

**A Survey of the Old Testament**  
**Prophetic Books**  
**by Pastor Richard H. Jones**

**# 1 "Nahum"**

**I. THE PROPHET**

Nahum's name means "consolation" or "consoler". While his prophecy is a message of destruction, his name is symbolic of comfort to oppressed and afflicted Judah. He is called the Elkoshite in 1:1 and probably came from Elkosh, however the location of this city is not known. Because of Nahum's interests in Judah in his prophecy, this village was probably located there.

Judging from Nineveh's destruction and other sources, we can conclude that Nahum was contemporary with Zephaniah, Habakkuk and Jeremiah.

**II. THE PROPHECY**

Nahum's prophecy is called "the burden of Nineveh" (1) and concerns itself with the destruction of Nineveh for their cruel oppressions of God's people. About a hundred years had passed since Jonah had preached and the whole city had repented and was spared destruction. Now another generation had grown up and once again the city had lapsed into sin demanding irrevocable judgment.

Nahum's prophecy states that God's purpose for punishing Nineveh was for its exaltation against God and His people (1). Chapter 2 is a detailed announcement of the destruction. Then Chapter 3 gives us the causes of their calamity - their notorious cruelty, treachery, idolatry and seduction of other nations.

**III. THE PERIOD**

The powerful Assyrian nation is in the background of Nahum's prophecy. For many years Judah had experienced invasions and oppressions from the Assyrian armies.

In 612 B.C. Egypt and Babylon joined with the Medes and the Scythians in an allied assault upon Nineveh and destroyed it.

After Sennacherib's defeat when Hezekiah was King, Manasseh reigned over Judah in an unparalleled reign of idolatry and sin. Nahum is thought to have prophesied during this wicked reign in which Isaiah was sawn asunder and executions took place every day as recorded by Josephus. This might well be why no king is mentioned in the superscription of Nahum's prophecy.

#### **IV. THINGS TO NOTE**

- A. Note how complete Nineveh's destruction would be (1:14).
- B. Note the divine attribute of 1:2-3.
- C. Note 1:8 and 2:6 may refer to the heavy flooding of Nineveh by the Tigris river which carried away part of the city and opened it to attack.
- D. Note the wicked counselor of 1:11 was Sennacherib of Assyria.
- E. Note Huzzab 2:7 may be translated "it is decreed or fixed".
- F. Note why God was opposed to Nineveh as recorded in 3:4.
- G. Note the city of No (3:8) was Thebes of Egypt. Assurbanipal of Assyria, one of its last rulers, destroyed Thebes shortly before Nineveh fell. Thebes fell in 663 B.C.
- H. Note since Nahum spoke of the destruction of Thebes as an accomplished fact which took place in 663 B.C. and since Nineveh was destroyed in 612 B.C., Nahum prophesied sometime between these dates.

#### **PERSONAL LESSONS**

- A. Nahum's pronouncement of judgment (1:2-3) is representative of all nations or persons who are against God and His people.
- B. God has no grandchildren. The faith of parents is not efficacious for their children. Each person in each generation must appropriate God's salvation.
- C. God, who is love, is also holy and His holiness must be vindicated when offended by sin.
- D. There is no immunity from God's righteous judgments. One may presume for a long time upon His mercy and grace, but one will receive just recompense.

#### **OUTLINE**

##### **I. PRONOUNCEMENT FOR NINEVEH'S PRESUMPTION (1)**

- A. God's holiness will be vindicated
- B. Assyria's yoke will be broken
- C. Judah will be delivered from Assyrian oppressions

## **II. PICTURE OF NINEVEH'S PERIL (2)**

- A. Medes and Babylonians will conquer it
- B. Nineveh will be led away captive

## **III. PAYMENT FOR NINEVEH'S PRACTICES (3)**

- A. Nineveh will reap according to its sowing
- B. Nineveh will be destroyed as others like her have