethiopians and Egyptians were subdued together, ***Jeremiah 46:2; Isaiah 18:1, 2***. It is now inhabited by the Abyssinians (a kind of mongrel Christians), and called Prester John's country; where they say they have this custom, among others: In their great solemnities they have a cup of gold borne before them, filled within, and besmeared without with dirt, yet so as the gold appeareth; and next to this cup is carried a crucifix. Hereby they would show that man should be pure as gold; but being within and without defiled by sin, he is restored by Christ crucified, so as that the gold of God's graces appeareth in him here in part, and shall do hereafter in all perfection. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And he will stretch out his hand against the north.** *i.e.* Against Assyria (which lay north from Judea), as is presently added by way of exposition. The Scripture sometimes hath its own interpretation annexed, as ***John 2:19, 21; 7:39***. Howsoever, the Rabbis have this saying among them, *Nulla est obiectio in lege quae non habet solutionem in latere;* i.e. there is not any doubt in the law but may be resolved by the context.

And destroy Assyria. Cast this rod of his wrath into the fire, after that he had worn it to the stump (as that martyr said) upon other nations.

And will make Nineveh a desolation. See ***Nahum 1:2***, with the notes. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And flocks shall lie down in the**

midst of her, &c. Here are various and vehement expressions of the dreadful face of her desolations. *Omnia congerit quae vastitatem horribilem denotare solent,* saith Gualther, because it was held a thing almost impossible that Nineveh should be destroyed. Hence that admiration of bystanders and beholders, ***Zephaniah 2:15***. But what can be impossible to the Almighty? and what will not he do for his Church's cause and comfort? See ***Zephaniah 2:6***.

All the beasts of the nations. Which shall come from far to haunt this new desert, beaudesert. See ***Isaiah 13:21, 22***, and observe that parallel texts, like glasses set one against another, do cast a mutual light. The lapidary brighteneth his hard diamond with the dust shaved from itself; so must we clear hard Scriptures.

Both the cormorant (**or pelican**) **and the bittern.** Those inauspicious birds of prey that are signs both of God's curse and man's misery, ***Isaiah 34:11***. The former hath its name in Hebrew from vomiting, and seemeth, saith one, to be the same that we call the shovelard, which swallows shell fishes, and after vomiteth them to get the fish. The latter liveth about lakes, saith Pliny, and with her beak beateth the fish out of the shell with great vehemence.

Shall lod*Genesis* in the upper lintels of it. Beautified with pomegranates, flowers, and other curious garnishes, as are wont to be seen at the porches of palaces.

Their voice shall sing in the windows. The black saints, as they say; where was wont to be heard all manner of music and melodious noises. *Luxus cadet in luctum,* their merry dances shall end in a miserable downfall.

Desolation shall be in the thresholds. Which were wont to be worn out with the abundance of clients and parasites tracing over them.

For he shall uncover the cedar work. *i.e.* God, or the enemy by God's appointment, shall uncover the roof made of cedar, for better continuance. Cedar is strong and durable; and by reason of the dryness of it the timber chawneth not, rotteth not; yea, it hath a property to preserve other things from putrefication, saith Scribonius. The Ninevites raftered their houses with it, as they say the Africans do with whale bones. But now that God shall bare them and expose them to the injury of wind and weather, how can they stand? and what can be in the thresholds but desolation? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 2:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}**This is the rejoicing city.** *Exultabunda,* that could stand on no ground, but was ready to leap out of her skin as it were; her inhabitants were mere mirthmongers altogether set upon the merry pin; like the people of Tombutum in Africa, who spend their whole time in singing and dancing. Now the case is altered, and the Church, out of zeal for God's glory, thus insulteth over them.

That dwelt carelessly. As if situated in the clouds, above all fear; and altogether insuperable. Security ushereth in destruction. See ***Jeremiah 49:31, 32***.

That said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me. This was a proud word indeed. I am is one of God Almighty's names, ***Exodus 3:14***, and there is none besides me is one of his titles, ***Isaiah 45:5, 21; 48:12***. Thus empty man would be something (the toad would swell to the size of an ox), though man be born like a wild ass's colt, ***Job 11:12***, and man being in honour, understandeth not that he is, or shortly shall be, like the beasts that perish: that die of the murrain, and so become carrion, good for nothing. (***Psalm 49:20****, pecoribus morticinis.* Tremel.)

> *"Unde superbit homo cuius conceptio turpis,*
> *Nasci poena, labor vita, necesse mori?"*
>
> "Whence will man show his pride, whose conception is shameful,

to be born a penalty, life of work, and needs die”

How is she become a desolation. *Here the prophet, Nineven in Theatre statuit, et traducit apud Iudaeos* (saith Calvin), setteth Nineveh upon the stage, and showeth his Jews the tragic end of her; how she should wonderfully be brought down beyond all expectation. God delighteth to make himself marvellous; he is the only true *Thaumaturgus.*

Every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand. In scorn, horror, and disdain; and why, see ***Nahum 3:19; Lamentations 2:15, 17; 1 Kings 9:8; Ezekiel 27:36; Micah 6:16***. (***See Trapp on “Nahum 3:19"***) Surely God scorneth the scorners, ***Proverbs 3:34***, and maketh that the merciless find no mercy, ***James 2:13***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 3

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Woe to her that is filthy and polluted**. Meaning Jerusalem, once a faithful city, now an harlot, ***Isaiah 1:21***, *faedissimum prostibulum,* of the kind of those sordid men who are called *Borboritae,* of their miry filthiness, whom Epiphanius and Oecumenius speak of. The word (יאר) here rendered filthy comes from a word that signifieth dung, or that signifieth an example (παράδειγμα); and so it is a metaphor taken from light women that are carted in a disgraceful way and made a public example, an infamous instance. It is rendered also gluttonous, or all craw, as ***Leviticus 1:16***.

> *"Ingluvies et tempestas, barathrumque macelli."*

To the oppressing city!. *Praedatrici,* that maketh a prey of others (either by force or fraud), as the silly dove is made a prey to the hawk and other ravenous birds. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**She obeyed not the voice.** *sc.* Of her teachers, nor inclined her ear to them that instructed her, as ***Proverbs 5:13***. Hence she was so filthy and oppressive; who, if she had hearkened to wholesome counsel, and hidden the word of God's grace in her heart, would have purified herself even as he is pure, ***1 John 3:3***, and not have exacted money and grain, but have left off that usury, ***Nehemiah 5:10***.

She received not correction. Or discipline, as being incurable or incorrigible, pining away in her iniquity, ***Leviticus 26:39***, and not accepting the chastisement of her sin.

She trusted not in the Lord. But knocked at the creature's door for help in her distress, and made flesh her arm, her heart departed from the Lord, ***Jeremiah 17:5***. This God taketh very ill, ***Jeremiah 2:12, 13***, as he hath very great reason; confidence being the least and yet the best we can render to him for all his benefits.

She drew not near to her God. Though he were her God, yet she went as far from him as she could; and, like a wild beast, would not be tamed nor managed by him. Now, if these be undoubted arguments of a filthy and polluted state, as surely they are, what shall we think of ourselves, who are as deeply guilty as ever Jerusalem was in the promises? what shall the Lord do, or what shall he not do, rather, to a nation so incorrigibly flagitious, so obliged, so warned, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Her princes within her are roaring lions.** Roaring over the meaner sort, and tearing them with their claws. (***See Trapp on "Micah 3:1"***) (***See Trapp on "Micah 3:2"***) (***See Trapp on "Micah 3:3"***)

Her judges are evening wolves. See ***Habakkuk 1:8***. This rapacity and bribery they had learned (likely) under Manassah and Amon; and exercised under good Josiah, who either knew it not, or could not redress it. *Est ergo periculi plena reipublicae forma, quae ab uno dependet,* saith Gualther here. And Tertullian telleth us, that one special thing the primitive Christians prayed for the emperor was, that God would send him *Senatum fidelem,* a faithful senate, pious councillors, good subordinates. Of Aurelian's council it was said, that by them the good emperor, who might know nothing but as they informed him, was even bought and sold. Alphonsus, King of Aragon, said that princes were for this in a worse condition than other people; because they could seldom hear the truth of things. Augustus bitterly bewailed the death of Varus; because now, said he, I have none about me that will deal truly with me. The Grand Signior goes often abroad that he may receive poor men's petitions, and right them upon the greatest beshaws, who, bewitched by bribery, have denied them justice. And hence it hath been ever observed, that few of his chief officers die in their beds. These evening wolves many times have not a morrow left them to gnaw the bones in. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Her prophets are light.** Rash, headlong, futilous, debauched (as the French translateth it), aerial, fantastic, weightless, worthless men, such as in whose doctrine there is no authority, in whose life no gravity, staidness, severity, constancy (Rodulphus, Archbishop of Canterberry next after Anselm, was surnamed Nugax for his jesting and toying): like the planet Mercury, they can be good in conjunction with good, and bad with bad; like that French apostate of whom Beza saith that he had *religionem ephemeram,* for every day a new religion, *ab his ad illos, ab illis ad hos leviter iens et levius transiens,* double-minded and unstable in all his ways, ***James 1:8***.

And treacherous persons. *Viri perfidiarum,* most perfidious persons. This is their true title, whom the world counteth and calleth facile, facetious, fair conditioned, comporting, condescending, people pleasing preachers. Can there be a worse treachery than to betray men's souls, as your Aiones and Negones do, that cry peace, peace, and so betray men to hell.

Her priests have polluted the sanctuary. Or holy services.

> *"Cum coelum terrae commiscent sacra profanis."*

God looks to be sanctified in all those that draw nigh unto him, ***Leviticus 10:3***, that they should be singularly holy, handling the word, *sancte magis quam scite* with greater reverence than knowledge, (as one once told the wanton vestal), and living so that malice itself may be silenced. God of old appointed both the weights and measures of the sanctuary to be twice as large as those of the commonwealth; to show that he expects much more of those that serve him there than he doth of others. See ***1 Kings 7:15;*** *cf.* ***2 Chronicles 3:15***.

They have done violence to the law. *sc.* By their crafty and perverse glosses, setting it on the rack, as it were, and so making it speak more than it would; tawing it with their teeth, as shoemakers do their upper leather, forcing it two miles when it would go but one, yea, murdering it, as Tertullian saith of some, *quod caedem scripturarum faciant,* that they slaughter the Scriptures to serve their own purposes; for which cause also he calleth Marcion the heretic, *Murem Ponticum,* the Rat of Pontus, for his arroding and gnawing the text. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The just Lord is in the midst thereof.** The unjust princes were said to be in the midst of Jerusalem as roaring lions, ***Zephaniah 3:3***. Here the just Lord is also said to be in the midst of her, as a sin revenging judge. He sitteth as God in the midst of those uncircumcised vicegods (as I may in the worst sense best term them), he sets a jealous eye upon all their unrighteous proceedings, and is with them in the judgment. Neither eyeth he them only, but all others in like sort; as the king in the Gospel came in to see his guests. His eye, like a well drawn picture, taketh view of all that come into the room. Oh that we could be in his fear all the day! Oh that we would ever walk in the sense of his presence, and light of his countenance! *Noli peccare, nam Deus videt, angeli astant, diabolus accusabit, conscientia testabitur, Infernus cruciabit.* Sin not; for God sees you, the good angels stand about you, Satan will accuse you, conscience will give in evidence against you, hell will torment you. A reverend and religious man had this written before his eyes in his study.

He will not do iniquity. *i.e.* He will not let enormities go unpunished, nor pass by the infirmities of his people without a sensible check, ***Psalm 99:8***. See ***Habakkuk 1:13***.

Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light. Daily and diligently doth he both threaten by his prophets and execute with his hand the menaces of his mouth upon those that will not be warned, that refuse to be reformed. He hath in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, ***2 Corinthians 10:6***. Maturely he will do it, and accurately; it is his morning's work, ***Psalm 101:8***, like as it is theirs to rise early, and corrupt all their doings, ***Zephaniah 3:7***. He will be up and at it as soon as they.

He faileth not. As he may seem to do when he forbeareth. *Non deest,* he will not be wanting to his office to proceed against the uncounsellable.

But the unjust knoweth no shame. He can blush no more than a sackbut, as the proverb is. Such an impudence hath sin woaded [1] in his face, that he basheth nothing. *Et pudet non esse impudentem,* he is past all grace, as we say, and as good at resisting the Holy Ghost as ever those Jews were that had a whore's forehead, ***Jeremiah 3:3***, sinews of iron and brows of brass, ***Isaiah 48:4***. When neither fear of God nor shame of the world will rein men in, what hope is there of such? *Illum ego periisse dico cui periit pudor,* saith Curtius, a heathen. He is an undone man that knoweth no shame. Prevent it in time; for the modest beginnings of sin at first will make way for immodest proceedings. The thickest ice that will bear a cart beginneth with a thin trembling cover, that will not bear a pebble.{{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I have cut off the nations.** And hanged them up in gibbets, as it were, before your eyes, for your admonition, *ut ruina maiorum sit cautela minorum,* that their destruction might be your instruction; that, seeing your neighbour's house on fire, you might look to your own; that, observing others to suffer shipwreck, you might see to your tackling. This is the use God expects we should make of his judgments upon others, ***Luke 13:3, 5; 17:26, 29; Matthew 12:13, 41, 42; 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2***, and surely he deserveth to be made an example that will not take example by others.

Their towers are desolate. Or, their corners, *sc.* of their munitions, whereon towers were set. Or, their extremities, *q.d.* I have overturned them from one end to another. Drusius and Ribera interpreteth it of their princes. (***See Trapp on "Zephaniah 1:6"***)

I made their streets waste, &c. See ***Zephaniah 2:5, 6, 14, 15***. To the end, that when my judgments were thus on the earth, the inhabitants of the world (but especially of the Church) might learn righteousness, ***Isaiah 26:9***; that the righteous, seeing the vengeance, might wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, ***Psalm 59:10***, taking warning by his harms. Observe here, by the way, what great account God makes of his people, since for their instance and instruction he thus wasteth the wicked; like as the Persian kings, when their sons had committed a fault, made their servants to be beaten before them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I said, surely thou wilt fear me.** As in a school, when one boy is whipped the rest tremble; and as in the commonwealth, *poena ad paucos, metus ad omnes;* punishment for the few, fear for everybody so it should be in the Church. Other men's woes should be our warnings; others' sufferings our sermons; others' lashes our lessons; God's house of correction a school of instruction, where we should hear and fear, and do no more so, ***Deuteronomy 17:13***. He that trembleth not in hearing shall be crushed to pieces in feeling, said that martyr.

And receive instruction. This I promised myself of thee, but am disappointed, ***Jeremiah 15:3***. See ***Zephaniah 3:2***, thou art therefore ripe for destruction.

So their dwelling should not be cut off. They should have redeemed their sorrows and saved their city. And this God speaks to others, as weary of speaking any longer to them to so little purpose.

But they rose early and corrupted, &c. *Manicabant,* they made haste, that no time might be lost; they woefully wasted that best part of the day, the morning (which πᾶν ἔργον ὀφέλλει, furthereth every business), in corrupting their practices, doing evil as they could. Once (saith a reverend man) Peter's argument was more than probable; These men are not drunk, for it is

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[1] A bluish dye the ancient British warriors covered themselves with when going to battle to make their appearance more terrible to the enemy.

but the third hour of the day. Now, men are grown such husbands, as that by that time they will return their stocks, and have their brains crowing before day. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord**, &c. Stand forth, and hear your doom; which that ye may know that I do not precipitate or rashly pass upon you, "Wait ye upon me," &c.; and yet, that ye may not presume upon my patience, know that there is a day set, a determination settled for your full payment.

> *"Nostra Deus subitis non damnat crimina poenis:*
> *Compensat longas sed gravitate moras."*

To gather the nations. To put them up, as it were sheep, into a pound for slaughter. See more of this, ***Jeremiah 25:15-33***

To pour upon them mine indignation. Here is mention made of God's prey, of his indignation, fierce anger, fire of jealousy against nations and kingdoms; the better to persuade people to that which they are so hardly drawn to believe, viz. that God is not made all of mercy; but, though fury be not in him, to speak properly, ***Isaiah 27:4***, yet that he will not by any means "clear the guilty," ***Exodus 34:7***, but punish them severely, taking vengeance of their inventions, ***Psalm 99:8***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**For then will I turn to the people a pure language.** "Then," when my sword hath rid circuit, ***Ecclesiastes 8:17***, and been bathed in the blood of all nations, for their many and mighty sins, "I will turn to the people," I will turn mine hand upon the little ones, mine elect, that remnant reserved for royal use. These I will bring, not into the fire only, but through it, and will refine them as silver is refined, ***Zechariah 13:7, 9***, so that their tongue shall be as choice silver, ***Proverbs 10:20***, their lip shall be a pure lip, as it is here, a lip of excellence, ***Proverbs 17:7***, so that they shall scatter pearls, ***Matthew 7:6***, throw abroad treasure, ***Matthew 12:35***, even apples of gold in shrines of silver, ***Proverbs 25:11***, they shall purify themselves, as God is pure, ***1 John 3:3***. Old things shall be past with them, all things shall become new; new constitution, new communication, new conversation. Look how the Conqueror sought to bring the French tongue into England, commanding it to be taught in schools, spoke in courts, &c., so doth the Lord Christ, who rideth about the world upon his white horses, the apostles and other ministers, "conquering and to conquer," ***Revelation 6:2***; wherever he prevails, he turneth to such "a pure language," even the language of Canaan; not the Hebrew tongue (as R. Abraham senses this text) which all nations shall speak, saith he, in the kingdom of Christ (what they do in heaven, I have not to say, some are confident), but words of grace, ***Colossians 4:6***, words of truth and soberness, ***Acts 26:25***, right words, ***Job 6:25***, spiritual speeches, ***Ephesians 4:29***, Scripture language, ***1 Peter 4:11***.

That they may call upon the name of the Lord. As all God s people do, it is their character, ***1 Corinthians 1:2***, he hath no dumb children, they no sooner breathe but pray, ***Acts 9:11***, for prayer is the breath of the spirit, ***Romans 8:26***, and the fruit of faith; hence it is called the prayer of faith, and under the phrase of calling upon the name of the Lord here is meant believing in his name, and reposing upon Christ for safety here and salvation hereafter.

To serve him with one consent. Heb. with one shoulder, that is, unanimously, and with conjoined endeavours (ὁμοθυμαδὸν), a metaphor from oxen yoked and setting their shoulders together to the work (ὑπὸ ζυγὸν ἕνα, Sept.); or else from porters, who set their several shoulders to the same burden. The saints may the better do so because they have the Spirit to lift with them and be over beside them, as the apostle's word (συναντιλαμβάνεται) importeth, ***Romans 8:26***. Let them therefore endeavour, by all good means, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, ***Ephesians 4:3***, that they may say, as holy Miconius did of himself and his colleagues at Gotha, *in Thuringia, cucurrimus, certavimus, laboravimus,*

pugnavimus, vicimus, et viximus semper coniunctissimi. We ever ran together, strove, laboured, fought, vanquished, and did all together, in much peace and concord. This is Christian-like indeed, see ***Acts 1:14; 2:1, 46; 4:32***, *animo animaque inter se miscebantur,* saith Tertullian, they were all of one heart and of one mind. The very heathens acknowledged that no people in the world did hold together and love one another so as Christians did. To see their travails (saith Master Fox concerning the saints here in times of persecution), their earnest seeking, burning zeal, readings, watchings, sweet assemblies, love, concord, godly living, faithful marrying with the faithful, may make us now in these our days of free profession (but lamentable divisions) to blush for shame. They served the Lord with one shoulder, we shoulder one another: they kept unity with purity without schism, much less heresy, glorifying the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one mind and with one mouth, ***Romans 15:6***, with a pure lip, as it is here; we are *quot homines, tot sententiae,* so many men, so many minds. How many religions are there now among us! saith one; old heresies new vamped! Our Saviour Christ saith, if the Son of man come, shall he find faith? &c. Yes, sure he may find many faiths; so many men, so many faiths. *Pudet opprobria nobis*, &c. It is a shame and a repraoch to us. It is not peace but party that some men mind, saith another; their chief studies are *studium partium, et studium novarum rerum,* part-taking, and novelling. But what saith the apostle? If ye speak with several tongues will not he that comes in think ye are mad? so when the world hears of so many dissonant opinions, will they not think we are run wild? ***1 Corinthians 14:23***. Is it not a shame to us that the Turks should say, we may sooner look that the fingers on our hands should be all of one length than that the Christians should be all of one judgment? Why should any Julian jeer us for our divisions? why should any Camian hit us in the teeth with our many sects and schisms? Pardon may be gotten for our other sins by faith in Christ's blood, *discordiam neque si sanguinem fundamus expiabimus* (saith Oecolampadius to the Lutherans of his time), our scandalous discords God will judge. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.** Heb. Of Chush, that is of Arabia Chusaea, which lay between Judea and Egypt. Confer ***Isaiah 18:1, 7***. Some understand it of Ethiopia, which is beyond the river Nile, and hath two very great rivers. See this in part fulfilled by that Ethiopian eunuch, ***Acts 8:26-40***; neither may we think that he was alone in that country. Matthias the apostle is said to have preached the gospel to the Ethiopians (Euseb. i. 1). The large region of Nubia there had from the apostles' time (as it is thought) professed the Christian faith, till about two hundred years since it forsook the same (Alvarez, Hist. Aethiopic.). The kingdom of Habassia, held by presbyter John, are yet Christians, differing from us in a few ceremonies only. (***See Trapp on "Zephaniah 2:12"***)

My suppliants. My praying people, that ply the throne of grace, and multiply strong suits, pouring out a flood of words in humble supplication (as the Hebrew signifieth), continuing instant in prayer, as knowing that their safety here and salvation hereafter is of me alone.

Even the daughter of my dispersed. Jews and Gentiles, elect of both sorts, ***John 11:52***, scattered here and there, as the salt of the earth upon the face thereof, to keep it from putrefying. Danaeus thinketh that there is mention made of the daughter of the dispersed affectionately; namely, both to describe the earnestness of the saints in serving God (for women, *quicquid volunt, valde volunt* whatever they wish, they greatly prefer), and that this so goodly and joyful a spectacle or sight of women worshipping and serving God, and of virgins especially, might stir up and move affections. It is easy to observe that the New Testament affordeth more store of good women than the old, who can make masculine prayers, mingled with tears; and as music upon the waters sounds further and more harmoniously than upon the land, so do prayers well watered.

Shall bring mine offering. Heb. My meat offering, or rather my wheat offering (*Minchathi),*

their bodies and souls, ***Romans 12:1***, that best of sacrifices, for a reasonable service, a solemn present; such that the Chaldee paraphrast might express; he translateth it thus: They shall bring as presents unto me the banished of my people, who were carried captive, and shall return by my mercies. Some think that here is foretold the return of the Jews to their own land, toward the end of the world, to set up the spiritual worship of God there; the famous Church that shall be among them, full of sanctity and rid of all wicked ones, ***Zephaniah 3:11-13***, the joy and gladness that shall possess their souls, ***Zephaniah 3:14***, through God's removing of all cause of fear from them, ***Zephaniah 3:15***, the encouragement they shall receive from others, ***Zephaniah 3:16***, and (which is the cause of all this) the apparent arguments of God's great love and favour, ***Zephaniah 3:17***, the quality of those that shall be received to be citizens of this New Jerusalem, ***Zephaniah 3:18***, the utter rooting out of all their enemies, the fame and dignity that this Church of the Jews shall be of among all nations, ***Zephaniah 3:19, 20***. Thus they: *quam recte iudicium sit penes Lectorem.* {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**In that day shalt thou not be ashamed.** There is a holy shame for sin, such as was that of Ezra, ***Ezra 9:6***, of the penitent publican, ***Luke 18:13***, and of those good souls in Ezekiel, who blushing and bleeding loathed themselves for their abominations, ***Ezekiel 16:52***. To be ashamed on this sort is no shame, but a sign of that godly sorrow that worketh repentance never to be repented of; and not to know shame, to be frontless and impudent, is the note of a naughty man, ***Ezekiel 16:52***. But that which God promiseth here is that he will cover their sins, not impute them, ***Psalm 32:1, 2***, and that he will by his grace preserve them from scandalous and reproachful practices that might render them ignominious and despicable, see ***Psalm 18:39***; shining upon them himself, and giving them honour in the hearts of others, as he did Solomon.

Them that rejoice in thy pride. Or, in thine excellence, as ***Psalm 68:35***, that is, in thine external privileges, wherein thou hast hitherto so prided thyself as the only people of God, holy and beloved.

And thou shalt no more be haughty. Stand upon thy tip-toes, upon thy sandles, as if there were none such.

Because of mine holy mountain. ***Jeremiah 7:4***. The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, cried they aloud that nothing cared for the Lord of the temple. So the Jesuits and their Romish crew cry, the Church, the Church, the Catholic Church, *ad ravem usque,* until hoarse like so many oyster-wives: but this is not the guise of God's people. He will purge his Church of such formalists. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people.** Poor and therein afflicted, therefore despised. Poverty is an affliction, and makes a man trodden upon, *Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se, Quam quod ridicules homines facit,* Men will be sure to go over the hedge where it is lowest. Hence St Paul joins them together, I have learned to want and to be abased. They that want must look to be abased. This thy son, saith he, ***Luke 15:30***, not this my brother; he would not once own him, because in poverty. But though men will not, yet God will, ***James 2:5; Revelation 2:9***. I know thy poverty, but that is nothing, thou art rich: poor in spirit, rich to Godward, glorying in nothing but this, that thou understandest and knowest me and my will, thyself and thy duty, ***Jeremiah 9:23***, and art therefore a rich cargazon, a full magazine, such as the world is not worthy of.

And they shall trust in the name of the Lord. As having nothing else to trust to. So St Paul's widow indeed, being desolate and left alone, trusteth in God, who while she had a husband trusted too much in him, ***1 Timothy 5:5***. A noble woman of Savoy, mother to John Galear, Duke of Milan, after her husband's decease, caused a coin to be made, upon the one side whereof

she drew these words, *Sola facta solum Deum sequor,* Being left alone, I trust in God alone. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity.** Sanctity and security are here promised to all the citizens of the Church. Being justified by Christ they shall do righteousness and truth: there shall no way of wickedness be found in them, ***Psalm 139:24***, they shall be kept from foul flagitious practices, neither shall they wallow or allow themselves in any known sin unrepented of. Their spot, if any, shall be the spot of God's children, ***Deuteronomy 32:5***, involuntary and avoidable informity, such as there is a pardon of course for; only they must sue it out by praying daily, Forgive us our trespasses.

Nor speak lies. For that is a foul fault, and rarely found in a saint, ***Isaiah 63:8***. For he said, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour." It was wont to be as current an argument, *Christianus est, non mentietur,* He is a Christian, he will not lie, as afterwards it was, *Hic est frater, ergo mendax,* This is a friar, and therefore a liar. Sophronius testifieth of Chrysostom, *nunquam eum mentitum fuisse,* that he was never heard to tell a lie. Whereas of Pilate Hegesippus telleth us, that he was *vir nequam et parvi faciens mendacium,* a naughty man, and one that made little conscience of a lie. It may seem so indeed by that scornful question of his, "What is truth?" ***John 18:38***.

Neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth. Their pure lip, ***Zephaniah 3:9***, is not used to the language of hell, their spirit without guile, ***Psalm 32:2***, produceth speech without deceit; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, ***Matthew 12:34***. (***See Trapp on "Matthew 12:34"***)

For they shall feed and lie down. Shall have all that heart can wish or need require; plenty, safety, security.

And none shall make them afraid. So as to make them do iniquity or speak lies; as very good men when frightened have dared to do; witness Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, but especially David, deeply guilty of this sin, ***1 Samuel 21:2, 8; 27:8, 10***, In the sense of which sin he prayeth, "Remove from me the way of lying," ***Psalm 119:29***; we also should pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from that evil one," the father of lies. And having the shepherd of Israel to feed us and tend us, we should not fear, ***Psalm 23:2, 3***, but choosing rather to die than to lie, to suffer than to shift, commit the keeping of our souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator, ***1 Peter 4:19***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel.** Joy is the just man's portion, which the wicked may not meddle with, ***Hosea 9:1***. In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare or a cord to strangle his joy with, to check and choke all his comforts, but the righteous sing and rejoice, ***Proverbs 29:6***, they are commanded so to do; yea, the command is doubled and trebled here and elsewhere in both Testaments; and it is a sin for such not to rejoice, as well as not to repent.

Be glad and rejoice with all the heart. Which no wicked man can do: his mirth is but the hypocrisy of mirth; like a little counterfeit complexion. It may smooth the face, never cheer up the heart; like a slight dash of rain that soaketh not to the root, or a handful of brushwood or sear thorns under the pot, ***Ecclesiastes 7:6***. As their humiliations are but skin deep, they rent their garments and not their hearts, they grieve in the face and not in the heart, ***Matthew 6:16***, so do they rejoice in the face and not with all their heart, ***2 Corinthians 5:12***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The Lord hath taken away thy Judgments.** *i.e.* He hath remitted thy sins, removed thy punishments, turned again thy

captivity as the streams in the south, commanded his prophets, saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," &c., ***Isaiah 40:1, 2*** tell her that all accusations and actions laid against her in the court of heaven are non-suited, and God's wrath appeased. This is the sum of all the good news in the world; this is a short gospel.

He hath cast out thine enemy. As rubbish and sweepings of the house are cast out (הכפ *repurgare everrere significat*); so hath God dealt by thine enemies corporal and spiritual; that thou being delivered out of the hands of both, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all thy days, ***Luke 1:74, 75***.

The king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee. In the many testimonies of his powerful and gracious presence; yea, he hath set him up a mercy seat, a throne of grace, and bidden thee come boldly thereunto, ***Hebrews 4:16***.

Thou shalt not see evil any more. *sc.* So long as thou retainest God with thee, who is both a sun and a shield, ***Psalm 84:11***, and children have a place of refuge, ***Proverbs 14:26***.
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Verse 16. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:16]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Fear thou not.** Why shouldest thou while the King of Israel is in the midst of thee? Be of good cheer, said Caesar to the ferryman in a storm, thou canst not miscarry: *Casarem enim fers et fortunam Caesaris,* for you carry Caesar and luck of Caesar, so long as Caesar is in the same bottom with thee. May not the Church much more gather comfort, having God in her company; and so many of his servants to say to her, Fear thou not? True faith quelleth and killeth distrustful fear; but awful dread it breedeth, feedeth, fostereth, and cherisheth.

And to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. *Remollescant.* Let not thy fears weaken, but rather waken thy diligence in well doing; lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, ***Hebrews 12:12***. Up and be active; pluck up your good hearts, and buckle close to your business; your task is long, your time short; your master urgent, your wages inconceivable. It troubled a martyr at the stake, that he should then go to a place where he should ever be receiving wages, and do no more work. Up, therefore, and be doing. "Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," ***Hebrews 6:12***. *Spontaneae lassitudines morbos loquuntur,* faithlessness argueth a diseased soul.
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Verse 17. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:17]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty.** Even the mighty strong God, ***Isaiah 9:6***, the giant, as the word signifies, the champion of his Church. He being in the midst of thee cannot but see who thou art set upon; and how many dangers and difficulties thou encounterest with, and will send thee in new supplies, ***Ephesians 1:19***, seasonable help.

He will save. This properly signifieth the privative part of man's happiness; but includeth also the positive. Jesus will do all for his people.

He will rejoice over thee with joy. As a bridegroom doth over his bride, ***Isaiah 62:5***. He will take special complacence and content in thee, being made accepted in the beloved, ***Ephesians 1:6***.

He will rest in his love. And seek no further. Heb. He will be silent in his love, passing by small faults without any the least signification of his displeasure; as if he were even fond over his Church, and did err in his love towards her, as husbands are licensed to do toward their wives, ***Proverbs 5:19***. Some render it *obmutescet in amore suo,* he shall be dumb in his love, so as he cannot speak through excess of love. Lovers are so transported sometimes that they cannot utter their minds.

He will joy over thee with singing. As a father doth over his child whom he beareth in his besom, or dandleth on his knee. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:18]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly.** Which now they cannot celebrate, as being in captivity; and are therefore in great heaviness; as was David, ***Psalm 42:2, 3, 5***. Nothing goes nearer to a good heart than to be debarred the benefit of God's holy ordinances, than to hear the sabbaths mocked at by the enemies, as these good souls did, ***Lamentations 2:7***, and to be asked, as David was, "Where is now thy God," ***Psalm 42:3***. All outward comforts in this case are mere Ichabods. When the ark was taken Eli could live no longer; that word struck him down backward, and killed him in the fall. No sword of a Philistine could have slain him more painfully; neither is it easy to say whether his neck or heart were first broken.

Who are of thee. True children of the Church, as appeareth by their strong affections to the ordinances, ***1 Peter 2:2***. Luther said he would not live in paradise without the word; as with it he could easily live in hell. An infant cannot be quieted with gauds [2] or fine clothes without the dug; so neither can a true Christian with anything but the public services, the solemn assemblies.

To whom the reproach of it was a burden. It lay heavy upon their spirits, and made them send up many a deep sigh to God, who heareth the breathings of his people, ***Lamentations 3:56***, and will restore comfort to such his mourners, ***Isaiah 57:18***. He that helped his Levites to bear the ark, ***1 Chronicles 15:26***, will help those that grieve at the want of it and groan under the reproach cast upon it, which they ever honoured as the face of God, ***Psalm 105:4***. Yea, as God himself, ***Psalm 132:5***.{{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 19. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:19]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee.** Heb. Behold me; look not to thyself as unworthy or unlikely to inherit such precious promises; for, "not for your sakes do this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you; but for mine own holy name's sake," ***Ezekiel 36:22, 32***: your unworthiness shall serve for a foil to set forth the freeness of my love; your unlikeliness the greatness of my power; "my grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is perfected in thy weakness," ***2 Corinthians 12:9***. Again, look not to thine enemies, how many and mighty they are, how witty and wealthy, how active and combined (*loricatus incedit Satan et cataphractus,* saith Luther), let thine eyes be upon me, as Jehoshaphat's were, when he knew not whither else to look, ***2 Chronicles 20:12***; let thine heart be lift up in my ways, as his was, ***2 Chronicles 17:6***; behold me, behold me, ***Isaiah 65:1***. Look not downward on the rushing and roaring streams of miseries and troubles which run so swiftly under thee, for then thou wilt be giddy; but look upward, and steadfastly fasten on my power and promise; believe in the Lord thy God, so shalt thou be established; believe his prophets, so shalt thou prosper, ***2 Chronicles 20:20***; thine enemies also shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places, ***Deuteronomy 33:29***. I will undo them, saith God here; Heb. I will do them (*per antiphrasin*); or, I will bruise them and break them in pieces, as R. David rendereth it, by comparing ***Ezekiel 23:3, 21***. I will not only repress them, but root them out. Those that offer violence to the Church, like blind Samson, they lay hands upon their pillars, to pluck the house upon their own heads.

And I will save her that halteth. As enemies shall not hinder the Church's happiness, so neither shall her own infirmities. Grant she be lame and luxated, maimed and disjointed, so that she goeth sidling and halteth downright, ***Psalm 38:17***; say she be driven out of her country as an exile, out of all companies, as an outcast (whom no man seeketh after, ***Jeremiah 30:17***), and out of all good conceit of herself, as an abject, vile in her own eyes not fit for the communion of saints or kingdom of heaven; yet I will save her, I will gather her, like as the

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[2] One of the larger and more ornamental beads placed between the decades of 'aves' in a rosary. ŒD

gathering host in the wilderness (*see* ***Joshua 6:9***) took up the lame, feeble and those that were left behind, see ***Micah 4:6***, (***See Trapp on "Micah 4:6"***) and ***Ezekiel 32:16***; I will seek that which was lost and reduce that which was driven away.

And I will get them praise and fame in every land, &c. So that glorious things shall be spoken of thee, O city of God; as thy sin shall be remitted, so thy name shall be healed thy fame spread, *per ora hominum volitabis* I will fashion men's opinions of thee, so that those that formerly shamed and shunned thee shall highly esteem thee, and stand for thee.
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Verse 20. [[@Bible:Zephaniah 3:20]]{{field-on:Bible}}**At that time will I bring you again.** And this I tell you again, that you may the better believe it; only you must wait my time, for, in time will I bring you again, and in time will I gather you, and in time will I make your name and a praise among all people of the earth, as before I promised; but you must give me time to do all this. He that believest maketh not haste. The vision is yet for an appointed time, ***Habakkuk 2:3***. (***See Trapp on "Habakkuk 2:3"***) Limit not the Holy One of Israel, set him not a day, say not now or never; wake not your beloved till he please. He is a God of judgment, and waiteth to be gracious, ***Isaiah 30:18***. Have patience, therefore, yea, let patience have her perfect work, ***James 1:4***, that ye may receive a full reward, ***2 John 8***. For behold I come, and my reward is with me, to give you an expected end, ***Jeremiah 29:11***.

When I turn back your captivity. Heb. Captivities; that is, all four captivities together For the Jews were carried captive to Babylon (1.) Under Manasseh, ***2 Chronicles 33:11***. (2.) Next, under Jehoiachim, ***2 Chronicles 36:6***. (3.) Under Jechonias, ***2 Kings 24:12; 2 Chronicles 36:10***. (4.) Lastly, under Zedekiah, ***2 Chronicles 36:17; 2 Kings 25:6***. All these shall be brought back together by an eminent and signal deliverance.

Before your eyes. Those eyes of yours that failed almost for my salvation, and for the word of my righteousness, ***Psalm 119:123***, shall see the accomplishment thereof, and be satisfied ***Psalm 54:7; 92:11***. *Dexter tibi prae laetitia salter oculus.*

Saith the Lord. This is the seal of all, and security sufficient, for *Dei dixisse est fecisse* To God to have said is to have done, God will not suffer his faithfulness to fail nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips ***Psalm 89:33, 34***.

Laus Deo in aeternum. {{field-off:Bible}}