

# Overlapping Minor Prophets – Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Obadiah

William J.D. Shaw May 9, 2021

This is a continued study following the documents on Daniel and then on Jeremiah. These prophets all overlap in a time period where the North and South division of Israel and Judah experienced God's judgement through the use of the Babylonian's. The intent is to examine commonalities or overlaps in prophecy and to especially separate out end time prophecy.

## Nahum

This prophet directed his warning against Nineveh. The Book starts with telling of God's personality and great power. God reserves his wrath and vengeance for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger but He will always have His way. It will always come about according to the Lord's plans.

**Nah 1:2** God *is* jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and *is* furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies.

**Nah 1:3** The LORD *is* slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked*: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds *are* the dust of his feet.

Man can not stand against God in the end, when He pours out His fury man will be consumed and destroyed. Interesting, poured out like fire and rocks thrown down, this fits with the plagues in the Tribulation.

The Lord knows those who place their trust in Him, he is their anchor in times of trouble.

**Nah 1:6** Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.

**Nah 1:7** The LORD *is* good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

Those that promote peace are God's people, Judah and all that are God's people are reminded to keep the solemn feasts and keep the vows of walking in God's ways.

**Nah 1:15** Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.

The second and third chapters are focused upon Nineveh's destruction. Roughly 160 years previously Jonah called Nineveh to repent and they did, which resulted in God turning His wrath away from them at that time. This was a Gentile city but it knew the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and His ways. Over a generation or two they went back to their old evil ways, which now brings it to Nahum's time.

We are informed of the evil that has arisen again in Nineveh, lies, robbery, witchcraft and more.

**Nah 3:1** Woe to the bloody city! it *is* all full of lies *and* robbery; the prey departeth not;

**Nah 3:4** Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.

It was 3 years later after Nahum that Nineveh was totally destroyed by the Babylonian's. Those that know God's word and methods understand that this occurred through the Old Testament, here God used the Babylonians to carry out His will and His wrath.

There is an important lesson in this Book for us today. It is that any Nation that knows the God of Israel is required to walk forward as a Nation following the ways of God. If they do not, God's wrath rises up against them and God will at some point destroy them. That applies to many Nations in the world today including North America, Great Britain, and much of Europe, some of Africa and South America and Australia and New Zealand. All of these as well as many other nations that do not know the God of Israel. will in the future experience the wrath of God, these are nations such as China, Korea, Russia, Turkey, Greece, Iran, Iraq, India and the rest of Asia. Yes the Tribulation is fast approaching.

## Zephaniah

After about 10 years from Jeremiah starting to prophecy, Zephaniah also came on the scene in Jerusalem. Both at the same time were calling Judah back to change before it was too late.

**Zep 1:2** I will utterly consume all *things* from off the land, saith the LORD.

**Zep 1:3** I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.

**Zep 1:4** I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, *and* the name of the Chemarims with the priests;

**Zep 1:5** And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship *and* that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham;

**Zep 1:6** And them that are turned back from the LORD; and *those* that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him.

The wrath of God was scheduled to come down upon Jerusalem and upon Judah. The people had forgotten the Lord and were worshiping false gods. Those in Judah were about to be cut off from the land.

The warning is issued that the Day of the Lord is near.

**Zep 1:7** Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for **the day of the LORD is at hand**: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.

**Zep 1:8** And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD'S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

**Zep 1:9** In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

**Zep 1:10** And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, *that there shall be* the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills.

**Zep 1:11** Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off.

**Zep 1:12** And it shall come to pass at that time, *that* I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: **that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.**

**Zep 1:13** Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and **their houses a desolation**: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

**Zep 1:14** The great day of the LORD *is* near, *it is* near, and hasteth greatly, *even* the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

**Zep 1:15** **That day is a day of wrath**, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

**Zep 1:16** A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.

**Zep 1:17** And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because **they have sinned against the LORD**: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.

**Zep 1:18** Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even **a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.**

Those being punished will be the leaders and also the inhabitants. They will be removed from their houses and off the land. They are warned in that they have sinned against the Lord and will therefore be removed off the land. They became complacent with respect to the Lord's directives. The term, Day of the Lord, is used to denote God's wrath, both at specific times but also primarily at the end time of the Tribulation period. In the above verses the term is directed to those living in Judah at that particular time.

The call to come back is for all those walking improperly, they are to lose their pride and become meek towards the Lord and seek righteousness.

**Zep 2:3** Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.

This call by the God implies repent, become humble before the lord and come back to walking in His ways.

The wrath of God will also be poured out on enemies of Judah, in particular first upon Moab and Ammon.

**Zep 2:8** I have heard the reproach of **Moab**, and the revilings of the children of **Ammon**, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified *themselves* against their border.

**Zep 2:9** Therefore *as* I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, *even* the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.

**Zep 2:10** This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified *themselves* against the people of the LORD of hosts.

**Zep 2:11** The LORD *will be* terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and *men* shall worship him, every one from his place, *even* all the isles of the heathen.

**Zep 2:12** Ye **Ethiopians also**, ye *shall be* slain by my sword.

**Zep 2:13** And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and **destroy Assyria**; and will make **Nineveh a desolation**, *and* dry like a wilderness.

The prophecy also continues on the destruction of the Assyrians and that of Nineveh. In 612 BC Nineveh was destroyed which was 14 years after Zephaniah's prophesying. Also Assyria was destroyed in 604 BC which occurred 22 years after Zephaniah's prophesying. The destruction of the Ethiopians seems to speak to a later time which is yet to come.

Zephaniah then prophesies regarding Jerusalem and tells of her errors.

**Zep 3:2** She **obeyed not** the voice; she **received not correction**; she **trusted not** in the LORD; she **drew not near** to her God.

**Zep 3:3** Her princes within her *are* roaring lions; her judges *are* evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.

**Zep 3:4** **Her prophets** *are* light *and* **treacherous** persons: **her priests** have **polluted the sanctuary**, they have **done violence to the law**.

**Zep 3:5** The just LORD *is* in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but **the unjust knoweth no shame**.

The leaders are the ones responsible for the direction of the Nation and its people. They did not obey, they did not take correction, they did not place their trust in the lord and they did not draw near to God. Judah's appointed prophets were treacherous and the priests polluted the sanctuary and broke the Torah. Worst of all, the leaders did not know any shame. They were full of pride and full of themselves. This has a parallel in that it speaks to us as to what is occurring in today's time.

The next portion from Zephaniah is directed at the world's Nations. This appears to be taking place in the end times.

**Zep 3:6** I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

**Zep 3:7** I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, *and* corrupted all their doings.

**Zep 3:8** Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination *is* **to gather the nations**, that I may **assemble the kingdoms**, to **pour upon them mine indignation**, *even* **all my fierce anger**: for **all the earth** shall be **devoured with the fire of my jealousy**.

The verses above speak to a gathering of the nations where the wrath of God is poured out upon them and over the entire earth. This definitely is going to be occurring during the Tribulation period.

Zephaniah then tells about the conversions of the Nations. This is directed to the whole world. The verse Zep 3:9 has been taken to mean a number of things, but definitely means the people will turn and call upon the name of the Lord,

**Zep 3:9** For then will I turn to the people a **pure language**, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.

**Zep 3:10** From **beyond the rivers of Ethiopia** my suppliants, *even* the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

**Zep 3:11** In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, **wherein thou hast transgressed against me**: for then I will **take away** out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy **pride**, and thou shalt no more be **haughty** because of my holy mountain.

**Zep 3:12** I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and **they shall trust** in the name of the LORD.

**Zep 3:13** The **remnant of Israel** shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make *them* afraid.

The above speaks to the time at the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennium. The Nations are from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia which was the far limit of the world at the time of Zephaniah. At this moment of time, God will remove the people that are full of pride in themselves, the ones that walked in iniquity. Those that are left will trust the Lord. The remnant of Israel will walk forward in the way of the Lord and no one will make them afraid.

From this point forward Israel will be exalted and fulfill their rightful place as God's people. The King referred to that is in their midst is Yeshua Mashiach.

**Zep 3:14** Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

**Zep 3:15** The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, *even* the LORD, *is* in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

**Zep 3:16** In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: *and* *to* Zion, Let not thine hands be slack.

**Zep 3:17** **The LORD thy God in the midst of thee** *is* mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

**Zep 3:18** I will gather *them that are* sorrowful for the solemn assembly, *who* are of thee, *to*

*whom* the reproach of it *was* a burden.

**Zep 3:19** Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.

**Zep 3:20** At that time **will I bring you again**, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.

All of Israel that is scattered throughout the world will be gathered and brought back to the land of Israel. They will now become the center of the world throughout the Millennium.

## Habakkuk

Habakkuk overlaps with Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, but comes later after Nahum and Zephaniah. This prophet ask questions to God and God answers them. Habakkuk lived at a time that was in turmoil and iniquity and unrighteousness abounded.

**Hab 1:2** O LORD, how long shall **I cry**, and **thou wilt not hear!** *even* cry out unto thee of **violence**, and **thou wilt not save!**

**Hab 1:3** Why dost thou shew me **iniquity**, and cause *me* to **behold grievance?** for **spoiling** and **violence** *are* before me: and there are *that* raise up **strife** and **contention**.

**Hab 1:4** Therefore **the law is slacked**, and **judgment doth never go forth:** for **the wicked** doth **compass about the righteous;** therefore **wrong judgment proceedeth.**

This question by Habakkuk in what he was witnessing could in fact apply as well in today's time as well as many other times in the past. Habakkuk was one of God's people, he walked in God's way and to see the unrighteous turmoil bothered him immensely. The presence of unrighteousness and iniquity bothers all of God's people that witness it and experience it.

God answers Habakkuk and tells him that He uses what Nations that He wishes to carry out punishment on Judah.

**Hab 1:5** Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for *I* will work a work in your days, *which* ye will not believe, though it be told *you*.

**Hab 1:6** For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, *that* bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces *that are* not theirs.

**Hab 1:7** They *are* terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

**Hab 1:8** Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle *that* hasteth to eat.

**Hab 1:9** They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up *as* the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand.

**Hab 1:10** And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall

deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it.

**Hab 1:11** Then shall *his* mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, *imputing* this his power unto his god.

In the end these wicked nations that God uses are ones that worship their gods attributing their success at overcoming others to their false gods.

Then Habakkuk asks God another question, knowing that God's people are ordained for judgement and also for correction. So why are they subject to others that are more evil than themselves.

**Hab 1:12** *Art* thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast **ordained them for judgment**; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them **for correction**.

**Hab 1:13** *Thou art* of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, *and* holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth *the man that is* more righteous than he?

**Hab 1:14** And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, *that have* no ruler over them?

**Hab 1:15** They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad.

**Hab 1:16** Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion *is* fat, and their meat plenteous.

**Hab 1:17** Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?

Then God answers with a vision that Habakkuk is to deliver. It addresses judgment by God.

**Hab 2:2** And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make *it* plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

**Hab 2:3** For the vision *is* yet **for an appointed time**, but **at the end** it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, **wait for it**; because **it will surely come**, it will not tarry.

**Hab 2:4** Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but **the just shall live by his faith**.

**Hab 2:5** Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, *he is* a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and *is* as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:

The vision is going to occur at an appointed time, speaking to the end time. God's people are to be patient and wait for it as it will come according to God's time table. Hab 2:3 possibly speaks to the final judgement on the Nations and redemption of God's people occurring on a Holy Day of God in the future, perhaps Nisan 1.

Even though God uses evil Nations to carry out his punishment upon the Israelites, these wicked Nations will be punished and also experience God's wrath according to God's timing.

**Hab 2:6** Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, **Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his!** how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!

Hab 2:7 Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?

Hab 2:8 Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and *for* the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

Hab 2:9 **Woe to him that coveteth an evil** covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!

Hab 2:10 Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned *against* thy soul.

Hab 2:11 For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

Hab 2:12 **Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!**

Hab 2:13 Behold, *is it* not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?

Hab 2:14 **For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.**

Hab 2:15 **Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink**, that putteth thy bottle to *him*, and makest *him* drunken also, that thou mayest **look on their nakedness!**

Hab 2:16 Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD'S right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing *shall be* on thy glory.

Hab 2:17 For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, *which* made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

Hab 2:18 What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?

Hab 2:19 **Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake;** to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it *is* laid over with gold and silver, and *there is* no breath at all in the midst of it.

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

There are a number of reasons for Woes to them that are evil. In the end they will not escape. Those that worship false gods are in for major punishment. God will act in his own time. That time occurs in the Tribulation period. Then when the Millennium that follows starts, the entire earth will be filled with the knowledge and glory of the Lord.

Habakkuk replies with a prayer expounding upon the power and feats of the lord. He then finishes by rejoicing in the lord.

Hab 3:17 Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* fruit *be* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and *there shall be* no herd in the stalls:

Hab 3:18 **Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.**

Hab 3:19 **The LORD God *is* my strength**, and he will make my feet like hinds' *feet*, **and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.** To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.

No matter what ever comes upon us, we are to rejoice in our God.



## Obadiah

Obadiah overlaps with Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Obadiah was called to pass judgment upon Edom for the treatment of his brother Jacob.

**Oba 1:15** For the **day of the LORD** is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

The prophecy starts out indicating that the Day of the Lord is coming.

**Oba 1:18** And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of **Esau for stubble**, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and **there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau**; for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

Continuing further mount Zion will be a location where judgment will go forth in the time of the Millennium and Esau will be a nation that will be judged. All the kingdoms of the world will be the Lord's. Esau will not exist as it will be burned up as stubble.

**Oba 1:21** And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

The prophet in proclaiming Edom's doom gives us a message for today, beware of pride in your mind, be humble and obey God.

## Summary

There are a number of lessons from these Minor Prophets that apply to us today and also warn us of the fast approaching end time that is coming along with the wrath of God poured out upon the entire world. The information on the end time prophecies are completely in harmony with those from other prophets.

A number of prophecies made by these minor prophets were fulfilled, others pertaining to the end time are still awaiting fulfillment.

One of the most important takeaways from these Books of the overlapping minor prophets is "Trust in the Lord", God is to be first and foremost in our heart, mind and soul. We are to obey and walk in His ways, and not forgetting to keep His solemn Feasts. We are to be humble before the Lord, and not let the pride of life into how we walk. Always walk in righteousness and thankfulness.

The prophets called the leaders and the people to come back to God, repent and then walk in obedience to God's way. God is always willing to take everyone back if they do that. If one does

not do that, then they will experience the wrath of God. All evil people will be destroyed during the wrath that God pours out upon the entire world at the end time, none will escape. Those that do not obey God and walk in His ways sin, they walk outside His Laws, they walk in iniquity. Unless they repent and change before it is too late, they are doomed.

Those that are God's are to rejoice in our God and walk forward in His laws, in patience and endurance without complaint, for we know that **only** our future life with the Father and the Son is what is important.

\*\*