

Snapshot of Nahum

The Prophet:

The name Nahum means “consolation” or “comfort.”

Nahum was from the city of Elkosh, whose location is unknown to us today.

Other than these two facts, very little, if any more is known about Nahum.

The Date:

We are able to date the ministry of Nahum from two events referred to in his book. Thebes (or No-Amon) had already fallen when he prophesied (3:8). The fall of Nineveh was yet to come (2:13; 3:5-7,15). The fall of Thebes occurred in 661 B.C. and the fall of Nineveh was in 612 B.C. So Nahum’s ministry must be between 661 and 612 B.C. He was a contemporary of Zephaniah, Habakkuk, and Jeremiah.

The Message:

About 150 years earlier Jonah had preached to the city of Nineveh and his preaching brought about repentance. When Nahum comes on the scene, Assyria is back to her old sins.

The book of Jonah demonstrates the mercy of God, Nahum demonstrates His vengeance upon the impenitent (1:2). In spite of His longsuffering and goodness, He will not tolerate sin indefinitely (1:3).

The Book:

Chapter one presents Jehovah as a jealous and avenging God who punishes evil.

Chapter two pictures the sending of a powerful army against Nineveh.

Chapter three informs men that Nineveh has brought this terrible fate upon herself.

Outline of Nahum

- I. The God of Vengeance (1:1-8)
 - A. The prophet and his theme (1:1)
 - B. God's wrath against sin (1:2-6)
 - C. God's mercy to the faithful (1:7)
 - D. God's pursuit of his enemies (1:8)
- II. Nineveh's Distress (1:9-2:13)
 - A. Her overthrow to be complete (1:9-15)
 - B. A prophetic vision of the coming siege (2:1-7)
 - 1. Preparation for battle (2:1-4)
 - 2. The futility of it all (2:5-7)
 - C. The plundering of the city (2:8-13)
 - 1. The confused flight of the people (2:8-10)
 - 2. The completeness of destruction (2:11-13)
- III. Reasons For Nineveh's Doom (3:1-19)
 - A. Her sins (3:1-7)
 - 1. Description of the battle (3:1-3)
 - 2. The cause of doom specified (3:4)
 - 3. Her shame uncovered by God (3:5-7)
 - B. The impossibility of her survival (3:8-19)
 - 1. Nineveh to share the fate of Thebes (2:8-11)
 - 2. Her resources will not avail to save her (3:12-19)

Lessons for Today:

- 1. Humility and penitence must be cultivated by every new generation.
- 2. God is a stronghold in the time of trouble (Nahum 1:7).
- 3. God's patience has its limits.