

The Book of Nahum

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

"The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power..." (see Gen. 15:16; Ps. 103:8).

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.

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

"There is one come out of thee, that imagineth evil against the Lord, a wicked counselor" (1:11).

It is generally agreed that the wicked counselor here is Sennacherib, 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),

"Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off."

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 (No-Amon, see 3:6), 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 (3:6, 7, 19).
4. Its warriors to be slain (2:13).
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.

"The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries..." (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).