

Intro to JONAH

Author: The author is Jonah, who scripture say, was the son of Amittai, who came from the town of Gath-hepher—some 3 miles NE of Nazareth. Jonah’s ministry preceded that of Amos under Jeroboam II. His name means “dove,” and he occupies a unique place as the first foreign missionary that we read about in the scriptures.

Outline of the Book

Chapter 1 : Jonah’s call and disobedience: The first verses of Jonah 1 lay out the scenario very plainly. God issued a call to Jonah to go to Nineveh to proclaim the Word of the Lord. Jonah ran scared and boarded a boat to Tarshish. During the voyage a terrible storm arose and the crew members threw Jonah overboard because they felt he brought bad luck onto the boat. The Lord had prepared a big fish to swallow Jonah, where he stayed for three days and three nights.

Chapter 2: Jonah’s Prayer and Deliverance: In his prayer to the Lord in Chapter 2, Jonah expressed much disillusionment and despair in his remarks. But in the end, he acknowledges that the only source of hope for him is God, himself. And that hope came in the form of God’s ability to restore Jonah, and Jonah’s willful decision to honor the Lord and worship Him.

Chapter 3: Jonah’s Renewed Commission. Jonah expresses obedience to the Lord by going to Nineveh and proclaiming the Word of Nineveh’s impending calamity unless they repented. The king of Nineveh repents and calls on his people to repent and the Lord relented in his judgment against them.

Chapter 4: Jonah got quite upset and angry that the people repented and God withdrew his judgment from them. In his mind, if God was going to do that anyway, then what was the use in Jonah going there in the first place. Jonah fell into depression and wished that he were dead. God’s gentle reprimand reminded Jonah and reminds us that God’s love is extended to all people.

Intro to MICAH

Author: Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea and prophesied against both Israel and Judah, but reserved the bulk of his words mainly for Judah. The book of Micah is a mixed bag, with strong words of judgment for Israel, but also some strong Messianic prophecies, as well as, a very practical word for us in the end.

Outline and Themes of the Book:

Micah prophesied during the times of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. It was during these reigns that both Israel and Judah were in decline, and Israel was subsequently taken captive by Assyria, but Judah spared from the Assyrian onslaught.

I. God in Judgment (Chapters 1 - 3)

In the first section of the book, God issues stern warnings and judgments against Samaria and Israel, against the false prophets and those who would oppress the people, and against the spiritual leadership who had lost their vision.

II. God in Hope (Chapters 4 - 5)

Chapter 4 speaks of the “Mountain of the Lord,” which seems to symbolize the place of the final consummation of God’s Kingdom. Chapter 5 is a strong chapter, filled with several Messianic prophecies. Among them are the Messiah being struck (5:1), the Messiah coming out of Bethlehem (5:2), the Messiah being their shepherd (5:4), and Messiah being their peace (5:5).

III. God in Mercy (Chapters 6 - 7)

Chapter 6 brings this prophecy to a very practical word from the Lord to Israel and to us in verse 8:

He has showed you, o man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly

To love mercy

And to walk humbly before your God."

Chapter 7 of Micah ends with a prayer and a praise and a message of Hope with an exaltation of God and the true nature of His character.

Intro to NAHUM

Author: Not much is known about Nahum, only that his prophecy is directed toward Nineveh, which makes it unique that it was not directed toward Israel or Judah. Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian empire and was the subject of the preaching of Jonah. Although Jonah led them to repentance, Nineveh became the hub of the Assyrian aggression, which subsequently took Israel into exile.

Chapter 1: Through Nahum, God makes a declaration of His holiness and His might, and announces his judgment against Nineveh in verses 12 - 15.

Chapter 2: In poetic fashion, Nahum describes the siege and the overthrow of the city of Nineveh.

Chapter 3: God makes an example of Nineveh as what will happen when a city sows seeds of violence, deceptions, and false dealings with other nations. It will eventually be reaped by the same coming back and destroying you.

Intro to HABAKKUK

Author: The author is Habakkuk and this book was probably written around 607 B.C. Though we don't know a lot about Habakkuk, whose name means "embracer," we do know about the times wherein the book is written. He wrote this prophecy just before Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon invaded Judah and exiled its people in 605 B.C. He prophesizes while Jehoakim is king of Judah.

Outline: There are two distinct divisions to the book of Habakkuk. The first section (Chapters 1 and 2) have to do with **Habakkuk's Questions**. In the first verses of chapter one, Habakkuk asks the first questions of God, which has to do with why God allows the wickedness to continue in Judah. The answer comes in verses 5 - 11, in which God tells Habakkuk that he is getting ready to do something that Habakkuk would not believe if he had been told. God continues to tell him he is raising up the Babylonians to come in and take the people and then the land. The second set of questions in 1:12 - 2:1 asks why is God using the wicked to judge Judah. God's basic answer in chapter 2 is that, because of the people's pride and arrogance, and seeking to live a life apart from Him, they basically have brought this upon themselves. And in that discourse, the most famous verse from the book is given in the 4th verse of the 2nd chapter:

*"See, he is puffed up -
His desires are not upright -
But the righteous shall live by faith."*

The second section of the book is found in the last chapter of the book, and has to do with **Habakkuk's Praise of God**, and it is three-fold:

- 1) Praise for the Person of God
- 2) Praise for the Power of God
- 3) Praise for the Purpose of God