

STUDIES IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

The Book of *Nahum*

Prepared by:
Joel D. Hestand, D.Min.

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NAHUM "The Full of Exceeding Comfort"
THE PROPHET OF CONSOLATION

NAHUM: "Comfort" "Consolation" "Compassion"

OCCUPATION:

Not known

HOME: Elkosh. Four possible locations have been suggested - (1) Assyria, North of Nineveh; (2) Southwest of Jerusalem; (3) Somewhere in Galilee; (4) The site of Capernaum.

DATE: 663 - 610 BC. The date is indicated by 3:8-10. Thebes by Assurbanipal in 663 BC; Ninevah by Nabopolassar in 606 BC

MESSAGE: Divine vengeance and Divine mercy *God's patience has run out*

THEME: The destruction and doom of Nineveh *Nineveh falls and is gone*

CHARACTERISTICS:

Stately, orderly, impressive; poetic in form; unsurpassed for power of description; marked with clearness; vivid imagination; language is strong and brilliant; emotional and full of feeling; "The most vivid and passionate fragment of declamation in all literature." (Brice); fiery vigor, glowing color, dramatic impressiveness and picturesque phraseology.

OUTLINE:
Doom Declared (1) *Verdict of Vengeance*
Doom Described (2) *Vision of Vengeance*
Doom Deserved (3) *Vindication of Vengeance*

LESSONS:
God will forgive sin repented of, but will not condone sin persisted in
The goodness and the severity of God
There is a limit to God's patience
God's sovereignty
The judgment of the Lord though long deferred is sure and final
Consider Zechariah 4:6
Might does not make right
The person who deliberately rejects God, deliberately elects doom

*Zechariah 4⁶ - "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel:
'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,'
Says the Lord of hosts*

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NAHUM: A Teaching Outline

- I. The Destruction of Nineveh Is Decreed 1**
 - A. The General Principles of Divine Judgment 1:1-8**
 - 1. God's Vengeance in Judgment 1:1-2**
 - 2. God's Power in Judgment 1:3-8**
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- III. The Destruction of Nineveh Is Deserved 3**
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THE CITY OF NINEVAH

The founding of the kingdom of Assyria dates from 1700 B.C. She became a powerful state, subdued nations and treated them cruelly. In matters of science and art these people were greatly inferior to the Babylonians. They did not have the creative instinct. Following the time of Jonah, having fallen into a weakened condition, her strength was revived. Ninevah was her capital. The city lay on the Eastern side of the Tigris, opposite the modern town of Mosul. It was founded by Nimrod of Babylonia (Genesis 10:11), and was especially dedicated to Istar. It was the capital of Assyrian kings from 1100 B.C. to 880 B.C., and again after Sennacherib became king; being regarded as the chief city of the empire, as indeed it was. The city with its walls one hundred feet high and wide enough for three chariots to drive side by side on its top had remained unconquered for more than a century. Up to this time it had been impregnable. It is said that outside this massive wall was a moat one hundred and forty feet wide and sixty feet deep, dominated by some twelve hundred defense towers. Such was Ninevah, the capital of the most powerful, sensual, ferocious, and diabolically atrocious race of men that perhaps ever existed in all the world. They were great besiegers of men; ever crying, "Siege, siege, siege!" Nahum declares the besiegers of the world will at last be besieged themselves. Esarhaddon was Ninevah's last king. The Medes, with the Babylonians and the

Scythians, first razed all the surrounding fortresses, and then beleaguered the city. The Ninevites proclaimed a fast of one hundred days to propitiate their gods; nevertheless the city fell. Ktesias described how the last night of the besieged city was spent in drunken orgies. To precipitate the catastrophe, the Tigris overflowed, breaking breaches in the walls...and the city was, of course, subsequently plundered of its rich spoil. Its destruction was made complete. All that remains today of the ancient city are two great mounds. So complete were Ninevah's ruins that Xenophon scarcely recognized the site; Alexander the Great marched by, "not knowing that a world empire was buried under his feet." Lucian wrote, "Ninevah is perished, and there is no trace left where once it was." The traveler, Niebuhr, in 1766, passed over the site without knowing it. Only since Austen Henry Layard and Paul Emile Botta identified the site in 1842, has the city begun to be recognized by the modern world.

At the time of the utterance of the prophecy, the Northern Kingdom had been destroyed, and the ten tribes dispersed. The prophet's message was to Judah. The Assyrian power was at its very height, and the descriptions given of it reveal its arrogance and habitual oppression of others. Nahum was not sent to Ninevah, as Jonah was. The time of such opportunity for her was forever passed. The message of Nahum

was that of the full end determined.

NINEVAH DESCRIBED

Judged from the vaunting inscriptions of her kings, no power more useless, more savage, more terrible, ever cast its gigantic shadow on the page of history as it passed on the way to ruin. The kings of Assyria tormented the miserable world. They exult to record how "space failed for corpses;" how unsparing a destroyer is their goddess Ishtar; how they flung away the bodies of soldiers like so much clay; how they made pyramids of human heads; how they burned cities; how they filled populous lands with death and devastation; how they reddened broad deserts with carnage of warriors; how they scattered whole countries with the corpses of their defenders as with chaff; how they impaled "heaps of men" on stakes, and strewed the mountains and choked rivers with dead bones; how they cut off the hands of kings and nailed them on the walls, and left their bodies to rot with bears and dogs on the entrance gates of cities; how they employed nations of captives in making brick in fetters; how they cut down warriors like weeds, or smote them like wild beasts in the forests, and covered pillars with the flayed skins of rival monarches. (Farrar, The Minor Prophets, pp. 147,148.)

NAHUM, BOOK OF

A short prophetic book of the Old Testament that foretells the destruction of the nation of Assyria and its capital city, Nineveh.

For an outline of the book see Nahum

Structure of the Book. The book opens with a brief identification of the prophet Nahum. Then it launches into a psalm of praise that celebrates the power and goodness of God. This comforting picture is contrasted with the evil deeds of the Assyrians. With graphic language, Nahum presents a prophetic picture of the coming judgment of God. He informs the nation of Assyria that its days as a world power are drawing to a close. In an oracle of woe, the prophet describes Nineveh as a "bloody city, full of lies and robbery" (3:1). But soon the city of Nineveh will be laid waste, and Assyria will crumble before the judgment of God.

Authorship and Date. This book was written by a prophet known as "Nahum the Elkoshite" (1:1). This brief identification tells us all we know about this spokesman for the Lord. Even the location of his home, Elkosh, is uncertain, although some scholars believe he may have lived in northern Judah. The book can be dated with reasonable accuracy. Nineveh fell, as Nahum predicted, about 612 BC. Therefore, the book was probably written shortly before this time.

Historical Setting. For more than 100 years before Nahum's day, Assyria had been one of the dominant powers of the ancient world. The northern kingdom of Israel fell to Assyrian forces in 722 BC. Some prophets taught that this pagan nation was used as an instrument of God's judgment against His wayward people. But now it was Assyria's turn to feel the force of God's wrath. The armies of Nabopolassar of Babylon stormed Nineveh in 612 BC. The entire Assyrian Empire crumbled three years later under the relentless assault of this aggressive Babylonian ruler. Thus, as Nahum prophesied, Assyria's day of dominance ended with their humiliation by a foreign power.

Theological Contribution. This book teaches the sure judgment of God against those who oppose His will and abuse His people. Acts of inhumanity are acts against God, and He will serve as the ultimate and final judge. God sometimes uses a pagan nation as an instrument of His judgment, just as He used the Assyrians against the nation of Israel. But this does not excuse the pagan nation from God's laws and requirements. It will be judged by the same standards of righteousness and holiness which God applies to all the other people of the world.

Special Considerations. By a strange irony, the city in Galilee most closely associated with the ministry of Jesus was Capernaum. The name Capernaum in the Hebrew language means "the village of Nahum."

Some people wonder about the gloomy, pessimistic tone of the Book of Nahum. How can this picture of God's wrath and judgment be reconciled with the God of grace and love whom we meet in the New Testament? As the sovereign, all-powerful God, He has the right to work His purpose in the world. Judgment against sin is a part of the work which He must do in order to remain a just and holy God.

Nahum's announcement of God's approaching judgment also carries a call for holy living and faithful proclamation by God's Covenant People. Our work is to carry the message of His salvation to those who are surely doomed unless they turn to God in repentance and faith.

Also see NAHUM.

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"BURDEN" - A HEAVY LOAD TO BE
LIFTED UP, I.E., TO LIFT UP THE VOICE
IN PROCLAMATION DENOUNCING THE SINS
OF A PEOPLE BY PRONOUNCING JUDGMENT

INSTRUCTION - 1
FIERCE WRATH OF GOD 2-8
AFFLICTION FROM ASSYRIA WILL
NOT RISE AGAIN 9-13

Nahum 1:1

"An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite."

Nahum 1:2 stems from his own honor - not supplanted by another in the affection of his people
"The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The LORD takes vengeance on his foes and maintains his wrath against his enemies." not "getting even" but vindicated by a just judgment
not only jealous of his people, but FOR his people also (executes judgment)

ONE SIDE OF GOD
(2-6)
OTHER SIDE OF GOD
(7)

Nahum 1:3 not an indication of weakness - does not act impulsively
"The LORD is slow to anger and great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet." will not clear, nor excuse, the guilty
expressed God's power - boiling up as he strikes
will not sweep away as does the storm

Nahum 1:4

"He rebukes the sea and dries it up; he makes all the rivers run dry. Bashan and Carmel wither and the blossoms of Lebanon fade." his power revealed in nature
↳ East of sea of Galilee
↳ West toward Great Sea
↳ North of Galilee

Nahum 1:5

"The mountains quake before him and the hills melt away. The earth trembles at his presence, the world and all who live in it." Symbols of strength and endurance
his power revealed in everything - all tremble at his presence!

Nahum 1:6 If all is in his control

"Who can withstand his indignation? Who can endure his fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before him." Even Assyria will be helpless
↳ lava - cannot be stopped

Nahum 1:7

"The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him," Love and protective power
an impregnable stronghold to those who flee to him
his power is as great to protect as it is to destroy

Nahum 1:8 Liven in flood

"but with an overwhelming flood he will make an end of Nineveh; he will pursue his foes into darkness." Complete destruction - complete disappearance

Nahum 1:9

"Whatever they plot against the LORD he will bring to an end; trouble will not come a second time." Probably addressed to both Judah and Assyria

Nahum 1:10

Assyria thought to be impregnable
"They will be entangled among thorns and drunk from their wine; they will be consumed like dry stubble." - self confidence of power and pride
God will light the fire and they will go up in smoke!

Nahum 1:11

"From you, O Nineveh, has one come forth who plots evil against the LORD and counsels wickedness." not certain who this is - could be speaking of the spirit and the power and purpose of Assyria toward God

Nahum 1:12

"This is what the LORD says: 'Although they have allies and are numerous, they will be cut off and pass away. Although I have afflicted you, O Judah, I will afflict you no more.'" God has used Assyria to afflict Judah (Isaiah 10:5-21)

But Judah will not suffer that affliction again

Nahum 1:13

"Now I will break their yoke from your neck and tear your shackles away."

Addressed to Judah

Nahum 1:14

"The LORD has given a command concerning you, *Nineveh*: "You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the carved images and cast idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are vile."" *light in weight - Psalm 62:9*

Directed toward *hinnom*
completely bury - pass into oblivion

Nahum 1:15

"Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, O Judah, and fulfill your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed."

Assyria's doom is determined
a messenger is on his way bringing
good tidings to Judah
(14, 15)

Isaiah 40:9; 52:7

THE GODS OF ASSYRIA:

Ashur
Nabu
Anu
Adad
Ishtar (goddess)

"Praise God for His infinite power, and for the Providence by which He exercises it!"

Isa 40:9

"You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!"

Isa 52:7

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

ANU - prominent god over heaven, air, and earth

ADAD - represented the storm - either rains or destructive storms

ISHTAR - mother earth; fertility; goddess of love; prostitutes

ASHUR - god of politics; ordering and governing of the universe

NABU - god of education, literature, writing, wisdom, arts sciences

NEBUCHADNEZZAR (Babylon)

The Destroyer is on
His Way (1-7)

Nahum 2:1 ^{MEDES} → one who shatters and dashes (by dashing) in pieces and scattering
"An attacker advances against you, Nineveh. Guard the fortress, watch the road, brace yourselves, marshal all your strength!" make full and complete preparation

Nineveh prepares but to
no avail

Nahum 2:2 honor, self-respect, glory (Jacob = natural name)
"The LORD will restore the splendor of Jacob like the splendor of Israel, → divine name
though destroyers have laid them waste and have ruined their vines."

Nahum 2:3 copper overlay; leather painted
"The shields of his soldiers are red; the warriors are clad in scarlet. The metal on the chariots flashes on the day they are made ready; the spears of steel armor
pine are brandished." polished; flashing in the sunlight

Nahum 2:4
"The chariots storm through the streets, rushing back and forth through the squares. They look like flaming torches; they dart about like lightning." The air of madness

Nahum 2:5 Nineveh Panic stricken; weakened by terror
"He summons his picked troops, yet they stumble on their way. They dash to the city wall; the protective shield is put in place." Small towers

Nahum 2:6
"The river gates are thrown open and the palace collapses." all efforts at defense are vain -
God will open the gates - overflowing army

Nahum 2:7
"It is decreed that the city be exiled and carried away. Its slave girls moan like doves and beat upon their breasts." - Plaintive wail; deep anguish and sorrow

Nahum 2:8 central gathering spot
"Nineveh is like a pool, and its water is draining away. "Stop! Stop!" they cry, but no one turns back." Crumble + dry up
fleeing in desperation

VERSES 8-13

when the city falls, the
people flee! A new
experience is theirs!
Destruction

Nahum 2:9
"Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold! The supply is endless, the wealth from all its treasures!" Description by ancient writers -
borders on the fabulous

Nahum 2:10 Utter desolation and destruction
"She is pillaged, plundered, stripped! Hearts melt, knees give way, bodies tremble, every face grows pale." Utter despair and terror of the moment } That which she inflicted
is now their lot!

Nahum 2:11
"Where now is the lions' den, the place where they fed their young, where the lion and lioness went, and the cubs, with nothing to fear?" lion's disposition to tear and crush

Nahum 2:12
"The lion killed enough for his cubs and strangled the prey for his mate, filling his lairs with the kill and his dens with the prey." That which had been torn from others
(booty)

Nahum 2:13
"I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will burn up your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your young lions. I will leave you no prey on the earth. The voices of your messengers will no longer be heard." Their end is determined by God
no more emissaries sent to command

Nahum 3:1 ^{"miserable and sorrowful fate"} ^{more - further wickedness} ^{Tearing in pieces}
"Woe to the city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims!"
↳ stained in blood

Nahum 3:2
"The crack of whips, the clatter of wheels, galloping horses and jolting chariots!"

Nahum 3:3
"Charging cavalry, flashing swords and glittering spears! Many casualties, piles of dead, bodies without number, people stumbling over the corpses--"

Nahum 3:4 ^{proper place of the blame}
"all because of the wanton lust of a harlot, alluring, the mistress of sorceries, who enslaved nations by her prostitution and peoples by her witchcraft."

Enticed, seduced, destruction
PV 7:11, 27

Nahum 3:5
"I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will lift your skirts over your face. I will show the nations your nakedness and the kingdoms your shame."

To expose their nakedness
"You are no longer dealing with nations, but with God!"

Nahum 3:6
"I will pelt you with filth, I will treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle."

set as a goading stock

Nahum 3:7
"All who see you will flee from you and say, 'Nineveh is in ruins--who will mourn for her?' Where can I find anyone to comfort you?""

Laid waste for over 2000 years

Nahum 3:8 ^{"no-amon"}
"Are you better than Thebes, situated on the Nile, with water around her? The river was her defense, the waters her wall."

VERSES 8-11

The fate of No-amon is to be the fate of Nineveh

Nahum 3:9 ^{Ethiopia} ^{uncertain}
"Cush and Egypt were her boundless strength; Put and Libya were among her allies."
↳ Libia

Nahum 3:10
"Yet she was taken captive and went into exile. Her infants were dashed to pieces at the head of every street. Lots were cast for her nobles, and all her great men were put in chains."

In spite of infinite and unlimited strength

Schurbanipal

Nahum 3:11 ^{Fallen like a drunken man}
"You too will become drunk; you will go into hiding and seek refuge from the enemy."

Intoxicated on pride, self-confidence and strength

Nahum 3:12
"All your fortresses are like fig trees with their first ripe fruit; when they are shaken, the figs fall into the mouth of the eater."

VERSES 12-18

Nineveh's resources are unable to save the city

Nahum 3:13
"Look at your troops-- they are all women! The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has consumed their bars."

The reason for the rapid fall - wickedness of the people

Nahum 3:14

"Draw water for the siege, strengthen your defenses! Work the clay, tread the mortar, repair the brickwork!"

Nahum 3:15

"There the fire will devour you; the sword will cut you down and, like grasshoppers, consume you. Multiply like grasshoppers, multiply like locusts!"

Complete - all will be in vain

Nahum 3:16

"You have increased the number of your merchants till they are more than the stars of the sky, but like locusts they strip the land and then fly away."

Nahum 3:17

"Your guards are like locusts, your officials like swarms of locusts that settle in the walls on a cold day-- but when the sun appears they fly away, and no one knows where."

Nahum 3:18

"O king of Assyria, your shepherds slumber; your nobles lie down to rest. Your people are scattered on the mountains with no one to gather them."

Nahum 3:19

"Nothing can heal your wound; your injury is fatal. Everyone who hears the news about you claps his hands at your fall, for who has not felt your endless cruelty?"

what a way to go!

Clapping - over the vindication of righteousness

"AT LAST!"

BOOK OF NAHUM

"Ninevah's Doomsday"

I. Nahum, the man

- A. Name means "Comforter" or "Consolation"
- B. Calls himself an "Elkoshite" 1:1
 - 1. Alkush--24 miles north of Ninevah
 - a. this would make him a descendent of Jewish captives (2 Kings 17:6)
 - b. It is claimed his tomb is still there along with Jonah's, but this is highly doubtful
 - 2. Elkesi in Galilee
 - 3. Capernaum means "City of Nahum"
 - 4. village in Southern Judah
 - 5. actually no one knows for sure

II. Nahum, the book

- A. Date
 - 1. after fall of Thebes, Egypt (No, KJV) 3:8-10 663 B.C.
 - 2. Before fall of Ninevah 612 B.C.
 - 3. This places him after the fall of Israel (722 B.C.) and before the fall of Judah (586 B.C.)
 - 4. Contemporary with Jeremiah, Habbakuk, and Zephaniah
- B. Theme
 - 1. Destruction of Ninevah 1:1 "Bloody city" 3:1
 - 2. Ninevah had repented century earlier at preaching of Jonah (Jonah 3:5-10)
 - a. then reverted back to sinful ways
 - b. LXX places Nahum after Jonah
 - 3. Now doom is certain, and cannot be avoided
 - a. no call for repentance, nor promise of escape
 - b. God's patience has run out
 - 4. Only nation of Judah could find comfort in Nahum's book (1:15)
 - 5. Ninevah has run roughshod over the nations, now must face a God who is against them 2:13; 3:5
- C. Nahum and the New Testament
 - 1. never quoted in the New Testament
 - 2. Romans 10:15 is similar to 1:15, but probably a quote from Isa. 52:7
- D. Nahum is written in poetic form

III. City of Ninevah

- A. Capitol of Assyria
 - 1. Founded by Nimrod (Gen. 10:8-11)
 - 2. Worshipped cruel God, Asshur
 - 3. Nation geared for aggressive war
 - a. They had the power to conquer the world, but not the wisdom to know how to run it
 - b. saw no responsibilities to conquered nations, only opportunities to exploit them
 - c. lion was their national symbol 2:11-13
 - d. described as one of most ferocious, savage, cruel nations ever to exist

- (1) Asshurbanipal boasted of tearing lips and limbs off of captured rulers, of forcing other kings to pull his chariot and of hanging the head of slaughtered kings about another king's neck.
- (2) "Judged from the vaunting inscriptions of her kings, no power more useless, more savage, more terrible, ever cast its gigantic shadow on the page of history as it passed on the way to ruin. The kings of Assyria tormented the miserable world. They exalt to record how "space failed for corpses"; how unsparing is their goddess Ishtar as a destroyer; how they flung away the bodies of soldiers like so much clay; how they made pyramids of human heads; how they burned cities; how they filled populous lands with death and devastation; how they reddened broad deserts with the carnage of warriors; how they scattered whole countries with the corpses of their defenders as with chaff; how they impaled "hoaps of men" on stakes, and strewed the mountains and choked rivers with dead bones; how they cut off the hands of kings and nailed them on the walls, and left their bodies to rot with bears and dogs on the entrance gates of cities; how they employed nations of captives in making brick in fetters; how they cut down warriors like weeds, or smote them like wild beasts in the forests and covered pillars with the flayed skins of rival monarchs." (Farrar, as quoted by Homer Hailey, The Minor Prophets, p. 251)

B. City of Ninevah

1. Located on east bank of Tigris River
2. was capitol from 1100 B.C. - 880 B.C. and again 705 B.C. - 612 B.C.
3. Considered Impregnable
 - a. surrounded by moat 140 ft. wide and 60 Ft. deep
 - b. wall was 100 ft. high and wide enough for three chariots abreast
it was 7½ miles in circumference
 - c. 1200 defense towers
4. population--120,000 people who could not discern between right and left hand
 - a. probably those who were still young children
 - b. suggested this would place population in excess of half million

C. Destruction of Ninevah

1. Assyria took Israel captive in 722 B.C.
2. They made Judah tributary in 735 B.C. Judah barely escaped destruction with God's help in 701 B.C. (2 Kings 18:13-19:37)
3. Defeated Egyptians at Thebes (No) in 663 B.C.
4. Assyria at height of prosperity and power when Nahum prophesied her doom
5. Defeated by Medes, Babylonians, Scythians in 612 B.C. after two year siege
6. Medes, Babylonians and Scythians, under Median king Cyaxares first took all surrounding cities and fortifications, then laid siege to Ninevah
 - a. City's leaders proclaimed 100 day fast to propitiate their gods
 - b. River supplying their moat overflowed and undermined the walls, causing them to collapse
 - c. King Esarhaddon II, seeing his defenses broken, had himself and his family burnt alive in his palace to escape the wrath of his enemies.
 - d. The city fell in 612 B.C. as Nahum had predicted with remarkable detail.
7. Destruction so complete that Alexander the Great passed the sight in 331 B.C. and didn't know it
8. Was not discovered by archaeologists until 1840's

BOOK OF NAHUM

INTRODUCTION: 1:1

- A. The burden of Ninevah
 - 1. "burden"--literally heavy burden to be borne or lifted up
 - 2. Hence it came to mean lifting up the voice in pronouncing heavy judgment on a people
 - 3. usually introduced threat of judgment (Hab. 1:1; Zech. 9:1; Ezek. 12:10; Jer. 23:33; Isa. 23:1; 22:1; 21:1; see also Zech 12:1 for exception)
- B. Vision of Nahum the Elkoshite--Jehovah reveals in vision the destruction of Ninevah
- C. Critics have claimed one part of double title is interpolation, but which one?
 - 1. Without "burden of Ninevah" would not know audience until 2:18
 - 2. Without "vision of Nahum" would not know author at all

I. NINEVAH'S DESTRUCTION DECREED 1:2-15

- A. Jehovah will not leave Ninevah's crimes unpunished 1:2-6
 - 1. Verse 2--God is jealous, will tolerate no rival. He is angry and will take vengeance.
 - 2. Verse 3--He will not acquit the wicked. He will not "clear the guilty" (Ex. 34:6-7) He will take vengeance on Ninevah. He has waited because he is slow to anger, not because of weakness. His power will be as destructive as the whirlwind (tornado) and storm.
 - 3. Verses 4-5--Nature shows his power is strong enough to deal with Ninevah
 - 4. Verse 6--Considering God's power who can stand before his indignation? His fury is poured out like fire. (Duet. 4:24; Heb. 12:29)
- B. To be faithful to his own people, Jehovah must destroy Ninevah 1:7-12
 - 1. The Lord is good to those who trust in him, and powerful enough to protect them vs. 7
 - 2. Verse 8--But he will destroy his enemies with an overrunning flood. Flood may be flooding of Tigris River, or may be overflowing of Chaldeans "Darkness shall pursue his enemies"--will go into complete darkness of disappearance. (Zeph. 2:13ff) Assyrian inscription of defeated kings--"no one has seen any trace of him since"
 - 3. Verse 9--"What do ye imagine against the Lord?" You can't withstand him, he will utterly destroy you. He will not have to afflict you twice. Once will be enough.
 - 4. Verse 10--"entangled like thorns"--reference to impregnable thornhedge. They will be feeling secure and drunk on own greatness, but will be devoured as dry stubble.
 - 5. Verse 11-12--A wicked counsellor will come out of Assyria. He will say you are of full strength (quiet, KJV) and many in number. But the Lord will mow you down. He will not have to do it twice. Destruction will be complete
- C. Deliverance promised Judah, but punishment for Ninevah 1:13-15
 - 1. Verse 14--The Assyrians would be so completely destroyed that no more of their name would be sown. Their temples and idols would be destroyed. "I will make thy grave."--You are doomed to destruction. "For thou art vile"--You aren't great and honorable as men think you are. You are light (Literally) You are light in weight, as Belshazzar. (Dan. 5:27)
 - 2. Verses 13,15--Assyria's yoke will be removed from Judah, and this will result in good news for Judah. There is one coming on the mountains with the good news of Ninevah's fall. Judah is free and can keep the feasts and vows once again. Ninevah is destroyed and will never again be a threat to Judah.

II. NINEVAH'S DESTRUCTION DESCRIBED 2:1-13

A. Vivid picture of city's capture 2:1-7

1. Battle for the city 2:1-4

- a. Verse 1--The one who will dash you in pieces is come up before your face. He will not be afraid to confront you. He won't hide from you. This is a reference to Chaldean king and his armies that would destroy Ninevah. "Keep the munition"--keep the fortified city. Set your guards, make yourself strong. Prepare for the battle.
- b. Verse 2--You have destroyed Israel, but God is going to restore Israel and destroy you.
- c. Verse 3-4--Mighty and valiant men dressed in red (Chaldean army) are coming upon you. Chariots will be like flaming torches (lit. flashing steel) They will gleam in the sunlight. The "fir trees" (spears, footnote) will be brandished. Their chariots will rage in your streets. There will be so many of them they will jostle each other in your broadest streets. They will run quickly and swiftly through your streets.

2. Hopelessness of resistance 2:5-7

- a. Verse 5--The one who dashes in pieces will remember his worthies (nobles) They will be in such a hurry that they will stumble on their way to the wall of Ninevah. The defense shall be prepared. "Defonso" is a covering or shelter, usually built over a battering ram to protect the men operating the battering ram.
- b. Verse 6--The gates of the river shall be opened and palace dissolved. Could mean the flood of the Tigris River that destroyed part of the wall and allowed the Chaldeans to enter. Could mean that God would open the gates and allow the Chaldean armies to flood in. God is said to have opened the doors for Cyrus (Isa. 45:1-2)
- c. Verse 7--"Huzzab" is not a proper name. It means "it is established", that Ninevah, "mistress of the world" would be led away captive.

B. Desolation of the defeated city 2:8-13

1. Inhabitants flee and the city is plundered 2:8-10

- a. Verse 8--Although Ninevah's population is like a pool of water (great multitude), they will all flee away. The commanders will cry for them to stand and fight, but they will not even look back.
- b. Verse 9--Plunder the silver, gold, and furniture. There is no end of the spoil. There is plenty for everybody, and no one to stop you from taking it.
- c. Verse 10--City is left empty, void, and waste. Its inhabitants are characterized by extreme terror. Their hearts melt, their knees shake, their loins are in pain, and their faces are black. The footnote says their faces are "waxed pale". Ninevah has become a ghost town.

2. Destruction of the city is complete 2:11-13 (Zeph. 2:13-15)

- a. Verse 11--"Where is the place of the lion?" The lion was the national symbol of Assyria. Ninevah had once been the place where the lion had walked in great security and none made them afraid. Now the place could not even be found. Ninevah's destruction was so complete that its location was not identified for sure until 1840's.
- b. Verse 12--The lion had once made ample provisions for his family. Ninevah had once been able to plentifully provide for its citizens, but not anymore.
- c. Verse 13--Ninevah no longer dealing with power of men. They had conquered that, but now it is the Lord who is against them, and they are doomed. The Lord will destroy the young lions, the strength of Ninevah. They no longer will be able to prey upon the earth. Their messengers demanding tribute will no longer be heard in the world.

III. NINEVAH'S DESTRUCTION DEFENDED 3:1-19

A. Destruction brought upon self as retribution for crimes 3:1-7

1. Ninevah's sins 3:1-4

- a. Verse 1--Ninevah was a city characterized by bloodshed. It was a "bloody city" (Literally, "city of bloods"). It was full of dishonesty, and robbery (literally, "plunder"). They preyed on everyone.
- b. Verse 2-3--She had amassed a huge army and had been ruthless in her conquest of other nations. She had slaughtered so many people that there was "none end of their corpses". They literally stumbled over dead bodies.
- c. Verse 4--She had been guilty of spiritual adultery and whoredom. They were an idolatrous people, and yet they had knowledge of God. Johah had preached to them a century before. She was the "mistress of witchcrafts" that sold whole nations and families into slavery. As a "well-favored harlot", she appeared to be well blessed, but was doomed.

2. Jehovah will uncover her shame 3:5-7

- a. Verse 5--Ninevah had run roughshod over the nations, but had run into God, and now he was against them. He would "discover the skirts upon thy face" and expose her nakedness and shame to the world.
- b. Verse 6-7--The Lord would cast abominable filth upon her, that is he would cause her to be exposed the insults and ill-treatment of the rabble. She would be disgraced and hated by the nations of the world. The nations would flee from and actually rejoice over her fate. None would bemoan her destructions. She had shown no compassion on others, and now would receive none herself.

B. The fate of No is to be the fate of Ninevah 3:8-11

1. Verse 8-9--Ninevah should not place too much confidence in her own location and ability to defend herself. No had been just as difficult to defeat. She had been "situate among the rivers" (Nile and her canals nearly surrounded No or Thebes). Her ramparts and walls were the waters that surrounded her. She had allies among the Egyptians, Ethiopians, Put, and Lubim. These were some of the most powerful nations found in the world.
2. Verse 10-11--These defenses had proven useless for No. The Assyrians themselves had carried her away captive. They had dashed her young children at the top of the streets. (Note the cruelty of the Assyrians.) They had bound her nobles with chains and cast lots for them as slaves. Ninevah would now know how it felt to be on the receiving end of the cruelty. She would stagger as drunk and look for strength in the face of the enemy, but to no avail. She would be hid. It was over 2000 years before her location would be known for sure.

C. Resistance is vain: the city will fall 3:12-19

1. Fall of outlying strongholds 3:12-13

- a. Verse 12--The stronghold would fall at the first approach of the coming enemy. They would fall as readily as first-ripe figs. Figs were the first fruit to ripen in the spring and would be welcomed as a sign of coming fresh fruit. Ninevah's outposts would be welcomed by the enemy as the first of many fruits of war to be enjoyed.
- b. The weakness of the army would result in the defeat of Assyria. Her outposts would put up no more resistance than if they were women, thus opening the gates of the land to advancing Chaldean armies. There would be nothing stop them.

2. Siege and destruction of the city 3:12-19a

- a. Verse 14--Nahum sarcastically tells Ninevah to make preparation for the battle for the city. Actually Ninevah was to be subjected to a two year siege. So they were to lay up supplies for water. It was time to work on their fortifications. They were to lay hold of the brick-molds again. They would need bricks for their defenses. The bricks had been unnecessary for years while Ninevah was on the offensive but now she had to make provisions for defense.
- b. Verse 15--Ninevah could increase her army to match the number of locusts, but the fire would overtake her while she was working on bricks for her defenses. Strong fortifications and large armies would do her no good. The fire would devour her and the sword cut her off.
- c. Verse 16--Ninevah had multiplied the number of merchants that run her markets. Trade routes from all over the world converged at Ninevah. This made her a very wealthy city. But these merchants who appeared to be her friends would abandon her when she was in trouble. They would be of no value whatsoever.
- d. Verse 17--Ninevah's nobles and captains were large in number. They were as numerous as grasshoppers and locusts. This would indicate a large number of enlisted men. A huge army! But the captains and nobles would flee away until no one could find them.
- e. Verse 18--The shepherds of the king and the nobles would be killed in the battle ("slumber" and "dwell in the dust") and the inhabitants of the city would be scattered on the mountains. There would be none left to gather them in. Assyria would not exist as a nation any more.
- f. Verse 19a--Ninevah's wound would be grievous. There would be no healing of her bruise. Her destruction would be complete and final.

3. Universal exaltation over fall of Ninevah 3:19b

- a. All who heard the "bruit" (report) of Ninevah's destruction would rejoice and applaud.
- b. There would be none to sorrow over her destruction. She had been cruel to every nation she had come in contact with, and they would be glad of her destruction.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM NAHUM

1. There is a limit to the patience of God.
God had been patient with them in Jonah's day. But there repentance had been temporary. Now the day of his wrath is come. We must be careful not to exhaust the patience of God.
2. There is no stronghold secure from the vengeance of God.
Ninevah had considered herself invincible. But the Lord was against them. When we think we cannot fall, let us take heed. (1 Cor. 10:12)
3. God is in active control of the world.
A nation's strength does not lie in her military strength, but her righteousness. God can, and will, eventually bring down any nation that exalts itself against him.
4. Sinners cannot withstand the Lord's indignation. 1:6
We are sadly mistaken if we think we are strong enough to withstand the Lord's wrath.
5. Every generation needs to be thoroughly converted.
The religious revival of Jonah's day was too short lived. It was just a couple of generations later that they reverted to their old ways. We must never assume because we believe that our children do. They must be taught.

SUMMARY OF NAHUM

"Sovereign and omnipotent, God rules supreme in nature. The wicked--the enemies of God by their deeds--are allowed to continue because God is slow to anger. (1:3) In due time the vengeance of a jealous God will be released. Those who trust in him will be saved in the day of his wrath, but the enemy will be completely cut off. (1:7-8) (Samuel Schultz, The Old Testament Speaks, p. 405)

NAHUM

The Prophet of Consolation

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble;
and he knoweth them that trust in him. (Nahum 1:7)

The books of Jonah and Nahum should be read together. They both deal with the mighty city of Nineveh. In the order of the story presented, Jonah comes first, displaying Nineveh at its height of power, while Nahum pictures its fall.¹

His Home

Of the personal life of Nahum, practically nothing is known. In 1:1, he is called "the Elkoshite," that is, an inhabitant of Elkosh. Unfortunately, the location of this place is not known. One tradition, which cannot be traced beyond the 16th century A. D., identifies the home of Nahum with the modern village of Elkush, or Alkosh, not far from the left bank of the Tigris, two days' journey north of the site of ancient Nineveh. A second tradition, dating from Jerome in the latter part of the 4th century, locates Elkosh in Galilee. Others identify the home of the prophet with Capernaum (City of Nahum). A fourth tradition, which is found in a collection of traditions entitled "Lives of the Prophets," says "Nahum was from Elkosh, beyond Bet Gabre, of the tribe of Simeon." This would place him from the South which is more in harmony with the interest the prophet takes in the Southern Kingdom. However, no absolute certainty is attainable.²

His Date

Nahum's date is pretty clearly indicated by 3:8-10, which treats of the fall of No-amon, that is, Thebes in Upper Egypt, as already accomplished, and of the fall of Nineveh as shortly to take place. The former was captured by Assurbanipal in 663 B. C., and the latter by Nabopolassar in 606, or, as more recently discovered, 612 B. C. The Prophet's period would accordingly fall between these two limits.³ This is sufficiently definite, and there is practical unanimity concerning the date.⁴

Nineveh

The founding of the kingdom of Assyria dates from 1700 B. C. She became a powerful state, subdued nations and treated them cruelly. In matters of science and art these people were greatly inferior to the Babylonians; they did not have the creative instinct. Following the time of Jonah, having fallen into a weakened condition, her strength was revived.⁵ Nineveh was her capital. The city lay on the eastern side of the Tigris, opposite the modern town of Mosul. It was founded by Nimrod of Babylonia (Gen. 10:11), and was especially dedicated to Istar. It was the capital of Assyrian kings from 1100 B. C. to 880 B. C. and again after Sennacherib became king; being regarded as the chief city of the empire, as indeed it was.⁶ The city with its walls one hundred feet high and wide enough for three chariots to drive side by side on its top had remained unconquered for more than a century. Up to this time it had been impregnable.

It is said that outside this massive wall was a moat one hundred and forty feet wide and sixty feet deep, dominated by some twelve hundred defense towers.⁷ Such was Nineveh, the capital of the most powerful, sensual, ferocious, and diabolically atrocious race of men that perhaps ever existed in all the world. They were great besiegers of men; ever crying, "Siege, siege, siege!" Nahum declares the besiegers of the world will at last be besieged themselves (3:1ff.). Esarhaddon was Nineveh's last king. The Medes, with the Babylonians and the Scythians, first razed all the surrounding fortresses (3:12), and then beleaguered the city. The Ninevites proclaimed a fast of one hundred days to propitiate their gods; nevertheless the city fell. Ktesias described how the last night of the besieged city was spent in drunken orgies. To precipitate the catastrophe, the Tigris overflowed, breaking breaches in the walls...and the city was, of course, subsequently plundered of its rich spoil. Its destruction was made complete. All that remains today of the ancient city are those two great mounds. So complete were Nineveh's ruins that Xenophon scarcely recognized the site; Alexander the Great marched by, "not knowing that a world-empire was buried under his feet." Lucian wrote, "Nineveh is perished, and there is no trace left where once it was." The traveler Niebuhr, in 1766, passed over the site without knowing it. Only since Austen Henry Layard and Paul Emile Botta identified the site in 1842, has the city begun to be recognized by the modern world.⁸

At the time of the utterance of the prophecy, the Northern Kingdom had been destroyed, and the ten tribes dispersed. The prophet's message was to Judah. The Assyrian power was at its very height, and the descriptions given of it reveal its arrogance and habitual oppression of others. Nahum was not sent to Nineveh, as Jonah was. The time of such opportunity for her was forever passed. The message of Nahum was that of the full end determined.⁹

Nahum's Message

The purpose of the book was to pronounce Divine Vengeance upon the bloody city, and to console Judah with promises of future deliverance.¹⁰ This proud and cruel city had been involved in the sufferings of multitudes of people. She was to be repaid for all her sins. The judgment of God was come upon her.

Nahum means "compassion." His hatred for the cruel Assyrians can be detected in almost every sentence of his book. A holy and just God could not let this city live. Nahum's righteous indignation flashes like lightning in poetic utterances. God's wrath and vengeance are not to be thought of as the petty blunderings of men. When God is angry it is because of principle and not caprice. This city, guilty of cruelty, harlotry, brutality, oppression and rebellion against God, must reap the awful consequences. Nineveh mocked God and died.¹¹

Nahum's message sets in a clear light Jehovah's sway over the whole universe, and emphasizes the duty of nations as well as individuals to own His sway and obey His will. Disobedience

to His purpose and disregard of His rule will surely bring calamity and distress. "Assyria in His hands," says Kennedy, "becomes an object-lesson to the empires of the modern world, teaching, as an eternal principle of the Divine government of the world, the absolute necessity, for a nation's continued vitality, of that righteousness, personal, civic, and national, which alone exalteth a nation."¹²

Morgan divides Nahum's message into three sections: (1) the Verdict of Vengeance; (2) the Vision of Vengeance, and (3) the Vindication of Vengeance. In the first section the prophet preceded the announcement of the verdict by a section dealing wholly with Jehovah Himself. In this, we find, first, a declaration of His character, then a revelation of His majesty, and finally an affirmation of His method. As to His character, He is a God of vengeance and yet the central fact of His nature is that He is slow to anger. In the second section, having thus announced the verdict the prophet proceeded to describe the process of vengeance. He declared that the "hammer" had come up against Nineveh, and ironically advised her to prepare. He then gave in detail the process of Nineveh's destruction. I suggest that it falls into three clearly defined parts. First the conflict (3-5); secondly the conquest (6-9); finally the consumation (10). As a result of the vision of vengeance Nineveh "is empty, and void, and waste." "The heart melteth, the knees smite together." The last movement of the prophecy is devoted wholly to the vindication of Jehovah in His action with regard to Nineveh. Nineveh had re-

pent under the preaching of Jonah and had been restored, but having returned to her sins the day of repentance was passed, and doom was determined. Jehovah is slow to anger, but He can by no means clear the guilty.¹³

His Lessons For Us

Nineveh is a type of all nations that turn their backs on God. In our day, proud civilizations are staking everything upon the strength of manpower and machines and there is a terrible disregard of God. We find that Nineveh was overthrown because of her sin (Nahum 3:1-7), and that her great wealth and strength was not sufficient to save her. Oftentimes nations depend upon might and power to survive. They forget that it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit," said the Lord of hosts (Zach. 4:6). The person or nation that deliberately and finally rejects God, deliberately and finally and fatally elects doom.¹⁴

Three important lessons, implicitly taught by Nahum, stand out as abiding: (1) the universality of God's government; (2) its retributive character; and (3) its subordination to his scheme of grace. Such lessons can never become obsolete. He shows plainly that Nineveh's destruction is not an act of capricious sovereignty, but the just reward of her iniquities. It is not Israel's pride that is at stake but God's honor; and it is not even the redemption of his people that is primary, but the vindication of their God. In other words, the great lesson of the book is that the mills of God grind "exceedingly small"; and that for nations as well as for individuals, "sin when it

is full-grown bringeth forth death." The joy of Nahum is not merely the human exultation of an angry patriot over a fallen foe, but rather the glad cry of an assured faith in the God of the fathers.¹⁵

Nineveh Is Doomed

OVER A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER JONAH

*PREACHED TO NINEVEH, GOD SENT ANOTHER
PROPHET, NAHUM, TO PRONOUNCE ITS DOOM.*

The book of Nahum demonstrates how false is the view that "might makes right." The great Assyrian Empire, of which Nineveh was the capital, boasted its might and wealth, but it did not acknowledge its sin, nor would it listen to God. The fall of such a haughty nation was inevitable, as we shall see in our studies of this lesson.

I. PREPARATION FOR STUDY

1. Review Chart A, noting especially when Jonah and Nahum ministered as prophets. Jonah was a prophet of Israel whom God sent to preach to Nineveh. Nahum was a prophet of Judah, whose ministry also involved Nineveh.
2. Read Jonah 1:1-2 and 3:1-10. What was Jonah's message, the people's reaction, and God's response? Was a specific destruction of Nineveh foretold?
3. "So the people of Nineveh believed God" (Jon 3:5). In about how many years would this generation of believers have been replaced by the succeeding generation?
4. Read Nahum 1:1. What does this introductory verse suggest as to what Nahum's message is about? Now scan the remainder of the book to get the feel of the prophet's burden.
5. Note: Because of its length, this lesson should be studied in short sections. Three suggested units are: (1) background, (2) survey, (3) analysis.

II. BACKGROUND OF THE BOOK OF NAHUM

Now let us focus our attention on the original setting of Nahum's book. This will help to illumine our study of the text later in the lesson.

A. The Man Nahum

Very little is known of the personal life of Nahum. His name does not appear at any other place in the Bible (unless he is the Naum of Lk 3:25).

1. NAME

The name "Nahum," which is a shortened form of Nehe-miah, means "consolation" or "comforter."

2. HOME

According to 1:1, Nahum was from a town called Elkosh. Four possible locations of Elkosh have been suggested: (1) in Assyria, north of Nineveh; (2) southwest of Jerusalem; (3) somewhere in Galilee; (4) the site of Capernaum (Caper-naum). Wherever Nahum's home was, we should keep in mind that when he was born¹ the Assyrian armies had already invaded Palestine twice:

722 B.C.—conquest of the Northern Kingdom (Israel)
by Sargon II (2 Ki 17:6)

701 B.C.—invasions against Judah by Sennacherib
(2 Ki 18:13-18)

3. TIME

Chart N shows the contemporary leaders of Nahum's day. Refer to it as you answer the questions below.

- a) During Nahum's ministry three kings ruled over Judah. Who were they? Whose was the righteous reign? (See Chart D.)
- b) Which was the ruling world empire of Nahum's time?
- c) Which Assyrian king was reigning during the earliest years of Nahum's ministry?
- d) When did Nineveh fall? What empire succeeded Assyria as the world power?
- e) What other prophets were ministering around the time of Nahum?

1. The year of Nahum's birth is unknown, but he was probably younger than 50 when he began his prophetic ministry.

4. KINGS AND CITIES

A few things should be noted concerning some rulers and cities directly related to the book of Nahum.

a) King Ashurbanipal. He was the last of the famous kings of Assyria. After his death (633 B.C.) the power of Assyria faded away. Ashurbanipal was exceptionally cruel. Skinning captives alive, forcing a prince to wear around his neck the bloody head of his king, and feasting with the head of a Chaldean monarch hanging above him, are examples of the gruesome stories about this tyrant.

b) King Josiah. Josiah reigned over Judah in the fear of the Lord. Read 2 Kings 22:1—23:28. Nahum may have written his book during Josiah's reign.

c) Nineveh. This was the capital of Assyria. It was founded around 2000 B.C. During Nahum's ministry it was at a peak of wealth, power, and fame. (Read 3:16-17.) The city walls were considered to be impregnable, yet Nahum prophesied their fall (e.g., 2:5-6). In 612 B.C. Nineveh was conquered and demolished by the Babylonians, Medes, and Scythians. The city has remained through all the centuries as a heap of desolate ruin.

d) Thebes. Thebes is the Greek name for the Egyptian city of No (Hebrew). (See 3:8.) The capital of Egypt, it was conquered by the Assyrians in 663 B.C. Nahum refers to this conquest in 3:10.

B. The Book of Nahum

1. DATE

Nahum wrote his book some time after 663 and before 612 B.C. This dating is based on his *reporting* of the fall of Thebes (3:10), which had already taken place (663 B.C.), and on his *foretelling* the fall of Nineveh (e.g., 2:8-10), which was still future (612 B.C.). Chart N shows Nahum's public ministry extending from about 650 to 620 B.C.

2. THEME AND PURPOSE

The theme of Nahum may be stated thus: 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 which the opening sentence (1:1) introduces. It is also addressed mainly to

Nineveh. It is the sequel to the book of Jonah. Do you think God would have withheld judgment of Nineveh if the people had repented of their sins, as their forefathers had responded to Jonah's message?

Nahum also wrote for the benefit of the people of Judah. He clearly answered questions raised by his brethren, such as:

Why does cruel Nineveh prosper?

Has God abandoned Judah?

Where is justice?

Do these questions have their counterparts in the world today?

III. SURVEY OF THE BOOK OF NAHUM

Chart O shows how the theme of Nahum progresses from its opening verse to the concluding one. Read through the entire book of Nahum, not slowly, referring to the chart as you read. You may want to record the outlines in your Bible before you do this scanning.

Note the following on Chart O:

1. There is a natural progression in the book. (See bottom of the chart. Also note the progression in the three sections, beginning with NINEVEH TO FALL.)
2. How is the first paragraph (1:1-8) set off from the rest of the book?
3. Study the four outlines which divide the book into two main sections.
4. How is Judah brought into the book?
5. Add to the list of key words as you proceed with your analysis of the text.

IV. ANALYSIS

Segments to be analyzed: 1:2-8; 1:9—2:2; 2:3-13; 3:1-19

Paragraph divisions: at verses 1:2, 9, 12b, 14, 15; 2:1, 3, 8; 3:1, 8, 15b.

"Burden". a heavy load to be lifted up, i.e.,
to lift up the voice in proclamation denouncing
the sins of a people by pronouncing judgment

Introduction - (1)
Fierce Wrath of God - (2-8)
Affliction from Assyria will
not rise again (9-13)

Nahum 1:1

An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of
Nahum the Elkoshite.

Nahum 1:2 stems from His own honor - not supplanted by another in the affection of His people
The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD takes
vengeance and is filled with wrath. The LORD takes
vengeance on his foes and maintains his wrath against his
enemies. not only jealous of His people, but for His people, also (executes judgment)
not "getting even" but vindicated by a just judgment

verses 2-6
one side of God
verse 7
other side of God

Nahum 1:3 not an indication of weakness - does not act impulsively
The LORD is slow to anger and great in power; the LORD
will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the will not clear, nor excuse, the guilty
whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet. - boiling up as He strides
expressed God's power - will sweep away as does the storm

Nahum 1:4

He rebukes the sea and dries it up; he makes all the rivers - His power revealed in nature
run dry. Bashan and Carmel wither and the blossoms of
Lebanon fade. East of sea of Galilee → W. toward sea of Mediterranean
north of Galilee

Nahum 1:5 symbols of strength/endurance
The mountains quake before him and the hills melt away. like wax - His power revealed in
The earth trembles at his presence, the world and all who everything - all tremble at His presence!
live in it.

Nahum 1:6 if all are in His control
Who can withstand his indignation? Who can endure his
fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are
shattered before him. Lava - cannot be stopped

Even Assyria would be helpless!

Nahum 1:7

The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares
for those who trust in him, love + protective care

→ An impregnable stronghold to those
who flee to Him
His power is as great to protect as it is to
destroy

Nahum 1:8 River in flood
but with an overwhelming flood he will make an end of
Nineveh; he will pursue his foes into darkness. - complete destruction / complete disappearance

Nahum 1:9

Whatever they plot against the LORD he will bring to an
end; trouble will not come a second time.

probably addressed to both
Judah + Assyria

Nahum 1:10 Assyria thought to be impregnable

They will be entangled among thorns and drunk from their wine; they will be consumed like dry stubble. *→ self confidence of power and pride*
God will light the fire, and they will go up in smoke!

Nahum 1:11

From you, *O Nineveh*, has one come forth who plots evil against the LORD and counsels wickedness.

not certain who this is - could be speaking of the spirit and power and purpose of Assyria toward God

Nahum 1:12

This is what the LORD says: "Although they have allies and are numerous, they will be cut off and pass away. Although I have afflicted you, *O Judah*, I will afflict you no more.

God had used Assyria to afflict Judah (Is 10:5-21)

But Judah will not suffer that affliction again

Nahum 1:13

Now I will break their yoke from your neck and tear your shackles away."

Addressed to Judah

Nahum 1:14

The LORD has given a command concerning you, *Nineveh*: "You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the carved images and cast idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are vile." *(light in weight - Ps 62:9)*

Directed toward Nineveh

completely bury - pass into oblivion

Nahum 1:15

Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, *O Judah*, and fulfill your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed.

*Assyria's Doom is determined
A messenger is on his way bringing good tidings to Judah
(14, 15)*

ISAIAH 40⁹ 52⁷

The Gods of Assyria -

Ashur

Nabu

Anu

Adad

Ishtar (goddess)

"Praise God for His infinite power, and for the providence by which He exercises it!"

The Destroyer is on
His way (6-7)

Nineveh prepares, but to
no avail

nebuchadnezzar (Babylon)
Medes

Nahum 2:1 "one who shatters by dashing in pieces & scattering"
An attacker advances against you, Nineveh. Guard the
fortress, watch the road, brace yourselves, marshal all your
strength!

MAKE FULL and complete
preparation

Nahum 2:2 honor, self-respect, glory → natural name
The LORD will restore the splendor of Jacob like the
splendor of Israel, though destroyers have laid them waste
and have ruined their vines. ↓ divine name

Nahum 2:3 Copper overlay; leather painted
The shields of his soldiers are red; the warriors are clad in - the Chaldeans
scarlet. The metal on the chariots flashes on the day they are - steel armor
made ready; the spears of pine are brandished. - polished; flashing in the sunlight

Nahum 2:4
The chariots storm through the streets, rushing back and - air of madness
forth through the squares. They look like flaming torches;
they dart about like lightning.

Nahum 2:5 → Nineveh Panic stricken; weakened by terror
He summons his picked troops, yet they stumble on their
way. They dash to the city wall; the protective shield is put - small towers
in place.

Nahum 2:6
The river gates are thrown open and the palace collapses. all efforts at defense are vain
God will open the gates - overflowing army

Nahum 2:7
It is decreed that the city be exiled and carried away. Its plaintive wail; deep anguish & sorrow
slave girls moan like doves and beat upon their breasts.

Nahum 2:8 central gathering spot crumble & dry rot
Nineveh is like a pool, and its water is draining away. "Stop!
Stop!" they cry, but no one turns back. fleeing in desperation

(vs 8-13)
when the city falls, the people flee -
a new experience is theirs!
Destruction

Nahum 2:9
Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold! The supply is endless,
the wealth from all its treasures! Description by ancient writers
borders on the fabulous

Nahum 2:10 utter desolation & destruction
She is pillaged, plundered, stripped! Hearts melt, knees give
way, bodies tremble, every face grows pale.

That which she inflicted
is now their lot

utter despair & terror of the moment

Nahum 2:11

*lion's disposition to
tear & crush*

Where now is the lions' den, the place where they fed their young, where the lion and lioness went, and the cubs, with nothing to fear?

Nahum 2:12

The lion killed enough for his cubs and strangled the prey for his mate, filling his lairs with the kill and his dens with the prey.

*that which had been torn
from others (booty)*

Nahum 2:13

"I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will burn up your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your young lions. I will leave you no prey on the earth. The voices of your messengers will no longer be heard."

Their end is determined by God

no more emissaries sent to command

Nahum 3:1 → "Miserable and sorrowful fate" → more, further wickedness → tearing in pieces
Woe to the city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims! → stained in blood

Nahum 3:2

The crack of whips, the clatter of wheels, galloping horses and jolting chariots!

Verses 2-7

one of the most moving descriptions of the fierceness of battle to be found

Nahum 3:3

Charging cavalry, flashing swords and glittering spears!
Many casualties, piles of dead, bodies without number, people stumbling over the corpses--

Nahum 3:4

all because of the wanton lust of a harlot, alluring, the mistress of sorceries, who enslaved nations by her prostitution and peoples by her witchcraft.

proper place of the blame

enticed - seduced - destruction
Pr 7", 27

Nahum 3:5

"I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will lift your skirts over your face. I will show the nations your nakedness and the kingdoms your shame.

to expose their nakedness

"you are no longer dealing with nations - BUT with God!"

Nahum 3:6

I will pelt you with filth, I will treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle.

set as a gazing stock

Nahum 3:7

All who see you will flee from you and say, 'Nineveh is in ruins--who will mourn for her?' Where can I find anyone to comfort you?"

laid waste for over
2,000 years

Nahum 3:8

"No-amon"

Are you better than Thebes, situated on the Nile, with water around her? The river was her defense, the waters her wall.

vs 8-11

The fate of No-amon is to be the fate of Nineveh

Nahum 3:9 → Ethiopia

uncertain

Libian

Cush and Egypt were her boundless strength; Put and Libya were among her allies.

Nahum 3:10

Yet she was taken captive and went into exile. Her infants were dashed to pieces at the head of every street. Lots were cast for her nobles, and all her great men were put in chains.

*in spite of infinite +
unlimited strength*

Ashurbanipal

Nahum 3:11 *fallen like a drunken man*

You too will become drunk; you will go into hiding and seek refuge from the enemy.

*intoxicated on pride, self-confidence
and strength*

Nahum 3:12

All your fortresses are like fig trees with their first ripe fruit; when they are shaken, the figs fall into the mouth of the eater.

vs 12-18

*Nineveh's resources
are unable to save
the city*

Nahum 3:13

Look at your troops-- they are all women! The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has consumed their bars.

*The reason for the
rapid fall - weakness of
the people*

Nahum 3:14

Draw water for the siege, strengthen your defenses! Work the clay, tread the mortar, repair the brickwork!

Nahum 3:15

There the fire will devour you; the sword will cut you down and, like grasshoppers, consume you. Multiply like grasshoppers, multiply like locusts!

*complete -
all will be in vain*

Nahum 3:16

You have increased the number of your merchants till they are more than the stars of the sky, but like locusts they strip the land and then fly away.

Nahum 3:17

Your guards are like locusts, your officials like swarms of locusts that settle in the walls on a cold day-- but when the sun appears they fly away, and no one knows where.

Nahum 3:18

O king of Assyria, your shepherds slumber; your nobles lie down to rest. Your people are scattered on the mountains with no one to gather them.

Nahum 3:19

Nothing can heal your wound; your injury is fatal. Everyone
who hears the news about you claps his hands at your fall,
for who has not felt your endless cruelty?

What a way to go!

*Clapping - over the vindication
of righteousness*

"At last!"

