

Prophecy of Zephaniah: Part 1

The Three Angel's Messages

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As we study the book of Zephaniah, we're going to locate the Three Angel's Messages in the book of Zephaniah; we'll be looking at the 144,000; the 2520; the Sunday Law; the Purification of God's Church; the Economic crisis in Bible Prophecy; Sept.11/2001—the 3rd Woe; the Seventh Trumpet; we're going to see how these three chapters of the book of Zephaniah bring to perfection, I believe, and bring together the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

Today we are going to lay a foundation—sort of an orientation—for the rest of the studies in this course. We are going to be studying the Bible—going line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little.

Divine Setting:

Zephaniah 1:1 "The word of the LORD which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah."

One of the things that I want us to recognize from the beginning is that Zephaniah's prophecies take place during the time of King Josiah, who was the King of Judah. We know based on Selected Messages, Volume 3, pg. 338, that:

"Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11). "

It is going to be easy to see, as we go through Zephaniah that Zephaniah's prophecies reach down to the end of the world, even the very time that you and I are living in as the last generation of Bible Prophecy. But his prophecies begin in the time of Josiah. So I want us to turn to 2 Kings 22 and look at a story that takes place during the reign of Josiah, and remember that the prophecies of Zephaniah are taking place while Josiah, King of Judah, is reigning.

2 Kings 22:1 "Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath. 2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left. 3 And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying, 4 Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: 5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house, 6 Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

One of the things we see taking place in the reign of Josiah, in the 18th year of his reign, was the repairing of the breaches of the house of the Lord. The House of the Lord is dealing with the Sanctuary;

and they were gathering in money, so that they could have the necessary timber and tools and all the resources in order to repair the breaches of the Temple of the Lord. So in Josiah's days we see the repairing of the breach in the sanctuary, the House of the Lord.

2 Kings 22:8 And Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

Notice what takes place; when they go into the House of the Lord to repair the breaches that are in the Temple; Hilkiyah, the High Priest found the Book of the Law of the Lord. Now the Book of the Law that they found was the writings of Moses: Genesis; Exodus; Leviticus; Numbers; and Deuteronomy.

For our day, the Book of the Law for us would be the Spirit of Prophecy; all the writings that expound upon the Law of God. They are repairing the breaches, and as a result of this they find the Book of the Law of God that was lost. I want you to notice what takes place in verse 10:

2 Kings 22:10 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. 11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

Notice: they are repairing the breach in the Temple of the Lord; they find the Book of the Law of the Lord which had been lost; they deliver it to King Josiah; he reads the Book and then he rends his clothes. Why does he rend his clothes based upon reading the Book of the Law of the Lord? What does it mean to rend the clothes? We know that when they would do this, it was because they were grieved; but let's look at it in a spiritual sense. We need to understand the significance of what is taking place symbolically; repairing the breaches, they find the Book of the Law, King Josiah reads it and rends his garments. What does that mean symbolically?

Turn to the book of Joel chapter 2 and notice what the Bible says:

Joel 2:12 "Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: 13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

Joel 2:15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: 16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. 17 Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

So we see here, Josiah rends his clothes, symbolizing how we are not to rend our garments but to rend our heart—turn to the Lord with all of our heart, with mourning and with weeping and with fasting. Now when we think about mourning and weeping and fasting and rending the heart; a trumpet is blown; a fast is proclaimed; a solemn assembly begins and a gathering takes place, this should remind us of what occurred on the Day of Atonement in the history of the Children of Israel.

So we see that Josiah reads something in the Book of the Law that causes him to turn to the Lord with weeping and with mourning and with fasting; in other words, experiencing true contrition of heart, and also true repentance and confession of sin.

Let's return to 2 Kings 22:

2 Kings 22:12 And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying, 13 Go ye, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

So why he was rending his garments, which is a symbol of mourning and fasting, weeping, repentance and acknowledgment of sin; he is saying, "I recognize that our fathers have not obeyed the words that are in this Book, and because of that, great wrath is upon us from the Lord, so go and inquire of the Lord."

When one would go and inquire of the Lord, they would go and seek the Seer, or the prophet. In this case it was a woman prophetess whose name was Huldah.

14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her. 15 And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, 16 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: 17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. 18 But to the king of Judah which sent you to enquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard; 19 Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the LORD.

Notice what happens; what did King Josiah discover as he read the Book of the Law of the Lord, which was the writing of Moses? He recognized that because they had worshipped other gods; they had forsaken the Law of God; they had went after Pagan idols just like the Pagan nations around them; they had broken God's Covenant; he recognized that great wrath was upon them. And the great wrath that was upon them was the Curse that was written in the Book of the Law of Moses.

Curse of Moses:

Do we know about any curses that would come upon the people of God as a result of breaking God's covenant? "And He said, I will punish you Seven Times more according to your sins", this is Leviticus 26: the 2520 that he recognizes. You have to remember the 2520 against the southern kingdom of Judah, began in the time period of Josiah's grandfather. His father was Ammon, and Ammon's father was Manasseh. In 677 B.C. Manasseh was carried off into Babylon.

Of course we know that the kingdom of Judah still continued as a nation; but the pioneers recognized that this was the beginning of Babylon's rule over Judah, but Judah as a kingdom still had some probationary time yet. Their kingdom was not yet totally finished.

We see here that Josiah as the grandson of Manasseh, unlike Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar—Josiah heeds the warning; he knows what happened to his grandfather and how he was carried off into Babylon because he had led the people into idolatry; into sorcery; into witchcraft

and Baal worship. He was one of the wickedest kings in Israel's history. Josiah did not follow his example; he heeded the warning.

The Book of the Law was lost, but as a result now of the Book of the Law being uncovered—how was it uncovered? As they went in to repair the breach in the Temple, the Book of the Law was rediscovered. So here we see some new light coming into the history of Josiah—it really wasn't anything new, it was just old truth, truth that was written in Leviticus 26 but had been lost, and covered up and sealed up, because of sin; because of worldliness, apostasy and open rebellion against God.

So we see here now, all of a sudden, the Book of the Law is read; he begins to weep and mourn because he is recognizing the wrath of God—the 2520 which had already begun in the time period of his grandfather Manasseh; but Judah is not fully removed as of yet. Repairing the breach; they find the Book of the Law of the Lord; they read therein and what does he discover—the 2520 curse, and that's what causes him to weep and mourn, to fast and repent.

Let's notice what happens in 2 Kings 23:

2 Kings 23:1 And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.

Notice what takes place after reading about this curse, and this desolation—this wrath that is pronounced against Judah—this impending judgment; all of a sudden now the king gathers the elders. There's a gathering that takes place.

2 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD. 3 And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant. 4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel. 5 And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.

What do we see here? As a result of the Book of the Law of the Lord being rediscovered, recognizing the curse of the 2520 that had already begun, they gather together and they make a covenant to keep the commandments of God, to keep the testimonies—the Spirit of Prophecy—and the statutes; and what do they do? They bring out all the vessels, all the instruments to worship Baal—to worship the sun, moon and stars, and they literally destroy it all. What we see here is a revival and a reformation, and Israel being cleansed of all worldliness, of all apostasy, all 'new theology', all false doctrines and false methods and principles of prophetic interpretation. Notice what takes place now, because when we come down to verse 20, notice what the Bible says:

2 Kings 23:20 And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem. 21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of

this covenant. 22 Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah;

What do we see taking place when Baal worship is destroyed; when no-one is involved in Satanism—sun worship anymore? He says that now it is time to keep the Passover. The Passover had not been kept since the time of the kings—why? Because the people had forsaken the foundations of Israel. They had forsaken the foundations of Adventism. But what led them back to the Passover, was finding the Book of the Law of the Lord, which was only discovered as they went to repair the breaches in the temple.

When they saw the wrath of God; when they saw the curse of the 2520, Josiah did everything in his heart to produce a revival and a reformation. As a result of that revival and reformation, Baal worship, apostasy, sin, ungodliness, iniquity, was removed and the people turned back to Passover.

When we look at Passover; Passover was the birth of Israel, literally as a nation; that was the beginning of ancient Israel—the Passover. When they left Egypt, and they came to the Red Sea; we know that before they left Egypt, we know they had to slay the lamb and to put the blood on the doorpost; they had to eat it with bitter herbs and with their staff in their hand and their shoes on their feet—and there is a lot of symbolism that we will look at later. They left out of Egypt, which is a symbol of coming out of paganism; coming out of darkness; coming out of spiritualism; atheism and sin, and they were coming to the Red Sea; and as they came to the Red Sea they recognized that there was nowhere to go; they saw Pharaoh's chariots behind them and they were greatly disappointed.

Just like Great Controversy 457, 458 says that the Millerites were greatly disappointed on October 22, 1844, and the disappointment of the Hebrews at the Red Sea, parallels and points forward to that disappointment on October 22, 1844. So notice this: when the Israelites came out of Egypt, that was their beginning as a nation; and when God brought His people spiritually out of Egypt in 1844, that was the beginning of spiritual or modern Israel.

So when we look at the foundations of Israel, it began with the Passover, but it was suspended, they were not keeping the Passover. Why? Because of all the gods, because of forsaking the Book of the Law of the Lord—it was lost—truth was sealed up to them. But now, after finding the Book of the Lord, now they have this revival, this reformation experience, they go back to the Passover; they go back and return to the foundations of Israel.

Why did we go through this story? Why are we looking at this? Because when we look at Zephaniah, in our day when Zephaniah's prophecies are completely fulfilled—because there was a literal, local application—there will be a spiritual world-wide application; when Zephaniah's prophecies are fulfilled again, it's going to be in a time period when the breaches need to be repaired. When the breaches are repaired, once again the Book of the Law of the Lord is going to be found, although it is not going to be the writings of Moses—what is the Book that has been sealed up? What is the Book that has been lost to God's people, the Book they are not studying anymore, which we are told that when we better understand these books, believers will have an entirely different religious experience? Their hearts and minds will be impressed with the character that all will need in order to dwell among the blest and the holy, and the gates of heaven will literally be opened up to them, and one thing will be certain, that the connection between God and His people is close and decided and there will be seen a great revival. It's the Books of Daniel and Revelation.

Daniel and Revelation

The only way that we can understand the Books of Daniel and Revelation, the only way we can uncover these truths that have been lost, is that we need to repair the breaches. Is there a prophecy concerning

those that will repair the breaches in the last days? What happened in the days of Josiah when Zephaniah was prophesying is going to be repeated in our days? The Bible tells us:

Isaiah 58:12 And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

The only way we can return back to the foundations of Adventism, illustrated on these two charts, is that we need to study like never before the Books of Daniel and Revelation. But the only way that we will understand the New Light that is found in Daniel and Revelation, which is designed to bring about a revival and a reformation, we need to go back and repair the breaches and in repairing the breaches, we have to raise up the foundations of many generations.

This took place in the days of Josiah. People began to weep, people began to mourn and to fast and pray and to put away all sin; to put away Baal worship among Israel. The 'New Theology' problems that we find, the apostasy, the attack on standards and principles, and the Spirit of Prophecy—the reason why this is there is because the Book of the Law has been sealed up, so to speak. But when the Books of Daniel are unsealed to His people, this will produce the revival and reformation, we will raise up the foundations of many generations and then we will return back to the foundations.

This is the divine setting of Zephaniah; that was the introduction. Now let us study Zephaniah 1:2, 3:

Zephaniah 1:2 I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the LORD. 3 I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.

Now did this take place in the days of Zephaniah, when He cut off man and beast and the creeping things and the fowls and fishes? Did this take place in his day? I tend to believe that this prophecy was not fulfilled in the days of Zephaniah; that Zephaniah was writing for our day and generation. In fact, there was only one time in history that God had cut off man and beast, fowls and creeping things, there was one other time. We find that it was in the days of Noah. Let's look at Genesis 6: when God says that He is going to cut off man and beast, the fowls and the creeping things—what kind of message is God trying to communicate to His people? What is He saying through His mouth-piece Zephaniah?

Genesis 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

Now when God says that He is going to destroy man from off the face of the earth, is this not depicting the close of probation on the antediluvian world? Yes it is. So when we see in Zephaniah God says that He is going to cut off man and beast, the fowls and creeping things and the fishes—this is a message of the close of probation. Now the last time I checked, probation is still open to those who are living. We know that probation did not close in the days of Zephaniah, so this has to be pointing to our day. Jesus said in Matthew 24:

Matthew 24:37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

So we recognize that Zephaniah 1:2, 3, is pointing us to the close of probation; but what does it mean He is also going to cut off "the stumblingblocks with the wicked"? What are the stumblingblocks of the

wicked that are going to be destroyed with man and beast and the fowls and creeping things? Notice in Ezekiel 14:

Ezekiel 14:1 Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. 2 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 3 Son of man, these men have **set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face:** should I be enquired of at all by them? 4 Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the **house of Israel** that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols; 5 That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.

What is the stumblingblock of the wicked? It is idolatry. So God says, I am going to cut off man and beast and the fowls and creeping things and fishes and I am going to cut off the stumblingblocks with the wicked. I am going to cut off all false and Pagan gods.”

Idols and Idolatry

Let’s look a little bit closer now; what are the idols that God is going to cut off at the end of the world just before probation closes on everyone? What are the idols? What are these stumblingblocks, that are going to cause people not to be prepared for the close of probation? When God says:

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”
(Revelation 22:11, 12)

We know that this is when Michael stands up in Daniel 12:1. The censer is cast down; the temple of God is filled with smoke and no man is able to go into the Temple until the seven last plagues of the seven angels are fulfilled. (Revelation 15:8)

Let’s look at some of these stumblingblocks; these idols. These idols are leading the world to perdition. These idols are leading men and women to have their part in the lake of fire which is the second death. (Revelation 21) we need to look at what these idols are; God says, “I am going to destroy them, because they are responsible for causing people to lose out on eternal life and to experience eternal death.” The Bible says in Micah 5:

Micah 5:10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that I will cut off thy **horses** out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy **chariots:** 11 And I will cut off the **cities** of thy land, and throw down all thy **strong holds:** 12 And I will cut off **witchcrafts** out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more **soothsayers:** 13 Thy **graven images** also will I cut off, and thy **standing images** out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the **work of thine hands.** 14 And I will pluck up thy **groves** out of the midst of thee: so will I destroy thy cities. 15 And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

God is talking about cutting off horses; cutting off chariots; cutting off strongholds; the Bible says witchcrafts and soothsayers and graven images. Whose chariots is He going to cut off? Whose horses? Whose graven images? Whose soothsayers and those that are involved with witchcraft? In order for us to understand we need to look at verse 6 to know the nation that is under discussion.

Micah 5:6 And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.

Now in prophecy when we talk about the land of Assyria, and the land of Nimrod, all we have to do is go back to Genesis chapter 10 and we'll see that the land of Nimrod or Assyria was connected with the land of Shinar, and the beginning of his kingdom was Babel. We are talking about Babylon's idols and Babylon's horses; Babylon's soothsaying and witchcraft and graven images. But I want you to look at something in verse 12:

Micah 5:12 And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers:

Now when you think about Babylon and soothsayers, and you think about witchcraft, what comes to mind? What does it mean when people profess to have a familiar spirit and communicate with the dead? It is spiritualism. God is talking about cutting off and destroying the idolatry and stumblingblocks of spiritualism.

Babylon's Divisions

Now you have to remember that in prophecy, Babylon is divided in three parts.

Revelation 16:19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

What are those three parts?

Revelation 16:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

OK, so when God talks about these idols here, of soothsaying and witchcraft and spiritualism, He is talking about cutting off and destroying the idols of the Dragon power; the idols of Spiritualism or Paganism. Are there going to be many people in Babylon and in the world that are going to be in the Lake of Fire because of Spiritualism? All you have to do is read Revelation 21:8:

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

So there are Spiritualists that are going to experience the second death. But that is not all; turn with me in your Bibles to the book of Zechariah 11:

Zechariah 11:17 Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.

Notice it does not say "Idle Shepherd", meaning you are not doing anything; but it says IDOL shepherd. What is a shepherd? A shepherd is a pastor or a minister or a leader over a flock or congregation. It says 'Woe to the IDOL Shepherd'. Spirit of Prophecy says that the 'Idol Shepherd' is the minister that leads the people to exalt him and to worship him.

"Notice the spelling of the word idol. It is not idle, but idol. This refers to the minister who makes an idol of himself--to the minister who carries on his heart no burden for souls. Let the ministers consider this scripture. The Lord has no use for idol shepherds." 18MR 182.

He does not direct people to Jesus Christ as the good and great and chief Shepherd of the flock, the Bishop of our souls, but he leads the people to exalt and worship him 'in the place of Christ'.

Now wait a minute, when we talk about somebody that is in the 'place of Christ', or in the 'room of Christ', or opposes Christ—that person is anti-Christ. This shepherd doesn't lead you beside the still waters, and make you to feed in the green pastures of God's Word—the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy—this shepherd leads you into idolatry. This shepherd leads you into a false experience; worldliness and apostasy. The Idol Shepherd is the one pointing people to the Idol Sabbath; the spurious Sabbath. Who is the Idol Shepherd of false prophecy?

The Idol Shepherd

Daniel 7 says he is the 'little horn'. Daniel 11 says he is the 'king of the north'. 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4 says that he is the man of sin who exalts himself above all that is called God and is worshipped, as he sits in the temple of God showing himself that he is God. Revelation 13 says he is the leopard-like beast and Revelation 17 says that she is Mystery Babylon, mother of harlots. This is the pope of Rome; this is the Papacy, he is the Idol Shepherd in Bible prophecy.

What's going to happen to his right arm? Bible says that his right arm is going to be clean dried up. Now that's interesting; when you look at the arm here, the arm is dealing with his armies, his strength. It is dealing with his military and political power being dried up. Wait a minute—when are the armies of Rome or the military strength—the people that support Rome—when are they going to be dried up—the waters that this woman sits upon?

Well in Revelation 16, the sixth angel pours out his vial on the great river Euphrates, so that the waters thereof might be dried up, that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared. That is the sixth plague. When does that take place? Well we know that this takes place after Michael stands up but when we talk about the waters of Euphrates being dried up or the waters of Babylon—peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues—it begins to be dried up before the plagues are poured out.

Daniel 11

What does Daniel 11:45 say?

And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in [and] the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

What does the Bible mean when it says his right eye is going to be darkened—why the right eye of the papacy? What does the papacy do with its eye? Remember Daniel 7:8? The right arm—the military power of the papacy is going to be dried up in Daniel 11:45 and also Revelation 16; but why is the eye of the papacy going to be darkened?

Eyes of a Man

I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were **eyes like the eyes of man**, and a mouth speaking great things.

The eyes of man, the Bible says, are never satisfied. (Proverbs 27:20) In connection with the eyes of man we see a mouth speaking great things. What are these great things that this anti-christ power is speaking from his mouth—out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks? (Matthew 12:34)

Revelation 13:5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Why is his right eye going to be darkened? Because it is with his eyes that he exalts and lifts up himself against God, and he speaks these blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven.

Blasphemy, according to the Bible is:

- A. when a man claims to be able to forgive sins. Mark 3:7.
- B. when a man claims to be God. John 10:30-33.

There is only one man on the face of the earth that claims to be able to forgive your sins, and also he claims to be God—again that is the Pope of Rome. But his eye is darkened—when is the eye of the papacy—the intelligence of the papacy—his mind is darkened—when?

Revelation 16:10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast;

Where is the seat of the beast? Remember in Revelation 13:2, the dragon gave him his power, seat and great authority? The seat of the papacy is located in Rome—in the Vatican.

. .and **his kingdom was full of darkness**; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,
11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

Fifth Plague

Notice, the Vatican has one plague—the fifth plague of darkness, reserved just for it. Why? Because it was this power that led the world in a dark age. It was this power that led the people to have a darkened understanding of the law of God; of the character of God; and also of the high priestly ministry of Jesus. And the reason the tongues are gnawed for pain is, because with that wagging tongue he's been blaspheming God. It was with that tongue that his doctrine, his dark sentences, that he led people also to blaspheme God; to make people into atheists as well; to forsake the covenant of their God; and there is more that we could go into. But that's why their tongue is being judged and punished. With that mouth they were speaking great blasphemies against God and His Law and His people.

So when God says "I am going to cut off the idols; I am going to destroy man and beast and fowls and creeping things", He is talking of bringing judgment on the idols of Babylon; the idols of the dragon power—spiritualism; the idols of the beast power—which is the pope of Rome himself, and also on his seat as well, but that is not all. The beast power is leading people to the Lake of Fire; the dragon power is leading people to the Lake of Fire by their idols.

The False Prophet

The Stumbling Blocks of the wicked—that which causes people to stumble over the truth for this time, and accepting the Lord Christ Jesus as a personal Savior from sin.

Turn to Zechariah 13:2:

And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the **names of the idols out of the land**, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and **the unclean spirit to** pass out of the land.

Now wait a minute: we talked about the idols of the dragon; the idols of the beast power; now the Bible says here, “I am going to cut off the **names** of the idols, and also I am going to cause the prophets and **the unclean spirit to** pass from the land”. We talked about the Dragon and we talked about the Beast, but that is just two-thirds of modern Babylon. Is there a third player? The false prophet—who is the false prophet in revelation 16?

It is the United States of America—it is Apostate Protestantism; that power that is going to breathe life into the Image of the Beast and command the whole world to worship the Beast on pain of death. You won't be able to buy or to sell. It is the power that is going to lead people to accept the idol sabbath, and this arrangement between the United Nations and also the Vatican. It's the military power, the economic strength as well of the Papacy. But it's talking about the idolatry of the false prophet; and there is much idolatry in Protestantism today that we don't even have time to get into.

Spiritualism

What we see here in Zephaniah 1:2, 3, is God speaking about executing judgment upon modern Babylon. Now, does God have people that are involved in spiritualism that He has to call out of it? Does He have people that are involved in Catholicism that need to come out? Does He have people that are involved in apostate Protestantism? Yes He does. So there needs to be a message to Babylon—is that not right? There is a message that calls people to come out of Babylon—why? Because they are going to be destroyed with their idolatry and have their probation closed if they stay there in.

So what's the message? It's Daniel 11:41.

Daniel 11:41 He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

But does it say that everyone is going to be overthrown? No, just 'many' are going to be overthrown, it say these shall escape out of his hand. Whose hand? The hand of the King of the North. “Even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon”; who are these? We will deal with that later in our studies, but it is those that are involved with the Dragon; those that are involved with the Beast; those that are involved with the False Prophet. It's those who are in Spiritualism, Catholicism, and apostate Protestantism. They have to come out—why?

When is God going to cut off and destroy Babylon? When does He begin to do so? In Revelation 16 you have the falling of the plagues; the first plague is going to fall on the men and women that have the Mark of the Beast. It's going to be a grievous and noisome sore that's going to fall upon them because they received the Mark of the Beast and they worship his image.

Revelation 16:2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

So this verse is taking about the close of probation on modern Babylon, and those who are in the world; they need to be called out lest they receive the plagues. We've talked about the idols of Babylon; those are the idols of the world, but surely Israel doesn't have any idols; there are no idols among the Seventh Day Adventist church. Or are there?

Well, in Zephaniah 1 what does the Bible tell us?

Zephaniah 1:4 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the

Chemarims with the priests; 5 And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham;

In verse for when God says, "I'm going to also stretch out My hand," what does that mean—'also'? "In addition to stretching out My hand on the Dragon, Beast, and false prophet, I'm going to stretch out My hand also on Judah and Jerusalem."

Who are Judah and Jerusalem at the end of the world? Seventh-day Adventists. And why is He going to stretch out His hand on Judah and Jerusalem—the remnant? Because they are a people that are worshipping Baal; they are a people that are worshipping the same idols and the same gods that are in Babylon. It's just that they have a profession of godliness; they have a form of godliness but without the power thereof—they have the same sins of Babylon, but they are members of the 'remnant'. They keep the Sabbath; they read their Bible; they pray and study; they return a faithful tithe and offering; but they have the same sins and idolatries.

Remember Ezekiel said about these idols that are in the house of Israel, that they have set up these idols in their heart. Something that is in the heart, is that open apostasy? Open transgression? You see, the idols of the house of Israel, are not so much the open and blatant sins, going to the club; going to the theater; worldly amusements, not those things—our idols are in the heart—the secret sins—that no one can see. That's what we're going to be judged and punished for.

The remnant of Baal—there is Baal worship that is taking place. And what does the Bible say? "I am going to punish those that are swearing by the Lord and by Malcham." Swearing by two gods—the Lord Jehovah and who is Malcham? Malcham is just another word for Molech. You remember the god Molech, that they used to have the hot burning arms and hands—glowing orange-red hot; and they would throw their babies and offer up their children to Molech.

Now, when the Bible says that they are swearing by the Lord and also by Malcham—what does that mean? That means that God's people are halting between two opinions. Didn't Elijah say:

"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." (1 Kings 18:21)

What did Jesus say in Matthew 6:24?

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

What about Revelation 3:15, 16, where Jesus says; "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."?

Surely we don't have Baal worship going on in our churches today—us as Seventh Day Adventists? We don't worship Baal; we don't bow down to idols of gold and of silver and of brass and wood and stone, that can't see, can't talk, can't hear, can't smell; right?

Baal worship is as verily alive and well today, as it was in ancient Israel. Let me read something to you from Great Controversy 583. What is Baal worship? I think we need to allow the Spirit of Prophecy to identify this to us, because some of us think we are worshipping the true God, but after we read this, I think we are going to have to go back and examine our hearts to see who sits on the throne of our hearts, and who we are really worshipping. Whether it is Christ enthroned within or whether it is Baal that's in the heart.

“In rejecting the truth, men reject its Author. In trampling upon the law of God, they deny the authority of the Lawgiver. It is as easy to make an idol of false doctrines and theories as to fashion an idol of wood or stone.”

Do we have false doctrines among us today? Do we have winds of doctrine blowing through Adventism today, sweeping people off the foundation of the faith once delivered to the saints? Do we have New Theology; false principles of prophetic interpretation—especially in the books of Daniel and Revelation? That’s Baal worship.

“By misrepresenting the attributes of God, Satan leads men to conceive of him in a false character. With many, a philosophical idol is enthroned in the place of Jehovah; while the living God, as he is revealed in his Word, in Christ, and in the works of creation, is worshiped by but few. Thousands deify nature, while they deny the God of nature. Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world today as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah. The god of many professedly wise men, of philosophers, poets, politicians, journalists,—the god of polished fashionable circles, of many colleges and universities, even of some theological institutions,—is little better than Baal, the sun-god of Phoenicia.” GC 583.

Do you know what she just described? She just described every sector of human life; music; education; health; sports; theological seminaries; there are many people today worshipping Baal, the sun-god of Phoenicia. Even as ancient Israel went into apostasy and wondered after Baal as well. Is there idolatry that exists within the human heart? Are there idols that Seventh Day Adventists have while they claim to worship the God of Creation, but really they are worshipping self? Because when you worship an idol, what are you really worshipping?

The Bible says that they worship the works of their own hands. If you are worshipping the works of your own hands, you are worshipping self. So false doctrines; false theories; education; politicians; poets; fashionable circles; colleges; universities; all these things alike, God says that “I am going to have to stretch out My hand upon My people”.

Those that go up to the house tops to worship. What were they doing going up to the house tops to worship? We read it in 2 Kings 23; they were worshipping the sun, the moon and the stars. What kind of stars do we worship? The stars that we see at night in the heavens? Oh no. Movie stars? Sports stars? Musical stars? Political? I believe that the book of Zephaniah is a message to God’s people living here just before probation closes.