

## Nahum Chapter 1

### Introduction:

### Authorship: Nahum. (Comforter)

- The Elkoshite: Kfar Nahum national park, AKA - Capernahum.
- “Capernaum” literally means “village of Nahum.”
- Nahum’s birthplace of Elkosh would likely have been near there somewhere.



**Time written:** Uncertain. Between the reign of King Hezekiah, king of Judah and the destruction of Nineveh at 607 BC. Nahum mentions the conquest of Thebes (No-Amon, Egypt) in 663 BC. Thus Nahum was written sometime after 663 and 607 BC or thereabouts.

- Some consider Nahum as a sequel to the prophecy of Jonah, written give or take about 150 years prior, after the prophet Jonah visited Nineveh when they repented for a time.
- Zephaniah was a contemporary of Nahum who also predicted or prophesied of Nineveh’s destruction.

**Zephaniah 2:13-15** “<sup>13</sup>And He will stretch out His hand against the north, destroy Assyria, and make Nineveh a desolation, as dry as the wilderness. <sup>14</sup>The herds shall lie down in her midst, every beast of the nation. Both the pelican and the bittern shall lodge on the capitals of her pillars; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be at the threshold; for He will lay bare the cedar work. <sup>15</sup>This is the rejoicing city that dwelt securely, that said in her heart, I am it, and there is none besides me. How has she become a desolation. A place for beasts to lie down! Everyone who passes by her shall hiss and shake his fist.”

### Theme: God’s final judgment on Nineveh.

- Because Nineveh was completely destroyed, the Bible critics declared that it was a mythological city that never existed. But archeologists have discovered the ruins of Nineveh, finding palaces and a tremendous library containing the records of the Assyrians, listing ten different kings of Israel by name.”
- Nineveh was the largest city of it’s day. The Assyrians had conquered all the peoples around them, and Nineveh was it’s capital. As we recall from Jonah, it took three days to walk across the city, it had massive walls with 1,200 towers.
- The city had previously experienced a great revival, but 150 or so years later there is little evidence of that, in fact they’ve turned back to their old ways.

**2 Peter 2:20** “For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.”

### Outline:

- Nahum is a fairly short book with 3 just chapters that line up to an outline:

**Chapter 1: God is jealous, and Nineveh will fall.**

**Chapter 2: God is judge, and describes how Nineveh will fall.**

**Chapter 3: God is just, describing why Nineveh will fall.**

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**V: 1** The burden / oracle against Nineveh - Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian empire that ruled the world, or the general region - from 800 to 600 BC.

- The Assyrians were a cruel and heartless people that sought to terrorize and intimidate their opponents into submission.
- They would take their captives, and skin them alive. They would maim their prisoners, cutting off feet, or hands, cutting off their ears, or noses, pulling their tongues out, they would maim, and disfigure their captives, in order to create terror. Many times nations, or cities that were surrounded by the Assyrians, would commit mass suicide, rather than be captured by the Assyrians.
- All of this is why the prophet Jonah didn't want to go there.
- The vision that God gave to Nahum the Elkoshite. We're not certain where "Elkosh" is exactly. I could be another name for Capernaum or a near by city in Galilee, we don't really know for sure.
- This burden against Nineveh describing their judgment would also at the same time be a comfort to Judah who had constantly been under threat of the Assyrians.
- In **Isaiah 13:1**, **Isaiah 15:1**, and **Isaiah 23:1** - they each describe the "burden" of Babylon, Moab, and Tyre respectively. There is a pattern here, each of these kingdoms was completely destroyed. It's best not to be a burden to God.

**V: 2** Our God is a jealous God because He loves us so much!

**Psalm 94:1-2** “<sup>1</sup>O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongs - O God, to whom vengeance belongs, shine forth! <sup>2</sup>Rise up O Judge of the earth; render punishment to the proud.”

**Psalm 18:47** “It is God who avenges me, and subdues the people under me;”

**Romans 12:19** “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

**V: 3** This verse describes three more attributes of God:

1. “The LORD is slow to anger...” - meaning He is patient and long suffering.

**Exodus 34:6** “And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth.”

2. The Lord is great in power; an understatement of sorts, He is omnipotent, all powerful.

**Genesis 17:1** “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect.”

3. The Lord will not acquit the wicked - meaning He is just, He is righteous.

**Psalms 89:14** “Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.”

- The Lord has His way: God uses the whirlwind and the storms to accomplish His purposes.

**Isaiah 14:24** “The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand.”

**V: 4-5** At His rebuke, oceans and rivers are dried up. The mountains quake before Him, and the earth itself heaves.

**Psalms 114:3-7** “<sup>3</sup>The sea saw it and fled; Jordan turned back. <sup>4</sup>The mountains skipped like rams, the little hills like lambs. <sup>5</sup>What ails you, O sea, that you fled? O Jordan, that you turned back? <sup>6</sup>O mountains, that you skipped like rams? O little hills, like lambs? <sup>7</sup>Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.”

- The prophet is describing the burden of Nineveh, the judgment against the most powerful nation they know of. Being so powerful one might ask - “well how you gonna do that?” You know it is just “big talk?”

- I remember back in the day another sergeant was mouthing off at me pretty good one night and when he got done, took breath I just looked him right in the eye and told him, “*You know, if your arms were as big as your mouth I might be a little more scared...*”

- The prophet speaking for God is laying out, describing the power of God to accomplish His judgment against Nineveh.

**V: 6** A rhetorical question:

**Psalm 76:7** “You, Yourself, are to be feared; and who may stand in Your presence when once You are angry?”

**V: 7** The LORD is good, there is no doubt of that.

**Psalm 100:5** “For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.”

**Psalm 136:1** “Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.”

- The Lord is going to take vengeance, the Lord is powerful, who can stand before His indignation - then the reminder that God is good, everything He does is good.

**Ephesians 4:26** “Be ye angry and sin not....”

- Even in His fury and indignation God is never out of control, He is good.
- He is a stronghold in the day of trouble, He is our stronghold!

**Psalm 18:1-2** “<sup>1</sup>I will love You, O LORD, my strength. <sup>2</sup>The LORD is my Rock and my Fortress and my Deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my Shield and the horn of my Salvation, my Stronghold.”

**Proverbs 18:10** “The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.”

- The Lord knows those who trust in Him.

**2 Timothy 2:19** “Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: The Lord knows those who are His, and, let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

**V: 8** All the same, God will bring an end to the Assyrian empire, and it's capital of Nineveh.

**Proverbs 4:19** “The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.”

**V: 9** Conspiring against the Lord? Futile at best.

**Psalm 2:1-2** “<sup>1</sup>Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? <sup>2</sup>The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His Anointed...”

**Proverbs 21:30** “There is no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the LORD.”

- He will make an utter end of it: there will be no recovery.
- Affliction will not rise up a second time, these guys are done!

**V: 10** The Babylonians laid siege to Nineveh, then the Assyrian king sent his army out to drive the Babylonians back with initial success, the Babylonians retreated. And the Assyrians went back to their fortress.

- Because they had enough food growing in their city, and the Euphrates river running through it - they could basically hold out forever.
- This cycle repeated itself 3 times - then the Assyrians went back into the city and celebrated in a drunken party.
- As God predicted in V: 8 - torrential rains came and the Euphrates river swelled up above normal and eroded the foundations of the city. The Babylonians came back and got in through the gaps in the foundation and conquered the city while they were all in their drunken state, burning it like dried stubble.
- The destruction was so complete that a few hundred years later when Alexander the Great came through looking for the famed city of Nineveh, when he arrived at the location of the city he couldn't find a single stone where the city was supposed to be.
- All according to God's Word.

*Interesting that later Babylon would more or less fall in the same way:*

**Jeremiah 51:57** “And I will make drunk her princes and wise men, her governors, her deputies, and her mighty men, and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not away, says the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.”

**V: 11** From Nineveh - that seems to describe the Rabshakeh from Hezekiah's day - concurrent with Nahum's prophetic ministry during Sennacherib's reign over Assyria.

- The Rabshakeh was a title for king Sennacherib's spokesman. He is the one described in **2 Kings 18** as addressing King Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem during the siege of the city by the Assyrians.

- The Assyrians had taken the Northern kingdom, then invaded the Southern kingdom of Judah taking all of the major cities with the exception of Jerusalem.
- As the army of Assyria was gathered around Jerusalem the Rabshakeh attempted to get the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Hezekiah to capitulate without a fight, to surrender.
- He threatened them, he blasphemed the God of Israel.

**2 Kings 19:14-22, 28-35** (Turn to / read)

V: 12-13 Now he's talking to Judah for a moment.

- Though they've been afflicted (siege / threats) you are safe now.
- They, the Assyrians will be cut down - which the angel of the Lord did.
- He will break the yoke of the Assyrians and burst their bonds - they won't bother you any more.

**Isaiah 14:24-25** “<sup>24</sup>The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand: <sup>25</sup>That I will break the Assyrian in My land, and on My mountains tread him underfoot. Then his yoke shall be removed from them, and his burden removed from their shoulders.”

V: 14 Back to addressing Nineveh. You're toast! God has given a command concerning them and it will be carried out.

**Nahum 3:6** “Behold, I am against you, says the LORD of hosts...”

- And if God is against you, who can be for you?

**Psalms 109:13** “Let his posterity be cut off, and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.”

- Your name will be remembered no more, your carved images will be cut off, destroyed.
- God will dig their grave - He pronounces them to be vile. This amounts to being cursed by God.

**Psalms 37:22** “For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, but those cursed by Him shall be cut off.”

V: 15 Now back to Judah. Judah was on the brink of destruction, now God delivers them, gives them another chance to live uprightly!

**Isaiah 52:7** “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, Your God reigns!”

- Keep the appointed feasts (which point to Jesus)
- Perform your vows, the promises you made to God in your desperation.

**Psalms 116:12-14** “<sup>12</sup>What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits toward me? <sup>13</sup>I will take up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. <sup>14</sup>I will pay my vows to the LORD now in the presence of all His people.”

**Deuteronomy 11:22-25** “<sup>22</sup>For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do - to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him - <sup>23</sup>then the LORD will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess greater and mightier nations than yourselves, <sup>24</sup>Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea, shall be your territory.” <sup>25</sup>No man shall be able to stand against you; the LORD your God will put the dread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has said to you.”

- The wicked have been dealt with, you don't have to worry about them.

**Isaiah 29:7** “The multitude of all the nations who fight against Ariel, even all who fight against her and her fortress, shall be as a dream of a night vision.”

- With the defeat of the enemy they are now free to worship God freely.
- We too have been set free from the enemy, free from sin, and death so that we can worship God in holiness and truth!