

19	JOURNEY: Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah		
Key Word	Key Passage	Key Themes	Key People
“Why Evil?”	”How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, ‘Violence!’ but you do not save?” -- Habakkuk, 1:2	Sin/judgment Why does evil win? God’s sovereignty Restoration	Obadiah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Nebuchadnezzar

1. Historical Background

- a. 7th Century B.C.
- b. Assyria in decline
- c. Babylon is on the rise
- d. Dates of writing
 - Obadiah: 605-586 B.C.
 - Nahum: 663-612 B.C.
 - Habakkuk: 609-588 B.C.
 - Zephaniah: 640-621 B.C.

2. Common themes

- a. Judgment against sin
- b. Question: why does evil seem to be dominant over good?
- c. Restoration of Israel
 - Examples:
 - Obadiah 15-21
 - Nahum 1:12-15
 - Habakkuk 2:12-14, 3:13
 - Zephaniah 3:13-20
- d. God’s sovereignty

3. **Representative Passage:** Habakkuk

1:1-11 Habakkuk’s first complaint

- a. Complaint: why does evil go unpunished? (1:1-4)
- b. God’s answer: The Babylonians will punish Judah (1:5-11)

1:12-2:20 Habakkuk’s second complaint

- a. Complaint: how can a just God use a wicked people (Babylon) to punish Judah? (1:12-2:1)
- b. God’s answer: Babylon will be punished and faith, rewarded (2:2-20)

3:1-19 Habakkuk’s prayer: a confession of trust and joy

Key Verse: 1:2 – “How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen?”

3:2 – “In wrath, remember mercy”

4. Life Application

- a. The issue raised by Habakkuk was: why does evil go unpunished?

Discuss: How does the prevalence of evil in the world affect your faith?

- b. The conclusion of the prophets: God is sovereign; He will eventually punish evil-doers.

Discuss: How have you reconciled the reality of evil in the world with your faith in the sovereignty of God?

OLD TESTAMENT OUTLINES

Obadiah

1-14 Edom's destruction

- a. Edom's destruction announced (1-7)
b. Edom's destruction reaffirmed (8-14)

15-21 Israel's restoration (The Day of the Lord)

- a. Judgments on the Nations (15-18)
b. The Lord's Kingdom established (19-21)

Key Verse: 15 – "The day of the LORD is near for all nations..."

Nahum

1:1-15 Nineveh's Judge

- a. The Lord's kindness and sternness (1:2-8)
b. Nineveh's overthrow and Judah's joy (1:9-15)

2:1-13 Nineveh's Judgment

- a. Nineveh besieged (2:1-10)
b. Nineveh's desolation contrasted with her former glory (2:11-13)

3:1-10 Nineveh's total destruction

- a. Nineveh's sins (3:1-4)
b. Nineveh's doom (3:5-19)

Key Verse: 1:7 – "The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him..."

Zephaniah

1:1- 18 The Day of wrath

- a. Judgment on idolaters in Judah (1:1-9)
b. The inescapable day of the Lord's wrath (1:10-18)

2:1-3:8 God's Judgment on the nations

- a. Call to repentance (2:1-3)
b. Judgment on Philistia, Moab/Ammon, Cush, Assyria, Jerusalem

3:9-20 Redemption of the remnant (The Day of Hope)

- a. The Remnant restored, Jerusalem purged (3:9-13)
b. The nation restored (3:14-20)

Key Verse: 2:3 – "Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands."

Next Week, 03-25-15

Join us for a time of prayer.

No JOURNEY on April 1. Join us for Maundy

Thursday worship, 04-02-15.