

# Zephaniah 1:7-14

## Day of the Lord:

- This section is bracketed by the phrase “day of the LORD” (“day of YHWH”) in verse 7 and 14
  - 1:7 – “For the day of the LORD is near”
  - 1:14 – “The great day of the LORD is near...the day of the LORD is bitter.”
- Between verses 7 and 14 the “day of the LORD” is referred to as:
  - 1:8 – “the day of the LORD’s sacrifice”
  - 1:9 – “On that day I will punish...”
  - 1:10 – “On that day...a cry will be heard”
  - 1:12 – “At that time I will search Jerusalem...”
- In this section the day of the Lord is referred to 7 times in 8 verses which means the day of the Lord is the focus and Zephaniah is revealing more details concerning the day of the Lord.

## Objects of Judgment:

- The objects of judgment become more focused as we move through chapter one:
  - 1:2-3 – the cosmos
  - 1:4-6 – Judah and Jerusalem
  - 1:8-9 – Jews in Judah
  - 1:10-11 – specific districts in Jerusalem

1:7 – “**Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests.**”

3068 [e]	3117 [e]	7138 [e]	3588 [e]		3069 [e]	136 [e]	6440 [e]	2013 [e]
Yah·weh,	yō·wm	qā·rō·wḅ	kî	—	Yah·weh;	'ă·dō·nāy	mip·pe·nê	has
יְהוָה	יוֹם	קָרוֹב	כִּי	—	יְהוָה	אֲדֹנָי	מִפְנֵי	הֵסֵם 7
of Yahweh	the day	[is] at hand	for		GOD	of the Lord	in the presence	Be silent
N-proper-ms	N-msc	Adj-ms	Conj		N-proper-ms	N-proper-ms	Prep-m   N-cpc	Interjection

	7121 [e]	6942 [e]	2077 [e]	3068 [e]	3559 [e]	3588 [e]
	qə·ru·'āw.	hiq·dîš	ze·ḅah	Yah·weh	hê·kîn	kî-
.	קִרְאוּ:	הִקְדִּישׁ	זֶבַח	יְהוָה	הִכִּין	כִּי
	His guests	He has invited	a sacrifice	Yahweh	has prepared	for
	V-Qal-QalPassPrtcpl-mpc   3ms	V-Hifil-Perf-3ms	N-ms	N-proper-ms	V-Hifil-Perf-3ms	Conj

1. Stop making such weak attempts at religion
2. Be silent. These people cannot defend themselves so stop talking. They have nothing to say.
3. Judgment is coming.

1:8 – “And on the day of the LORD’s sacrifice— “I will punish the officials and the king’s sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire.”

5921 [e] we·'al-	<b>1</b>	8269 [e] has·sā·rīm	5921 [e] 'al-	6485 [e] ū·pā·qad·tī	3068 [e] Yah·weh,	2077 [e] ze·bah	3117 [e] bē·yō·wm	1961 [e] we·hā·yāh,
ועל-		הַשָּׂרִים	עַל-	וּפְקַדְתִּי	יְהוָה	זָבַח	בַּיּוֹם	וַהֲיָה 8
and		the princes	upon	that I will punish	of Yahweh	of the sacrifice	in the day	And it shall be
Conj-w   Prep		Art   N-mp	Prep	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-1cs	N-proper-ms	N-msc	Prep-b   N-msc	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-3ms

5237 [e] nā·kə·rī.	4403 [e] mal·būš	3847 [e] hal·lō·bə·šīm	3605 [e] kāl-	<b>2</b>	5921 [e] we·'al	4428 [e] ham·me·lek;	1121 [e] bē·nē
נִכְרִי:	מִלְבוּשׁ	הַלְבוּשִׁים	כָּל-		וְעַל	הַמֶּלֶךְ	בְּנֵי
foreign	with apparel	such as are clothed	all		and	of the king	children
Adj-ms	N-ms	Art   V-Qal-Prtcpl-mp	N-msc		Conj-w   Prep	Art   N-ms	N-mpc

1. YHWH consistently alternates as first person and third person through out the book.
  - a. “On the day of the LORD’s (3<sup>rd</sup> person) sacrifice – “I (1<sup>st</sup> person) will punish...”
  - b. This is consistently abrupt throughout the book, so this is not a scribal error or poor writing. This pattern occurs too often and is so obvious.
  - c. This altering between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person is the LORD’s plan and the LORD’s direct involvement in the plan being revealed. The LORD plans and the LORD does.
2. YHWH will bring his punishment “on” – ‘**al** – (1:8 and 1:9) on four groups:
  - a. The leaders (officials and king’s children) (1:8)
  - b. Those with foreign apparel (1:8)
  - c. Those who leap over the threshold (1:9)
  - d. The violent (hamas) and deceitful (1:9)
3. “princes” or “officials” from **hassarim** is from **sar** meaning “chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince”.
  - a. This is best understood to be the governmental leaders (not specifically the sons of the king or the princes since they are mentioned next.
  - b. Notice there is NO MENTION of the KING!...because, the king was Josiah. He was in the midst of personal repentance and seeking after the LORD while leading a national reformation back to the book of Deuteronomy. So, “king” is not mentioned here. But, his officials and his sons are.
  - c. Punishment will begin with the national leadership
4. “children of the king” or “king’s sons” refers to the household of Josiah and specifically to Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, and eventually, Zedekiah. (Jehoiakim’s son, Jehoiachin, would become king as a teenager and quickly be taken by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon and replaced with Zedekiah.)
  - a. When Josiah was in his 18th year (age of 26 in 622-621 BC) when the Book of the Law was found:
    - i. Jehoiakim was 12
    - ii. Jehoahaz was 10
    - iii. Zedekiah was not yet born (He was born in 619 BC)
  - b. If we assume the year was 617 BC then:
    - i. Jehoiakim is at least 16
    - ii. Jehoahaz 14 years old

- iii. Zedekiah is 2 years old.
  - c. Again, there is no mention of the King (Josiah) being punished. Only his sons and his officials.
  - d. Remember Zephaniah was a great-grandson of King Hezekiah just like King Josiah was also a great-grandson of King Hezekiah. Zephaniah may have been in the inner circle and around the royal family.
5. “those who array themselves in foreign attire”
- a. There are a couple of suggestions as to what this refers to:
    - i. One, this could merely refer to those who were willing to compromise their traditional customs and wear the contemporary clothing of the day which would have been heavily influenced by Assyrian culture along with Egyptian culture. This is definitely a possibility, but it seems rather weak since culture and fashion are in constant change. (Even the Messiah was given the Greek version of his Hebrew name.)
    - ii. This phrase “foreign attire” – *malbus nakeri* – (malbush=raiment, attire; nakeri=foreign, alien) may be referring to the clothing worn by the priesthood (or, worshippers) of one of the foreign gods already mentioned in Zephaniah and in the accounts in 1 and 2 Kings: Baal, Milcom (Moloch), one of the starry hosts.
      - 1. 2 Kings 10:22-23, 25 – Jehu was cleansing Israel of Baal worship: “He (Jehu) said to him who was in charge of the wardrobe, “Bring out the vestments for all the worshippers of Baal.” So he brought out the vestments for them. Then Jehu went into the house of Baal with Jehonadab the son of Rechab, and he said to the worshipers of Baal, “Search, and see that there is no servant of the Lord here among you, but only the worshipers of Baal....So as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, Jehu said to the guard and to the officers, “Go in and strike them down; let not a man escape.”
      - 2. 2 Kings 22:14 – The husband of Huldah the prophetess was the keeper of the wardrobe for YHWH in Jerusalem: “So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter), and they talked with her. And she said to them, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: ‘Tell the man who sent you to me, Thus says the Lord, Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read.’”
      - 3. See Matthew 21:
        - a. Matthew 21:33 uses the imagery of the unproductive vineyard of Isaiah 5
        - b. Matthew 21:42 refers to the leaders rejection of the chief cornerstone from Psalm 118
        - c. Matthew 22:11-13 refers to guest that appear at the wedding (takes place after the Lord’s return on the Day of the Lord) with the wrong clothes:
          - i. The Greek Septuigint translates Zephaniah 1:8 here says: “ἐνδεδυμένους ἐνδύματα ἄλλότρια” or

“*enedymenous endymata allotria*” or  
 “wear strange apparel”/“clothed alien clothes”

- ii. The Greek in Matthew 22:11 says:  
 “οὐκ ενδεδυμενον ενδυμα γαμου” or  
 “ouk *enedymenon endyma* gamou” or  
 “not being dressed in clothes of wedding”
- iii. One of the guest appears at the wedding feast after the Lord’s return on the Day of the Lord “being dressed” or “wearing apparel” (same wording in Greek in Zephaniah and Matthew) that was wrong, strange, not appropriate, foreign, etc. for the wedding.
- iv. All three illustrations then are taken from the OT and refer to Israel being rejected: vineyard, cornerstone, apparel (Isaiah, Psalms, Zephaniah)
- v. Zephaniah was referring to clothing worn before the Day of the Lord; Jesus was referring to clothing worn on the Day of the Lord. The results were the same.
- vi. Zephaniah sees large numbers of foreign attire before judgment.  
 Jesus sees merely one who has slipped into the wedding with foreign attire after judgment had begun.

1:9 – “On that day I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold, and those who fill their master’s house with violence and fraud.”

4390 [e] ham-mal·'im	1931 [e] ha·hū;	3117 [e] bay·yō-wm	4670 [e] ham-mip·tān	5921 [e] 'al-	1801 [e] had·dō-w·lēg	3605 [e] kāl-	5921 [e] 'al	6485 [e] ū·pā-qad·tī,
הַמְמַלְאִים	4 הָהוּא	בַּיּוֹם	הַמִּפְתָּן	עַל-	הַדּוֹלֵג	3 כָּל-	עַל	9 וּפְקַדְתִּי
who fill	that	in day	the threshold	over	those who leap	all	on	And I will punish
Art   V-Piel-Prtcpl-mp	Art   Pro-3ms	Prep-b, Art   N-ms	Art   N-ms	Prep	Art   V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	N-msc	Prep	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-1cs

4820 [e] s	2555 [e] hā-mās	113 [e] 'ā-dō-nē-hem	1004 [e] bēt
ס	וּמְרָמָה:	הַמָּס	אֲדֹנֵיהֶם
-	and deceit	with violence	their masters' houses
Punc	Conj-w   N-fs	N-ms	N-mpc   3mp

- 1. “leap over the threshold”
  - a. Options for interpretation:
    - i. “over” can be “upon” which could indicate a deliberate act of violating a pagan practice of stepping “over” the threshold. Not likely.
    - ii. “leap over” is a phrase that carries the sense of “do violence to” such as breaking into a house. Are they breaking into a temple of their “lord”, “master” or “god”? Are they breaking into a residential house and bringing the plunder of their “violent” and “deceitful” act to a temple?

iii. There was a belief in the ancient Near East that evil spirits gathered near doorways. By stepping on the threshold or doorsill the evil spirits gained access to the house.

1. Syrian temples and holy structures added a raised platform to elevate the object of worship which then protected it from the low laying evil spirits at the doorway.
2. Stepping on the threshold was thus dangerous for the individual and showed disrespect for the evil spirits who could be offended by being stepped on.
3. As in 1 Samuel 5:5 -  
 “The following morning when they rose, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord! His head and hands had been broken off and were lying on the threshold; only his body remained. That is why to this day neither the priests of Dagon nor any others who enter Dagon’s temple at Ashdod step on the threshold.” – First Samuel 5:4-5

2. “fill their master’s house with violence and fraud”

- a. “master’s house” refers to a temple. It could be the Temple of YHWH or, according to 1:4 the master was Baal, so a Temple of Baal. Or, it could be any of the pagan deities worshipped in Jerusalem.
- b. The “master’s house” was filled with gifts, offerings, and religious tokens that had been attained through violence (hamas) and deceit. Typical production and worship by the fourth generation.

3. Comparing “stepping over the threshold” with “filling their master’s house with violence and fraud” there is a clear detachment of spiritual observance with moral behavior.

- a. They were attempting to avoid violating the spirits or observing a insignificant ritual, but at the same time practicing violence and deceit to worship their Lord.
- b. Straining out the knat to swallow the camel.
- c. Ritual without reality.

1:10 – **“On that day,” declares the LORD, “a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate, a wail from the Second Quarter, a loud crash from the hills.”**

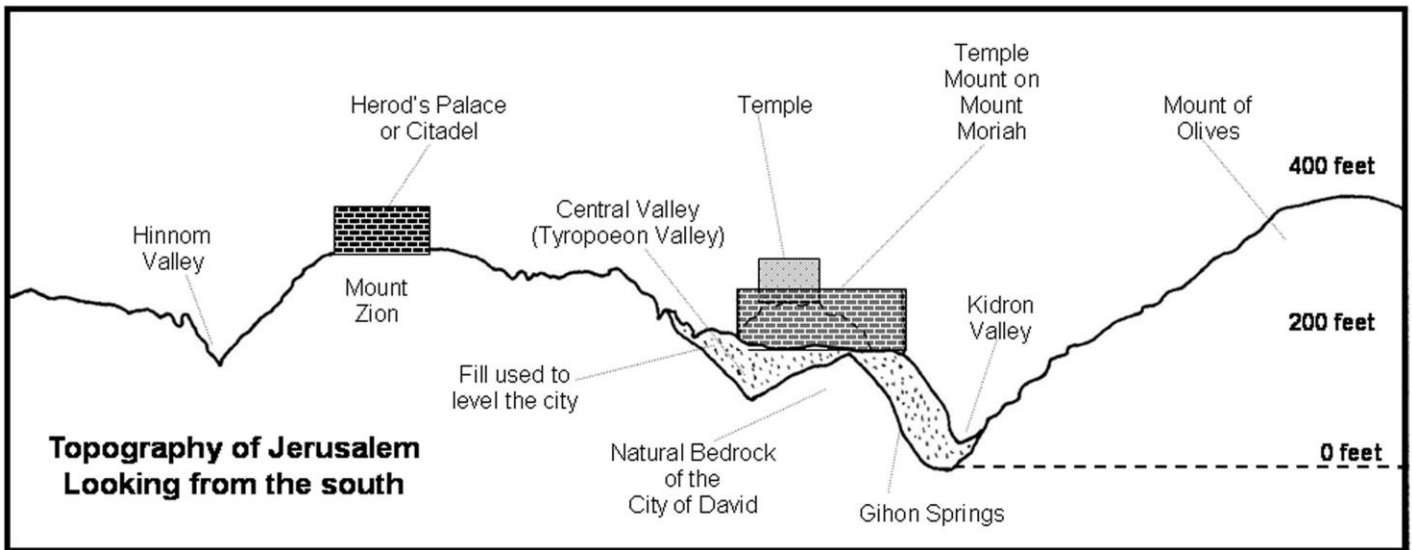
8179 [e] miš·ša·'ar	6818 [e] ṣə·'ā·qāh	6963 [e] qō·wl	3068 [e] Yah·weh	5002 [e] ne·'um-	1931 [e] ha·hū	3117 [e] ḅay·yō·wm	1961 [e] we·hā·yāh
מִשַּׁעַר	צְעָקָה	קוֹל	יְהוָה	נֹאֵם	הַהוּא	בַּיּוֹם	וְהָיָה 10
from Gate	of a [mournful] cry	the sound	Yahweh	says	that	on day	And there shall be
Prep-m   N-msc	N-fs	N-msc	N-proper-ms	N-msc	Art   Pro-3ms	Prep-b, Art   N-ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-3ms

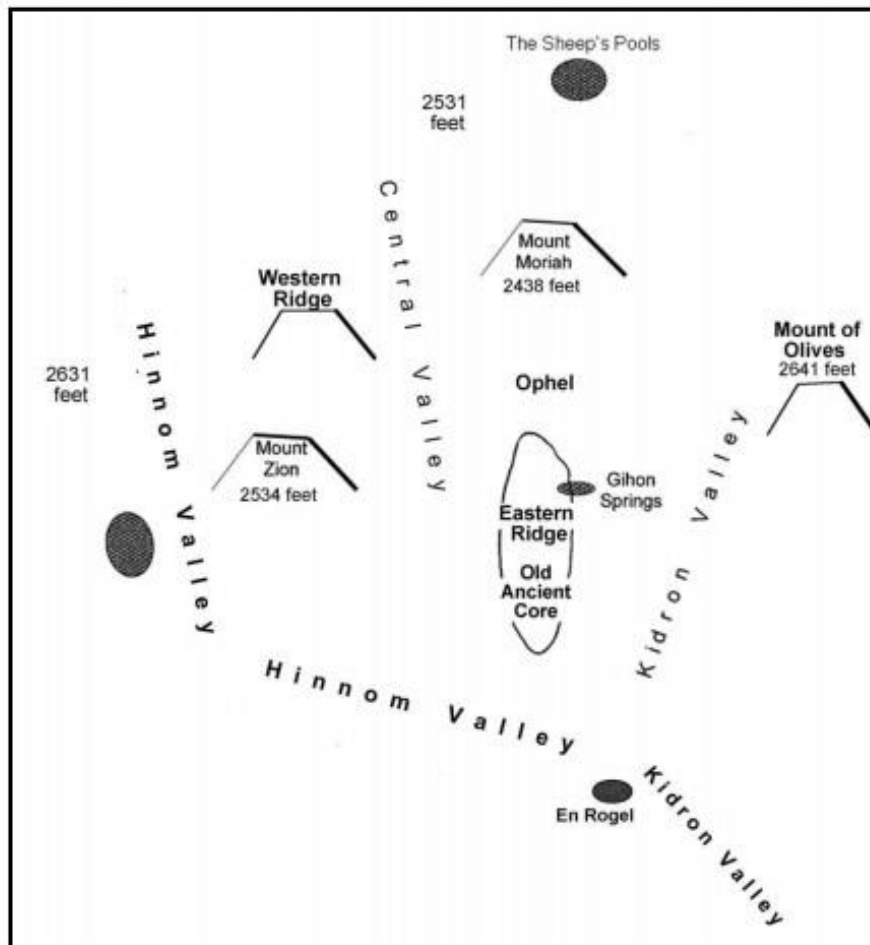
1389 [e] mê·hag·ge·ḅā·'ō·wt.	1419 [e] gā·dō·wl	7667 [e] we·še·ḅer	4932 [e] ham·miš·neh;	4480 [e] min-	3215 [e] wī·lā·lāh	1709 [e] had·dā·gīm,
מִהַגְּבְעוֹת:	גָּדוֹל	וְשֹׁבֵר	הַמִּשְׁנָה	מִן	וְיִלְלָה	הַדְּגָיִם
from the hills	loud	and a crashing	the Second Quarter	from	a wailing	the Fish
Prep-m, Art   N-fp	Adj-ms	Conj-w   N-ms	Art   N-ms	Prep	Conj-w   N-fs	Art   N-mp

1. “On that day” is another reference to the events on the Day of the Lord

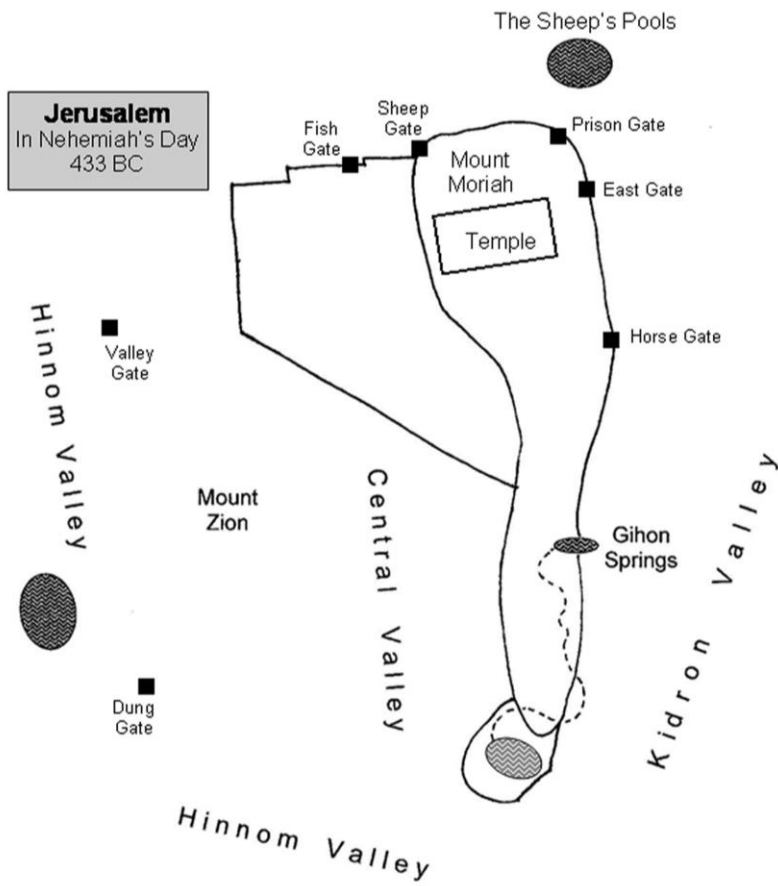
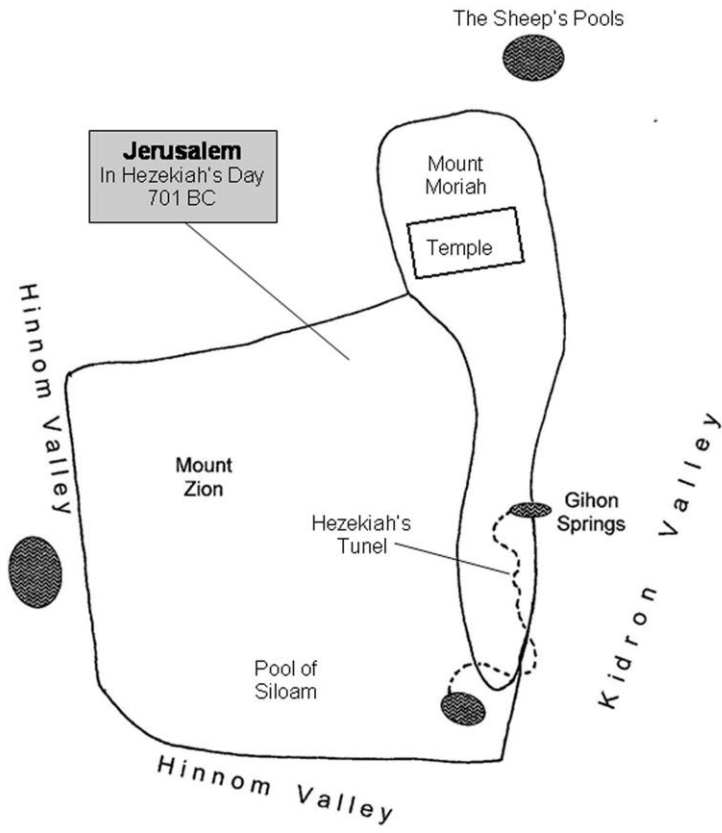
2. Four locations in or around Jerusalem are identified as places of particular punishment and suffering:
  - a. The Fish Gate –
    - i. In Jerusalem’s north wall
      1. After Manasseh returned from captivity he strengthen Jerusalem: 2 Chron. 33:14 – “Afterward he rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David, west of the Gihon spring in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate and encircling the hill of Ophel; he also made it much higher. He stationed military commanders in all the fortified cities in Judah.”
      2. Nehemiah 3:3 – “The Fish Gate was rebuilt by the sons of Hassenaah. They laid its beams and put its doors and bolts and bars in place.”
      3. Nehemiah 12:38-39 – “The second choir proceeded in the opposite direction. I followed them on top of[g] the wall, together with half the people—past the Tower of the Ovens to the Broad Wall, 39 over the Gate of Ephraim, the Jeshanah Gate, the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate. At the Gate of the Guard they stopped.”
      4. Invasions and invaders attacked on the north side of Jerusalem and entered this gate.
      5. This would be the Damascus Gate today
  - b. The Second Quarter – Is the extended portion of the city walls either to the west in Hezekiah’s day or further to the north in Manasseh’s day.
    - i. 2 Kings 22:14 – where Huldah lived: “Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Akbor, Shaphan and Asaiah went to speak to the prophet Huldah, who was the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem, in the New Quarter.”
    - ii. (2 Chroniles 34:22 – same as 2 Kings 22:14)
    - iii. Nehemiah 11:9 – “Joel son of Zikri was their chief officer, and Judah son of Hassenuah was over the New Quarter of the city.”
    - iv. Again, as seen above in 2 Chronicles 33:14
- c. The hills – The hills that surrounded Jerusalem: Mt. Zion on west; Mt. Olive on east; Mt. Moriah rising to the north.
  - i. The tumultous crashing may refer to the crashing of the idols which had previously been a busy place of noisy activity and humming.
- d. The Motar – 1:11 -



## Jerusalem's Topography



Jerusalem has three valleys: Hinnom, Central and Kidron. There are three ridges or hills: Western Hill (with Mt. Zion), Eastern Hill (with Mt. Moriah) and the Mount of Olives.





1:11 – “Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar! For all the traders are no more; all who weigh out silver are cut off.”

3772 [e]	3667 [e]	5971 [e]	3605 [e]	1820 [e]	3588 [e]	4389 [e]	3427 [e]	3213 [e]
niḵ·rə·tū	kə·na·'an,	'am	kāl-	niḏ·māh	kî	ham·maḵ·têš;	yō·šə·ḇê	hê·lî·lū
נִכְרְתוּ	כְּנָעַן	עַם	כָּל-	נִדְמָה	כִּי	הַמִּכְתָּשׁ	יְשֻׁבֵי	הַיְלִילוּ 11
are cut off	merchant	the people	all	are cut down	for	of Maktesh	you inhabitants	Wail
V-Nifal-Perf-3cp	N-ms	N-msc	N-msc	V-Nifal-Perf-3ms	Conj	Art   N-ms	V-Qal-Prtcpl-mpc	V-Hifil-Imp-mp

3701 [e]	5187 [e]	3605 [e]
kā·sep̄.	nə·ṭî·lê	kāl-
כֶּסֶף:	נְטִילֵי	כָּל-
money	those who handle	All
N-ms	N-mpc	N-msc

1. “Mortar” or “pounding place” or “the hollow”. This may refer to Jerusalem itself which is the low point between the hills.

1:12 – “At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, ‘The LORD will not do good, nor will he do ill.’

5216 [e]	3389 [e]	853 [e]	2664 [e]	1931 [e]	6256 [e]	1961 [e]
ban·nê·rō·wt;	ye·rū·šā·lim	'et-	'ā·ḥap·pêš	ha·hî,	bā·'êṭ	we·hā·yāh
בְּנֵרוֹת	יְרוּשָׁלַם	אֶת-	אֲחַפֵּשׂ	הִיא	בְּעֵת	וְהָיָה 12
with lamps	Jerusalem	-	[That] I will search	that	at time	And it shall come to pass
Prep-b, Art   N-mp	N-proper-fs	DirObjM	V-Piel-Imperf-1cs	Art   Pro-3fs	Prep-b, Art   N-cs	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-3ms

3824 [e]	559 [e]	8105 [e]	5921 [e]	7087 [e]	376 [e]	5921 [e]	6485 [e]
bil·bā·bām,	hā·'ō·mə·rîm	šim·rê·hem,	'al-	haq·qō·pə·'îm	hā·'ā·nā·šîm,	'al-	ū·pā·qad·tî
בְּלִבְכֶם	הַאֲמָרִים	שִׁמְרֵיהֶם	עַל-	הַקֹּפְאִים	הָאֲנָשִׁים	עַל-	וּפְקֹדְתִי
in their heart	who say	complacency	in	who are settled	the men	on	and punish
Prep-b   N-msc   3mp	Art   V-Qal-Prtcpl-mp	N-mpc   3mp	Prep	Art   V-Qal-Prtcpl-mp	Art   N-mp	Prep	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-1cs

7489 [e]	3808 [e]	3068 [e]	3190 [e]	3808 [e]
yā·rê·a'.	we·lō	Yah·weh	yê·ṭîḇ	lō-
יַרְעֵ:	וְלֹא	יְהוָה	יַיְטִיב	לֹא-
will He do evil	nor	Yahweh	will do good	not

1:13 – “Their goods shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them.”

1004 [e] bāt·tīm	1129 [e] ū·bā·nū	8077 [e] liš·mā·māh;	1004 [e] ū·bāt·tê·hem	4933 [e] lim·šis·sāh,	2428 [e] hê·lām	1961 [e] wə·hā·yāh
בָּתִּים	וּבְנוּ	—	וּבְתֵיבָתָם	לְמִשְׁטָה	חֵילָם	וְהָיָה <b>13</b>
houses	and they shall build	a desolation	and their houses	booty	their goods	Therefore shall become
N-mp	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-3cp	Prep-I   N-fs	Conj-w   N-mpc   3mp	Prep-I   N-fs	N-msc   3mp	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-3ms

3196 [e] yê·nām.	853 [e] 'eṭ-	8354 [e] yiš·tū	3808 [e] wə·lō	3754 [e] kə·rā·mîm,	5193 [e] wə·nā·tə·'ū	3427 [e] yê·šê·bū,	3808 [e] wə·lō
יַיִנָּם:	אֶת־	יִשְׁתּוּ	וְלֹא	כַרְמִים	וְנִטְעוּ	יִשְׁבוּ	וְלֹא
their wine	-	drink	but not	vineyards	and they shall plant	inhabit [them]	but not
N-msc   3mp	DirObjM	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp	Conj-w   Adv-NegPrt	N-mp	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-3cp	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp	Conj-w   Adv-NegPrt

1:14 – “The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there.”

3117 [e] yō·wm	6963 [e] qō·wl	3966 [e] mə·'ōḏ;	4118 [e] ū·ma·hêr	7138 [e] qā·rō·wḅ	1419 [e] hag·gā·dō·wl,	3068 [e] Yah·weh	3117 [e] yō·wm-	7138 [e] qā·rō·wḅ
יּוֹם	קוֹל	מְאֹד	וּמְהֵרָה	קָרוֹב	הַגָּדוֹל	יְהוָה	יּוֹם־	קָרוֹב <b>14</b>
of the day	the noise	quickly	and hastens	[it is] near	the great	of Yahweh	day	[is] near
N-msc	N-msc	Adv	Conj-w   Adv	Adj-ms	Art   Adj-ms	N-proper-ms	N-msc	Adj-ms

1368 [e] gib·bō·wr.	8033 [e] šām	6873 [e] šō·rê·aḥ	4751 [e] mar	3068 [e] Yah·weh,
גִּבּוֹרִים:	שָׁם	צָרַח	מֵרַר!	יְהוָה
the mighty men	there	Shall cry out	is bitter	of Yahweh
Adj-ms	Adv	V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	Adj-ms	N-proper-ms