

# Old Testament

Mission Arlington • Mission Metroplex Curriculum • 2010

# Through the Old Testament in Two Years

## Part Two



Created for use with young, unchurched learners  
Adaptable for all ages including adults

# Old Testament

## Zephaniah

Last week we learned that God was punishing His people. Habakkuk called out to God for help. He wanted to know the reason God was allowing sinful people to keep doing wrong. God told him that He planned to punish the evil people. Habakkuk knew that he could trust God and he put his hope in the Lord.

## Zephaniah 1-3

### Read the Bible

**READ: Zephaniah 3:1-4, 14-20 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)**

## Memory Verse

May the God who gives hope  
fill you with great joy.  
May you have perfect peace  
as you trust in Him.  
May the power  
of the Holy Spirit  
fill you with hope.  
(Romans 15:13 NIV)

## Begin With Prayer

Today's lesson is about a man named Zephaniah (Zef-a-ni-a). His great-great grandfather was King Hezekiah. Some of you may know the story. Hezekiah prayed to God when his enemies threatened him. God heard and answered Hezekiah's prayer. (II Kings 19:14-37) Zephaniah probably knew the story.

## Goals

1. Understand that Zephaniah lived in a time when God's people worshipped idols.
2. Recognize that God was planning to punish His people.
3. Learn that Zephaniah encouraged the faithful to hope in God.
4. Understand that God promised to be with His people, Israel.

Zephaniah lived at the same time as King Josiah (Joe-sigh-a). At that time the people were not following God. They had forgotten all about Him. They were doing what they wanted instead of doing what God wanted. Josiah became king when he was eight years old. He followed God. He decided to make the temple pure. He got rid of the false gods and things sacrificed to them. He even got rid of the priest who worshipped the false gods. The Bible says, "Josiah had everyone in Israel serve the Lord their God. As long as he lived, they didn't fail to follow the Lord, the God of their people." (II Chronicles 34)

God called Zephaniah to prophesy against Israel. God told Zephaniah to tell the people that He would destroy the sinful people along with their gods. (Zephaniah 1:1-3)

Zephaniah encouraged those who were faithful to God to keep obeying God's commands and to continue doing right. "So look to Him, all of you people in the land who worship Him faithfully. You always do what He commands you to do. Continue to do what is right. Don't be proud. Then perhaps the Lord will keep you safe on the day He pours out His anger on the world." (Zephaniah 2:3 NIV) Zephaniah knew that God's mercy is great. He encouraged the righteous to hope in the Lord.

### Zephaniah — Bible Facts

1. Zephaniah was a prophet of God. He was the great-great grandson of King Hezekiah.
2. Josiah was the king when Zephaniah prophesied.
3. God planned to punish Israel because of their sin.
4. Zephaniah said God would stop punishing His people. He would be with them. He would save them.

The people did not obey God. They didn't listen to His warnings. They didn't even trust God.

God said that their prophets were proud and they could not be trusted. They were polluting God's temple. They were teaching people to obey the law, but they broke the law. (Zephaniah 3:1-4)

Zephaniah told the people what God said. He told them that even though they were disobedient God was good to them. "[God] never does anything that is wrong. Every morning He does what is fair. Each new day He does the right thing. But those who do what is wrong aren't even ashamed of it." (Zephaniah 3:5 NIV) God said that He would punish His people. They would be scattered, but then God would bring them back. They would sing, shout and be glad. They would be full of joy. God would stop punishing them. Their enemies would turn away. Zephaniah encouraged the people saying, "Don't give up." God would be with them. (Zephaniah 3:14-16 NIV)

"The Lord your God is with you. He is mighty enough to save you. He will take great delight in you. The quietness of His love will calm you down. He will sing with joy because of you." God promised to bless and gather them home. (Zephaniah 3:17-20 NIV) God sent Jesus to save us and provide us with a way to know Him and live with Him in heaven.

### Review

1. **Who was Zephaniah?** (Zephaniah was a prophet of God. He was the great-great grandson of King Hezekiah)
2. **Who was the king when Zephaniah prophesied?** (Josiah was the king when Zephaniah prophesied.)
3. **What did God plan to do?** (God planned to punish Israel because of their sin.)
4. **What did Zephaniah say?** (Zephaniah said God would stop punishing them. He would be with them. He would save them.)

### Do You Know Jesus?

We can know God and be with Him forever. God sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. But He rose from the dead. (John 3:16; Romans 10:9-10) If we invite Jesus to be a part of our lives He will come to be a part of our lives forever. If you would like to know more, talk to your teacher.

### Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus to save us.
3. Ask God to help you put your hope in Him.
4. Pray for friends and family members who need to put their hope in God.

### Application

Zephaniah lived in a time when God's people worshipped idols. God was planning to punish His people. Zephaniah encouraged the faithful to hope in God. God would punish and scatter His people but then He would stop punishing them. He would gather them home and bless them. He would be with them. Because Jesus died and rose from the dead God's Holy Spirit lives in believers. As believers we know God's love, hope, joy and peace.

### Planning for Next Week

### Haggai — Haggai 1-2

# Preschool Lesson

## Read the Bible

**READ: Zephaniah 3:14-20 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)**

**Teachers:** Bring icing and cereal in the shape of “o’s.” Using the icing to spell out the words joy and hope on a paper plate. Allow the children to place the cereal on the icing to form the word. Enjoy!

God called Zephaniah to prophesy against Israel. God told Zephaniah to tell the people that He would destroy the sinful people along with their gods.

Zephaniah encouraged those who were faithful to God to keep obeying God’s commands and to continue doing right. “So look to Him, all of you people in the land who worship Him faithfully. You always do what He commands you to do. Continue to do what is right. Don't be proud. Then perhaps the Lord will keep you safe on the day He pours out His anger on the world.”

Zephaniah knew that God’s mercy is great. He encouraged the righteous to hope in the Lord. The people did not obey God. They didn’t listen to His warnings. They didn’t even trust God.

God would punish His people. But Zephaniah encouraged the people saying, “Don’t give up.” God would be with them.

“The Lord your God is with you. He is mighty enough to save you. He will take great delight in you. The quietness of His love will calm you down. He will sing with joy because of you.” God promised to bless and gather them home. God sent Jesus to save us and provide us with a way to know Him and live with Him in heaven.

### Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus to save us.
3. Ask God to help you put your hope in Him.

### Memory verse for younger children

May the God who gives hope fill you with great joy. Romans 15:13

## Learning Activities

•**Memory verse activity** — Make glasses out of construction paper. Write the memory verse on the glasses.

•**Test your memory** — Cut out the letters for the words, “JOY,” “HOPE,” and “MERCY.” Use the letters to form the words as you tell the story. Place the letters on a bulletin board or poster board.

•**Taste activity** — Bring icing and cereal in the shape of “o’s.” Using the icing to spell out the words joy and hope on a paper plate. Allow the children to place the cereal on the icing to form the word. Enjoy!

•**Think about it** — God’s people were worshipping idols. They ignored God’s commands. God was going to punish them. Talk about consequences.

God would punish His people but then He would be merciful. Talk about God’s mercy.

Zephaniah encouraged the faithful to hope in the Lord. Talk about hope in the Lord.

•**Touch activity** — Make cards with magnets with the words hope, joy, peace, power, and mercy. Glue magnets on the back. Ask the children to decorate their cards.

Make binoculars with construction paper. Make two cylinders. Glue them together. Add an index card with the verse.

•**Run and play** — Play hide and seek.

Play a guessing game. Prepare cards with the following words: hope, joy, peace, power, and mercy. You may also prepare questions or phrases. [Example: What you express when you pray. (hope) What you feel when you get a present. (joy) What you sense when you are with God. (peace) What you want to show your enemy. (power) What you want when you do wrong. (mercy)] Each child will have a word on their back. They can ask three questions to determine the word on their back. If they are able to discover the word, they may sit down.

•**Listen** — As the children take time for silence, remind them that God wants us to put our hope in Him.

•**Sing** — Sing “Solid Rock,” “Only Believe,” or another song related to the story.

•**Reach out** — During class, pray (by name) for kids who did not come today. Ask the children to go with you to deliver the memory verse activity set to those who were absent. Pray with the children who were absent. Encourage them to read the story in the Bible.

## Memory Verse

May the God who  
gives hope fill you  
with great joy.

May you have  
perfect peace as you  
trust in Him.

May the power  
of the Holy Spirit  
fill you with hope.

Romans 15:13

## Word Puzzle

Trace the letters.

God is

mighty

to save

## Word Search

D B K L P N L T S R D C B G F  
E S F R H F G C L J P N D S D  
P D R A F G H A I N A H P E Z  
P B N D L P D K N G N L T M C  
I G S K B S D E R J U P K L N  
H V S R F D E G S F R L D R L  
S C H M B K J V H T U R I S T  
R P B G P O T T D F R G G Y E  
O N D G Y L I C N S H O O L N  
W R P T N A S I L T B J Y D S  
F W V C F B S G F Y T H G I M

ZEPHANIAH

WORSHIPPED

FALSE

DESTROY

SINFUL

FAITHFUL

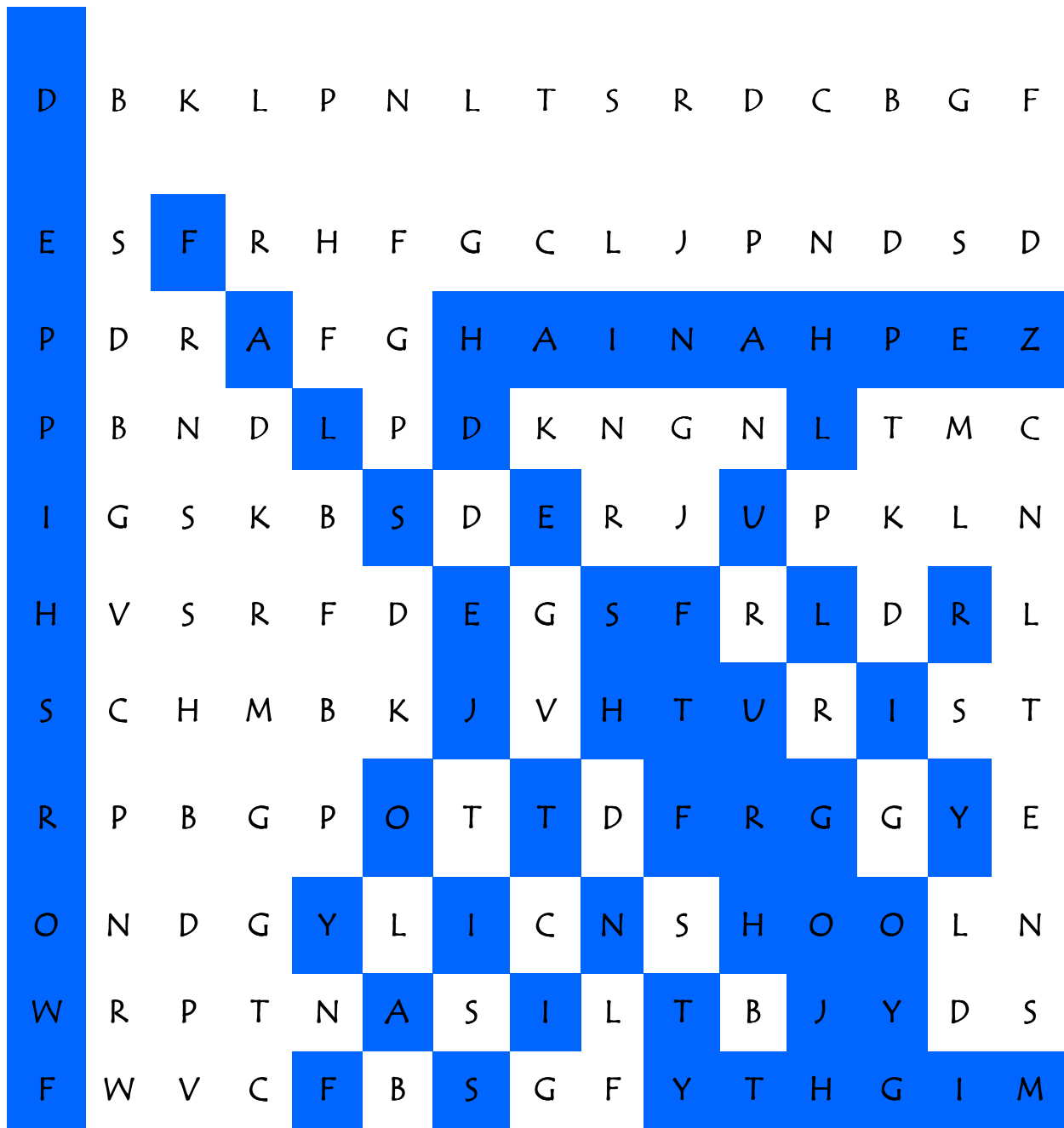
RIGHT

MIGHTY

JOY



# Word Search



ZEPHANIAH

WORSHIPPED

FALSE

DESTROY

SINFUL

FAITHFUL

RIGHT

MIGHTY

JOY

## Word Search

F N B T F V P K G W F R M  
C H F G B P K N L B R S C  
V G N F R M F M P S K F B  
F L H J O Y N K B C N M G  
B R M I G H T Y H F G S D  
G S F C F B C R S M S D H  
N F W F G R I G H T E D B  
S H F L F A L S E Y B D G  
D P N I N B V C T R S D F  
S R W O R S H I P P E D G  
F Z E P H A N I A H M F S  
M K C R H B K L C V K M S

ZEPHANIAH

WORSHIPPED

FALSE

RIGHT

MIGHTY

JOY

## Word Search

F N B T F V P K G W F R M  
C H F G B P K N L B R S C  
V G N F R M F M P S K F B  
F L H J O Y N K B C N M G  
B R M I G H T Y H F G S D  
G S F C F B C R S M S D H  
N F W F G R I G H T E D B  
S H F L F A L S E Y B D G  
D P N I N B V C T R S D F  
S R W O R S H I P P E D G  
F Z E P H A N I A H M F S  
M K C R H B K L C V K M S

ZEPHANIAH

WORSHIPPED

FALSE

RIGHT

MIGHTY

JOY

# Anagram

DGO EVSIG

PEHO

TEARG YJO

TREEPFC CEEPA

WREPO

OLYH PTISR

LLIF OYU

NSOARM

PINHHEAAZ

# Anagram

GOD GIVES

HOPE

GREAT JOY

PERFECT PEACE

POWER

HOLY SPIRIT

FILL YOU

ROMANS

ZEPHANIAH