



The Bible Challenge

A daily guide to reading the Bible in a year

Micah

Chapters 1-7

*He has told you, O man,
what is good;
and what does
the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to
love kindness,
and to walk humbly
with your God? Micah
6:8*

A Prophet to the Impoverished

Micah is a prophet of the southern kingdom of Judah. He is a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah. Whereas Isaiah was a prophet to the kings of Judah, Micah was a prophet to the people of Judah.

His prophecies concerned the judgment of God on the northern kingdom of Israel during the Assyrian crisis. The Assyrians conquered and destroyed the northern kingdom's capital city of Samaria in 722 BC. The leaders and ruling classes of the southern kingdom of Judah were complacent in their own sin and wealth.

Micah saw the judgment on the north as a forewarning of God's pending judgment on the south without serious repentance. Ultimately, the corrupt leadership of the Jerusalem and Judah's other cities would be punished. Like Isaiah, Micah foresaw a restoration of a Holy Jerusalem on Mt. Zion for the middle class and poor of Judah who had been impoverished by the corrupt practices of the wealthy and powerful rulers of Judah's cities.

Literary Structure

Micah	Chapters 1-7	
Judgment on Israel and Judah	Samaria and Judah Punished (1:1-1:16)	
	Woe to the Oppressors (2:1-11)	1:1-2:13
	Promise for the Oppressed (2:12-13)	
Jerusalem: Present Injustice/Future Justice	Corrupt Leaders & Jerusalem (3:1-12)	
	Jerusalem Restored (4:1-13)	3:1-5:15
	Righteous Leader Announced (5:1-15)	
Final Indictment and Promise	Prophetic Lawsuit/ Call to Repentance (6:1-16)	6:1-
	Prophetic Promise with the Righteous Lament (7:1-20)	7:20



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Nahum

Chapters 1-3

The Prophet of Comfort

The name “Nahum” means comfort. His prophecies of judgment were leveled against Assyria and her capital city Nineveh—Judah and Israel’s enemy and oppressor.

The prophet’s words of judgment bring comfort to the oppressed and besieged of Judah. The book was composed by the prophet sometime around 660-630 BC.

The book serves as a sequel to the book of Jonah (early 8th century). Jonah also announced prophetic judgment against Nineveh, yet his prophecies of destruction were heeded and followed with repentance. However, with future rulers of Assyria would become cruel and powerful. The Assyrian armies were ruthless as they expanded the empire and conquered their neighbors.

Literary Structure

Nahum	Chapters 1-3
Prelude to Battle against Nineveh	1
The Battle Against Nineveh	2-3



Habakkuk

Chapters 1-3

*But the Lord is in his
holy temple;
let all the earth keep
silence before him.”
Hab. 2:20*

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The Question of Evil

Habakkuk is a prophetic version of the book of Job in brief. The book is wrestling with the problem of evil. As a prophetic book the interaction provides insight into the prophet's wrestling with the sin of the people and the severity of the messages of judgment which they were called to announce.

The prophet's ministry was during one of the darkest times of corruption and judgment for the people of God: The Babylonian Crisis. The prophet is troubled by both the sin of the people and the severity of God's judgment.

The book is structured around two cycles of question and response between Habakkuk and the Lord. The first question raised by the prophet concerns the apparent toleration and patience of the Lord with the sin of the wicked within Judah. When the Lord responds with an announcement of severe judgment by the Babylonians (Chaldeans) against Judah and Jerusalem, the prophet asks a second question.

Habakkuk then asks the Lord how he can tolerate the Babylonians. How is it that a holy God would use an evil nation to punish a less evil one? Shouldn't God's holiness have prevented him from using the Babylonians as an instrument of his wrath and judgment? The Lord's answer is that all nations and evil will ultimately be destroyed. The call is for those who are righteous to "live by faith" in the sovereign Lord (Hab. 2:4). (cf. Rom. 1:17; 3:11; Heb. 10:38)

Having heard the voice of the Lord in response to his complaints, he concludes his book in chapter 3 in submission and praise of the sovereign and just God.

Habakkuk	Chapter 1-3
First Cycle of Question and Response	1:1-11
Second Cycle of Question and Response	1:12-2:20
Habakkuk's Psalm of Praise and Prayer	3:1-19