***“Studying the Gentile Prophets”—Nahum 1-3***

***Nahum 1 - Coming Judgment on Nineveh, the Comfort to Judah***



**THE BOOK OF NAHUM (means, “Consolation or Comfort”) IS A BOOK ABOUT THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD and it highlights the character of the God who brings judgment. Nahum comes along one century after Jonah; they both preach to the same area, the capital of the Assyrian empire, Nineveh. Both Jonah and Nahum came from Galilee, and both preach to Nineveh. THIS BOOK IS “AN ECHO OF JONAH.” The judgment on Nineveh is comfort to Israel, and a testimony to the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD! We don’t know exactly when Nahum gave this prophecy. He mentions the destruction of the Egyptian city *No Amon* (Thebes) in** [**Nahum 3:8**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Nahum+3:8&t1=en_nas) **and Thebes fell to the Assyrians in 663 b.c., so Nahum must have been written after that. Nineveh was destroyed 50 years after No Amon (612 b.c.). It is likely that Nahum was written during the *height* of Nineveh’s power. Nahum was concerned with Nineveh, and was delivered almost certainly when she was at the height of her power.**

**The following were the Kings of Assyria: 1.Shalmanessar III (859-824 B.C.)—he received tributes from Jehu, King of Judah; 2. Ashur-dan III (772-754 B.C.)—was king when Jonah preached to Nineveh; Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.)—Azariah, king of Judah, paid tribute to him, Menahem, king of Israel, did the same, and Ahaz was made a vassal king under him; Shalmaneser V (727-722 B.C.)—defeated the Northern Kingdom, Samaria, in 722 B.C. and ELIMINATES THE NORTHERN KINGDOM FOREVER; Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.)—stopped short of n Jerusalem when 185,000 Assyrians were destroyed overnight by Jesus.**

**2 Kings 19:35-37, “**And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+19&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-10097b)] of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. 36So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned *home,* and remained at Nineveh. 37Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.” ***This book was written in Jerusalem, soon after 709 B.C., Nahum would have witnessed the invasion of Sennacherib and the destruction of his army. THE SUBJECT OF THIS PROPHECY IS THE APPROACHING COMPLETE AND FINAL DESTRUCTION OF NINEVEH. Nahum saw this prophecy approximately 40 years before it really happened!***

**Chronological Summary:**

**903 B.C. Rise of Nineveh**

**759 B.C. The Warning of Jonah**

**722 B.C. The Destruction of the Northern Kingdom**

**709 B.C. The Invasion of Sennacherib, the 185,000 killed**

**663 B.C. The Prophecy of Nahum**

**625 B.C. The Destruction of Assyria**

**Nahum 1:2-11 is often called an unfinished “acrostic poem.”**

**Nahum 1:1, “The burden against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.”**

1. **What is “a burden?”** The burden: In the prophets, a burden is a heavy message of weighty importance, heavy in the sense that it produces sorrow or grief. *Massa* comes from the verb to lift up (*nasa*), and so it can mean to carry or to lift up the voice. From the first meaning comes the translation burden, or load; and from the second meaning we get the translation oracle, or utterance. (Wolf, in his commentary on Isaiah) Grammatically, we may be able to say oracle, but since these are *heavy* oracles, we are justified in calling them *burdens*. *Massa* not only signifies a *burden*, but also a thing *lifted up*, *pronounced*, or *proclaimed*; also a *message*. It is used by the prophets to signify the *revelation* which they have received from God to deliver to any particular people.
	1. **Compare this prophecy against Nineveh with Zechariah 2:8-9, “**For thus says the Lord of hosts: “He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. 9For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me.”
2. **Where is Nineveh?** Against Nineveh: The capital of the Assyrian Empire was Nineveh, the city that heard the preaching of Jonah a hundred years before and repented. Nahum will address a city that has slipped back into sin, and is again ripe for judgment.
	1. **Who founded Nineveh? See Genesis 10:8-12, *“Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord.” 10And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, 12and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city).”*** Nineveh was an ancient, famous city. It was founded by the first world dictator, Nimrod ([Genesis 10:11](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+10:11&t1=en_nas)) From Nineveh’s walls, temples, palaces, inscriptions, and reliefs, mute yet elaborate witness is given to a city that flourished up to its destruction in 612 b.c.
3. **How does Nahum’s message prove that God deals with nations as well as individuals?** Among other things, the Prophecy of Nahum shows us that God not only deals with individuals as individuals, He also deals with nations as nations. This is the prophecy which sets forth, more clearly than any other, the truth concerning the wrath of God, in its national application. Nations will be held to account by God.
4. **What is “The book of the vision?”** This was more than a message communicated to Nahum in words or phrases from God. Because this is a vision, in some way Nahum *saw* it. When we see the vivid, descriptive way Nahum writes we understand that the book records what he saw in his vision.
	1. **Compare with what Isa**[**iah 2:1**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+2:1&t1=en_nas) **says: “*The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem***.” Isaiah *saw* a *word*, and in some sense Nahum also did.
5. **Who was Nahum the Elkoshite? We don’t know anything else about Nahum or the city of Elkosh. The name Nahum is an abbreviated form of the name *Nehemiah*, which means Comfort of Yahweh.**
	1. **Was Elkosh in the region of Galilee?**
		1. **Discuss “Capernaum” in** [**Matthew 4:13**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+4:13&t1=en_nas)**,** [**Mark 9:33**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Mark+9:33&t1=en_nas)**,** [**John 2:12**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=John+2:12&t1=en_nas)**.** It was named after Nahum (*Kephar-Nahum*, City of Nahum).

**Nahum 1:2-8, “God *is* jealous, and the Lord avenges; the Lord avenges and *is* furious. The Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves *wrath* for His enemies; the Lord *is* slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked.* The Lord has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds *are* the dust of His feet. He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, and dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither, and the flower of Lebanon wilts. The mountains quake before Him, the hills melt, and the earth heaves at His presence, yes, the world and all who dwell in it. Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him. The Lord *is* good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him. But with an overflowing flood He will make an utter end of its place, and darkness will pursue His enemies.”**

1. **Elaborate on the Lord’s jealousy.** God’s jealousy is love in action. He refuses to share the human heart with any rival, not because He is selfish and wants us all for Himself, but because He knows that upon that loyalty to Him depends our very moral life . . . God is not jealous *of* us: He is jealous *for* us.
2. **Compare this section with the doom in Revelation**
3. **Why does Nahum begin his prophecy by considering the *character* of the God who brings judgment? Consider these:**
	1. **The Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries: Man needs to understand that he can’t fight against God and hope to prevail. Everyone who sets themselves against God will end up receiving His vengeance.**
	2. **The Lord is slow to anger: God is far more patient than man. Though there is a time and place where He does display His anger, it doesn’t come quickly or capriciously. Gods sword of justice is in its scabbard: not rusted in it - it can be easily withdrawn - but held there by that hand that presses it back into its sheath, crying, Sleep, O sword, sleep; for I will have mercy upon sinners, and will forgive their transgressions. (Spurgeon)**
	3. **And great in power: Knowing Gods power should make us *trust* in His help (because He is able to help) and to *fear* His judgment (knowing that He judges with power).**
	4. **Will not at all acquit the wicked: God is not like an unjust judge who simply lets the guilty go out of a false sense of compassion. We can’t just figure that God will say, let’s let bygones be bygones when we get to heaven. Sin must be accounted for, because He will not acquit the wicked. Every sin will be paid for - either in hell or at the cross - but God will not acquit the wicked. Never once has he pardoned an unpunished sin; not in all the years of the Most High, not in all the days of his right hand, has he once blotted out sin without punishment. (Spurgeon)**
	5. **The Lord has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm: Gods power is so great that it controls the mightiest forces known to man. A huge whirlwind or storm is nothing to God, because He has His way in them.**
	6. **His fury is poured out like fire: When God is resisted long enough and rejected strongly enough, eventually His judgment comes. He is slow to anger, but when it does come His fury is poured out like fire. Understanding this should make man quick to repent and wary of presuming on Gods patience.**
	7. **The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble: Those who love Him and trust Him see the goodness of God, and find protection in His stronghold - which is the Lord Himself. Remember that it is only a *day;* it is not a week, nor a month, and God will not permit the devil to add an extra hour to that day; it is a day *of* trouble. There is an end to all our griefs. (Spurgeon)**
	8. **He knows those who trust in Him: Not only does He know them in the sense of identification, but also in the sense of *relationship*. Trust implies relationship, and God knows those who trust in Him. Once more, dear friends, this word know here means *loving communion* . . . God knows us; he knows our prayers and tears, he knows our wishes, he knows that we are not what we want to be, but he knows what we do desire to be. He knows our aspirations, our sighs, our groans, our secret longings, our own chastenings of spirit when we fail; he has entered into it all. He says, Yes, dear child, I know all about you; I have been with you when you thought you were alone. I have read what you could not read, the secrets of your own heart that you could not decipher I have known them all, and I still know them. (Spurgeon)**
4. **How important is it to know that the Lord is good!**
5. **Define the phrase, “With an overflowing flood He will make an utter end of its place.”** Taking into account the character of God, though His slow to anger and good, He cannot forever overlook the sin and rebellion of the Assyrians. Their end in judgment will come like an overflowing flood. The overflowing flood was fulfilled both figuratively and literally. According to secular accounts, during the final siege of Nineveh by a rebel army of Persians, Medes, Arabians, and Babylonians, unusually heavy rains caused the rivers to flood and to undermine the citys walls, which then collapsed . . . the invading armies entered the city through this breach in its defenses.

**Nahum 1:9-11, “What do you conspire against the Lord? He will make an utter end *of it.* Affliction will not rise up a second time. For while tangled *like* thorns, and while drunken *like* drunkards, they shall be devoured like stubble fully dried. From you comes forth *one* who plots evil against the Lord, a wicked counselor.”**

1. **Is Nineveh really destroyed?** He will make an utter end of it: Nineveh was ripe for a devastating judgment. This was not a harsh chastening; this was utter destruction to come upon the city. The promise Affliction will not rise up a second time sounds encouraging, until we realize that it will not rise up a second time because the judgment will be so severe the *first time*.
2. **Talk about the reference to drunkards.**
3. **Elaborate on “stubble fully dried.”** The dry leftover stalks of grass are ready to be devoured by the smallest flame. This is how ripe Nineveh is for judgment, and how complete the fire of judgment will be when it comes.
4. **Who is the “wicked counselor?” Sennacherib. “A counselor of Belial.”**
	1. **See 2 Kings 18-29, 2 Chronicles 32, and Isaiah 36-37.**

**Nahum 1:12-13, “Thus says the Lord: Though *they are* safe, and likewise many, yet in this manner they will be cut down when he passes through. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more; for now I will break off his yoke from you, and burst your bonds apart.”**

1. **Who are the enemies of Zion? looked mighty; they were safe and many. Yet they will be devastated by the judgment that the Lord promised.**
	1. **Re-visit the atrocities of the Assyrians to Israel.**
	2. **Is God promising hope to His people? Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more: Gods people looked weak and afflicted; yet God promises that they will be strengthened and restored. The power of their oppressors will be broken (I will break off his yoke from you).**

**Nahum 1:14, “The Lord has given a command concerning you: Your name shall be perpetuated no longer. Out of the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the molded image. I will dig your grave, for you are vile.”**

1. **What will be the ultimate outcome for Nineveh? Your name shall be perpetuated no longer:** The city of Nineveh was once instantly recognized as one of the great power cities of the world. God promises to bring this wicked city so low that they lose their legacy and name among the nations.
2. **Re-state the vivid imagery of verse 14: “I will dig your grave, for you are vile.”** In this vivid - almost extreme - imagery, God warns Nineveh of its coming judgment and destruction.

**Nahum 1:15, “Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace! O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, perform your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; he is utterly cut off.”**

1. **Contrast the outcome for Nineveh for that of Judah.** Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace! The contrast between the fate of the godly and wicked is nothing but *good news* to Nahum and the people of God.
	1. **See** [**Isaiah 52:7**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+52:7&t1=en_nas)**, which uses a similar expression.** but Isaiah marvels at the *beauty* of the *feet of him who brings good news*. Nahum would certainly agree, because those who bring good tidings have beautiful feet; they partner with God for the salvation of men. The feet speak of activity, motion, and progress, and those who are active and moving in the work of preaching the gospel have *beautiful* feet.
		1. **Contrast the two “good news” passages.** In Isaiah, the good news is the coming of the Messiah. In Nahum, the good news is the defeat of the enemies of Gods people.
		2. **Use also Revelation 17 and 18, which describe the fall of Babylon, representing the world system and all of its support structure.** [**Revelation 18:9-19**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+18:9-19&t1=en_nas) **shows how the kings and merchants of the earth mourned the fall of Babylon, but** [**Revelation 18:20**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+18:20&t1=en_nas) **through**
			1. **See Revelation 19:6, which shows how heaven rejoiced over the fall of the world system.** What was mourned on earth was applauded in heaven, and the same principle applies in Nahum’s prophecy of Nineveh’s fall.
2. **Parallel verse 15, “feet of him,” with Isaiah 52:7 and Romans 10:13-15.**
3. **Re-iterate the final instruction to Judah**. O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, perform your vows: Knowing the grace and mercy of God to His people should not make the believer *careless* in obedience, it should make the believer more careful to obey every word of the Lord**.**

## Nahum 2—The Judgment on Nineveh

***\*\*\*This chapter is a masterpiece of ancient literature, unsurpassed for its graphic portrayal of a military assault.***

**Nahum 2:1-2, “He who scatters has come up before your face. Man the fort! Watch the road! Strengthen *your* flanks! Fortify *your* power mightily. For the Lord will restore the excellence of Jacob like the excellence of Israel, for the emptiers have emptied them out and ruined their vine branches.”**

1. **Elaborate on the warning of God’s impending battle with Nineveh. He who scatters: In his vision (**[**Nahum 1:1**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Nahum+1:1&t1=en_nas)**),**
2. **Does the prophet see a mighty army coming against Nineveh?**
3. **How does this destruction restore God’s people?** In 612 B.C., Nabopolassar and Cyaxares, and their joint-Medo/Babylonian forces destroy Nineveh.
	1. **Who are the “emptiers?” The Assyrian Spoilers. See Hosea 10:1, “**Israel empties *his* vine; He brings forth fruit for himself. According to the multitude of his fruit He has increased the altars; According to the bounty of his land.
	They have embellished *his sacred* pillars.” PUNISHMENT OF ISRAEL.
	2. **Review: “the emptiers, i.e. plunderers,” and note this figure is the common one of the vine; compare** [**Jeremiah 5:10**](http://biblehub.com/jeremiah/5-10.htm)**, “**“Go up on her walls and destroy,
	But do not make a complete end. Take away her branches, for they *are* not the Lord’s,”[**Nahum 2:2**](http://biblehub.com/nahum/2-2.htm)**.**

**Nahum 2:3-7, “The shields of his mighty men *are* made red; the valiant men *are* in scarlet. The chariots *come* with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the spears are brandished. The chariots rage in the streets, they jostle one another in the broad roads; they seem like torches, they run like lightning. He remembers his nobles; they stumble in their walk; they make haste to her walls, and the defense is prepared. The gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace is dissolved. It is decreed: she shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up; and her maidservants shall lead *her* as with the voice of doves, beating their breasts.”**

1. **Describe Nahum’s vision of the battle. The chariots come with flaming torches: Nahum can see it all in his vision. The battle for Nineveh is fierce and bloody, and though the defense is prepared they will be conquered. The chariots rage in the streets, they jostle one another in the broad roads; they seem like torches, they run like lightning: Chuck Smith notes that some have taken this - erroneously - as a prophecy of the automobile and traffic congestion.**
2. **Verse 6 explains what happened historically when the Tigris River overflowed**. It took out a section of the 2 ½ mile wall, and the river flooded the city. Some described Nineveh as “a pool of water.”
3. **Who is led away captive**? She shall be led away captive: The prophet not only sees the battle, he sees the outcome - Nineveh will fall before this mighty army, and she will be humbled and led away captive even as the Assyrians led other nations in captivity**.**

**Nahum 2:8-12, “Though Nineveh of old *was* like a pool of water, now they flee away. Halt! Halt! *they cry;* but no one turns back. Take spoil of silver! Take spoil of gold! *There is* no end of treasure, or wealth of every desirable prize. She is empty, desolate, and waste! The heart melts, and the knees shake; much pain *is* in every side, and all their faces are drained of color. Where *is* the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding place of the young lions, where the lion walked, the lioness *and* lions cub, and no one made *them* afraid? The lion tore in pieces enough for his cubs, killed for his lionesses, filled his caves with prey, and his dens with flesh.”**

1. **The flooding Tigris helped in Nineveh’s destruction. Discuss.** of old was like a pool of water: Nahum says the troops defending Nineveh are like a pool of water that drains away to no use. They are useless in defending the city**.**
2. **With the confiscating of silver and gold, Nineveh’s destruction was complete. Why does silver and gold seem to point to utter destruction? *An impressive confirmation of this prophecy is that nothing of all this gold and silver has been discovered in the ruins of Nineveh by archaeologists. Nineveh was indeed stripped bare.***
3. **Why is there a reference to lions?** Where is the dwelling of the lions: The lion was one of the national emblems of the Assyrian Empire, and they crushed and plundered other nations like lions destroying prey.

**Nahum 2:13, “Behold, I *am* against you, says the Lord of hosts, I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more.”**

1. **Talk about God’s awesome warning: “Behold, I am against you.” What a terrible thing to hear from God!**
	1. **Contrast the principle for believers in** [**Romans 8:31**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+8:31&t1=en_nas)**.** This is true for the believer: *If God is for us, who can be against us?* Accordingly, the opposite is also true - if God is against you, then who can be for you?
	2. **Who is “The LORD of Hosts?”** It is bad when God is against you; it is even worse when the Lord of hosts is against you. This title refers to Gods place as Commander in Chief over all the armies of heaven.
	3. **What is the import of this promise: “The voice of your messengers shall be heard no more.”** Nineveh enjoyed its status as a power-center of the world, and relished the fact that the voice of her messengers commanded attention in palaces all over the world. That day would come to an end under the judgment of God.

## Nahum 3 - Nineveh, the Wicked City…the Reasons Why

**Nahum 3:1-4, “Woe to the bloody city! It *is* all full of lies *and* robbery. *Its* victim never departs. The noise of a whip and the noise of rattling wheels, of galloping horses, of clattering chariots! Horsemen charge with bright sword and glittering spear. *There is* a multitude of slain, a great number of bodies, countless corpses; they stumble over the corpses; because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, the mistress of sorceries, who sells nations through her harlotries, and families through her sorceries.”**

1. **Why does God call Nineveh, “The bloody city?” Woe to the bloody city! In his prophetic vision, Nahum takes a tour of the city of Nineveh and observes how ripe it is for judgment. He sees it is a busy city, full of the noise of a whip and the noise of rattling wheels, of galloping horses, of clattering chariots. Yet it is busy with violence, deception, and idolatry.**
2. **Give historical references to the Assyrians’ cruelty.** Not only where the rulers of Assyria terribly cruel, they *boasted* of the cruelty on monuments that exist in museums to this day.
	1. **Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 B.C.) boasted, “I stormed the mountain peaks and took them. In the midst of the might mountain I slaughtered them; with their blood I dyed the mountain red like wool….The heads of their warriors I cut off, and I formed them into a pillar over against their city; their young men and their maidens I burned in the fire……regarding one captured leader, he wrote, “I flayed him, his skin I spread upon the wall of the city.” He also wrote of mutilating the bodies of live captives and stacking their corpses in a pile.” Luckenbill, Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylon.**
	2. **Shalmaneser II (859-824 B.C.) boasted of his cruelties after one of his campaigns: “A pyramid I reared in front of this city. Their youths and their maidens I burned up in flames.”**
	3. **Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) wrote of his enemies, “I cut their throats like lambs. I cut off their precious lives (as one cuts) a string. Like the many waters of a storm I made (the contents of) their gullets and entrails run down upon the wide earth. ……their hands I cut off.**
	4. **Ashurbanipal (669-626 B.C.) described his treatment of a captured leader in these words: “I pieced his chin with my keen hand dagger. Through his jaw…..I passed a rope, put a dog chain upon him and made him…..occupy a kennel.” In his campaign against Egypt, he boasted that his officials hung Egyptian corpses “on stakes and stripped off their skins and covered the city walls with them.”**
3. **Who sells the nations through her harlotries?** It was bad enough that Nineveh indulged in this sin for herself; it was worse that she led the nations into violence, deception, and idolatry. For this, the judgment of God was coming.
4. **Was Nineveh known for her sorceries?** Thousands of tablets uncovered in the Mesopotamian valley show abysmal superstition. Hundreds of sorcery incantations have been brought to light.

**Nahum 3:5-7, “Behold, I *am* against you, says the Lord of hosts; I will lift your skirts over your face, I will show the nations your nakedness, and the kingdoms your shame. I will cast abominable filth upon you, make you vile, and make you a spectacle. It shall come to pass *that* all who look upon you will flee from you, and say, Nineveh is laid waste! Who will bemoan her? Where shall I seek comforters for you?”**

1. **Why does God repeat this phrase, “Behold I am against you, says the LORD of hosts,” also seen in Nahum 2:13.** I am against you: Nahum repeats this phrase, first mentioned in [Nahum 2:13](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Nahum+2:13&t1=en_nas). In the first mention, the emphasis was on the military defeat of Nineveh. Now, the emphasis is on the *humbling* of city.
	1. **Parallel this with the New Testament’s** [**1 Peter 5:5**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Peter+5:5&t1=en_nas)**, *“Be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”*** Nineveh walked in pride, and as a result had the Lord against them. How much better to be humble and receive the grace of God!
2. **Talk about “I will cast abominable filth upon you.” This is a reference to their idols, make you vile, and make you a spectacle: THIS IS VERY STRONG LANGUAGE AGAINST THE IDOL WORSHIP OF NINEVEH. will take the idols of Nineveh (abominable filth, the Hebrew word *shiqquts* often translated abomination) and throw them back in their face.**
3. **Discuss the Hebrew word for “vile,” “nabel,” which means made weak, foolish, and contemptible.**  Again, this was literally fulfilled the ancient Greek historian Diodorus Siculus wrote of the destruction of Nineveh: So great was the multitude of the slain that the flowing stream, mingled with their blood, changed its color for a considerable distance. **Adam Clarke, writing before the discovery of the ruins in Nineveh in 1840, quotes an author commenting on the disappearance of the city: What probability was there that the capital city of a great kingdom, a city which was *sixty* miles in compass, a city which contained so many *thousand* inhabitants, a city which had walls a *hundred* feet high . . . And yet so totally was it destroyed that the place is hardly known where it was situated . . . Great as it was formerly, so little of it is remaining, that authors are not agreed even about its situation.**

**Nahum 3:8-11, “Are you better than No Amon *that was* situated by the River, that had the waters around her, whose rampart *was* the sea, whose wall *was* the sea? Ethiopia and Egypt *were* her strength, and *it was* boundless; Put and Lubim were your helpers. Yet she *was* carried away, she went into captivity; her young children also were dashed to pieces at the head of every street; they cast lots for her honorable men, and all her great men were bound in chains. You also will be drunk; you will be hidden; you also will seek refuge from the enemy.”**

1. **What is “No Amon?”** No Amon is the Hebrew name for the Egyptian city of Thebes. Thebes was another wealthy, mighty city that was destroyed completely. The Assyrians in Nineveh knew this well, because it was their armies that destroyed Thebes. Nahum says, Remember what you did to No Amon? The same is coming on you. The expedition of Ashur-banipal, King of Assyria, against Egypt, which resulted in the fall of Thebes, occurred about 663 B.C. Therefore this writing of Nahum had to have occurred between 663-607 B.C.
2. **Note the reference to “drunk men.”**

**Nahum 3:12-15, “All your strongholds *are* fig trees with ripened figs: If they are shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater. Surely, your people in your midst *are* women! The gates of your land are wide open for your enemies; fire shall devour the bars of your *gates.* Draw your water for the siege! Fortify your strongholds! Go into the clay and tread the mortar! Make strong the brick kiln! There the fire will devour you, the sword will cut you off; it will eat you up like a locust. Make yourself many; like the locust! Make yourself many; like the *swarming* locusts!”**

1. **Elaborate on the use of the figurative language: fig tree, fire, water, clay and mortar and locusts.**
2. **Does Nahum’s language seem to be mocking the strength of the Ninevites?**
3. **Talk about the mention of locusts in Joel.**

**Nahum 3:16-19, “You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars of heaven. The locust plunders and flies away. Your commanders *are* like *swarming* locusts, and your generals like great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges on a cold day; when the sun rises they flee away, and the place where they *are* is not known. Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; your nobles rest *in the dust.* Your people are scattered on the mountains, and no one gathers them. Your injury *has* no healing, your wound is severe. All who hear news of you will clap *their* hands over you, for upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?”**

1. **Why are others clapping at Nineveh’s demise?** Because Nineveh was so known for its violence and cruelty, no wonder Nahum sees the nations applauding when the city is judged and destroyed.
	1. **Relate this section to Psalm 73:17-19.** Asaph dealt with this same problem. It seemed to him that the wicked constantly prospered and lived at ease. It troubled him so much that he doubted his own walk with God, **“*Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end. Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.”* (**[**Psalm 73:17-19**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Psalm+73:17-19&t1=en_nas)**)**
	2. **Why do we today take comfort in knowing judgment from God is faithful and true?** For Nahum, Asaph, and for us today, we take comfort in knowing that the judgments of the Lord are faithful and true. We don’t need to envy the unrighteous or seek vengeance against them ourselves. Nahum and Asaph each show us that God is more than able to take care of them and us, each according to His promise.
2. **List the prophecies fulfilled in this book.**
	1. **Nahum 3:12, the Assyrian fortresses surround the city would be easily captured.**
	2. **Nahum 3:14, the besieged Ninevites would prepare bricks and mortar for emergency defense walls.**
	3. **Nahum 3:13, the city gates would be destroyed.**
	4. **Nahum 1:10 and 3:11,** in the final hours of the attack, the Ninevites would be drunk. (According to Diodorus Siculus, “The Assyrian King distributed to his soldiers meats and liberal supplies of wine and provisions….while the whole army drank. The Assyrian King distributed to his soldiers meats and liberal supplies of wine and provisions….while the whole army was thus carousing, the friends of Arbakes learned from some deserters of slackness and drunkenness which prevailed in the enemies’ camp and made an unexpected attack by night.”)
	5. **Nahum 1:8, 2:6, 8, Nineveh would be destroyed by a flood.**
	6. **Nahum 1:10, 2:13, and 3:15, Nineveh would be destroyed by fire.**
	7. **Nahum 3:3, the city’s capture would be attended by a great massacre of people.**
	8. **Nahum 2:9-10, plundering and pillaging would accompany the overthrow of the city.**
	9. **Nahum 2:8, when Nineveh would be captured, its people would try to escape.**
	10. **Nahum 1:9, 14, Nineveh’s images and idols would be destroyed.**
	11. **Nahum 1:9, 14, Nineveh’s destruction would be final.**
3. **Compare Nineveh’s lawlessness with references, specifically, “Did right in his own eyes.”**
	1. **See Deuteronomy 12:8.**
	2. **See also Judges 17:6 and 21:25.**
	3. **Refer to Proverbs 12:15 and 21:2.**
4. **How does Nahum’s outcome differ from Jonah’s, since their message was basically the same?**
5. **What does Nahum say to us today?**

***And, here are the promises:***

**Nahum 1:1-3, “God *is* jealous, and the Lord avenges; The Lord avenges and *is* furious. The Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves *wrath* for His enemies; 3The Lord *is* slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked.”***

**Nahum 1:7, “The Lord *is* good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.”**

**II Chronicles 7:14, “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”**

**Additional Info:**

**Nahum was writing about the same time as Micah and Isaiah, during Hezekiah’s time, because in Chapter 2 he makes reference of the blasphemies of Rabshakeh during Sennacherib’s trying to siege Jerusalem, around 713 B.C. The Book of Nahum, OR “TIME HAS RUN OUT,” is the seventh book of the 12** [**minor prophets**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minor_prophets) **of the** [**Hebrew Bible**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_Bible)**. IT IS A COMPLETE AND FINISHED POEM. It is attributed to the prophet** [**Nahum**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nahum)**, and was probably written in** [**Jerusalem**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerusalem) **in the 7th century BC. WITHIN ONE DECADE OF NAHUM’S PREDICTIONS, NINEVEH FELL. NINEVEH WAS NEVER INHABITED AGAIN! And, it was lost until 1820; Sir Austen Layard found the site of the ancient Nineveh, on the west bank of the Tigris. Nahum did not go back home, but is buried on the west bank of the Tigris.** Little is known about Nahum’s personal history. His name means "comforter," and he was from the town of Alqosh, (Nahum 1:1) which scholars have attempted to identify with several cities, including the modern [`Alqush](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alqosh) of [Assyria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assyria) and [**Capharnaum**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capernaum) **(Caper-Nahum) of northern** [**Galilee**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galilee). He was a very nationalistic Hebrew, and lived amongst the Elkoshites in peace. **His writings were likely written in about 713 BC, before the downfall of Assyria. The subject of Nahum's prophecy is the approaching complete and final destruction of** [**Nineveh**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nineveh)**, the capital of the great and at that time flourishing** [**Assyrian empire**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assyria)**.** [**Ashurbanipal**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashurbanipal) **was at the height of his glory, according to Nahum a "bloody city all full of lies and robbery" (Nahum 3:1), a reference to the Neo-Assyrian Empire's military campaigns and demand of tribute and plunder from conquered cities.**  **Nineveh was destroyed apparently by fire around 625 BC, and the Assyrian empire came to an end, an event which changed the face of Asia. Archaeological digs have uncovered the splendor of Nineveh in its zenith under** [**Sennacherib**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sennacherib) **(705–681 BC),** [**Esarhaddon**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Esarhaddon) **(681–669 BC), and** [**Ashurbanipal**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashurbanipal) **(669–633 BC). Massive walls were eight miles in circumference.  It had a water** [**aqueduct**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aqueduct_%28watercourse%29)**, palaces and a library with 20,000 clay tablets, including accounts of a creation in** [**Enuma Elish**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enuma_Elish) **and a flood in the** [**Epic of Gilgamesh**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_of_Gilgamesh)**.The Babylonian chronicle of the fall of Nineveh tells the story of the end of Nineveh.** Naboplassar of Babylon joined forces with Cyaxares, king of the Medes, and laid siege for three months.  Assyria lasted a few more years after the loss of its fortress, but attempts by [Egyptian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egypt) [Pharaoh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharaoh) [Neco II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neco_II) to rally the Assyrians failed due to opposition from king [Josiah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josiah) of Judah and it seemed to be all over by 609 BC. [**Jonah**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonah) **had already uttered his message of warning, and Nahum was followed by** [**Zephaniah**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zephaniah)**, who also predicted (**[**Zephaniah**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Zephaniah) **2:4–15) the destruction of the city. Nahum's prophecy carries a particular warning to the Ninevites of coming events, although he is partly in favor of the destruction.One might even say that the book of Nahum is "a celebration of the fall of Assyria.And this is not just a warning or speaking positively of the destruction of Nineveh, it is also a positive encouragement and "message of comfort for Israel, Judah, and others who had experienced the "endless cruelty"** (3:19) of the Assyrians. The prophet [Jonah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonah) shows us where God shows concern for the people of Nineveh, while Nahum's writing testifies to his belief in the righteousness/justice of Godand how God dealt with those Assyrians in punishment according to "their cruelty" (Nahum 3:19). The Assyrians had been used as God's "rod of […] anger, and the staff in their hand [as] indignation." (Isaiah 10:5) **No one of the minor Prophets seems to equal the sublimity, the vehemence and the boldness of Nahum: besides, his Prophecy is a complete and finished poem; his exordium is magnificent, and indeed majestic; the preparation for the destruction of Nineveh, and the description of its ruin, and its greatness, are expressed in most vivid colors, and possess admirable perspicuity and fullness.**

**According to some,** [**Nahum**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nahum) **prophesied in the beginning of the reign of** [**Ahaz**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahaz) **(740s BC). Others, however, think that his prophecies are to be referred to the latter half of the reign of** [**Hezekiah**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hezekiah) **(8th century BC). The book would then have been written in** [**Jerusalem**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerusalem)**, where he witnessed the invasion of** [**Sennacherib**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sennacherib) **and the destruction of his host (**[**2 Kings**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Books_of_Kings) **19:35).**

**The scholarly consensus is that the "book of vision" was written at the time of the fall of Ninevehat the hands of the** [**Medes**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medes) **and** [**Babylonians**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylon)**(612 BC). This theory is demonstrated by the fact that the oracles must be dated after the Assyrian destruction of** [**Thebes, Egypt**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thebes%2C_Egypt) **in 663 BC as this event is mentioned in Nahum 3:8.**

**Author—Nahum was born in the Northern Kingdom, when the ten northern tribes were occupied by Assyria. He was born under Assyrian rule in the Holy Land. Born, bred, and brought up under the evil Assyrians’ captivity. So, the “good news” of this message is that Nineveh/Assyria is finally to be judged by God.**

**Nahum is almost all prediction:**

 **CHAPTER 1 (an Acrostic Poem, A MARVELOUS LITERARY WORK, which means that each verse begins with the next letter of the alphabet, in Hebrew, a carefully constructed work, constructed so his people, Israel, could remember)—Proclamation—who is going to touched by God? Disaster for God’s enemies and intervention for God’s people…..two sides of God (Psalm 50—God is sufficient and not needy). God is a God of jealousy and vengeance. Written in the set up: bad news to Nineveh, good news to Israel…..back and forth in this style.** Chapter one shows the majesty and might of God the LORD in goodness and severity.

 **CHAPTER 2 —Description of Nineveh’s demise—How Nineveh will fall; astonishing in its detail. He describes the destruction in vivid detail, as if he were there, although this is a prophecy. Interesting side note: Nahum sees the army who is destroying Nineveh in scarlet uniforms, and no one in his day wore these! HE EVEN SAW THE COLOR OF THEIR SUITS AND HE SAW THEM GETTING IN THROUGH THE GATES, BECAUSE OF THE RIVER. He describes the city being looted….called Nineveh “dying lions.” LIONS WERE THE SYMBOLS OF ANCIENT ASSYRIA.** Chapters two and three describe the fall of Nineveh, which later took place in 612 BC. Nineveh is compared to [Thebes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thebes_%28Egypt%29), the Egyptian city that Assyria itself had destroyed in 663 BC.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nahum%2C_Book_of#cite_note-Kent_H._Richards_2006-1) Nahum describes the siege and frenzied activity of Nineveh’s troops as they try in vain to halt the invaders. Poetically, he becomes a participant in the battle, and with subtle irony, barks battle commands to the defenders. Nahum uses numerous similes and metaphor. Nineveh is ironically compared with a lion, in reference to the lion as an Assyrian symbol of power; Nineveh is the lion of strength that has a den full of dead prey but will become weak like the lion hiding in its den.

 **CHAPTER 3—Explanation—Why? MOVES FROM DESCRIPTION TO EXPLANTION, saying that GOD IS GOING TO INTERVENE BY SENDING A GREATER FORCE INTO THE CITY. EXPLANATION—this is happening because of the sheer inhumanity of Assyria. They were inhuman and corrupted by their finances (bribery, etc.).** It comes to conclusion with a taunt song and funeral dirge of the impending destruction of Nineveh and the "sleep" or death of the Assyrian people and demise of the once great Assyrian conqueror-rulers .

**Jonah’s story asks: “Does God control nature?”**

**While Nahum’s saga asks: “Does God control history?” READ! Paul said to the Greeks, Acts 17:24-28, God allots history for nations.**



From its opening, Nahum shows God to be slow to anger but that He will by no means ignore the guilty, but will bring his vengeance and wrath to pass. God is presented as a God who will punish evil but will protect those who trust in Him. The opening passage (Nahum 1:2–3) states: "God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked". God is strong and will use means, but a mighty God doesn't need anyone else to carry out vengeance and wrath for him.

**Nahum 1:3, “The Lord *is* slow to anger and great in power, And will not at all acquit *the wicked.* The Lord has His way In the whirlwind and in the storm, And the clouds *are* the dust of His feet.”**

**Nahum 1:7, “The Lord *is* good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.”**

**Hosea 1:2, ““Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry And children of harlotry, For the land has committed great harlotry *By departing* from the Lord.” The apostle John used a similar analogy in Revelation chapter 17.**