

Subject: *Know Your Bible – Part 10*

Scripture: *Jonah 1:1-17*

Jonah: The Reluctant Prophet

This is the story of God's unwilling prophet who preached to the city of Nineveh. When God saw the repentance of Nineveh, He had compassion and withheld His judgment; however, Jonah did not share God's compassion and mercy. God had more trouble with His prophet than with the wicked people of Nineveh.

This book says more about the messenger than his message. Jonah became an object lesson to the people of Israel. The Gentiles in Nineveh repented after hearing Jonah's one and only message (eight words), however Israel and Judah did not repent although they heard many messages from God's prophets over many years.

Jesus referred to the preservation and preaching of Jonah (Mt. 12:39-41).

Jonah 1 Jonah protests (running from God's will)

Jonah 2 Jonah prays (submitting to God's will)

Jonah 3 Jonah preaches (fulfilling God's will)

Jonah 4 Jonah pouts (questioning God's will)

Key verses: Jonah 1:1-3, 17; 2:8-9; 3:1-5, 10; 4:1-4

Main themes in Jonah:

- God's providence and sovereign control
- God's mercy upon all people (Jews and Gentiles)
- God's patience toward all people (both saved and unsaved)

Micah: The Consequences of Moral Corruption

God warned His people of judgment because their lives were sinful. False prophets and priests were greedy, rulers were cruel and corrupt. Landlords stole from the poor and evicted widows. Judges expected bribes. Businessmen used deceitful practices. Micah called out the sins of the people that would lead to their destruction and captivity.

The name Micah means Who is like God?

Micah 1-3 Prediction of judgment

Micah 4-5 Prediction of restoration

Micah 6-7 Plea for repentance

Key verses: Micah 3:8; 5:2; 6:8; 7:18-19

Micah 5:2 is a significant prophecy of Christ's birthplace and eternity. This prophecy was given 700 years before it was fulfilled.

Micah ends with a message of promise and hope (7:18-19).

Nahum: When God's Patience Runs Out

This book is called a burden (Nah. 1:1) because of God's severe judgment.

God predicted the destruction of Nineveh about 100 years after the city had repented during the ministry of Jonah. The people had reverted back to their wicked ways and therefore God punished them.

Nineveh was considered to be indestructible. The city was surrounded by high walls and fortified with 200 towers and with a deep moat. It was the most impressive city of its time.

The name Nahum (shortened form of Nehemiah) means comfort. The destruction of Nineveh was a message of comfort and consolation to Judah and all who lived in fear of their cruelty.

This book reminds us of God's anger and goodness.

Nahum 1 The destruction of Nineveh is declared

Nahum 2 The destruction of Nineveh is described

Nahum 3 The destruction of Nineveh is deserved

Key verses: Nah. 1:1-7

Habakkuk: Considering Tough Questions

The name Habakkuk means one who embraces or clings. This is appropriate because he chooses to cling firmly to God in spite of difficult circumstances (Hab. 3:16-19). He was the last prophet sent to Judah before its fall to Babylon in 586 BC.

The prophet begins a dialog with God dealing with two difficult questions:

- 1) Why has God not judged the wickedness of Judah?
- 2) How could God use wicked Babylon as a tool of judgment?

Habakkuk 1-2 The problems of Habakkuk

Habakkuk 3 The prayer and praise of Habakkuk

Key verses: 1:1-6; 2:4; 3:17-19 (Hab. 2:4 is quoted in Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38 and is a text that influenced the lives of Luther and Wesley. Sinners are saved through faith in God alone and not through works.)

Know Your Bible – Part 10

Jonah through Habakkuk

Jonah: The Reluctant Prophet

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