

# The Only God Who Speaks

July 18, 2021  
Zephaniah 1:1

Who did you think you were going to hear speak today?

We tend to want to be heard more than we want to listen

God wants a dialogue, not a monologue

Everyone can read the bible, but not everyone can hear God

We need a miracle to hear the only God who speaks

**T/S: I would like to pray and then unpack the context of Zephaniah**

*The word of the LORD came to Zephaniah son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah, son of Ammon, king of Judah*

## 1. The Messenger- Who is Zephaniah?

**A prophet of the LORD**

**A prophet is one who speaks on behalf of God**

**First prophet to Judah in the 60 years since Isaiah**

**Last minor prophet and therefore last written word before**

**Judah was exiled to Babylon**

**Lived decades prior to the exile**

## **2. The Message- Destruction and Deliverance**

**Justice and Love**

**Prophetic warning wrapped in hope**

**Incredibly angry and incredibly gracious to save**

## **3. The Mess- What was happening during this time?**

**The past will help us to understand the present**

*2 Kings Bible Project Video*

**T/S This is the foundation of today's text**

**~Big Idea of Zephaniah 1:1~**

**Every biblical word of the LORD has an author, an ambassador, and an audience**

**T/S: By way of preview, today we will focus on three points**

- I. The Author of the Word**
- II. The Ambassador of the Word**
- III. The Audience of the Word**

**T/S: Have you ever created something and wanted others to know you created it?**

**God absolutely wants you, me, and everyone we know to know He is the only God who speaks and He is the Author of the Bible**

## **I. The Author of the Word (1:1a)**

*The word of the LORD*

### **A. Who is the LORD?**

**Exodus 3:15:** *God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations*

**Isaiah 45:5-** *I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God...*

## B. What is the “word of the LORD”?

- The one true God speaking to someone

**Genesis 15:1-** *the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great*

- The one true God speaking through someone

**Malachi 1:1-** *The pronouncement of the word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi*

### 2. The word of the Lord Jesus Christ

**Hebrews 1:1-2:** *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world*

**1 John 5:20b-** *And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life*

### 3. The written word of God

**2 Timothy 3:16-** *All Scripture is breathed out by God*

**Scripture is the written communication of the one true God**

- **Do you believe 2 Timothy 3:16? Does your life show it?**
- **It's easy to say we believe, but do we really?**
- **How do you know? Biblical faith works (James 2:26)**
- **Who you supremely obey reveals who you supremely love (John 14:15)**
- **Who you supremely love reveals who you worship**
- **Who you worship reveals your eternal destiny (1 John 2:17)**
- **Whether you believe 2 Timothy 3:16 or not is of eternal importance and has eternal consequences because no one will be saved apart from the receiving and believing the word of God (1 Peter 1:23; Romans 10:13-17)**

**T/S God intends for His word to be heard. Therefore, every biblical word of the LORD has an ambassador**

## **II. The Ambassador of the Word (1:1b)**

***The word of the LORD came to Zephaniah***

## **A. Ambassadors hear the Word**

### **i. Heavenly hearing**

**The God of the Word came specifically to Zephaniah**

**Everyone can read the bible, but not everyone can hear God**

**Everyone can hear the word of God, but not everyone can biblically hear the word of God**

***He who has ears let me hear* (Matthew 11:15)**

- **We all start off dead in sin (*Ephesians 2:1*)**
- **We all need to be born again (*John 3:3*)**
- **Christians hear His voice & follow Christ (*John 10:27*)**

**Hearing is the fruit of being born again & the fruit of being born again is faithfully obedience rooted in love**

## **B. Ambassadors hear & heed the Word**

### **i. Heavenly hearts**

**Zephaniah first received the Word, then delivered the Word**

**Christians are rivers, not reservoirs**

**Christians do not hoard, they herald**

**To represent Christ is to represent the Word of God and to represent the Word of God is to represent the God of the Word, Jesus Christ - you can't pull them apart**

*Zephaniah son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah*

## **1. Names have meaning**

*Zephaniah-* “The Lord hides”

**Isaiah 59:2-** *but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear*

**If God hides, how do I come to have a relationship with Him?**

**Matthew 11:27b-** *and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him*

**AND man is commanded to come with repentance and faith (Mark 1:15)**

***Gedaliah-*** Jehovah is my greatness (**identity**)

- Not the praises of men nor the treasures of this world
- Christ is the Christians greatness

***Amariah-*** Jehovah speaks or has promised (**authority**)

- Jesus Christ speaks and always keeps His promises

***Hezekiah-*** Jehovah is my strength (**fidelity**)

- Jesus Christ is the only true source of strength

## **2. Names serve as a timestamp**

**King Hezekiah's life is a part of the context of the book of Zephaniah**

**Focus on God as you listen to his story and see the only God who speaks**

**Video #1: EyeWitness Bible Series- A Good King?**

**King Hezekiah passionately represented the LORD**

- **Who are you truly representing?**

- **Who and or what does your name point to?**
- **Ask yourself continually who I am listening to?**
- **The answer will help you represent Christ daily**

**T/S Ambassadors are given heavenly hearing and hearts in order to herald the Word of God**

### **III. The Audience of the Word (1:1c)**

*In the days of Josiah, son of Amon, king of Judah*

#### **A. Ambassadors hear, heed, & herald the Word**

**Zephaniah proclaimed the Word to a specific people during a specific time**

*The days of Josiah* means the days of King Josiah's reign (640-608)

*Josiah*- whom Jehovah heals

- **Jesus Christ removes our sick heart of stone and replaces it with a new heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:25-27)**

**Through Zephaniah's lineage, God wants to give us the full perspective of Zephaniah**

**Zephaniah takes us four generations into the past to King Hezekiah, then he brings us to into the days of Josiah,**

**This time frame serves as bookends in order to give us the full perspective of the context of the book of Zephaniah**

### **Video #2: EyeWitness Bible Series- End of the Southern Kingdom**

**Although exile was inevitable, there was Hope in the LORD for the people of Judah**

**There is true eternal hope in Christ alone so long as one is breathing**

**Zephaniah proclaimed the word of God to the people of God, but the people of God didn't want the God of the word.**

**I have found that to be true among many who claim to love Christ and yet their lives demonstrate varying degrees of hatred**

- **Know your audience (those lost in the church and outside the church )**
- **Christians are called, commanded, and commissioned to a specific God ordained audience**
- **They see what you value, cherish, love, hate, and prioritize**
- **They see what you are living for and what you are not living for**
- **The Christian's life speaks so much louder than he or she could ever imagine**
- **Christians are called to draw attention to Christ and His Gospel**
- **Are you striving to please God or striving to please yourself?**
- **Are you striving to hear, heed, & herald your word or God's word, will, and ways?**

- **Are you set on bringing God glory? Herald the Gospel for the Gospel is the glory of Jesus Christ**
- **Always remember when and how you were saved. Someone came to you and share the Gospel. May we not hold back any part of God's word from anyone for God has not held back any part of His word from us.**

**T/S Let me remind you of where we have been**

**I. The Author of the Word is Jesus Christ**

**II. The Ambassador of the Word is every Christian**

**III. The Audience of the Word is the Great Commission**

**T/S As we close, I would like to share with you a poem**

*I admire the people who go way in.  
But I wish they would not forget how it was before they got in.  
Then they would be able to help the people who have not yet even  
found the door.  
Or the people who want to run away again from God.  
You can go in too deeply and stay in too long and forget the people  
outside the door.  
As for me, I shall take my old accustomed place,*

*Near enough to God to hear Him and know He is there,  
But not so far from men as not to hear them,  
And remember they are there too.*

*Where? Outside the door - Thousands of them. Millions of them.  
But - more important for me - One of them, two of them, ten of  
them. Whose hands I am intended to put on the latch.  
So I shall stand by the door and wait for those who seek it.  
'I had rather be a door-keeper so I stand by the door.*

- **6.04 million in Maryland**
- **626,299 in Vermont**
- **44.27 million in Uganda**
- **An estimated 11,440,030 in Bangalore, India**

**Christians are given ears to hear and hearts to lovingly obey in order to herald the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the glory of Jesus Christ**

**Use with all your strength which Christ so mightily works in you to hear, heed, and herald the word, will, and ways of God**

**Ambassadors of the LORD hear, heed, and herald the word of the LORD**

**On judgment day, every person will stand before Judge Jesus and He will either say *“well done, good and faithful servant”* or *“cast the worthless servant into outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.***

**Christians are called, commanded, and commissioned to do all they can do to help others hear “*well done, good and faithful servant*” all by God’s grace and all for God’s glory.**

**Sermon Series Title: Shelter from the Storm- A Study of the book of Zephaniah**

**Songs**

**Chris McClarney- Hallelujah for the Cross**

**Matthew West- Do Something**

**Matthew West- My Own Little World**