

STUDIES IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

NAHUM

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

Title: The prophet and his subject, v. 1

I. Nineveh's doom - by the decree of Jehovah, ch. 1

- . The goodness and severity of Jehovah, vv. 2-8
 1. Vengeance and mercy of God, vv. 2,3
 2. The terribleness of His anger against sin, vv. 4-6
 3. The greatness of His mercy - a stronghold to the faithful, v.7
 4. The pursuer of His enemies, v.8
- . The complete overthrow of Nineveh, vv. 9-15
 1. God's faithfulness in the present crisis: affliction not again to come from Assyria (as in the past), vv.9-11
 2. Judah delivered from the yoke of Assyria by destruction of Nineveh's power, vv. 12,13
 3. Destruction of Assyria, v. 14
 4. Rejoicing in Zion, v.15

II. Siege and destruction of Nineveh - decreed by Jehovah, ch. 2

- . Assault upon Nineveh: doom of the city, vv. 1-7
 1. Furious preparation for battle, vv. 1-4
 2. Hopelessness of resistance, vv. 5,6
 3. The city, as a queen, is captured and moans, v.7
- . Fight of the people and sack of the city, vv. 8-13
 1. The inhabitants flee, the city is plundered, vv. 8-10
 2. The destruction is complete, vv. 11-13

III. Nineveh's sins and her inevitable doom, ch. 3

- . Nineveh's fate brought upon herself as retribution for her crimes, vv. 1-7
 1. The graphic description of the battle, vv. 1-3
 2. The cause: her sins, v.4
 3. The uncovering of her shame is of Jehovah, vv. 5-7
- . The fate of No-amon is to be the fate of Nineveh, vv. 8-11
- . Inability of Nineveh's resources to save the city, vv. 12-19
 1. Fall of the outlying strongholds, vv. 12,13
 2. Siege and destruction of the city, vv. 14-19a
 3. Universal exultation over the fall of Nineveh, v. 19b

INFORMATION ON THE BOOK

DATE WRITTEN

The book was written some time after 663 and before 612 B.C.. The reason for this is that the fall of No-amon, which is Thebes of Egypt, which is mentioned in 3:8-10, took place in 663 B.C.. And the prophet foretold the fall of Nineveh which took place in 612 B.C.. It is generally believed that the prophesying of Nahum took place between 650 and 620 B.C.. It is also concluded that he may have been under the age of 50 when he began his prophetic work.

THE MAN

Little is known about the personal life of Nahum. His name does not appear in any other place in the entire Bible. His name means _____ {Look this up in your Bible Dictionary or Strong's Concordance}.

The home of this prophet, according to 1:1, is _____. Where was this city located?

His occupation is unknown, and there is not even any speculation.

MAIN THEME

The theme of the book can be stated in these words: *The Lord, in His sovereign holiness and goodness, will bring judgment upon sinful Nineveh, and spare righteous Judah.* The book is mostly about Nineveh, the subject of the opening sentence. It is also addressed primarily to Nineveh. It is in many ways a sequel to the book of Jonah. While the prophet was sent to Judah, he does not spend time in this prophecy dealing with the internal affairs of Judah and Jerusalem. This he has left to his contemporaries, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In Assyria, King Ashurbanipal reigned. He was the last of the famous kings of Assyria, and after his death in 633 B.C., the power of Assyria faded away. He was an exceptionally cruel king. On occasion, he had captives skinned alive, and forced a captured prince to wear around his neck, the bloody head of his king! And on another occasion, this king had the head of a Chaldean monarch hanging above him at a feast!

In Judah, King Josiah reigned. He did so in the fear of Jehovah God, and was by far one of the best kings of Judah. 2 Kings 22:2 "...he did {what was} right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left."

Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, founded around 2,000 B.C.. During Nahum's prophetic ministry, it was at its peak of wealth and power. The city walls were considered to be impregnable, yet Nahum prophesied their fall! In 612 B.C., Nineveh was conquered and demolished by the Babylonians, Medes and Scythians. The city has remained through the centuries as a heap of desolate ruins! The king at the time of its fall, Esarhaddon II, gathered his wives and children and wealth into the palace and set fire to it. He perished with them in the fire.

The fighting forces of Assyria were tired from protracted wars that spanned large areas. The population of the cities was made up of citizens from many countries who were drawn to them by desire for trade and wealth. So when the nation began to fail, they left and the strength of the nation was diminished. The nature of the Assyrian leaders and the people in general was excessively cruel, and the fall of Assyria was of no great consequence to the majority of the world. The time was RIGHT for Divine judgment to come upon them, and God was ready to see to it.

Thebes is the Greek name for the Egyptian city of No (Hebrew). The capital of Egypt, it was conquered by the Assyrians in 663 B.C.. Nahum refers to this conquest in 3:10.

QUESTIONS ON NAHUM

Title: The prophet and his subject, v.1

I. Nineveh's doom - by the decree of Jehovah, ch.1

- . The goodness and severity of Jehovah, vv. 2-8
- 1. Vengeance and mercy of God, vv. 2,3

1. What is the meaning of "burden" and "vision" in 1:1? _____

2. Compare the content of 1:2 and 1:7. _____

3. Define the words used to describe God in 1:2,3 and cite any New Testament passages which might use the same terminology to describe God. _____

- 1. The terribleness of His anger against sin, vv. 4-6

4. How would you classify the power of God which is mentioned in 1:4,5? _____
What is this power being used to emphasize? 1:6 _____

- 2. The greatness of His mercy - a stronghold to the faithful, v.7

5. To whom is God a stronghold, and how might this relate to us today? 1:7 _____

- 3. The pursuer of His enemies, v.8

6. The American Standard Version says in 1:8 "But with an over-running flood he will make a full end of *her place*, and will pursue his enemies into darkness." Other versions have "its place." What is the prophet referring to here? _____

- . The complete overthrow of Nineveh, vv. 9-15
1. God's faithfulness in the present crisis: affliction not again to come from Assyria (as in the past), vv.9-11
7. To whom does 1:9 refer, and what are they told will come of their efforts? _____

8. How do the thorns and drunkenness relate to those addressed? 1:10 _____

9. What does this "wicked" or "evil" counselor do? 1:11 _____

2. Judah delivered from the yoke of Assyria by destruction of Nineveh's power, vv. 12,13
10. To whom does the prophet address the remarks in 1:12,13, and what will be the results of His actions for them? _____

3. Destruction of Assyria, v. 14
11. What declaration does God make against Nineveh, and how will it affect their future? 1:14 _____

4. Rejoicing in Zion, v.15
12. Who would be rejoicing to hear of this destruction? 1:15 _____

13. What are they told to do when they hear of this? 1:15 _____

14. Who are the wicked, and what will happen to them? 1:15 _____

- II. Siege and destruction of Nineveh - decreed by Jehovah, ch. 2
- . Assault upon Nineveh: doom of the city, vv. 1-7
1. Furious preparation for battle, vv. 1-4
15. How are those who are coming up against Nineveh described? 2:1 _____

16. Explain the significance of Jacob and Israel being mentioned in this context. 2:2 _____

17. Discuss the meaning of the descriptions given in 2:3,4 of the invading army. _____

2. Hopelessness of resistance, vv. 5,6
18. Identify the "**HE**" and the "**THEY**" in 2:5, and what happens to them? _____

19. What is the relationship of the rivers and the dissolving of the palace? 2:6 _____

3. The city, as a queen, is captured and moans, v.7
20. In 2:7, we have a DECREE. What is it, and how does it relate to the subject of this book? _____

- . Fight of the people and sack of the city, vv. 8-13
1. The inhabitants flee, the city is plundered, vv. 8-10

21. What does the picture of Nineveh as a "pool of water" tell us about the populace of the city? 2:8 _

22. How does the prophet say these people will react to the invaders? 2:8 _____

23. To whom are the statements made in 2:9,10, and how are the people of Nineveh described? _____

2. The destruction is complete, vv. 11-13

24. What do 2:11,12 tell us about the destruction which was to come upon Nineveh? _____

25. Who was against them, and what was He going to do to them? 2:13 _____

III. Nineveh's sins and her inevitable doom, ch. 3

. Nineveh's fate brought upon herself as retribution for her crimes, vv. 1-7

1. The graphic description of the battle, vv. 1-3

26. Why is Nineveh being described as a "bloody city?" 3:1 _____

27. What is the prophet describing for them in 3:2,3? _____

2. The cause: her sins, v.4

28. Describe the cause of this destruction as it is enumerated in 3:4. _____

3. The uncovering of her shame is of Jehovah, vv. 5-7

29. Whom does the prophet say is against Nineveh? 3:5 _____

30. Explain the significance of the term "nakedness" here as it relates to what God is going to do to Nineveh. 3:5 _____

31. What does God threaten to do to them in 3:6? _____

32. How will others react to what God will do to them? 3:7 _____

. The fate of No-amon is to be the fate of Nineveh, vv. 8-11

33. Where was No-amon, and what was it named for? 3:8 _____

34. What happened to No-amon? 3:10 _____

35. In what way would Nineveh be drunken, and what would be the effects? 3:11 _____

. Inability of Nineveh's resources to save the city, vv. 12-19

1. Fall of the outlying strongholds, vv. 12,13

36. To what does the prophet liken the situation in Nineveh, and what is the meaning of these analogies? 3:12,13 _____

2. Siege and destruction of the city, vv. 14-19a

37. What does the prophet tell the people of Nineveh to do, and what good will it do for them? 3:14,15

38. In what had they trusted, and what would happen to them? 3:16 _____

39. What segment of the Assyrians are being described in 3:17, and what will happen to them? _____

40. Explain the meaning of "slumbering" and "resting in the dust" in 3:18. _____

41. To what extent would Assyria be injured, and what were the prospects for recovery? 3:19a _____

3. Universal exultation over the fall of Nineveh, v. 19b

42. How would others react to the fate of Nineveh, and why would they do it? 3:19b _____
