

January 5, 1997

3rd-6th Grades

God corrects the proud but helps the humble

Zephaniah 1-3 & 2Chron.34-35

3ZEP17JR

Zephaniah



Materials I Need:

Memory Work:

Learning the books of the Old Testament

The Prophet Zephaniah

The People Judah

The Prophecy The Day of the Lord

The Principle God corrects the proud but helps the humble

Aim Questions:

1. Who was Zephaniah? (He was the great-great-grandson of King Hezekiah. This means that Zephaniah was probably part of the royal aristocracy.)
2. Who was Josiah? What did he do for the people of Israel?
3. What day did Zephaniah warn the people about? (The Day Of The Lord) What was his warning? (That God would punish the people for their sin.)
4. What did Zephaniah tell the Israelites in Judah who still trusted in God? (God promised to protect and bring those home one day.)
5. Zephaniah knew that God is faithful to His own. Do you have the same confidence? Why or why not?

 **Hook:**

Play It. Bring in an unfamiliar board game or a deck of cards. Tell the students to play the game without giving them any rules or explanation. (Tell them that they can figure out how to play as they go along). **Debrief:** This will illustrate what it was like for the faithful in Judah who were trying to obey God during Josiah's time before the book of law was found.

Experiment. Ask the first few students (or some "teen" teachers) who arrive to help you with an experiment. Have them persuade the rest of the students that it would be fun to practice a certain behavior during class. Have them "talk the others into" coughing, keeping one eye closed or walking backwards. They'll need to lead by example. **Debrief:** Later, during class discuss the power we have to influence each other and how easily we can be influenced.

 **Book:**

Presentation Ideas -

Categories. As all of the Bible students arrive have them sit in a circle and explain the game categories. The leader will name a topic and the person to the left of the leader will name an item in the category. (For instance, Old Testament Prophets, Colors, Vegetables, Kinds of Cars, Disciples of Jesus, etc.) If a person repeats on the items they are out. Play the game until only one player remains. **Debrief:** We are using the idea of repetition for the book of Zephaniah. The Day of the Lord is repeated over 20 times.

Bible Adventure -

Have you ever had a friend, either a child or an adult, who was a good influence on you? Did just being around this person help you make wise decisions and want to please God? Today we'll hear about the prophet Zephaniah, who was a good influence over one of the kings of Judah.

It is thought that Zephaniah lived in the city of Jerusalem. He prophesied during the reign of the good King, Josiah. Before Josiah became King though, two evil Kings of Judah, Manasseh and Amon, had introduced wicked, sinful practices into Judah. They built altars to false gods and encouraged the people to worship the sun, moon, and stars. They even dared to build some of these altars and brought idols into God's temple. After Amon died, Josiah became the King. It is thought that Zephaniah knew Josiah from the time he was a very young boy. You see, Zephaniah was the great-great-grandson of Hezekiah, who was King of Judah some 50 years earlier. With his background of royalty, Zephaniah would have had contact with the Kings, especially Josiah.

The book of 2 Chronicles tells us that even as a teenager, Josiah had a heart for God. Zephaniah began prophesying at about this same time, and his prophecies had a great impact on young King Josiah. 2 Chronicles 34:2 says of Josiah that "He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or the left." When Josiah was about twenty years old, he began a campaign to rid Judah of the evil influences began by the Kings before him. He went throughout Judah, destroying the altars built to false gods. He smashed all the idols he could find and ground them into powder. Then he went back to Jerusalem. Six years later, Josiah ordered that God's temple be repaired. As the repairs were being done, what should one of the priests find but a copy of the book of the law given to Moses and to God's people. Evidently the evil kings, Manasseh and Amon, had done their wicked work so well that people had almost completely stopped worshipping the true God and had stopped reading and studying His word. Soon there were no more copies of God's law to be found, so when the priest found this copy, it caused some excitement. It was brought to King Josiah and read to him. What was Josiah's reaction? He tore his clothes in an expression of deep sorrow or grief. You see, when Josiah heard God's laws and commands being read again after all those years, he realized how far the people of Judah had fallen from God's high standards, and it made him very sad.

Josiah gathered all the people together in the temple and had the copy of the law read to them. Josiah stood and told the people he was renewing all his covenant promises to love and follow God. Then he had all the people do the same. Josiah had done his best to remove idolatry from Judah and return the people to worshipping the Lord. Once the temple was repaired, Josiah decided to celebrate the Passover in a big way. The Passover feast was held every year as a remembrance of how God had brought His people out of slavery in Egypt. Hopefully, Josiah felt they were celebrating freedom from the slavery of idolatry. The celebration lasted a full 7 days.

I think God was pleased with Josiah's efforts. However, there was a wickedness in the people that was not totally eliminated. After Josiah's reforms, it was discovered that even though people were worshipping the true God again, many were still worshipping idols in spite of the king's efforts. Those wicked people had no fear of God at all. Zephaniah was sent by God to tell the people of Judah that God was about to stretch out His hand of judgment against them. Those idol worshippers, those star worshippers, those who chose to ignore God were condemned for their failure to honor God. Zephaniah also spoke about the violence and greed of the people, and the way they took advantage of and cheated one another. Worst of all, the people of Judah had ignored God and taken Him for granted for so long that **they thought** God was being merciful to them because God had not done anything about the situation. What a terrible, foolish opinion to have about God! God thought these people needed some waking up to reality! Can you imagine Zephaniah's voice, ringing through the land of Judah? "Be silent before the Sovereign Lord, for the day of the Lord is near." (Zeph 1:7). "The great day of the Lord is near--near and coming quickly. Listen! The cry on the day of the Lord will be bitter, the shouting of the warrior there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom.....I will bring distress on the people and they will walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord." (Zeph 1:14-17). What a fearful prophecy! The day of the Lord always refers to a day when God judges sin. This is what is in store for Judah. I'm sure that many people felt hopeless as they listened to Zephaniah's prophecies, but God always graciously gave His people a reason to hope even in the midst of judgment. Yes, God was going to punish the people for their sins, but there were people living in Judah at that time who were not proud, self-serving, or greedy; people who still trusted in God. God called them the remnant of Israel, and He gave a promise to them.

God promised to protect them from any harm, and to one day bring them home to stay. The remnant will be honored and praised by all the people of the earth, and God will bless them with every good thing.

Zephaniah knew that God is faithful to His followers. Do you have that same confidence? When life is at its ugliest, take Zephaniah's words to heart. In Chapter 3 he writes, "The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, and will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing." Knowing that God loves you so much should give you courage to meet whatever comes your way.



Look:

- Seek.** Write the following words on three separate pieces of paper. THE LORD, RIGHTEOUSNESS, and HUMILITY. Hide them (before class begins) ahead of time in different places around the room. Have the students seek the pieces of paper. Whoever finds the papers brings them to the front of the class and read what they have found. Discuss how we could/should seek these things in our lives.
- Double/Trouble.** In small groups work to fill out the double/trouble page. Open up those Bibles to Zephaniah to find the answers. **3ZEP17JR.GF2**
- Pride/Humility.** The verses on the Pride/Humility page speak of either pride or humility. Mark each one with a 'P' for pride or an 'H' for humility. **3ZEP17JR.GF1**



Took:

- Jumpin' 4 P's.** Jump rope jam. Jump rope to this little diddy. Also, review prophets you've already studied.
 - The Prophet is Zephaniah
 - The People are from Judah
 - The Prophecy - - - The Day of the Lord
 - The Principle - - - God corrects the proud but helps the humble
 - These are the 4 P's
 - Got 'em from Zephaniah
 - Now it's time, to jump out!
- The Day of the Lord.** How many times do you find the phrase "The Day of the Lord" in these three chapters?
- The Prophet.** The prophet Zephaniah influenced young king Josiah who, in turn, greatly influenced the people of Judah. Even though he could not change their hearts, a whole nation of people followed God's ways as long as Josiah was with them. Have students draw a picture of three people as follows: Draw the student himself in the middle. On one side, draw someone the student is influenced by (parent, teacher, etc.), and on the other side, someone who is influenced by the student (younger brother or sister, friend, etc.). Discuss how important it is to be a good influence on others and to be influenced only by those who would help us obey God.
- Sing It.** Ask students if they have ever heard of the fact that God sometimes sings! Read Zephaniah 3:17. "The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing." What makes God sing? What delights God? Isn't it amazing that he loves us so much?
- Special Music. BE LIKE A TREE.** *[Begin to teach this song to the younger Bible students as a class. Have fun with it and use lots of actions. 3rd-6th Graders, enjoy getting ready to teach the younger Bible students.]* Paul and Denise Smith copyright 1994 Integrity's Hosanna! Music/ASCAP

I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the Father
To keep me strong
I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord
I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the Father
To help me grow
I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord.

The deeper the roots go
The better the fruits grow
The Blessings bloom out
For all to see
The deeper the roots go
The more my life shows
That Jesus is the Lord of me.

(Repeat Chorus and verse)

I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the Father
To keep me strong
I've gotta be like a tree
Planted by the water
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord
Trusting in the name
Of the Lord.

PRIDE AND HUMILITY

These verses speak of either pride or humility. Mark each one with a 'P' for pride or an 'H' for humility.

_____ Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people, I have heard you, declares the LORD. (II Kings 22:19)

_____ Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did - with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses. (II Kings 23:25)

_____ Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger. (Zephaniah 2:3)

_____ This is the carefree city that lived in safety. She said to herself, "I am, and there is none besides me." (Zephaniah 2:15)

_____ Woe to the city of oppressors... She obeys no one, she accepts no correction. (Zephaniah 3:1,2)

_____ Her prophets are arrogant; they are treacherous men. (Zephaniah 3:4)

_____ The LORD within her is righteous;... yet the unrighteous know no shame. (Zephaniah 3:5)

_____ I will remove from this city those who rejoice in their pride. Never again will you be haughty on my holy hill (Zephaniah 3:11)

_____ But I will leave within you the meek and humble, who trust in the name of the LORD.(Zephaniah 3:12)

DOUBLE TROUBLE
on the
DAY OF THE LORD

Fill in each blank with the "double" for the underlined word.

"At that time I will...punish those...who think, 'The LORD will do nothing, either good or _____.'" (Zephaniah 1:12)

"Their wealth will be plundered, their houses _____." (1:13)

"The great day of the LORD is near and coming _____." (1:14)

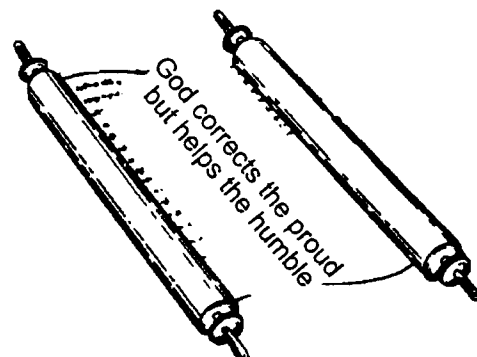
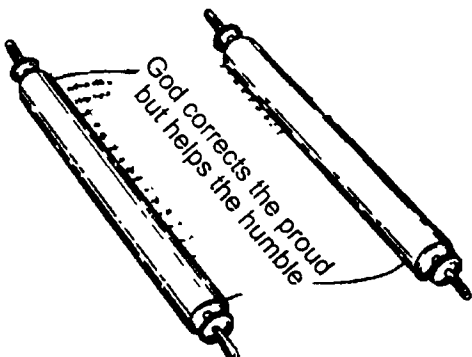
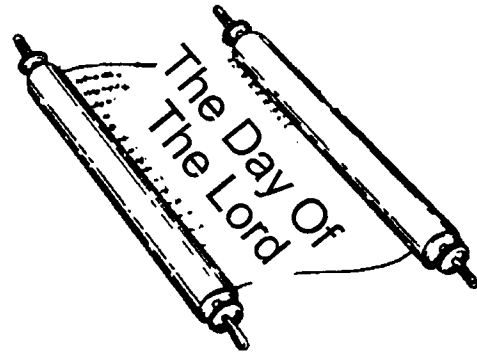
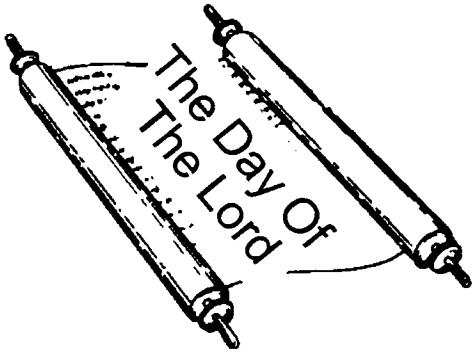
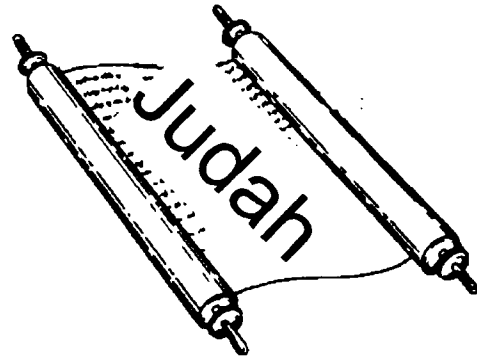
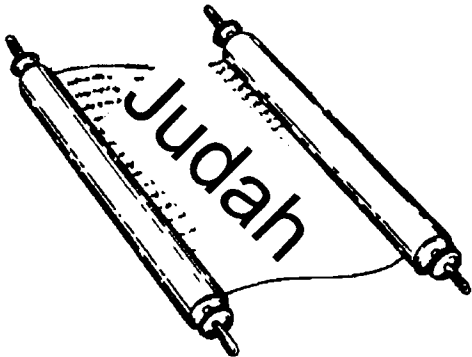
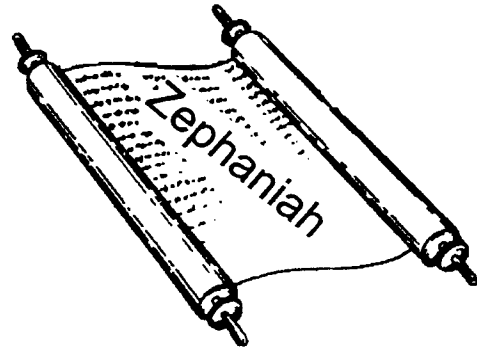
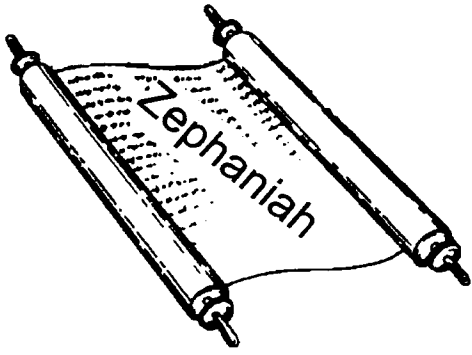
"That day will be a day of...distress and _____,

a day of trouble and _____,

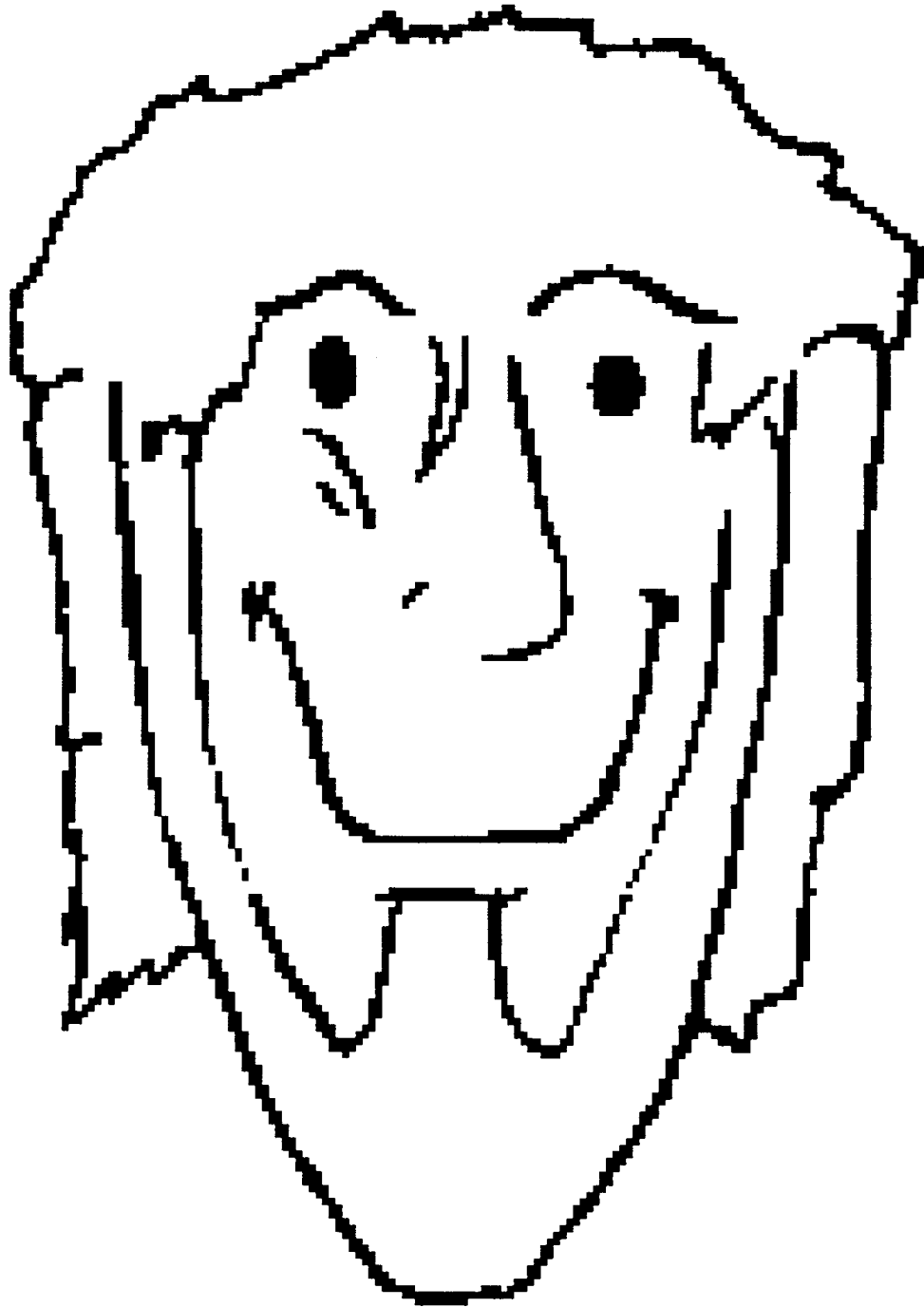
a day of darkness and _____,

a day of clouds and _____," (1:15)

"Neither their silver nor their _____ will be able to save them." (1:18)



3ZEP17GF4



Zephaniah

3ZEP17GF5

KING JOSIAH'S REFORMS 2KINGS 23

King Josiah eliminated idol worship. He cleansed Judah and Samaria. There was no King like Josiah either before or after him!

Follow the arrows to fill in the blanks.



W	I	E	A	R	I	T	H
A	T	H	T	A	W	A	L
L	H	I	S	S	N	D	L
A	L	H	U	O	S	H	D
L	H	T	L	C	I	R	A
L	W	I	A	C	O	C	N
H	I	D	N	A	W	E	A
S	E	N	N	I	T	H	L
S	R	G	I	A	L	E	L
T	T	H	O	W	O	H	T
S	E	S	B	M	F	W	V

Josiah turned to the Lord

“ W I _____ ”

→ ↓ ↓ ↗ ↓ ↘

→ ↑ →

↖ ↑ → → ↘

→ ↘ → ↖ ↑ → →

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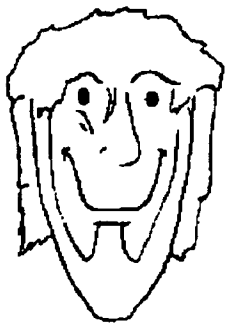
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_____ S _____”

NAME _____



REPAIRING THE TEMPLE

2 KINGS 22:1-7

Josiah was only a child when he became king, but he did well.

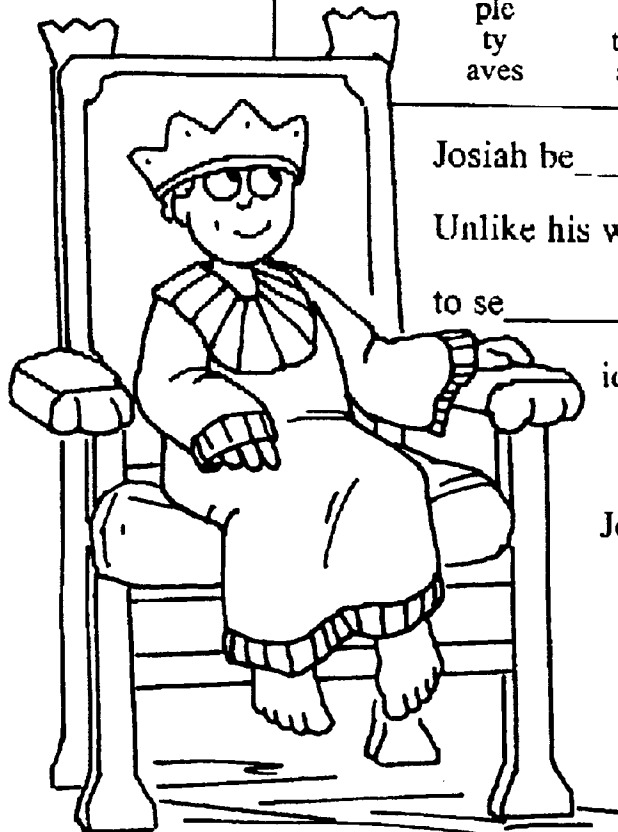
Fit these vowels, in the order given, in the blank spaces.

IEEIAAAOOIAEEIEIOAAEAAEEIEIEIEIOO
EAEIEOOEIAEIEAEAEUEFAFOEAEIEIAOOOIA

K__ng H__z__k__h w__s __ g__d k__ng. __ft__r h__ d__d, h__s
s__n, M__n__ss__h, w__s __n __xtr__m__ly w__ck__d k__ng. Wh__n h__
d__d, h__s s__n, Am__n, b__c__m__ k__ng. H__ f__ll__w__d h__s
f__th__r's w__ck__d w__ys. H__ w__s m__rd__r__d __ft__r tw__ y__rs.
Th__ n__xt k__ng w__s Am__n's s__n J__s__h.

Find the missing endings to the words that are underlined in the list below.

ple	und	came	gan	stroyed	store	nt
ty	tered	cd	ek	shipped	ship	ther
aves	aces	maged	pair	ng	ue	ght



Josiah be_____ ki_____ when he was ci_____ years old.

Unlike his wick_____ fa_____ and grandfather, he be_____

to se_____ the Lord. He de_____ the pl_____ where

idols were wor_____ . He gro_____ up the idols

and scat_____ them on gr_____ . When

Josiah was 26 years old, he set out to re_____

tr_____ wor_____ . The Lord's

tem_____ was dir_____ and da_____ .

He se_____ men to re_____ it.

Name _____

3ZEP17JRGF8