



April Bible Tidbits—Books of The Bible #7

A selection of facts and information to help you discover more of the riches about Sacred Scripture. We continue our journey through the books of the Bible. Call Diane at 633-3672 if you have questions or want to know more.

Each month we'll offer you several new tidbits in print and on-line: In print on the reverse side of the OLV Activities Calendar; On-line on OLV's Home Page (ourladyofvictoryallmadge.parishesonline.com),—below the Question of the Week!

We continue our look at the Prophetic Books of the Bible: Lamentations, Baruch, Micah, Nahum and Habakkuk.

Lamentations: This book is one of our most important sources of information about the terrible conditions in Jerusalem and Judah after the Babylonian attack. This short book consists of five chapters or poems which express the deep pain and grief of those who survived in the land.

Baruch: This book is known only in Greek and, therefore, is found only in the Catholic Canon of the Bible. It exalts the law of Moses as the hope of Israel, and it calls its readers in exile to trust in the Lord.

Micah: Micah preached his message at the same time as did Isaiah. Micah saw the same injustices and evil everywhere as did Isaiah. The message of Micah is powerful and uncompromising. Chapter 6:1 – 7:7 is in fact a legal trial against Israel for its sins.

Nahum: Nahum is one of the most colorful and dramatic books in the Old Testament with its ferocious description of the Babylonian siege of Nineveh (remember Nineveh from the story of Jonah). Nahum is a book of only three chapters and remains somewhat of a mystery. We know nothing about the author except his name, and he gives us no personal details. The book also contains no message of comfort about the God of the Covenant and his mercy.

Habakkuk: This book begins by describing Babylon as the scourge of God causing terror everywhere, for the author sees the Babylonians as the instruments of God for punishment. The central message of this prophetic book can be found in 2:1-5: *the righteous who believe will live, the wicked will not succeed.*

Zephaniah: Zephaniah was a fiery preacher whose wrath against pagan practices and hatred of the Assyrians were matched only by his devotion to Yahweh. His book is only three chapters long and most likely does not represent all that he had to say. Although short, Zephaniah represents the best of Israel's values brought together in a time of great difficulty.

Haggai: Haggai is one of the shortest books of the Old Testament—only two chapters, containing four oracles. His message is simple—the land is suffering from drought and hunger, poverty and failure because, he states, the people think only of themselves and have not as yet begun to rebuild God's Temple. It is Haggai and Zechariah who got the people moving to rebuild the Temple after its destruction by the Babylonians.