OET
Open English
Translation

Open English Translation
of the Bible

Tsefanyah

(Zephaniah)

Introduction

Tsefanyah (commonly known as Zephaniah) was a prophet at the time that Yoshiyah (Josiah) was king of Yehudah (Judah). The people served the true God, but before long, they abandoned Yahweh and started worshipping false gods. So then Yahweh threatened to punish the people of Yerushalem (Jerusalem) city and the people across all of Yehudah because of their evil activities. However, even then, they refused to ask him for forgiveness. So in 586 before Yeshua/Jesus (B.C.), Yerushalem was destroyed by the Babylonians (sometimes also called Chaldeans). But even then, he'd planned to punish those other nations in the future for enslaving his people, then he'd allow his people to return there to Yerushalem and receive his blessing.

Main components of this document

The day of Yahweh's judgement *1:1–2:3*
The destruction of nations near Yisrael *2:4-15*
The destruction and future redemption of Yerushalem *3:1-20*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
Open English Translation · Translation draft v0.48.94 · https://OET.Bible
Copyright © 2010-2026 https://Freely-Given.org. CC BY-SA 4.0. https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/

Readers' Version

1:1 The message from Yahweh which came to Tsefanyah (Zephaniah) (son of Kush (Ethiopia), son of Gedalyah, son of Amaryah, son of Hizkiyah (Hezekiah)) in the time of Amon's son, King Yoshiyah (Josiah) of Yehudah (Judah)[1]

Coming judgement against Yehudah · Southern kingdom

2 Yahweh declares:
I will exterminate everything that lives on the ground.
3 Yahweh declares:
I'll bring humans and animals to an end, along with the birds and fish. Wicked people will be destroyed along with their idols and humankind will be cut-off from the earth. **4** I will punish the people of Yehudah (Judah),
and those living in Yerushalem (Jerusalem).
I will wipe all remnants of Ba'al out from this place.
No one will even remember the names of those priests who served idols.
5 I'll punish those who bowed down to the stars and planets from their rooftops,
and those making promises to Yahweh but then promising to the false god Malkam.[2]
6 I'll punish those who turn back after following me, Yahweh,
as well as those who haven't searched for Yahweh or prayed to me.
7 Be silent in the presence of the master Yahweh,
because his day is near.
Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice,
and he's consecrated his guests.
8 On the day of Yahweh's sacrifice, I will visit their officials and the king's sons, and all those wearing foreign clothing.
9 At that time I will punish all the officials who force their way into people's homes—the ones filling their masters' houses using fraud and violence.
10 Yahweh declares:
On that day a cry of distress will come from the Fish Gate,
and wailing from the second district
and a loud crash from the hills.
11 Wail, you inhabitants of the Maktesh,
because all of the people of Kena'an (Canaan) will be destroyed.
All the money-counters will be eliminated.
12 I will search Yerushalem (Jerusalem) with lamps at that time,
and I will punish those who've sunk to the bottom—
the ones who tell themselves,
'Yahweh will never take action—either good or bad.'
13 Their wealth will be taken as plunder
and their houses will be ruined.
They'll build houses, but they won't get to live in them.
They'll plant vineyards, but won't get to drink their wine.
14 Yahweh's big day of judgement is near—

Literal Version

1:1 The_message_of **YHWH** which it_came to Tsəfan^{yāh} the_ _son_of Kūshiy/(Cushi) the_son_of Gədal^{yāh} the_son_of 'Amar^{yāh} the_son_of Ḥizqiy^{yāh} in_the_days_of Yo'shiy^{yāh}/(Josiah) the_son_of 'Āmōn the_king_of Yəhūdāh/(Judah).

2 Utterly_(destroy) I_will_bring_to_an_end everything from_ _under the_surface_of the_soil the_utterance_of **YHWH**. **3** I_ _will_bring_to_an_end human_being and_animal I_will_ _bring_to_an_end the_bird[s]_of the_heavens and_the_ _fish(es)_of the_sea and_the_stumbling-blocks with the_ _wicked_people and_I_will_cut_off ~~ḎǾM~~ the_humankind from_ _under the_surface_of the_soil the_utterance_of **YHWH**. **4** And_I_will_stretch_out hand_of_my on Yəhūdāh and_on all_ _of the_inhabitants_of Yərūshālaim/(Jerusalem) and_I_will_ _cut_off from the_place the_this ~~ḎǾM~~ the_remnant_of (the)_ _Ba'al ~~ḎǾM~~ the_name_of the_pagan_priests with the_priests. **5** And_~~ḎǾM~~ those_who_bow_down on the_roofs to_the_ _soldier/messenger_of the_heavens and_~~ḎǾM~~ those_who_ _bow_down those_who_swear_an_oath to/for_**YHWH** and_ _those_who_swear_an_oath by_king_of_their. **6** And_~~ḎǾM~~ those_who_have_turned_back from_after **YHWH** and_which not they_have_sought ~~ḎǾM~~ **YHWH** and_not they_have_ _sought_him. **7** Hush from_face/in_front_of my_master **YHWH** if/because is_near the_day_of **YHWH** if/because **YHWH** he_has_prepared a_sacrifice he_has_consecrated those_of_who_were_invited_by_him. **8** And_it_was in/on_day of_the_sacrifice_of of_**YHWH** and_I_will_visit_judgement on the_princes and_on the_sons_of the_king and_on all_of those_who_are_clothed clothing foreign. **9** And_I_will_visit_ _judgement on every_of (the)_one_who_leaps over the_ _threshold in_the_day (the)_that those_who_fill the_house_of their_master(s)_of_their violence and_deceit. **10** And_it_was on_day (the)_that the_utterance_of **YHWH** the_sound_of a_ _cry_of_distress from_the_gate_of the_fish(es) and_wailing from the_second_district and_a_crashing great from_the_ _hills. **11** Wail Oh_inhabitants_of the_Mortar if/because all_of the_people_of Kəna'an/(Canaan) it_will_be_destroyed all_of the_weighers_of silver they_will_be_cut_off. **12** And_it_was at_time (the)_that I_will_search ~~ḎǾM~~ Yərūshālaim/(Jerusalem) with_lamps and_I_will_visit_ _judgement on the_people who_are_thickening on lees_of_ _their who_are_saying in_heart_of_their not **YHWH** he_will_ _do_good and_not he_will_do_harm. **13** And_it_was wealth_ _of_their (into)_plunder and_houses_of_their (into)_a_ _desolation and_they_will_build houses and_not they_will_ _dwell_in_them and_they_will_plant vineyards and_not they_ _will_drink ~~ḎǾM~~ wine_of_their. **14** Is_near the_day_of **YHWH** (the)_great near and_hurrying exceedingly the_sound_of the_day_of **YHWH** bitter is_shouting there a_warrior. **15** Will_ _be_a_day_of fury the_day (the)_that a_day_of distress and_ _trouble a_day_of devastation and_desolation a_day_of darkness and_gloom a_day_of cloud and_thick_darkness. **16** A_day_of trumpet and_battle-cry on the_cities (the)_ _fortified and_on the_corners (the)_high. **17** And_I_will_ _cause_distress to_humankind and_they_will_walk like_(the)_ _people if/because to/for_**YHWH** they_have_sinned and_ blood_of_their _it_will_be_poured_out like_dust and_ _bowel[s]_of_their like_dung(s). **18** Neither silver_of_their nor

1 **RV 1:1 · Cross-ref.** 2Ki 22:1–23:30; 2Ch 34:1–35:27.

2 **RV 1:5 · Note** A variant of the name of the pagan god 'Molek' (or 'Molech', but also close to the Hebrew word for 'king' as found in some other translations).

Literal Version

gold_of_their not it_will_be_able to_deliver_them in/on_day of_the_fury_of of_**YHWH** and_in_the_fire_of his_jealousy_of_ _his all_of the_earth/land it_will_be_consumed if/because complete_destruction surely that_which_is_terrible he_will_ _make with all_of the_inhabitants_of the_earth/land.

2:1 Gather_yourselves_together and_gather_together Oh_ _nation not ashamed. **2** Before_before a_decree brings_forth like_chaff a_day it_has_passed_away before_before not it_ _will_come on_you(pl) the_burning_of the_anger of_**YHWH** before_before not it_will_come on_you(pl) the_day_of the_ _anger of_**YHWH**. **3** Seek ᴅᴏᴍ **YHWH** Oh_all_of the_humble_ _people_of the_earth/land who judgement_of_his they_have_ _done seek righteousness seek humility perhaps you(pl)_will_ _be_hidden in/on_day of_the_anger of_**YHWH**.

4 If/because ʿAzzāh abandoned it_will_be and_ʾAshqəlōn will_ _become_(into)_a_desolation ʾAshdōd at_noontide(s) people_ _will_drive_it_out and_ʿEqrōn it_will_be_plucked_up. **5** Woe_ _to the_inhabitants_of the_region_of the_sea the_nation_of the_Kərētī the_message_of **YHWH** is_on_you(pl) Oh_ _Kənaʿan/(Canaan) the_land_of the_Pəlishtiy and_I_will_ _destroy_you from_not an_inhabitant. **6** And_it_will_be the_ _region_of the_sea pastures_of meadows_of shepherds and_ _folds_of sheep. **7** And_ the_region _it_was to_the_remnant_of the_house_of Yəhūdāh/(Judah) on_them they_will_graze in_ _the_houses_of ʾAshqəlōn in_evening they_will_lie_down if/because he_will_visit_them **YHWH** god_of_their and_he_ _will_turn_back mmm[9]. **8** I_have_heard the_reproach_of Mōʾāv and_the_reviling_words/messages_of the_people_of ʿAmmōn who they_have_reproached ᴅᴏᴍ people_of_my and_ _they_have_magnified_themselves on territory_of_their. **9** For_so/thus/hence by_the_life of_me the_utterance_of **YHWH** soldiers/messengers the_god_of Yisrāʾēl/(Israel) if/because Mōʾāv like_Ṣədom it_will_be and_the_sons of_ _ʿAmmōn like_ʿAmorāh/(Gomorrah) a_place_possessed_of weed[s] and_a_pit_of salt and_a_waste until perpetuity the_ _remnant_of my_people_of they_will_plunder_them and_the_

Readers' Version

close and coming quickly.
The sound of Yahweh's day is bitter—
even warriors will cry out.
15 That day will be a day of anger,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of destruction and desolation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of cloud and thick darkness,
16 a day of trumpet blasts and with the battle cry
against the fortified cities and against the high towers on their corners.
17 I'll bring distress to the people,
and they'll walk slowly as if they were blind,
because they've sinned against Yahweh.
Their blood will be poured out like dust,
and their innards like dung.
18 Their silver, and even their gold, won't be able to save them
on the day of Yahweh's anger.
The whole earth will be consumed in the fire of his jealousy
because he'll soon destroy people from all over the world.

Do what is right · Southern kingdom

2:1 Gather yourselves together,
yes, assemble now you shameless nation
2 before the decree is made,
before the day passes like chaff,
before Yahweh's anger reaches you all,
yes, before that day of Yahweh's anger hits you.
3 Search for Yahweh, all you humble people who do his justice.
Aim to do what is right and to stay humble.
Perhaps you'll be hidden away on the day Yahweh's anger.

The demolition of places near Yisrael

4 Because Azah (Gaza) will become abandoned,
and Ashkelon will become a ruin.
The people of Ashdod will be driven out by noon,
and Ekron will be overthrown.[3]
5 The inhabitants of the coastal region are to be pitied,
the nation of the Kereti.
Yahweh's decision is against you all,
Kena'an (Canaan), land of the Pelishtim.
I'll destroy you until no one remains.
6 The coastal region will become pastures of meadows for shepherds
and pens for flocks.
7 The remaining survivors from Yehudah (Judah) will inhabit that region.
They will shepherd their flocks on that land.
They'll lie down in their houses in Ashkelon in the evening,
because their god Yahweh will visit them, and he'll restore their fortune.

3 **RV 2:4-7 · Cross-ref.** Isa 14:29-31; Jer 47:1-7; Eze 25:15-17; Yoel 3:4-8; Amos 1:6-8; Zech 9:5-7.

9 **LV 2:7 · Note** OSHB variant note: תובש/ם: (x-qere) שׁבְיָתִ֔ם: lemma_7622 n_0 morph_HNcfsc/Sp3mp id_36AXb שׁבְיָתִֽם

Readers' Version

8 I've heard Moav's (Moab's) mocking[4]
and the Amonim' insults.[5]
They've insulted my people
and built up their forces against their border.
9 Commander-in-chief Yahweh, Yisrael's (Israel's) god, declares:
As certain as I'm alive,
Moav will become like Sedom,
and the Amonim like Amorah (Gomorrah),
overrun by nettles and salt-pits—in ruins forever.[6]
The remnant of my people will plunder them,
and the remainder of my nation will take possession of them.
10 That will be the fruit of their pride,
because they mocked and talked themselves up
against the people of Commander-in-chief Yahweh.
11 The people of Moav (Moab) and Amon will be very scared when Yahweh punishes them.
He'll do that so powerfully that people will stop worshipping all other gods.
People in every nation will worship Yahweh instead—each person in their own country.
12 Also you, Kushim (Ethiopians) (Kushim), will be killed by my sword.[7]
13 Yahweh will punish those in the north.
Yes, he'll destroy Ashur (Assyria).
He'll turn Nineveh into ruins—
it'll become a dry place like the desert.[8]
14 Herds of every kind of wild animals will lie down in the middle of it,
Various kinds of owls will sit on the pillars still standing.
A call will hoot in the window.
Rubble will blocking any doorways still upright,
because the cedar planks will be exposed.
15 This is the proud city where people lived in security.
The one with a reputation: "No other city compares with me."
How it's become a ruin—a home for the wild animals.
Every one passing by will hiss at it in derision,
and shake their fist remembering their hate for it.
3:1 The one rebelling and being defiled is to be pitied—
the city of oppressors.
2 She doesn't listen to what she's told.
She doesn't take correction.
She refuses to trust in Yahweh.
She won't approach her god.

Yerushalem's sin · Southern kingdom

Literal Version

_rest_of my_nation_of_my[10] they_will_take_possession_of_ _them. **10** This to/for_them in_place_of pride_of_their if/because they_reproached and_they_magnified_themselves on the_people_of **YHWH** soldiers/messengers. **11** **YHWH** will_be_awesome on_them if/because he_will_make_lean ~~DOM~~ all_of the_gods_of the_earth/land and_they_will_bow_down to_him/it everyone from_his_own_of_place all_of the_ _islands_of the_nations. **12** Also you(pl) Oh_Kūshiy/(Cushite)s are_those_slain_of my_sword_of_my they. **13** And_he_will_ _stretch_out his/its_hand on the_north and_he_will_destroy ~~DOM~~ 'Ashshūr and_he_will_make ~~DOM~~ Nīnəvēh (into)_a_waste a_dry_region like_wilderness. **14** And_they_will_lie_down in_ _the_midst_of_of_it herds every_of animal_of_his a_nation both wilderness_owl as_well_as hedgehog on_capitals_of_its they_will_spend_the_night a_sound it_will_sing in_window desolation will_on_the_threshold if/because cedar-work he_ _will_lay_bare. **15** This[1112] the_city (the)_exultant which_ _dwelt to_security which_said in_heart_of_its I and_only_of_I am_yet how it_has_become (into)_a_waste a_resting_place for_animal[s] every one_who_passes_by on/upon_it(f) he_ _will_hiss he_will_shake his/its_hand.

3:1 Woe_to the_one_who_is_rebellious and_the_one_who_is_ _defiled the_city which_oppresses. **2** Not it_has_listened to_a_ _voice not it_has_accepted correction in_**YHWH** not it_has_ _trusted to god_of_its not it_has_drawn_near. **3** Officials_of_ _its in_midst_of_its are_lions roaring judges_of_its are_ _wolves_of the_evening which_not they_gnaw to_morning. **4** Prophets_of_its are_insolent men_of treacheri(es) priests_ _of_its they_profane the_sanctuary they_treat_violently the_

4 **RV 2:8-11 · Cross-ref.** Isa 15:1–16:14; 25:10-12; Jer 48:1-47; Eze 25:8-11; Amos 1:13-15.

5 **RV 2:8-11 · Cross-ref.** Jer 49:1-6; Eze 21:28-32; 25:1-7; Amos 1:13-15.

6 **RV 2:9 · Cross-ref.** Gen 19:24.

7 **RV 2:12 · Cross-ref.** Isa 18:1-7.

8 **RV 2:13-15 · Cross-ref.** Isa 10:5-34; 14:24-27; Nah 1:1–3:19.

10 **LV 2:9 · Note** OSHB variant note: יוֹגֵ: (x-qere) יֹ֫/וֹגֵ: lemma_1471 a n_0.0 morph_HNcmsc/Sp1cs id_36gBW יֹ֫/וֹגֵ

11 **LV 2:15 · Note** OSHB note: We read one or more accents in L differently from BHQ.

12 **LV 2:15 · Note** OSHB note: We read one or more accents in L differently than BHS. Often this notation indicates a typographical error in BHS.

Literal Version

_law. **5** **YHWH** is_righteous in_midst_of_its not he_does injustice in_morning in_morning judgement_of_his he_gives to_the_light not he_is_missing and_not an_unjust_person is_ _knowing shame. **6** I_have_cut_off nations corners_of_their they_are_desolate I_have_made_desolate streets_of_their from_not_of one_who_passes_by cities_of_their they_have_ _been_laid_waste from_not_of anyone from_not an_ _inhabitant. **7** I_said surely you_will_fear me you_will_accept correction and_not dwelling_of_its it_will_be_cut_off all that I_have_visited on/upon_it(f) nevertheless they_rose_early they_corrupted all_of practices_of_their. **8** For_ _so/thus/hence wait to_me the_utterance_of **YHWH** for_the_ _day_of my_rising for_booty if/because judgement_of_my is_ _to_gather nations I_to_assemble kingdoms to_pour_out on_ _them indignation_of_my all_of the_burning_of my_anger_ _of_my if/because in_the_fire_of my_jealousy_of_my all_of the_earth/land it_will_be_consumed. **9** If/because then I_ _will_restore to peoples a_lip purified to_ of_them_of_all _call in/on_name_of **YHWH** to_serve_him a_shoulder one. **10** From_the_other_side of_the_rivers_of of_Cush worshippers_of_my the_daughter_of my_scattered_ones[141516] they_will_bring offering_of_my. **11** In_the_day (the)_that not you_will_be_ashamed from_all practices_of_your which you_ _have_transgressed against_me if/because then I_will_ _remove from_midst_of_your the_exultant_ones_of your_ _pride_of_your and_not you_will_repeat to_be_haughty again on_the_mountain_of my_holiness_of_my. **12** And_I_will_leave in_midst_of_your a_people afflicted and_poor and_they_will_ _take_refuge in/on_name_of **YHWH**. **13** The_remnant_of Yisrā'ēl/(Israel) not they_will_do injustice and_not they_will_ _speak falsehood and_not it_will_be_found in_mouth_of_their a_tongue_of deceitfulness if/because they they_will_graze and_they_will_lie_down and_there_will_not_be one_who_ _terrifies.

14 Shout_for_joy Oh_daughter_of Tsiyyōn/(Zion) shout Oh_ _Yisrā'ēl/(Israel) rejoice and_exult in_all the_heart Oh_ _daughter_of Yərūshālaim/(Jerusalem). **15** **YHWH** he_has_ _removed judgements_of_your he_has_cleared_away enemy_ _of_your the_king_of Yisrā'ēl/(Israel) **YHWH** is_in_midst_of_ _your not you_will_fear evil again. **16** In_the_day (the)_that it_will_be_said to_Yərūshālaim/(Jerusalem) do_not be_afraid Oh_Tsiyyōn not hands_of_your let_them_drop. **17** **YHWH**

Readers' Version

3 Her leaders are roaring lions among the flock.
Her judges are wolves that approach in the evening.
There's nothing left to eat by the morning.
4 Her prophets are insolent, treacherous men.
Her priests profane the sanctuary—they violate God's law.
5 Yahweh behaves fairly in her midst.
He doesn't do anything that's wrong.
He makes fair and just judgements every morning.
At every dawn, he's present there,
and yet those who are disobedient have no shame.
6 I've destroyed nations—broken down their walls.
I've destroyed their streets and now they're deserted.
Their cities are ruined, lifeless,
without anyone living in them.
7 I said, 'Surely you will respect me and accept correction.
Then she won't die as a city because of my punishing her.'
Nevertheless, they got up early to do all their corrupt activities.
8 Yahweh declares:
Wait for me, for when I pounce on the prey,
because my decision is to gather nations and assemble kingdoms,
to pour my indignation and all my anger out on them,
because the whole world will be consumed by the fire of my jealousy.
9 Then I'll be sure to give pure speech to the peoples,
so all of them can pray to Yahweh,
and serve him side-by-side.
10 From across the rivers of Kush (Ethiopia) (Kush), my worshippers,
my scattered children will return and bring my offering.
11 On that day you won't feel ashamed about all the times you disobeyed me,
because at that time, I'll remove those proud people from among you,
and you won't continue to be arrogant on my sacred mountain.
12 And I'll leave the poorer and humble people among you,
and they'll trust in Yahweh's authority.
13 The surviving Israelis won't do what is wrong.
They won't tell lies or deceive others.[13]
Instead they'll eat and sleep in peace,
No one will be there to terrify them.

The song of happiness · Both kingdoms

14 Tsiyon's (Zion's) daughter, sing happily.
All Yisrael (Israel), shout aloud.
Daughters of Yerushalem (Jerusalem), be happy and triumphant will all your being.
15 Yahweh will stop punishing you.
He's forced your enemy to retreat.

13 **RV 3:13 · Cross-ref.** Rev 14:5.

14 **LV 3:10 · Note** OSHB note: Marks a place where we agree with BHQ against BHS in reading L.

15 **LV 3:10 · Note** OSHB note: Marks an anomalous form.

16 **LV 3:10 · Note** OSHB note: We read punctuation in L differently from BHS.

Readers' Version

Yisrael's king, Yahweh, is among you.
Don't worry any more about being harmed.
16 In that day Yerushalem will be told,
"Don't be afraid, Tsiyon (Zion).
Don't let your hands grow weak.
17 Your god Yahweh is right there.
A powerful warrior, he'll save you.
He'll be so happy about you.
He'll be silent in his love.
He'll talk happily about your rescue."
18 I will gather those among you who grieve so they can attend the celebrations.
They were taken as tribute and it was a reproach.
19 Look, I'll be dealing with all of your oppressors at that time.
I'll save your people who are disabled or who've been shamed.
Then I'll get them praising,
and change their shame into a good reputation around the world.
20 At that time I will bring you all in—
yes, I'll gather you all together at that time.
You'll have a good reputation and people all over the world will praise you,
as I restore your good fortune right in front of your eyes.
Yahweh has spoken.

ZEP · OET-RV v0.2.2

Literal Version

god_of_your is_in_midst_of_your[17] a_warrior who_he_will_
_give_victory he_will_rejoice on_you with_joy he_will_be_
_silent in_love_of_his he_will_be_glad on_you with_a_shout_
_of_joy. **18** Those_who_are_grieved_of from_an_appointed_
_feast I_will_gather from_you they_were tribute on/upon_
_it(f) reproach. **19** HERE_I am_about_to_deal with all_of
those_of_who_afflicted_you at_time (the)_that and_I_will_
_save ~~DOM~~ the_one_who_is_lame and_the_one_who_is_outcast
I_will_gather and_I_will_make_them (into)_praise and_(into)_
_a_name in_all the_earth/land shame_of_their. **20** At_time
(the)_that I_will_bring you(pl) and_at_time gather_I you(pl)
if/because I_will_make you(pl) (into)_a_name and_(into)_
_praise among_all_of the_peoples_of the_earth/land when_I_
_turn_back ~~DOM~~ captiviti(es)_of_your(pl) to_eyes_of_your(pl)
YHWH he_says.

ZEP · OET-LV v0.2.0 (OT set)

Text preprocessed by script v1.1.0, then PDF produced by SILE v0.15.12-0938a45-flake
https://Freely-Given.org/OBD/OET/byDoc/ZEP.htm#Top

17 LV 3:17 · Note OSHB note: We agree with both BHS 1997 and BHQ on an unexpected reading.