

4/3/16

Intro To Nahum

Tonight we want to look at the prophet Nahum which is the seventh minor prophet.

The first six that we have studied spoke prior to the captivity of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria in 722 B.C.

1. Obadiah 845 B.C.
2. Joel 835 B.C.
3. Jonah 765 B.C.
4. Amos 760 B.C.
5. Hosea 740 B.C.
6. Micah 735 B.C.

There are three Minor Prophets prior to the captivity of the Southern Kingdom by Babylon from 606-586 B.C.

1. Nahum 710 B.C. more accurate date is 660-50 B.C.
2. Zephaniah 625 B.C.
3. Habakkuk 608 B.C.

There are three Minor Prophets after the return from captivity of Babylon from 536-425 B.C.

1. Haggai 520 B.C.
2. Zechariah 520 B.C.
3. Malachi 430 B.C.

Nahum is one of the six Minor prophets who doesn't date his prophecy in the opening.

1. The others are Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Habakkuk and Malachi.
2. Nahum is the seventh in order of our English Bible, but in the Greek Bible follows Jonah!

Nahum has one single message, the judgment of the city of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire.

* There is not one ray of hope, her injury has no healing and her wound is severe, all that can come from God is judgment!

Let's look at the introduction to Nahum to get a good understanding of the judgment coming to Nineveh.

- I. The prophet Nahum.
- II. The book of Nahum.
- III. The times of Nahum.
- IV. The message of Nahum.

I. The prophet Nahum.

- A. The name of the prophet Nahum was very relevant to his prophesy.
 1. Nahum in Hebrew means "comfort" or "consolation". Nah. 1:1b
 - a. It is the shortened form of Nehemiah, "comfort of Yahweh".
 - b. It is found only this one time in the Old Testament and one time in the genealogy of Jesus, but it is not the prophet Nahum. Lk. 3:25
 2. Nahum would be a comfort to Judah who would hear that God was going to judge

Nineveh who had been oppressing her. Nah. 1:14-15

- a. Comfort from judgment on a person should not be understood simply from the perspective that a person has been injured or made to suffer for what they have done.
- b. Comfort from the Biblical perspective is that God has vindicated Himself of all the affront and sin against His grace and patience to save and that it is deserved, it is righteous judgment!

B. The man Nahum was God's prophet. Nah. 1:1

1. The prophet reveals this by the word burden.
 - a. The word burden "messa", refers to the prophetic oracle regarding the doom of Nineveh by Divine judgment.
 - 1) The prophet Nahum was not venting his anger and hate of Assyria.
 - 2) The prophet was the mere vessel and instrument of God to reveal the revelation under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit. 2Pet. 1:20-21
 - b. Nahum was one of the many through whom God spoke to reveal His word.
 - 1) The Major Prophets.
 - 2) The Minor Prophets.
2. The prophet reveals that the oracle came through a vision.
 - a. A vision "chazawn" is while one is awake.
 - b. A dream is while one is asleep.

- c. Nahum was the mouthpiece of God speaking forth and foretelling the future events of judgment to come on Nineveh.

C. The origin of Nahum the prophet is said to be Elkosh, an Elkoshite. Nah. 1:1

1. Some say it was a town in Assyria, north of the site of ancient Nineveh, "Al-Kush", modern day Mosul, east of the Tigris River.
 - * But Nahum never went into captivity!
2. Still others say it was a village 20 miles south-west of Jerusalem in Judah, around the same vicinity as Micah of Moresheth.
3. Jerome said it was a small village in the north of Galilee.
 - * The city of Capernaum on the north-western shore of the Sea of Galilee means "city of Nahum", which would be good evidence of his Galilean origin.
4. The possible scenario could have been that Nahum migrated to the south of Judah after the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C. , but we are not told, it is speculation.

This is the prophet Nahum!

II. The book of Nahum.

- A.** The natural divisions of the book.
 1. The prophet declaree the certainty of judgment. Nah. 1
 - * There is not one glimmer of hope!

2. The prophet declared the devastation of the judgment. Nah. 2
* They are to prepare, but to no avail!
 3. The prophet declared their depravity meriting judgment. Nah. 3
* They were an affront to God!
- B.** The particulars of the book.
1. The book contains 47 verses in our English Bible.
 - a. Chapter one has fifteen verses.
 - b. Chapter two has thirteen verses.
 - c. Chapter three has nineteen verses.
 2. The Hebrew and English chapter and verse do not always coincide.
 - a. Nah. 2:1-14 in Hebrew is equivalent to Nah. 1:15-2:13 in our English.
 - b. Verse fifteen in chapter one in the Hebrew text is verse one of chapter two.
 3. The prophet Nahum is considered as one of the prophet-poets of the ancient Hebrews.
 - a. One declared, “Nahum bears the palm for poetic power.”
 - b. Another says, “Nahum’s short book is a Pindaric ode of triumph over the oppressor’s fall.”
 - c. Still another, “Nahum’s language is strong and brilliant; his rhythm rumbles and rolls, leaps and flashes, like the horsemen and chariots he describes.”
 - d. The first nine verses bear an alphabetic acrostic form, each respective line

- bearing the first half of the Hebrew alphabet, but debated.
4. The city of Nineveh is mentioned three times. Nah. 1:1; 2:8; 3:7
 5. The King of Assyria is mentioned once. Nah. 3:18
 6. The evil character of Assyria.
 - a. Conspiring against the LORD. Neh. 1:9a
 - b. Violent murder, lies and robbery. Nah. 3:1
 - c. Harlots and sorceries. Nah. 1:4
 7. The indisputable central theme of the book is the sure and utter destruction of Nineveh under the judgment of God.
 - a. “The burden against Nineveh.” Nah. 1:1
 - b. “The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, And He will reserve wrath for His enemies.” Nah. 1:2d-e
 - c. And will not at all acquit *the wicked*.” Neh. 1:3b
 - d. “But with an overflowing flood He will make an utter end of its place.” Nah. 1:8a
 - e. “For while tangled *like* thorns, And while drunken *like* drunkards, They shall be devoured like stubble fully dried.” Nah. 1:10
 - f. “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.” Nah. 1:12

- g. “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.” Nah. 1:14
 * This is just the first chapter!

C. The key words, phrases and verses.

1. Key words.
 - a. Burden. Nah. 1:1
 - b. Vision. Nah. 1:1
 - c. Jealous. Neh. 1:2
 - d. Avenge three times. Nam. 1:2
2. Key phrases.
 - a. Not acquit the wicked. Nah. 1:3b
 - b. Affliction will not rise up a second time. Nah. 1:9c
 - c. Your name shall be perpetuated n longer. Nah. 1:14b
 - d. And the palace is dissolved. Nah. 2:6b
 - e. Your iniquity has no healing, Your woulnd is seere.” Nah. 3:19a-b
3. Key verses.
 - a. Judgment is in view of God’s holiness and frustrated patience, for all wicked. Nah. 1:2-3b
 - b. Judgment will comfort Judah. Nah. 1:15
 - c. Judgment comes from God not man, “The LORD of hosts”. Nah. 2:13
 - d. Judgment is comes after a life-style of sinful depravity, “The LORD of hosts”. Nah. 3:5
 - e. Judgment is self-inflicted. Nah. 3:19

- D. The contemporaries of Nahum.
1. The prophet Zephaniah.
 2. The prophet Jeremiah.
 3. The prophet Habakkuk.

This is the book of Nahum!

This was the prophet Nahum!

III. The times of Nahum.

- A. The history of Nineveh.
1. Nineneh was founded by Nimrod. Gen. 10:11
 2. The city followed Ashur as the capital of Assyria and the capital moved around to other location near Nineveh.
 3. Assyria was named after its chief god, Ashur, a god of war.
 4. The first Assyria gained its independence from Babylon sometime before 1500 B.C., but had only sparatic periods of greatness.
 - a. Ashur-uballit I, 1363-1328 B.C.
 - b. Tukulti-Ninurta I, 1243-1207 B.C.
 - c. Tiglath-Pileser I 1112-1074 B.C.
 - d. Ada-nirari II, 909-889 B.C.
 - e. Shalmaneser III, 858-824 B.C.
 - f. Adad-nirari III, 809-782 B.C.
 5. The second Assyrian empire is the most relevant to the Bible history.
 - a. Tiglath-Pileser III, 745-727 B.C, invaded Syria and North Isreal, 734 B.C.

- b. Shalmaneser , 727-722 B.C, Besieged Samaria and took Hoshea captive.
 - c. Sargon III, 721-722 B.C, Destroyed Samaria and subjected Babylon.
 - d. Sennacherib, 704-681 B.C, conquered Palestine and destroyed Babylon.
 - e. Esarhaddon, 681-669 B.C, conquered Egypt. 671 B.C.
 - f. Ashur-banipal, 669-626 B.C, took Babylon from his brother Samas-sumukin in 648, took Mnasseh captive to Babylon and established the greatest library of ancient times of 20,000 volumes.
 - g. The Assyrian empire began to disintegrate in 626 B.C. and Nineveh was destroyed in 612 B.C. , Ashur-uballit II was the King of Assyria, 623-612 B.C.
* The record of the event is preserved in one of the Babylonian Chronicles at the British Museum # 21901.
 - h. So complete was its destruction that the city became a myth for two millennias when it was discovered in 1842 by Layard and Botta.
 - i. Alexander the Great marched by it in 331 B.C. with no evidence of its existance.
- B.** The possible location in time.
- 1. Some place Nahum during the reign of Hezekiah around the time Sennacherib invaded Judah, around 710 B. C.

- 2. Others place him in Manasseh’s reign, who reigned for 51 years,from 697-646 B.C.
2Kings 21:1
- 3. The internal evidence is vital to this answer.
 - a. Nineveh was destroyed in 612 B.C. and their army was finally destroyed at the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C.
 - b. The “wicked counselor” from Nineveh to Jerusalem refers to Rabshakah that was sent by Sennacherib, 701 B.C. Nah. 1:11
* God defended Jerusalem and killed 250,000 front-line Assyrian troops.
2Kings 18:19-35
 - c. Nahum mentioned the destruction of “No Amon”, the famous capital city of Upper Egypt, Thebes, and asked of they were better fortified to avoid their destruction?
Nah. 3:8
* The god Amon was worshipped there.
 - 1) In 701 B.C. it was conquered by Sennacherib.
 - 2) In 671 B.C. it was conquered by Esarhaddon.
 - 3) In 663 B.C. it was conquered Ashurbanipal who overthrew that city in 665-66 B.C.
 - 4) Ashurbanipal’s inscriptions found in the ruins of Kuyunjik in 1878, the king himself tells how he captured Thebes.
 - d. Nahum had to have written some time after the conquest of No Amon in 663 B.C. perhaps between 660-650 B.C.

following the time of Isaiah, into the reign of Judah's most wicked king, Manasseh 597-646 B.C.

- C. The pertinent historical events within that time.
1. Egypt successfully revolted at the closing years of Ashurbanipal.
 2. The Medes became powerful and dangerous foes.
 3. The Scythians swept down from the distant north, spreading desolation through the wide and fertile Mesopotamian plains.
 4. These did not venture to attack Nineveh, but they robbed it of much of its prestige.
 5. At the death of the King of Assyria, Herodotus tell us that the Medes attempted an assault of Nineveh, but were obliged to abandon the attempt because they were summoned back to defend their own homes.
 6. The Medes eighteen years later, about 614 B. C. took and attacked the major Assyrian city of Asshur, and Nabopolassar made an alliance with their king. Together the Medes, the Chaldeans and the Scythians continued their attacks, until Nineveh fell in 612 B.C.
- C. The prophetic times had come upon Nineveh.
1. Nahum proclaims the burden against Nineveh. Nah. 1:1
 2. Nahum's burden was a prophetic oracle regarding the doom of Nineveh by Divine judgment.

3. Nineveh had been given much and therefore more was required of her. Lk. 12:48
 - a. Jonah had come to Nineveh around 765 B.C., and he came reluctantly hoping that God's judgment would destroy them but instead saw God's gracious forgiveness and salvation.
 - b. Some believe that Jonah might of lost family members at the hands of the Assyrians raids in the north of Israel?
 - c. But apart from that there were natural reasons why Jonah would not want to go to Nineveh, they were vile, cruel and gruesome people.
 - 1) The Ninevites were known for their fertility cult.
 - 2) The Ninevites were known for their child sacrifice.
 - 3) The Ninevites were known for their cruelty to the extent that many cities would commit mass suicide rather than to be taken captive.
 - a) They would skin people alive.
 - b) They would tear individuals apart by tying them to horses.
 - c) They would bury people alive with their heads exposed for the ants.
 - d) They would carry away their captives by placing hooks in their lips tied to ropes.
 - d. The city was impressive.
 - 1) Nineveh had its city proper of formidable size which took three days

- to cross and four suburb cities around it, making it sixty miles around.
- 2) The walls were one hundred and fifty feet high and wide enough for three chariots to drive side by side.
 - 3) The walls were fortified with fifty towers, each two hundred feet high.
 - 4) The city had spacious gardens, orchards, pastures and grain fields being self-sufficient.
 - 5) God made reference to the population of children being 120,000, making it conservatively about one million people. Jonah. 4:11
 - 6) The city at Nahum's time is thought to be greater in number.
4. Nineveh now about one-hundred-fifty years after Jonah was going to be judge by God for her sin against the light they had received and destroy her completely.
 - a. Nineveh had presumed, neglected and abused God's grace, they had returned to their sin and sinful lifestyle.
 - b. The God of grace, mercy and slow to anger and abundance of lovingkindness had come to an end of His patience, graciousness and would destroy them. Jo 4:2
 - c. Nahum declares the utter destruction of Nineveh for her pride, oppression, idolatry, cruelty and defiance. Nah. 3:1-7

- d. So complete was her destruction that by the second century A.D. the site had become uncertain.

These were the times of Nahum!

IV. The message of Nahum.

- A. The doom of Nineveh declared. Neh. 1
 1. The introduction identifies the burden as the oracle and vision of God not Nahum. Nah. 1:1
 2. God's wrath is justified being righteous anger against sin. Nah. 1:2
 - a. God is jealous against sin and His sinful enemies, due to His holiness.
 - b. God is a consuming fire to avenge His holiness. Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29
 3. God's patience has an end. 1:3a-b
 - a. God will not acquit the wicked. Ps. 1; Jn. 4:2
 - b. God takes vengeance on those who do not turn from sin. Rom. 2:3-5; 2Thess. 1:3-12; 2Pet 3:9
 4. God's ways of judgment are sovereign. Nah. 1:3c-8
 - a. God has power over nature in picturesque language. Nah. 1:3c-5
* Mount Sinai, Red Sea and the Jordan.
 - b. God is awesome in judgment, none can escape it or stand. Nah. 1:6
 - c. God is good a stronghold in the day of trouble, a protection to those who trust

Him but destruction to His enemies. Nah. 1:7-8

* The overflowing flood is descriptive of how Ninevah was partly destroyed, due to the overflowing of the Tigris River, washing away a section of the wall.

5. God's judgment can not be thwarted by any devise. Nah. 1:9-11
 - a. God will be swift, it will not rise up a second time. Nah. 1:9

* Nothing they devise will avail or avert destruction and there will be no need for a second visitation.
 - b. God will overpower them. Nah. 1:10
 - 1) The imagery of thorns fit for fire. 3:15
 - 2) The imagery of drunkards describe the men in the city when it was taken, in drunken feast. Nah. 3:11
 - c. God will not be defeated by their wicked councilor. Nah. 1:11

* So complete was the destruction of Nineveh that for almost 2,000 years it was considered a myth until 1842 when it was discovered by Lazard and Botta. Alexander found no trace of it in 331 B.C.
6. God's judgment would comfort Judah. Nah. 1:12-15
 - a. God will destroy them despite of their security and multitude. Nah. 1:12

- b. God having used Assyria to chasten Judah would relieve her by destroying her. Nah. 1:13; Is. 10:5-19
- c. God would obliterate Nineveh's name and gods for their vile living. Nah. 1:14
- d. God would allow the news to console Judah. Nah. 1:15
 - 1) Glad tiding at the hearing of Nineveh's destruction would bring comfort.
 - 2) Glad tiding of the gospel to come. Is. 52:7; Rom 10:15

* Verse fifteen in the Hebrew text is verse one of Chapter two.

- B. The doom of Ninevah described. Neh. 2
 1. God announces the invading armies and tells them to prepare for battle. Nah. 2:1-2
 - a. These are the armies of Nabopolassar and Cyaxares of Medo. Nah. 2:1
 - b. They were to man, watch, strengthen and fortify.

* God is saying get ready to fight the fight of your life!
 - c. The reason being, that God would restore to Israel what the Assyria took as God used them to chasten Israel. Nah. 2:2
 2. God describes the armies invading the city. Nah. 2:3-4
 - a. They are fierce mighty worriers armed for war. Nah. 2:3
 - b. They fearlessly jostle through the streets of Nineveh. Nah. 2:4

3. God describes the desperation of the Assyrian nobles at the wall of defense. Nah. 2:5
 4. God describes His use of nature to destroy Niveneh's defense. Nah. 2:6
 - a. The River Khoser had sluices and gates for Nineveh's moats for her walls these with the Tigris River undermined the wall.
 - b. The Lord had already declared that He has His ways to work through nature and no one can stand before His indignation. Nah. 1:3c-6
 5. God describes their humiliating defeat. Nah. 2:7
* Led captive and broken in spirit.
 6. God describes how the Assyrians used to refresh themselves but now run away. Nah. 2:8
 7. God describes her plunder of silver and gold and her inexhaustible treasures. Nah. 2:9
 8. God describes her desolation, faintness of heart, pain and fearful faces. Nah. 2:10
 9. God describes how Nineveh once was a lion, but now the prey. Nah. 2:11-12
 10. God describes Himself as her true enemy! Nah. 2:13
- C. The doom of Nineveh deserved. Neh. 3
1. The city was a bloody city full of lies, robbery and unending victims under her oppression. Nah. 3:1

2. The city would be filled with a multitude of corpses in the siege. Nah. 3:2-3
3. The city would be judged for her occultic practices that had seduced and infected other nations. Nah. 3:4
4. The city would be opposed by God. Nah. 3:5-6
 - a. The Lord of Hosts was against Nineveh, the Captain of the armies of heaven. Nah. 3:5a-b
 - b. The Lord would lift up her skirts over your face to expose her nakedness and shame to the nations. Nah. 3:5c-e
* This was a practice to expose a woman's unchastity to public gaze. Ezk. 16:37-39; Is. 47:2-3; Jer. 13:22; Hos. 2:3
 - c. The Lord would make the city more vile and a spectacle. Nah. 3:6
5. The city would be pitied at the display of her disgrace which she deserved. Nah. 3:7
6. The city was no better than others God had allowed to be conquered. Nah. 3:8-11
 - a. No Amon was the Egyptian capital city of Thebes who was well fortified but fell. Nah. 3:8
 - 1) 701 B.C. conquered by Sennacherib.
 - 2) 671 B.C. conquered by Esarhaddon.
 - 3) 663 B.C. conquered by Ashurbanipal.
 - b. No allies were able to help her. Nah. 3:9
 - c. None escaped, children were killed, honorable men were sold and great men were bound in chains. Nah. 3:10

- d. No one likewise would escape in Nineveh and would be drunk condition our of fear. Nah. 3:11; 1:10
 - 7. The city was ripe for judgment, as ripe figs, falling to the ground. Nah. 3:12
 - 8. The city would be overwhelmed with fear as cowards. Nah. 3:13
 - 9. The city in her preparations for the battle would be to no avail. Nah. 3:14-15
* The city was burned by fire. Nah. 3:15
 - 10. The city commerce would be destroyed. Nah. 3:16
 - 11. The cities commanders and captains would be slow to move due to fear, like locust and grasshoppers in a cold day. Nah. 3:17
 - 12. The cities king would have no more kingdom. Nah. 3:18
* The last king was Saracus.
 - 13. The cities injury has no healing and wound is severe and all who hear will celebrate her destruction, for she deserves it for her wickedness over others. Nah. 3:19
* Mene, Mene, Tekel-U-Pharsin. Dan. 5:27
- D.** Some important reminders to all generations.
- 1. God is unchanging regarding sin, though He is slow to anger He will not acquit the wicked. Nah. 1:3
 - 2. God rules in the affairs of men and nations and brings them to an end. Nah. 1:14
 - 3. God is not impressed by past glory and wealth. Nah. 2:8-9

- 4. God has a stern warning to any nation or person who turns its back on God, having partaken of His grace. Nah. 3:5
- 5. God points out Ninevah as a perpetual type of the present evil world, who parades it's sin with a false sense of security thinking they will escape the judgment of God. Nah. 3:8
- 6. God judgment is deserved and comes only when there is no hope of salvation. Nah. 3:19

This was and is the message of Nahum!