

NAHUM

This is the second prophecy devoted to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. The first was Jonah.

The differences between the two prophecies, however, could hardly be greater. The prophecy of Jonah shows the mercy of God toward that ancient and wicked Gentile power. The prophecy of Nahum is one of absolute judgment with not the slightest hint of an opportunity for the Ninevites to repent! Cf. 3:19.

Both Jonah and Nahum were from Israel. Although uncertain, it is generally agreed that Nahum's birthplace, Elkosh, was a town in Galilee, but that he moved later into Judah.

They lived about 100 years apart. Jonah prophesied about 800 years B.C.; Nahum, shortly after Isaiah and Micah--about 700 years B.C.

Nineveh had turned completely from her repentance in Jonah's day, and now there was nothing left but judgment.

Therefore, we have here an Israelite prophesying for Judah about Nineveh--since a reading of the prophecy leaves little doubt but that it was for the comfort (which is the meaning of the name, Nahum) of Judah.

Historical Background. It seems that the occasion for the writing of this prophecy was the nearly-successful invasion of Judah by Sennacherib during the reign of Hezekiah. No other king was able to do as much as he did until the time of the Babylonian Captivity. For the story, read Isa. 36, 37. Note how appropriate the statements are in Nahum 1:9, 12, 15; 2:13.

The date generally accepted for the overthrow of the Assyrians by the Babylonians and Medes is 612 B.C. Some place the date for the overthrow of No-amon (Nahum 3:8) as 663 B.C., but this cannot be established with certainty. If this were the case, then Nahum's prophecy would be dated 150 years or more from Jonah. However, the historical details in the preceding paragraph seem to be more reliable in setting the date.

- Outline:
- I. Introduction (1:1). It tells the nature of this prophecy: a "burden"--a term used to describe a weighty message of judgment. It gives the name of the place to fall under divine judgment: "Nineveh." It tells who the prophet is: "Nahum." And it tells where he was from: He was an Elkoshite.
 - II. A Revelation of The Character of God (1:2-8).
 - III. The Revelation of Divine Judgment Upon Nineveh (1:9-3:19).
 - A. The Announcement of the Judgment (1:9-15). This is given primarily to Judah, but note that part of it is directed to Nineveh.
 - B. The Description of the Judgment (2:1-13).
 - C. The ~~Explanation~~ Reasons for the Judgment (3:1-19).

Special Lessons:

1. We see that the most tragic mistake that any nation~~s~~ can make is to ignore God, or to forget what kind of a God He is. Nahum points out the two sides of God: He is "good," but He can also be terrible in His wrath. See 1:2, 3, 7, 9. *on this, cf.*
2. We see how the Lord delights in His people. Cf. 1:15b. Also 1:7. It is amazing that Nahum does not say a thing about Judah's sins, nor of her impending judgment by Babylon.
3. We see the absolute sovereignty of God over the nations, and that there is nothing that they can do to withstand Him! Cf. 1:4-6, 8, 9, 12, 13; 2:10-13; 3:5-10.
4. We see that, though God in mercy may delay His judgment, yet, if men persist in sin, judgment will ultimately fall. The sin of Assyria was really indescribable. Cf. 2:11, 12.

THE NINEVITES
DISPUTED
THIS. Cf. Isa.
36:15, 18-20.
ACCORDING TO HIST.
THE ASSYRIANS
HAD
CONQUERED
CITIES.
200,000 PEOPLE

EX. 34:6, 7;
PSA. 103:8
JOEL 3:16
JON. 1:2, 4:2
GOD IS LOVE
BUT HE IS
ALSO RIGHT-HEARTY