

BIBLE READING FOR 2023
MICAH, NAHUM, HABAKKUK

WEEK #48

& ZEPHANIAH

11-26-23

Monday - Micah 1-4

Wednesday - Nahum 1-3

Friday - Zephaniah 1-3

Tuesday - Micah 5-7

Thursday - Habakkuk 1-3

Micah and the other three books that are in this week's Bible reading are part of the Minor Prophets. In Micah 1:1 we are told that Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah were three of the kings of Judah that were in power during the time of Micah's ministry. His prophecies are thought to range from about 735 to 700 B.C. His messages were mainly intended for Judah but he also prophesied to Israel. He was a contemporary of Isaiah and had much in common with him. Some refer to the book of Micah as a condensed version of the book of Isaiah. There were differences between the two men though. Isaiah was of the Jewish aristocracy and Micah appears to have been more of a common man like a farmer or a herdsman. Both men, however, rebuked God's people because of their idolatry, corruption and their greed and willingness to oppress the poor for personal gain. Their punishment is predicted but the restoration of the remnant, especially their spiritual success, is also promised.

An outline for Micah: 1.) Judgment of Israel and Judah 1-3

2.) Promise of restoration 4-5

3.) Plea for repentance 6

4.) Penitential prayer and salvation 7

Nahum is a book of prophecy condemning Nineveh the capital of Assyria. Nahum, its author, was a man from the town of Elkosh but there is no conclusive evidence of where it was located. We know very little more about Nahum except that he prophesied after the fall of Thebes in Egypt to the Assyrians in 663 B.C. and before the destruction of Assyria in 612 B.C. Years earlier Jonah had preached to the Ninevites and they had repented and been spared. By Nahum's time though they had fallen back into sin. Since the Assyrians were at the peak of their power and pride they refused to listen to this spokesman for God and paid the price.

An outline for Nahum: 1.) Destruction of Nineveh decreed 1

2.) Destruction of Nineveh described 2

3.) Destruction of Nineveh deserved 3

Habakkuk is concerning Judah shortly before she is conquered by Babylon. Since Judah had sunk back into sin, Habakkuk's ministry appears to be after the death of Josiah in 609 B.C. During Josiah's life he had instituted religious reforms which, by this time, had been forgotten by the people. From what Habakkuk says the invasion of Judah by the Babylonians was imminent. Since we know Jerusalem first fell to Babylon in 606 B.C. that would indicate the book was written by Habakkuk between 609 and 606 B.C.

Habakkuk does not understand why God has not dealt with the lawlessness in his nation and inquires as to how long it will be before He does. Then when Habakkuk finds out that God is going to use Babylon to

punish Judah he is further puzzled since Babylon was even more wicked than Judah. In the end Habakkuk has a renewed appreciation for the wisdom and power of God and man's need to put his trust in God and faithfully serve Him.

An outline for Habakkuk: 1.) God's judgment of Judah and Habakkuk's questions 1
2.) God's judgment of Babylon 2
3.) Habakkuk's prayer of confident faith in the Lord 3

Zephaniah was written by the prophet of the same name. He informs us that he was a descendant of Hezekiah which would mean that he was a prophet coming from royal lineage. His ministry takes place in the days of Josiah, king of Judah. Because of the sinful state of the people at the time he was preaching, it must have been before the reforms that Josiah implemented during his reign. Since he ruled from 640 to 609 B.C. it is thought that Zephaniah could have authored his book around 635 to 625 B.C. His efforts would have encouraged people to follow the lead of Josiah in turning back to the Lord. The theme of his prophecy was the day of the Lord was coming upon Judah. That simply meant that God was going to punish Judah for her sin. Again this promise was fulfilled when Babylon conquered Judah beginning in 606 B.C.

An outline for the Zephaniah: 1.) The day of the Lord for Judah 1
2.) The day of the Lord for the enemies of Judah 2
3.) Promise of restoration of the remnant 3

Questions for Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk & Zephaniah:

- 1.) From the question asked in the first part of Micah 2:7, what does it appear the people were saying about the Spirit of the Lord?
- 2.) In Micah 7:19, what does Micah say God will do with the iniquities and sins of His people?
- 3.) How does Nahum describe how those living in Nineveh were going to feel in Nahum 2:10, when God came up against them?
- 4.) In Habakkuk 2:4, what does God say about the righteous man in contrast to the man who is proud and whose soul is not right within him?
- 5.) What men did God say He would punish in Zephaniah 1:12, and what did He say they would have said?

Answers to questions for Week #47 – 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John & Jude:

- 1.) Prophecies concerning man's salvation in Christ.
- 2.) The devil, prowling about as a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.
- 3.) The destruction of this world and everything physical..
- 4.) The one who denies the Father and the Son is the antichrist.
- 5.) The apostles who said, "In the last time there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts."