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**Zephaniah | Historical and Critical Information**

- Zephaniah gives a four-generation genealogy—presumably clarifying his relationship to king Hezekiah—in addition to indicating that he prophesied during the reign of Josiah, one of the few good kings of Judah.
  - o Given the nature of his message, it's like that Zephaniah's message preceded Josiah's reforms, perhaps even playing a role in precipitating them. As such, a date of 640-628 BC is quite reasonable.
- Given this date, Babylon had not yet replaced Assyria as the primary regional tyrant, but Assyrian power was nevertheless beginning to wane. The end of Cushite rule (mentioned multiples times in Zephaniah) in Egypt was marked by the destruction of Thebes by Assyria in 663 BC, but it would be this incredible victory that, ironically, began the decline of Assyrian power.

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- **Main Themes**
  - The Day of the LORD
  - Salvation to the ends of the earth
  - Idolatry
  - Perversion of righteousness by leadership
- **Role in the Twelve**
  - Zephaniah represents the climax and beginning of the falling action in the Twelve, serving as a hinge between the judgment (Nahum and Habakkuk) and restoration (Haggai-Malachi) sections of the Twelve.
- **Textual Connection to the New Testament**
  - Zephaniah 3:13 is very likely behind Revelation 14:5.
- **Application in the Light of Christ**
  - The nations and the Great Commission
  - The expected purity of God's people
  - The expectation of the final Day

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