

Habakkuk and Zephaniah

66 Books in 52 Weeks

(A Book-by-Book Overview of the Bible)

Summary & Structure

HABAKKUK

ORDER IN OLD TESTAMENT

35

NUMBER OF CHAPTERS

3

TYPE

PROPHECY, MINOR



OVERVIEW

Habakkuk was a prophet. This book contains an exchange between him and the Lord when Habakkuk is frustrated with the wickedness of the people. This book teaches us that even when we feel like God is doing nothing, He is always with His people and will eventually prevail.



WRITTEN
Around 604 BC



TIME PERIOD COVERED
615-605 BC



AUTHOR
Habakkuk the Prophet

Key Verse

See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness.

Habakkuk 2:4

Background

The Prophet:

Habakkuk identifies himself as “the prophet”. (Habakkuk 1:3; 3:1)

His style indicates a well-educated man who was as poetic as he was prophetic.

The name Habakkuk is believed to mean _____.

The Period:

Israel (North) had already fallen to the Assyrians, but Judah (South) remained intact. Habakkuk’s dialogue with God probably occurred between 612 and 605BC.

Most scholars place his ministry right after the reign of Josiah. Habakkuk would have been a contemporary to the prophet Jeremiah.

Outline of Habakkuk

Dialogue with God (Chapters 1-2)

First Question and Answer (Habakkuk 1:1-11)

Habakkuk questions God's delay in dealing with Judah's sin.

God surprises Habakkuk by telling him that Babylon, an evil nation, would be used to bring judgment on Israel.

Second Question and Answer (Habakkuk 1:12-2:20)

Habakkuk wonders how God could allow Babylon, a nation more evil than Judah, to bring judgment. Is this really fair?

God's response to Habakkuk's 2nd question included several elements:

Habakkuk was to write down God's answer.

Yes, God will use Babylon to judge Judah, but that doesn't mean He will not deal with them according to their own sins.

The four "Woes"

Woe to the greedy. (Habakkuk 2:9-11)

Woe to the violent (Habakkuk 2:12-14)

Woe to the drunk (Habakkuk 2:15-17)

Woe to the idolater. (Habakkuk 2:18-20)

Praise to God (Chapter 3)

Habakkuk responds in song to God's message.

In his prayer, Habakkuk voices his faith in God.

He believed in God's justice and mercy.

He praised God for His magnificence throughout the universe.

He praised God His power to control all of nature.

He had come to understand that God could crush evil while saving His own people.

Habakkuk waits for judgment to fall on Babylon, just as it would on Judah.

Lessons/Observations

God is big enough to handle your _____.

Don't mistake God's silence for His _____.

God calls us to exhibit an ' _____ ' faith.

Zephaniah

Summary & Structure

ZEPHANIAH

ORDER IN OLD TESTAMENT

36

NUMBER OF CHAPTERS

3

TYPE

PROPHECY, MINOR



OVERVIEW

Zephaniah is known for his seven mentions of "the Day of the Lord," more mentions than any other prophet. Often, the term refers to the end of time, but can mean any time in history where God personally intervenes to protect His people. Zephaniah has immediate importance for the people, as well as future generations.



WRITTEN
635-625 BC



TIME PERIOD COVERED
605 BC to the End
of Days



AUTHOR
The Prophet
Zephaniah

Key Verse

Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord's anger.

Zephaniah 2:3

Background

The Prophet:

Zephaniah was the only prophet with a royal lineage; was a descendant of Hezekiah, former king of Judah.

Probably had access to the palace and was considered to have been a personal advisor to the king.

The Prophet's Times:

Zephaniah ministered during the reign of Josiah.

The nation of Judah would be taken captive just a few decades after Josiah's reign.

Zephaniah's Style and Purpose:

Zephaniah is considered a fiery prophet.

His purpose was to frighten the people out of their sins.

Zephaniah's name means _____.

Outline of Zephaniah

Judgment and Doom (Zephaniah 1:2-3:8)

God would stretch out His hand against five groups of Jews.

Idolaters (1:4-6)

Worldly princes (1:7-8)

Violent Oppressors (1:9)

Corrupt Merchants (1:10-11)

The Indifferent (1:12-13)

Invitation - Even with an initial message of doom, the prophet gave hope for anyone who would repent. (Zephaniah 2:1-3)

The Sure Doom of the Nations (Zephaniah 2:4-15)

The Sure Doom of Jerusalem (Zephaniah 3:1-8)

Joy and Deliverance (Zephaniah 3:9-20)

A list of blessings awaiting the faithful remnant of God's kingdom:

Purity of Worship (3:9a)

Universal Commitment to God (3:9b)

Worldwide Unity (3:10)

No More Shame (3:11)

Gentle Humility (3:12)

No More Sin (3:13)

Heartfelt Joy (3:14)

No More Divine Judgment or Earthly Enemies (3:15a)

The Lord's Presence as the King of Israel (3:15b)

No More Fear (3:16)

Exaltation of the Grieved, Lame, and Outcast (3:19)

Regathering of the Jews to Their Land (3:20a)

Restoration of Their Fortune (3:20b)