

NAHUM BRIEF COMMENTARY

NAHUM CHAPTER 1

NINEVEH'S VERDICT DECREED

- **1:1**, Superscription, Nahum is human author.
- **1:1-5**, God is said to be jealous, avenging, and furious, yet slow to anger. Also He is "great in power".
(**1:3**). With this power He controls the universe and all its inhabitants. His jealousy is a righteous jealousy like a husband loves his wife, and wants what is best for her.
- **1:6-8**, No one can withstand the Lord's fierceness of anger (**1:6**). The Lord's judgment will sweep through like an "overrunning flood" (**1:8**) upon Nineveh, the capital of Assyria.
- **1:9-11**, God addresses the Assyrians he is about to destroy. The one who plotted evil against the LORD will fall (**1:9**). This may refer to Sennacherib (who boasted that he had ravaged Judah) or possibly the insolent Rabshaken.
- **1:12-13**, Assyria may currently seem safe, but shall "they be cut down" (**1:12**). Conversely, Israel had been afflicted, but will be afflicted "no more" (**1:12**). The LORD will break off the Assyrian's yoke from His people (**1:13**).
- **1:14**, The LORD addresses the Assyrian king saying his "name" (**1:14**) would be forgotten. His idol-filled temple will be destroyed. The LORD will dig his grave because he is so vile.
- **1:15**, The messenger who brings "good tidings" of Assyria's destruction, and resulting "peace" for "Judah" (**1:15**), is described. Paul quotes this verse (**Rm.10:15**) but uses it in the context of the gospel. See also **Isaiah 52:7**.

WHO

(The Judge)

NAHUM CHAPTER 2

NINEVEH'S VISION DESCRIBED

- **2:1**, Nahum starts out describing the Babylonians' siege against Nineveh.
- **2:1**, The people of the city of Nineveh are frenzied as their commands go forth: "Man the fort!", "Watch the road!", "Strengthen your flanks!" and "Fortify your power mightily" (**2:1**).
- **2:2**, The LORD will restore some of the excellence of Israel. But not right away. The Southern Kingdom of Judah has not yet been deported (586BC). However they were paying tribute to Assyria.
- **2:3-6**, These are the Babylonian invaders. The Babylonians wore red. Their ally, the Medes, wore scarlet tunics. The Assyrian military wore blue. The Assyrians developed a complex system of dams and canals to control the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers that flowed into the city.
- **2:7-10**, The queen will be "led away captive" (**2:7**). The people will flee the city though they are ordered to "stand" or "halt" (**2:8**). Nineveh's wealth (gold) is taken (**2:9**). Fear is on everyone's face (**2:10**).
- **2:11-12**, The Assyrian's emblem was the lion. This was a part of their whole culture. Men's heads had lion's bodies (and vice versa). They thought of themselves as lions, and tried to act the part. Seven times in two verses (**2:11-12**) Nahum pushes the "lion" picture.
- **2:13**, "young lions" — These are the warriors or perhaps their children will be "cut off" by "the sword".

WHAT

(The Judgment)

NAHUM CHAPTER 3

NINEVEH'S VERDICT DESERVED

- **3:1-3**, Some of the reasons for the destruction include, it is a "bloody city", and it is "full of lies and robbery". These came by having seized booty from many other nations (**3:1**). The "bright sword" (**3:3**) of the Babylonians horsemen attack the city streets. There are countless corpses everywhere.
- **3:4-7**, Nineveh is judged for her whoredoms (harlotries) and sorceries. She has corrupted others with her idolatry and commerce. Their sinfulness will be met with "shame".
- **3:8-10**, Nineveh will not be able to escape any more than Thebes (No Amon), escaped. This city was a symbol of the might of Ethiopia and Egypt. Thebes relied on "helpers" (**3:9**) such as "Put" and "Lubim" for security (generally associated with Libya).
- **3:11-13**, Nineveh will be "drunk" with the cup of God's wrath (**3:11**). Just like "ripened figs" they are ready for judgment (**3:12**). Their "gates" will swing wide open making a way for their enemies to enter (**3:13**).
- **3:14-17**, Nineveh's preparation "for the siege" (**3:14**) included acquiring extra water, and fortifying its strongholds.
- **3:18-19**, The "shepherds" (leaders of Assyria) "slumber" in sleep toward death (**3:18**). All that "hear" the news of its fall will greatly rejoice, especially those that suffered from them (**3:19**). The army of Alexander the Great marched over or near the ruins of Nineveh and was unaware of its location.

WHY

(The Justification)