

The Book of Nahum

I. THE PATIENCE OF GOD (NAHUM 1:1-8).

For over 500 years Nineveh and the Assyrians were feared as the terror of Western Asia. But while God's patience is infinite in depth, it is not eternal in duration. The time for judgment would soon come (1:3; Gen. 15:16; Ps. 103:8).

II. THE PRIDE OF SENNACHERIB (NAHUM 1:9-14).

It is generally agreed that the wicked counselor is Sennacherib (1:11), the evil Assyrian king who invaded Judah and surrounded Jerusalem in 701 B.C. Although Sennacherib's armies had been smashed at Jerusalem's gates and the monarch himself murdered years before (see 2 Ki. 19:35-37), the arrogant ruler seemed to symbolize the pride of Nineveh, and is therefore used here.

Sennacherib had made Nineveh a truly magnificent city, laying out its streets and squares, and built within a famous "palace without a rival." The dimensions of this palace were fantastic, 600 x 630 feet! It comprised at least eighty rooms, many of which were lined with sculpture.

III. THE PROMISE OF JUDAH (NAHUM 1:15).

Judah would need no longer fear this cruel nation.

IV. THE PUNISHMENT OF NINEVEH (NAHUM 2-3).

A. The certainty of this terrible punishment (3:11-19). Nahum compared Nineveh to Thebes (3:8), that great capital of upper Egypt. It too boasted that no power on earth could subdue it. However, both Jeremiah (46:25) and Ezekiel (30:14-16) predicted its destruction, which was fulfilled later by Sargon of Assyria in his campaign against Egypt. Now Nineveh's hour had come.

B. The sins causing this terrible punishment.

1. Bloodshedding (3:1).
2. Dishonesty (3:1).
3. Witchcraft and immorality (3:4).
4. Pride and materialism (3:16).

C. The description of this terrible punishment.

1. The city to be emptied of its wealth (2:9).
2. Its chariots to be burned (2:13).
3. It would be ridiculed by enemies (2:13).
4. Its warriors to be slain (3:6-7, 19).
5. Its corpses would be heaped up in piles (3:3).
6. The location of the city to be forgotten (3:17).

D. The source of this terrible punishment (1:2).

God used two sources to accomplish his punishment:

1. The flooding of the Tigris River (1:8; 2:6).
2. The allied forces of the Medes and Babylonians (2:1).