

Nahum

Purpose: Judah should acknowledge God's destruction of Nineveh and blessing for Judah.

Outline: 1:1 – Title

1:2-11 – God is coming to punish Nineveh

1:12-2:13 – Nineveh crushed and Judah blessed

3:1-19 – Woe to Nineveh

Author: Nahum

Date: Nahum's ministry took place around 650 B.C.

Highlights:

Historical Background

722 – Assyrians conquer Samaria and take the Israelites into exile

701 – Assyrian King, Sennacherib, invades Jerusalem

NAHUM'S MINISTRY – (Assyria will be destroyed. Judah will be restored)

612 – Nineveh, capital of Assyria, is conquered by Babylonians

586 – Babylonians conquer Jerusalem and takes the Judahites into exile

539 – Persians conquer Babylonians

538 – Persian King, Cyrus, issues an edict allowing exiles to return to their land

515 – Temple in Jerusalem is rebuilt

In the 8th century B.C. the prophet Jonah went (hesitantly) to the city of Nineveh (capital of Assyria) to proclaim a judgment oracle against her. The Ninevites responded with repentance, and God spared them. More than a century later, Nahum also declared the judgment of God upon the wicked city of Nineveh. This time there was no fasting or sackcloth, and Nineveh was not spared.

It is quite possible that this prophecy came during the period of Josiah's reign. Josiah, King of Judah, issued numerous religious reforms following King Manasseh. The judgment against Nineveh was favorable for Judah and would seem to fit what was happening in Judah, under Josiah.

God is Coming to Punish Nineveh (1:2-11)

Hymn praising God in Judgment (1:2-8)

Oracle of Judgment (1:9-11)

Sentence (1:9-10)

Accusation (1:11)

Nineveh will be Crushed and Judah will be Blessed (1:12-2:13)

Oracle of Judgment and Salvation (1:12-15)

Judgment for Nineveh (1:12a)

Salvation for Judah (1:12b-13)

Judgment for Nineveh (1:14)

Salvation for Judah (1:15)

Modified Call to War (2:1-13)

Judgment for Nineveh (2:1)

Salvation for Judah (2:20)

Judgment for Nineveh (2:3-13)

Woe to Nineveh (3:1-19)

Oracle of Woe

Accusation (3:1)

Sentence (3:2-19)

Before 612: Nahum's message would be interpreted as "Take hope in Nineveh's future defeat and Judah's blessing."

After 612: Nahum's message would be interpreted as "Rejoice by recognizing that God has fulfilled his word in Nineveh's defeat; so continue in positive hope."

For the NT Church: Nahum's message should be interpreted as "Take hope in the future defeat of evil and the blessing of the Church."

For today's Christian: Nahum's message should be interpreted as "God will destroy the wicked and bless the righteous."