

 **COGIC Sunday School Lesson: Lesson 2, June 14, 2026,**

**“The Consequences of Disobedience”**

**Bible Basis:** Zephaniah 3:6–8

**Bible Truth:** Zephaniah recounts how God punished the people for their disobedience, and wanted them to correct their behavior.

**Memory Verse:** “Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy” (Zephaniah3:8)

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**Key Takeaways: Lesson Aim:**

When we see God’s judgment, we should not fear His anger but respond to His mercy — learning, repenting, and waiting for His renewal.

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**1 Opening Activity — “Warning Signs”**

**Objective:** Help students connect the idea of warnings with God’s prophetic messages.

- Show pictures of warning signs (bridge out, storm alert, poison label).
  - Ask: *Why do we need warnings? What happens if we ignore them?*
  - Transition: Zephaniah’s message is God’s “warning sign” — not to destroy, but to awaken hearts.
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**Lesson Summary:**

**Verses 6–8 – Impending Global Judgment**

This passage in Zephaniah 3:6–8 is God speaking through the prophet, explaining why judgment is coming and what He intends to accomplish through it. It’s a moment of divine reflection — God recounts what He’s already done, what His people failed to learn, and what He will now do to restore justice.

## Background and Key Context

✦ **God warned Judah MANY times — over centuries, not just once.**

**Zephaniah 2- God's warning through the Prophet Zephaniah that His wrath was coming to the nation of Judah and Jerusalem because of their disobedience.**

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### The Lesson: Zephaniah 3:6-8

6I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

7I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, *and* corrupted all their doings.

8Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination *is* to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

**1 God warned Judah through earlier prophets (over 300+ years)**

Before Zephaniah, Judah had already heard warnings from:

- Isaiah
- Micah
- Joel
- Amos
- Hosea
- Obadiah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk (around the same time)

**That's multiple generations of prophetic warnings.**

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**2 God warned Judah through the fall of Israel (722 BC)**

The Northern Kingdom (Israel) was destroyed by Assyria because of idolatry and injustice. (2Kings 17 and 18)

Judah watched it happen.

God expected Judah to say:

“We don’t want that to happen to us.”

But they didn’t learn.

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### **3** God warned Judah through judgments on other nations (Zeph. 3:6)

**God says:**

“I have cut off the nations... their cities are destroyed.”

Meaning:

- You SAW Me judge other nations
- You SAW their towers fall
- You SAW their cities empty

But you still didn’t change.

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### **4** God warned Judah through kings and reforms

**Especially:**

- Hezekiah’s revival (2 Chronicles 29-31)- a return to dependence on God.
- Josiah (major reforms) 2 Kings 22-23 and 2 Chronicles 34-35, where he restored order back to the nation.

Even with righteous kings, the people’s hearts stayed divided.

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### **5** God warned Judah through covenant curses (Deut. 28)

**They had the Law.**

*They knew the consequences.*

**They had Scripture.**

*They had history.*

**They had prophets.**

*They had examples.*

**Therefore, they had no excuse.**

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 **So how many times did God warn Judah?**

**Countless times. Repeatedly. Patiently. Over centuries.**

**Through:**

- Prophets
- Kings
- Scripture
- National disasters
- The fall of Israel
- The fall of surrounding nations
- Personal correction
- Public judgment
- Mercy
- Patience
- Warnings
- Signs
- Examples

**God didn't warn them once.**

**He warned them over and over.**

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## The Lesson: Zephaniah 3:6-8

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7I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, *and* corrupted all their doings.

8Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination *is* to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

## Missing Pieces:

### Verses 1–5 – Jerusalem’s Corruption

Jerusalem is called an oppressive, defiled city that refuses correction, trusts no one, and rejects the LORD. Her princes, judges, prophets, and priests devour the people like predatory beasts, twisting law and truth. In stark contrast, “The LORD is righteous in her midst; He does no wrong” (v. 5).

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**Verse 6 — God’s Past Judgments** 6I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

### ***“I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate...”***

God reminds Judah that He has already judged other nations for their pride and violence.

- Their fortresses (“towers”) are empty.
- Their streets and cities are silent.
- No one passes through — total desolation.

This was meant to be a warning: Judah could see what happens when nations rebel against God.

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## Verse 7 —God’s heartbreak and Judah’s Missed Opportunity

7I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, *and* corrupted all their doings.

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### WHAT’S HAPPENING IN ZEPHANIAH 3:7?

This verse is God revealing **His heart, His hope, and His disappointment** with Judah.

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#### 1. “I said, Surely thou wilt fear me...”

God is saying:

**“After everything you’ve seen, surely you will respect Me.”**

Judah had watched:

- Other nations fall
- Israel (the Northern Kingdom) destroyed
- Cities wiped out
- God’s warnings fulfilled

God expected Judah to respond with **reverence**, humility, and repentance.

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#### 2. “Surely thou wilt receive instruction...”

God hoped Judah would:

- Listen
- Learn
- Accept correction
- Change direction

This shows God’s **mercy** — He wanted repentance, not destruction.

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### 3. “So their dwelling should not be cut off...”

God’s intention was:

**“If you listen, you won’t lose your land, your homes, your nation.”**

Judgment was **avoidable**.

God was offering protection — if they responded to His correction.

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### 4. “Howsoever I punished them...”

Even after discipline, God expected Judah to wake up spiritually.

This means:

- God had already been correcting them
- The correction was meant to turn them back
- But they still refused to change

God’s discipline was **meant to heal**, not destroy.

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### 5. “But they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.”

This is the tragic turn.

“Rose early” means:

- They were eager
- Quick
- Energetic
- Determined

But not to obey —  
**to continue sinning.**

They didn’t drift into sin.

They **ran** toward it.

They corrupted:

- Their worship

- *Their justice*
- *Their relationships*
- *Their leadership*
- *Their daily lives*

*Everything they touched became twisted.*

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### **THE HEART OF THE VERSE**

*Zephaniah 3:7 shows:*

- *God's **patience***
- *God's **hope***
- *God's **desire for repentance***
- *Judah's **stubborn rebellion***
- *The tragedy of ignored warnings*

*It's God saying:*

***"I gave you every chance. I corrected you with love. I hoped you would turn. But you refused — eagerly."***

*This sets the stage for verse 8, where God says:*

***"Now wait for Me — I must act."***

***"Rising early"*** here means they were eager to sin, quick to continue corruption. They ignored every warning and kept going their own way.

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### **KEY TAKEAWAY**

***God's warnings are mercy.***

***Ignoring them leads to destruction.***

***But God's heart is always for repentance, not ruin.***

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### Why this matters for us today?

God's warnings are not signs of anger — they are signs of love, patience, and mercy.

Judgment only comes after:

- Every warning
- Every chance
- Every invitation
- Every opportunity to repent

has been ignored.

### **Verse 8 — God's Final Determination**

**Here's what's happening in Zephaniah 3:8 — and this verse is the turning point of the entire chapter. It's where God moves from *warning* to *action*, and from *patience* to *judgment with purpose*.**

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### WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ZEPHANIAH 3:8?

**This is God Himself speaking, and He is announcing what He is about to do next.**

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#### **1. "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD..."**

God tells the faithful remnant:

"Stand still. Don't panic. Don't run.  
Wait for Me — I'm about to act."

It's trusting, watching, expecting God to move.

Judah cannot save herself.

Only God can.

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## **2. “Until the day that I rise up to the prey...”**

**This is warrior language.**

God is saying:

“I am rising up like a lion to take down My target.”

The “prey” is:

- wicked nations
- corrupt systems
- oppressors
- idolatry
- injustice
- everything that has lifted itself against God

God is not rising in irritation —  
He is rising in righteous judgment.

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## **3. “For my determination is to gather the nations...”**

This is intentional.

God has decided:

- to gather the nations
- to assemble the kingdoms
- to bring them to account

This echoes other prophetic scenes (Joel 3, Isaiah 34) where God gathers nations for judgment.

This is not random.

This is divine strategy.

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## **4. “To pour upon them mine indignation... all my fierce anger...”**

This is God’s holy anger — not human rage.

It is:

- pure
- just
- measured
- deserved
- righteous

God is not lashing out.  
He is executing justice.

This is the moment when God says:

“Enough.”

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##### **5. “For all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.”**

“Jealousy” here means:

- God’s fierce love
- His covenant passion
- His refusal to share His people with idols
- His commitment to righteousness

The “fire” is symbolic of:

- purification
- judgment
- cleansing
- removing evil

This is not the fire that destroys God’s people —  
it’s the fire that removes what destroys God’s people.

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## THE BIG PICTURE

### **Zephaniah 3:8 is God saying:**

“You’ve seen My warnings.

You’ve ignored My correction.

Now stand still — I am stepping in to judge the nations and cleanse the earth.”

This judgment is not the end.

It is the beginning of restoration.

Because immediately after this verse (v. 9–13), God promises:

- purified lips
- restored worship
- a humble remnant
- a renewed people
- a cleansed land

Judgment clears the ground for renewal.

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## IN ONE SENTENCE

**Zephaniah 3:8 is God announcing that He is rising to judge the nations with righteous fire — and calling His people to wait and trust Him as He cleanses the earth.**

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## Summary

- God judged other nations to warn Judah.
  - Judah ignored the warning and continued in corruption.
  - God will now act decisively to judge all nations — but His purpose is purification, not annihilation.
  - The faithful are called to wait — trusting that God’s justice will lead to renewal.
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## **Spiritual Application: Teaching Points:**

This passage teaches that:

- God’s warnings are acts of mercy.
- Ignoring correction leads to destruction.
- Waiting on God means trusting His timing and His justice.
- Judgment is not the end — it’s the doorway to restoration.

**Key point:** God’s justice is not random — it’s purposeful, meant to lead people to repentance and renewal.

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### **Main takeaway:**

God’s judgment is not just punishment — it’s a call to transformation.

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### **Reflection:**

Sometimes God lets us see consequences so we’ll *avoid* them.

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### **Discussion Questions**

- Why do you think Judah ignored God’s warnings?
- How does God’s patience show up even in His judgment?
- What can we learn from God’s desire that His people “receive correction”?
- How can we respond when God exposes areas in our lives that need change?