

Bible Synthesis IV
(Bible Survey)

**INTRODUCTION TO
NAHUM**

1. INTRODUCTION

Two Prophets spoke to and about Nineveh: Jonah and Nahum. Jonah wrote about 782 B.C. and Nahum about 630 B.C. (over 150 years apart). Jonah's was a message of mercy, while the message of Nahum was one of doom. Nineveh had repented under the earlier preaching of Jonah, but now the Ninevites were hardened in sin. Nineveh was completely destroyed in 612 B.C., between 18 and 38 years after Nahum's prophecy.

2. AUTHOR

The Prophet Nahum, whose name means "comforter," or "consolation."

(1) Called the Elkoshite (1:1), meaning that he was a native of Elkosh. No one knows for sure where the site of Elkosh is today. There are four supposed sites:

- 1. To the north of Nineveh, the modern village of Alkush.
- 2. In Galilee, identified with the modern city of El Kauze (Elkesi). This was the view of Jerome.
- 3. In Galilee, identified with Capernaum, which means "village of Nahum." It is supposed that the original name of the village was Elkosh, but was later changed to Capernaum in honor of its famous citizen.
- 4. In the south of Judah in the territory of Simeon. About 6 miles east of Beit-jobrin is an old well called Bir el-kaus which might be Elkosh. It is supposed that this would be more in keeping with his interest in Judah's triumph (1:15).

Either of the latter two suppositions has some basis for being the correct site of the city. The first two are no doubt incorrect.

(2) Nahum is not mentioned in the historical books.

3. RECIPIENTS

Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria — 1:1, 9; 3:5, ...

There is also a word of encouragement for Judah — 1:15

4. DATE OF WRITING

The time of Nahum is bounded by two events:

- (1) It must have been written after the destruction of No-Amon (No) in Egypt (3:8–10). This took place in 663 B.C., when Ashurbanipal captured the city.

- (2) It was written before the destruction of Nineveh which took place in 612 B.C. This event is still regarded as being future in Nahum's prophecy.
- (3) The book was written sometime between 663 and 612 B.C. Dates range from 650 B.C. to 630 B.C.

5. PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

Nahum's purpose is to announce the judgment and utter destruction of Nineveh. About 150 years before, Jonah had preached to them, and they had repented. But the city had since gone deeply into sin and hardness of heart, however (3:1), now the LORD announces His final condemnation through a second Prophet, Nahum.

The people of Judah had witnessed for many years an almost endless procession of cruel Assyrian kings who invaded their land:

Shalmanezzer III (859–824 B.C.)

Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.)

Shalmaneser V (727–722 B.C.)

Sargon II (722–705 B.C.)

Sennacherib (705–681 B.C.)

Esarhaddon (681–669 B.C.)

Ashurbanipal (669–633 B.C.)

—This king lived at the time of Nahum's writing. After Ashurbanipal there came three, and then utter ruin at the hand of the Babylonians. Even the third of these three kings did not reign in Nineveh, but in Haran.

6. THEME OF THE BOOK

Doom of Nineveh

7. KEY PASSAGES

Nahum 3:5–7

8. KEY TERM

“Vengeance” (with “revenge”) — 3 times

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**OUTLINE OF
NAHUM**

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| 1. Nineveh's Destruction Decreed | —Nah. 1 |
| (1) The Goodness and Severity of the LORD | —1:1-7 |
| (2) The Overthrow of Nineveh and Rejoicing of Zion | —1:8-15 |
| 2. Nineveh's Destruction Depicted | —Nah. 2 |
| (1) The Execution of the Decree — Nineveh Besieged | —2:1-10 |
| (2) The Fallen City Contrasted with Its Former Glory | —2:11-13 |
| 3. Causes for Nineveh's Destruction Described | —Nah. 3 |
| (1) The Sins of Nineveh | —3:1-4 |
| (2) Nineveh's Fate Sealed | —3:5-19 |

