

NAHUM

ORDER IN OLD TESTAMENT

34

NUMBER OF CHAPTERS

3

TYPE

PROPHECY, MINOR



OVERVIEW

Nahum means “comfort,” and God sends him to prophesy during one of the darkest periods in Judah’s history, when King Manasseh was allowing the worst of idolatry. Nahum fixates on the fall of the Assyrian city Nineveh, to whom the prophet Jonah had preached repentance some 150 years earlier. This time, the people do not repent and the prophecies of Nahum predicting the city’s destruction come to pass in 612 BC.



WRITTEN
650 BC



TIME PERIOD COVERED
658–615 BC



AUTHOR
Nahum the Prophet

1

GOD BRINGS COMFORT
TO JUDAH

NAHUM 1

Nahum speaks to Judah, announcing the destruction of the Assyrian nation. Nahum speaks about the nature of God—His love and loyalty for the people despite their constant wavering.

2

DETAILS OF THE
DESTRUCTION OF
NINEVEH

NAHUM 2–3

Nahum shares his vision detailing how Nineveh will fall. He speaks of people taken prisoners, their homes pillaged, and the nation stripped of their vast dominion. Nahum reveals a series of punishments for Assyria’s violence and idolatry, including humiliation, terror, and death.

NAHUM

AT-A-GLANCE

BOOK(S) WRITTEN:

The Book of Nahum

TYPE OF BOOK(S):

Minor Prophecy (Nahum is the seventh of 12 Minor Prophets)

PROBABLE DATES OF WRITING:

650 BC



AUTHOR BACKGROUND:

Nothing is known of Nahum's background before he wrote his prophecy. His prophecies almost exclusively focus on God's pending judgment against the city of Nineveh. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, the nation that had invaded and destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel nearly 100 years earlier.



UNUSUAL PLACES THIS AUTHOR WROTE:

This prophet likely wrote from Jerusalem. However, the city of Nineveh may be familiar. It is the city in which God told the prophet Jonah to admonish the people, around 780 BC, just before he was swallowed by the great fish. Nineveh did repent at that time. But this is more than 150 years later. God showed Nahum how the Assyrians—and especially Nineveh--were up to their bad tricks of idolatry, violence, invading the northern kingdom of Israel and tormenting the southern kingdom of Judah.

God was good to his word brought through Nahum. The Medean army took Nineveh in 612 BC and destroyed it forever. It was finally excavated, or dug out of the sand, in the 1800s AD.



UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THIS AUTHOR WROTE:

His work is only three chapters long, one of the shortest in the Bible.

HABAKKUK

ORDER IN OLD TESTAMENT

35

NUMBER OF CHAPTERS

3

TYPE

PROPHECY, MINOR



OVERVIEW

Habakkuk was a prophet and 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.



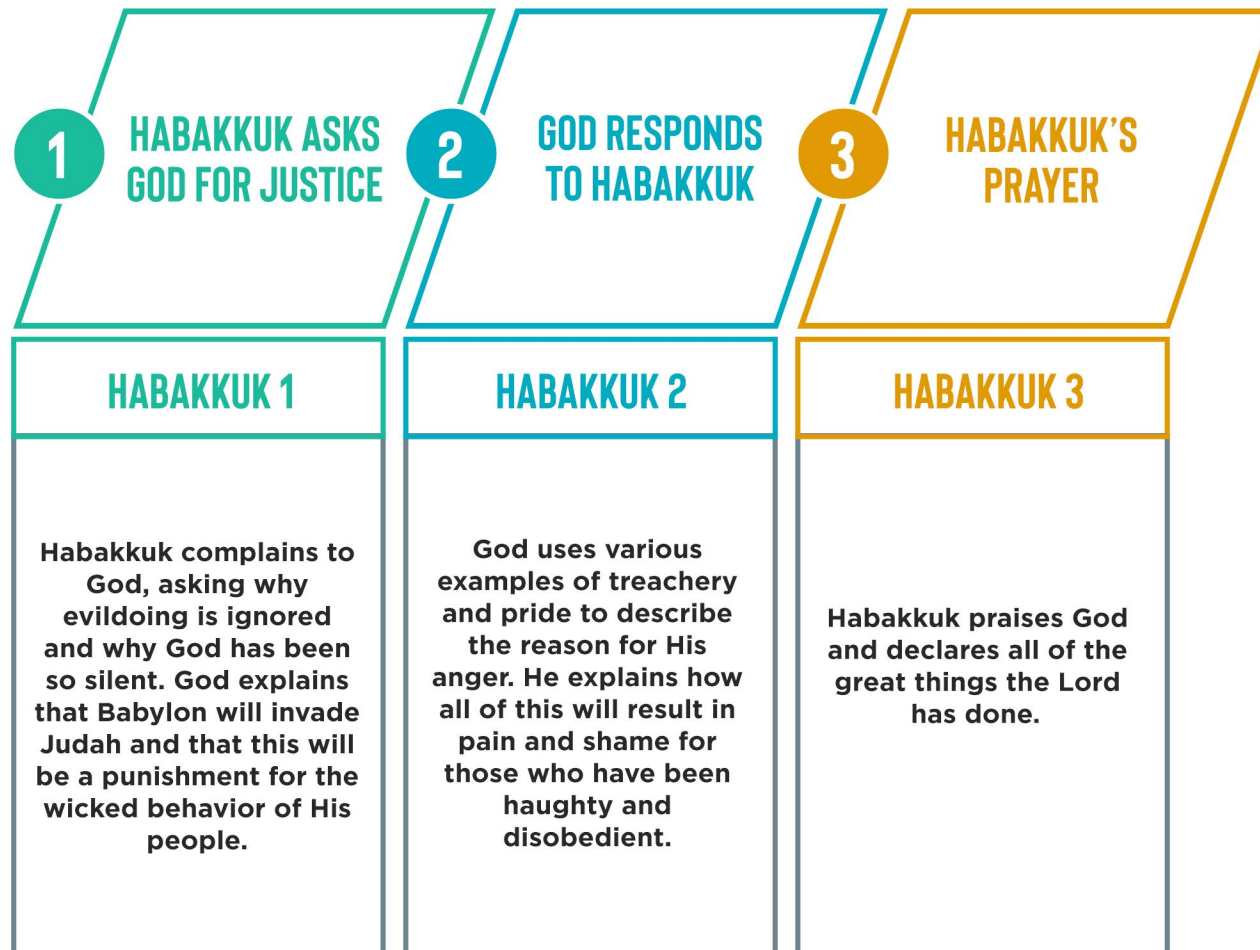
WRITTEN
615-605 BC



TIME PERIOD COVERED
608-598 BC



AUTHOR
Habakkuk the Prophet



HABAKKUK

AT-A-GLANCE

BOOK(S) WRITTEN:

Book of Habakkuk

TYPE OF BOOK(S):

Minor Prophecy (Habakkuk is the eighth of 12 Minor Prophets)

PROBABLE DATES OF WRITING:

615-605 BC



AUTHOR BACKGROUND:

This minor prophet wrote from in or near Jerusalem. Habakkuk likely prophesied in the first five years of King Jehoiakim's reign, which was a dark time for the nations of Israel and Judah. This king had led the people of the southern kingdom of Judah into idolatry and other forms of evil. The Assyrians had control of the northern kingdom of Israel after a brutal invasion more than 100 years earlier. Habakkuk preached from the southern kingdom of Judah, which was still intact but only about 20 years away from its own invasion by Babylon, that destroyed the Temple. The pressure was on.



UNUSUAL PLACES THIS AUTHOR WROTE:

Habakkuk was not given the names of specific places that would fall. Generally, prophets speak of a specific place. But when Jerusalem fell, the evil Judean King Jehoiakim was taken captive by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, who put him in chains and had him carted off to Babylon. He later returned, but as a puppet man to Nebuchadnezzar.



UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THIS AUTHOR WROTE:

Habakkuk uttered heartfelt prayers to God over the condition of Judah and the betraying behavior of its people. The prophecy was in response to his prayers.

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.



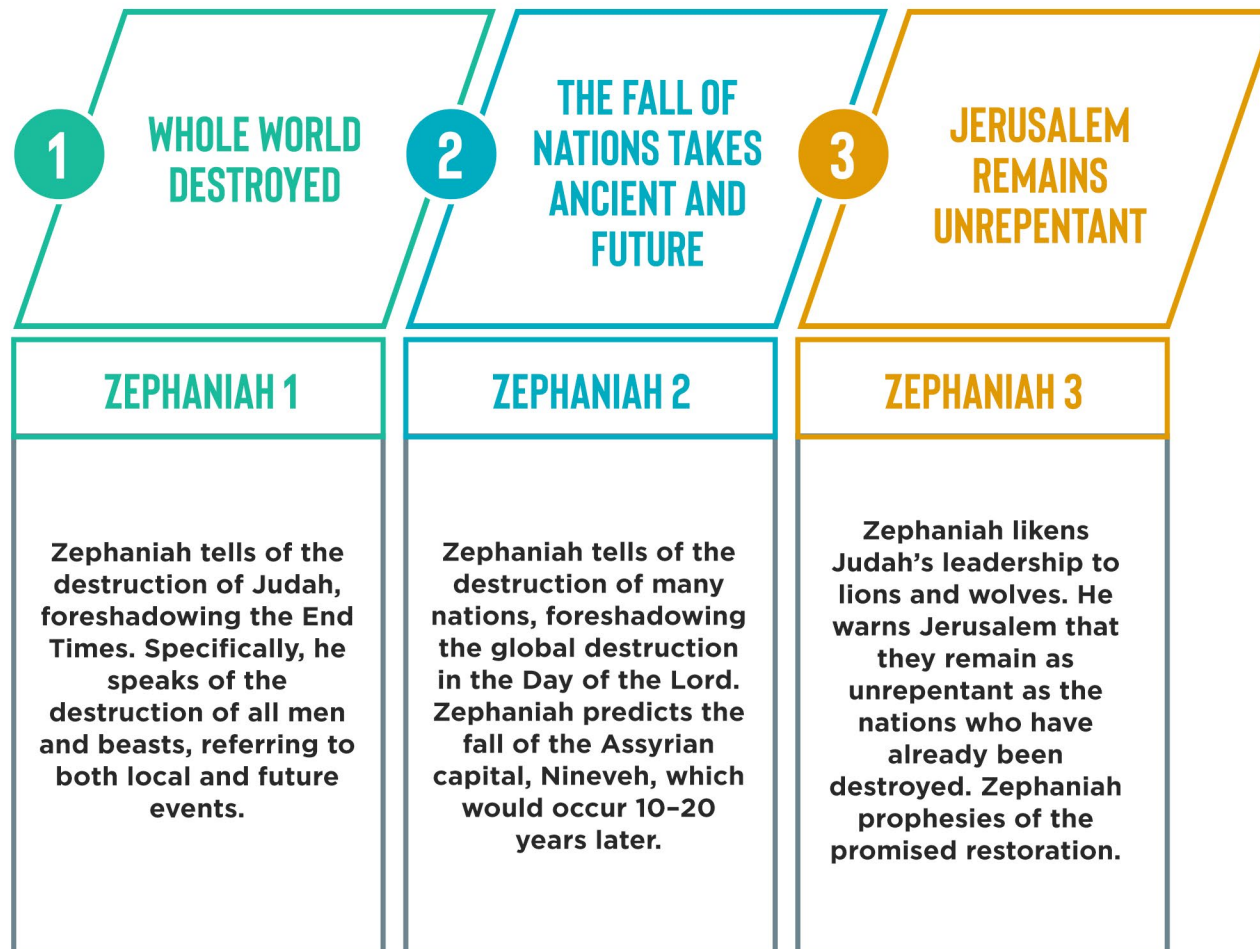
WRITTEN
635–625 BC



TIME PERIOD COVERED
605 BC to the End of Days



AUTHOR
The Prophet Zephaniah



ZEPHANIAH

AT-A-GLANCE

BOOK(S) WRITTEN:

Book of Zephaniah

TYPE OF BOOK(S):

Minor Prophecy (Zephaniah is the ninth of 12 Minor Prophets)

PROBABLE DATES OF WRITING:

635-625 BC



AUTHOR BACKGROUND:

Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of Josiah, the king of Judah from 640 to 609 BC. Josiah was one of the few good kings.

Zephaniah's prophecies are only three chapters long. The gist is about things that will happen on "the day of the Lord." Often, the term is used by the prophets to mean the coming of the end of time. However, it is also used to mean any time in history where God personally intervenes to protect his people and forward his will. So the prophet's words have applied to many eras.



UNUSUAL PLACES THIS AUTHOR WROTE:

Zephaniah wrote one of several famous Old Testament passages showing God's willingness to hide good and humble people from impending danger. Zephaniah 2:3 reads, "Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger." The word "perhaps" is often included in these prophecies, inspiring people to seek humility and righteousness. Today, Christians await what they call the "rapture," which is when God will hide people or take them up in the clouds so they will avoid harsh world judgments. This passage from Zephaniah is often associated with it.



UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THIS AUTHOR WROTE:

During King Josiah's reign, no judgment had yet fallen upon the southern kingdom of Judah. Therefore, God's judgment is in very general terms and applies to many eras. Zephaniah mentions the "Day of the Lord" more than any other Old Testament prophet.