

Note: The word "all" in Zephaniah 1:8c indicates that there were some who were not princes or royal princes who were also guilty of this sin.

- (b) The retainers of the princes and royal princes increased the riches of their masters by extorting treasures from their dependents by violence, i.e., by forcibly entering their homes and stealing their treasures and by fraud (Zeph. 1:9).

Note: The expression "leap on, i.e., over the threshold" is a common term for burglary and stealing with violence.

- b. The traders and Usurers (Zeph. 1:11)

The traders and usurers were called "the merchant people" or literally "the people of Canaan" because they acted like the Canaanites or Phoenicians who were unscrupulous and dishonest in their business transactions.

Note: "Maktesh" or "mortar" refers to a valley in Jerusalem where "the merchant people," i.e., traders and "they that bear money," i.e. usurers lived. Zephaniah says that the people who live there will "howl" because these traders and usurers will be destroyed.

- c. The Morally and Religiously Indifferent (Zeph. 7:12,13)

- (1) Their discovery (Zeph. 1:12a)

The words "I will search Jerusalem with candles" indicate that the Lord will make a minute search of the houses and hiding-places of these people by means of the enemies who conquer Jerusalem so that none of them will escape His judgment.

- (2) Their description (Zeph. 1:12b,c)

These people are described as those who "are settled on their lees," i.e. just as old wine which has been left upon its lees and not drawn off retains its flavor and odor when it is poured into other vessels, so these people persevere in their moral and religious indifference. They think to themselves that there is no God who rules and judges the world, and that everything takes place by chance or according to natural laws. Thus, while they don't deny the existence of God, they deny His moral government of the world and place Him in the same category with idols who can do neither good nor harm.

- (3) Their judgment (Zeph. 1:13)

- (a) Their "goods," i.e., wealth will become the property of their enemies (Zeph. 1:13a)
- (b) Their houses will be destroyed (Zeph. 1:13b cf. Lev.26:32,33)