

## Nahum

### Introduction.

- A. Number 7 of The Twelve minor prophets.
- B. A series of three poems.
- C. A prophet from Elkosh.
  - 1. Nahum means “comforter.”
  - 2. Capernaum = village of Nahum.
  - 3. Nothing else known of him.
  - 4. Between 626-612 B.C. (100 years after Jonah).
- D. Against Nineveh particularly and Assyria generally.
  - 1. Nineveh the capital city of the Assyrian empire.
  - 2. Built to its greatest by Sennacherib (705-681).
    - a. A wall 15 miles in circumference with 14 gates.
    - b. Water from the mountains flowed through 18 canals.
    - c. Palace was 1,301,100 square feet (the great hall 6000 sq ft), with 80 rooms and was 72 feet tall.
    - d. Door figures weighing up to 30 tons.
    - e. Many stone carvings on the walls.
    - f. The armory covered 46 acres.
  - 3. Near modern day Mosul, Iraq, in the Nineveh Governate.
  - 4. Rulers of that time: Sargon II (722-705), Sennacherib (705-681), Esarhaddon (681-669), Ashurbanipal (669-631), Assur-etil-ilani (631-627), Assur-ubalit II (627-612) – the fall of Nineveh.
- E. Assyria a vicious and cruel nation “on a scale that the world had never seen before.” (OT Overviews)
  - 1. Impaled captives, burning women and children in front of their relatives, skinning people alive, creating monuments made of severed heads, etc.
  - 2. Demeaned the LORD, the God of Israel (2 Ki.18:33-35).
  - 3. Sargon II began the captivity and deportation of Israel (Northern Kingdom) and Sennacherib finished it in 701.  
(The Sennacherib Prism, now at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, reads, in part: *As for Hezekiah, the Jew, who did not submit to my yoke, 46 of his strong, walled cities, as well as the small cities in their neighborhood. . . . I besieged and took . . . Himself, like a caged bird, I shut up in Jerusalem his royal city . . . the terrifying splendor of my majesty overcame him.*)

F. Destruction.

1. Babylonians, along with the Medes and others, marched against Nineveh in 612.
2. Heavy rains caused flooding which washed away parts of the wall, allowing the attackers to enter the city.
3. The bloodshed and looting were astronomical. No one was sorry to see it fall.

I. God's wrath against the oppressive nation (chapter 1).

- A. Jealous.
- B. Avenging (cf. Gen. 12:3).
- C. Slow to anger (Ex. 34:6-7, cf. 2 Pe. 3:9).
- D. Contrasts the fate of the wicked with that of the righteous.
- E. The one who counsels wickedness was probably Sennacherib.
- F. Good news (Is. 52:7).

II. God's wrath against Nineveh and Assyria (chapters 2 & 3).

- A. Shows the stages of the destruction.  
(Babylonian soldiers wore red and painted their shields red.)
- B. Total destruction and plundering of the city.
- C. Lions (2:11-12) a symbol of Assyrian might.
- D. The wealth of the city carried away.
- E. The city lies in ruins.
- F. Their wound is fatal (3:19).
- G. The world rejoices.

III. Lessons of Nahum.

- A. God is grieved by the suffering and death of the innocent.
- B. God's justice and goodness compel him to judge and destroy oppressive nations.
- C. God is at work in history; evil nations will not endure forever.
- D. The LORD is good (1:7).