

The Character of God, and a Prediction of the Fall of Nineveh

Nahum 1

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. God is great in His attributes.

2. God is great in His anger.

Practical Application

1. Look for common ground between interpretation and application.

Questions

1. What is the theme of the book of Nahum?
2. Which city served as the capital of the Assyrian Empire for many years?
3. Which prophet had previously pronounced judgment on Nineveh?
4. When this prophet pronounced judgment on Nineveh, what happened?
5. About how many years later did Nahum pronounce judgment on Nineveh?
6. What did the Tigris River have to do with the fall of Nineveh?

Answers

1. The theme is the doom of Nineveh.
2. Nineveh
3. Jonah
4. The people of Nineveh repented and were spared, for God withheld His judgment.
5. About 150 years after Jonah, Micah pronounced judgment on the city of Nineveh.
6. In 612 B.C., the Tigris River overflowed its banks and undermined Nineveh's huge city walls, allowing the river and the armies of the Babylonians and Medes to sweep in like a flood.

Discuss / Consider

1. In Nahum 1, there's a wonderful description of the character of God. Review the five listed in this study:

- God is jealous.
- God is avenging.
- God is slow to anger.
- God is great in power.
- God is good.

What do each of these qualities of God mean personally to you?

2. Assyria had attacked Jerusalem once, but they would not be able to attack it a second time as they planned. God's anger would cut off Assyria and destroy her temples and her gods. Anyone plotting evil against the Lord will ultimately be brought down. Think of the godless man-made philosophies of our day. It's only a matter of time before they will be gone forever.

Challenge

1. The principle of hermeneutics is "one interpretation, but many applications." Look for common ground between interpretation and application.

Nineveh Falls to the Armies of the Medes and Babylonians Nahum 2

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The splendor of Nineveh would be removed.

2. The splendor of Israel will be restored.

Practical Application

1. Don't pull prophecy out of context.

2. Remember God's "I am against you" has a corollary truth.

Questions

1. What could be the title of the prophecy of Nahum?

2. What is the theme of the prophecy of Nahum?

3. Why had God had delayed His judgment on the pagan city of Nineveh?

4. In which geographical area did Nahum write his prophecy?

5. Although Nahum's prophecy of judgment was directed at Nineveh, it was a warning and wake-up call to another kingdom who had departed from the Lord. Which kingdom would this be?

Answers

1. "To Nineveh from Nahum."
2. "The Doom of Nineveh."
3. Because they had previously repented of their sinful ways when Jonah had preached there more than 100 years before Nahum's time.
4. He wrote from the Southern Kingdom of Judah because the Northern Kingdom of Israel had already fallen to the Assyrians in 722 B.C.
5. The Southern Kingdom of Judah, who had also departed from the Lord.

Discuss / Consider

1. Nahum 2:1–13 shows that even the mighty city of Nineveh fell when God decreed judgment. How does this challenge our understanding of God's authority and justice today, and what can it teach us about the consequences of pride and oppression?

2. Nahum 2:2 interrupts the fall of Nineveh to point to the future, when the Lord will return. The splendor once held by Assyria will be gone, and the glory of Israel will be fully restored. This will be realized when Christ sets up His kingdom on earth. How does the promise of God's future restoration and reign encourage us to trust Him amid present challenges and injustices?

Challenge

1. God's "I am against you" against Nineveh reminds us that His judgment falls on anything opposed to Him (Romans 8:31). Are you fully on God's side by trusting Christ as your Savior, confident that if God is for you, no one can stand against you?

The Fall of Nineveh, Continued

Nahum 3

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. God is against those who practice sin.**
- 2. God will judge those who practice sin.**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's thank the Lord that there is an escape from the wrath of God.**

Questions

1. In Nahum 3:8-10, there is a reference to the destruction of No Amon. How do these verses help in the dating of the prophecy of Nahum?
2. What was the approximate date of the writing of Nahum's prophecy?
3. What is the point of the verses about the destruction of No Amon?
4. Which allies of Thebes (No Amon) were able to rescue her?
5. How does Question #4 relate to Assyria?
6. What does it mean that Nineveh would be hidden? (Nahum 3:11)

Answers

1. No Amon is ancient Thebes in Upper Egypt. Assyria had conquered Thebes in 663 B.C. Nahum obviously wrote his prophecy about the fall of Nineveh after the fall of Thebes, and before the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C.
2. About 650 B.C.
3. It is that just as Assyria destroyed Thebes of Egypt (No Amon) with cruel and evil ways, so Nineveh of Assyria would be destroyed.
4. None of them.
5. Nineveh would also be helpless. Nineveh's children would be dashed to pieces in public, as Assyria had done in Thebes, and her great men would be taken away in chains as Assyria had done to the men in Thebes. See Nahum 3:10.
6. Nineveh would not be rebuilt. In fact, Nineveh was so destroyed and buried that when Alexander the Great traveled through this area a couple of hundred years later, he was unaware that he was marching over the ruins of the once-great Nineveh.

Discuss / Consider

1. Assyria was infamous for cruelty, and Nineveh was called a city of blood. God opposed it because of its sins. Looking at our own nation, with practices like abortion, we are reminded that God holds both nations and individuals accountable. How does God's judgment on Nineveh challenge us to examine the moral state of our society, and what responsibility do we have to respond faithfully?
2. Nahum 3:18–19 shows the complete destruction of Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire because of their sin. How does this example of God's judgment shape our understanding of His justice today, both for nations and for individuals?

Challenge

1. Nineveh reached the point of no return and faced God's wrath for its sin. Scripture reminds us that *all have sinned* (Romans 3:23) and *the wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23). Yet, God offers a way of escape: "*He who believes in the Son has everlasting life*" (John 3:36). Have you turned from sin and received Jesus as your Savior to escape God's wrath?