

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 37

Nahum

In this lesson, we continue our survey of the Old Testament and our third week of looking at the Minor Prophets. Our study this week will continue the study of the remaining three prophets of Judah: Nahum, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk. From our study of Nahum, we will learn much about the Assyrians, their capital city Nineveh, and the sure and certain judgment that God brings which precisely fulfills all of Nahum's prophecies.

While all three of these prophets warned of coming judgments, all three also brought messages of comfort and assurance that God was in control. As such, in this lesson, we will consider Nahum's message of comfort to the Jews regarding the defeat of their enemies.

In our next lesson, we will look at Zephaniah's message of God's protection of Judah from harm in the coming days of His judgment; we will also examine Habakkuk's questioning of God regarding all of the injustices in the world. Although these books were written well over two thousand years ago; their messages, their insight, and their comfort are still very much relevant today.

For our study today, let's consider the city of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. John Walvoord writes about the Assyrians in The (Old Testament) Bible Knowledge Commentary pertinent to the book of Nahum: "Nineveh was the capital of one of the most cruelest, vilest, most powerful, and most idolatrous empires in the world. For example, writing of one of his conquests, Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 BC) boasted, 'I stormed the mountain peaks and took them. In the midst of the mighty mountain I slaughtered them; with their blood I dyed the mountain red like wool...The heads of their warriors I cut off, and I formed them into a pillar over against their city; their young men and their maidens I burned in the fire.' Regarding one captured leader, he wrote, 'I flayed [him], his skin I spread upon the wall of the city.'"

Now consider, approximately one hundred and fifty years after Jonah's call to repentance, what God says to this great city through the Prophet Nahum.

For this lesson, read the book of Nahum and consider the following questions:

1. Nahum and Jonah had at least one thing in common. Can you identify it?

2. What can we learn about Nineveh from the following verses?
 - a. Genesis 10:8-12

 - b. 2 Kings 18:17-37

 - c. 2 Kings 19:32-36

 - d. Ezekiel 32:22-23

3. How did Jonah describe Nineveh? (see Jonah 4:11)

4. How did Nahum describe the same city? (see Nahum 3:1 and 3:19)

5. When God brought judgment on Nineveh, how was it possible that this great city was so easily overtaken? (see Nahum 1:8, 2:6 and 2:8)

6. What else did Nahum prophesy about the destruction of Nineveh? (see Nahum 1:10, 2:13, and 3:15)

7. Just before the attack, in the final hours, what does Nahum prophesy about the physical condition of the people of Nineveh? (see Nahum 1:10 and 3:11)

8. What does Nahum prophesy about the results of the attack, in terms of a death toll? (see Nahum 3:3)

So, we see from this study that God's judgments are sure and swift, and that Biblical prophecy can consistently be trusted as an accurate reflection of God's Holy Word and His divine will. If God can bring down a nation as large and as evil as Assyria so quickly, we know that He can protect us and will judge those who strive to defeat His kingdom and His sovereign plans.

Have a great week everyone, and thanks for studying with us!

In Christ,

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