

NAHUM

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WRATH

Background and Context



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- Date: Written between 660-640 BC (Sometime after the fall of Thebes).
- Author: Nahum the Elkoshite. His name means “comfort”.
- Purpose: To make a “pronouncement concerning Nineveh” (Nah. 1:1). To provide comfort to the people of Judah
- Message: God’s wrath is to be feared. It is far better to have God on our side than to become His enemy.

Nineveh

- The capital city of the Assyrian Empire.
- Prior to its collapse in 612 BC, it was the largest city in the World.
- Two centuries prior, Jonah had ministered to the city and they repented.

Assyria

- Known for their ruthlessness and for their bloodshed.
- Had conquered Israel in 722 BC. Had toppled Thebes in 663 BC

Outline of the Book

- Nahum 1:1

“The Pronouncement concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite”.

- Nahum 1:2-7

God’s wrath summarized. God’s grace revealed (v.7).

- Nahum 1:8-3:19

Vision of the fall of Nineveh and its king. Judah delivered (Nah. 1:12-13).

The Content

- Nahum 1:2-7
 - A. Qualities of God's wrath (v. 2-3):
 1. Jealous
 2. Avenging
 3. Fierce in wrath
 4. Furious with his enemies
 5. Slow to anger**
 6. Just

“His path is in the whirlwind and storm, and clouds are like dust beneath his feet.”

- 1) The pagans often worshipped smaller gods who had authority over a small part of nature, but God has authority over it all.
- 2) When God is angry at those who transgress against his law, he will come at them with the fierceness of whirlwind and storm.

The Content

- Nahum 1:2-7
 - A. Qualities of God's wrath (v. 2-3)
 - B. God's power over nature (v. 4-6)
 1. These three verses not a literal prophecy of future events, but a reminder that even the most beautiful and magnificent bits of nature can be wiped away!

The Content

- Nahum 1:2-7
 - A. Qualities of God's wrath (v. 2-3)
 - B. God's power over nature (v. 4-6)
 - C. Refuge for the faithful (v. 7)
 - 1. He cares for those who take refuge **IN HIM** (cf. Eph. 1).

The Content

- Nahum 1:9-11
 - A. The wicked are destroyed completely and no-one can escape the wrath of God (v. 9-10)!
 1. “Consumed like entangled thorns” ~ God’s wrath is impossible to escape.
 2. “Consumed like the drink of a drunkard” ~ Like a drunkard who consumes every ounce of alcoholic beverage, God’s wrath will completely devour them.
 3. “Consumed like the straw that is fully dry” ~ God will make his enemies void of life, like straw that has been left out to dry in the sun.

The Content

- Nahum 1:9-11
 - A. The wicked are destroyed completely and no-one can escape the wrath of God (v. 9-10)!
 - B. A certain individual has gone out from Nineveh who plots evil against God and offers wicked counsel (v. 11).
 - 1. NOT a reference to Sennacherib (cf. Nah. 1:14)! Reference to the Assyrian king who lives during the time of composition.

The Content

- Nahum 1:12-15
 - A. Judah will be delivered from the Assyrians (v. 12-13).
 - B. The Assyrian King will be killed (v.14)
 - C. God's promise to Judah that the Assyrians will never again threaten them (v.15)

The Content

- Nahum 2
 - A. “One who scatters is coming up against you...” (v. 1)
 1. Reference to the Babylonians

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 - C. The Assyrians make battle preparations (v. 3-6).

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- Nahum 2
 - A. “One who scatters is coming up against you...” (v. 1)
 - B. Promised future restoration of Israel (v. 2).
 - C. The Assyrians make battle preparations (v. 3-6).
 - D. The city of Nineveh completely destroyed (v. 7-10).

The Content

- Nahum 2
 - E. The prosperity of the City of Nineveh ceases following its destruction (v. 11-13).
 1. Lion - the national animal and pride of Assyria. It is used in this passage to describe the citizens of Nineveh. The lion (Assyrian) was able to provide prey (resources) to its cubs (children) in the time of Nineveh's prosperity. However, the Babylonians will cut down all the Assyrians and strip them of resources.

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 - 1. Compare to Revelation 17!

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 - A. Vivid imagery and narrative of Nineveh's downfall (v. 1-3).
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 - C. The humiliation of Nineveh (v. 5-7).

The Content

- Nahum 3
 - A. Vivid imagery and narrative of Nineveh's downfall (v. 1-3).
 - B. Nineveh like a prostitute (v. 4).
 - C. The humiliation of Nineveh (v. 5-7).
 - D. Comparison to the Fall of Thebes (v. 8-11).
 1. The Assyrians had conquered Thebes in 663 BC and ruthlessly slayed or enslaved its inhabitants.

The Content

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 - F. A sarcastic call to defend the city (v. 14).
 - G. Nineveh completely devoured (v. 15-17).
 1. By fire - destruction of the structures of the city
 2. By sword - occupants of the city killed.
 3. By locusts - occupants of the city killed. Officials led away into captivity but no-one will know their location.

The Content

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 - E. Nahum mocks the defenses of Nineveh (v. 12-13).
 - F. A sarcastic call to defend the city (v. 14).
 - G. Nineveh completely devoured (v. 15-17).
 - H. No grace for the wicked king (v. 18-19).

Conclusion

It is far better to have God as our refuge (Nahum 1:7) than to endure God's wrath. God is just, and he will punish the wicked who do not repent.