

Nahum

Author

The author Nahum was a native of the town of Elkosh, but where this was is highly debated. Suggestions are Capernaum (which literally means “village of Nahum”) near the Sea of Galilee, a town in the nation of Assyria or Elcese, a village in Judah.

Date of Nahum’s prophecies

In Nahum 3:8-10, he refers to the destruction by the Assyrians of No Amon – the Egyptian city of Thebes. This event took place around 663-661 B.C. The Book of Nahum predicts the future fall of Nineveh. This occurred in about 612 B.C. So the Book of Nahum must have been written somewhere between 663-612 B.C.

The main emphases of the Book of Nahum

1. The Book of Nahum prophesies the *future destruction* of the *Assyrian capital of Nineveh*. Remember the Assyrians had previously turned from their sins to God after hearing the preaching of Jonah somewhere between 800-750 B.C.
2. The Book of Nahum emphasises that because of *God’s perfect justice* and *wrath against sin*, He must *punish* the *unrepentant* Assyrians. Read Nahum 1:2-3. The two references to God avenging and the reference to God taking vengeance in verse 2 relate to God’s justice. The expression He “*will not at all acquit the wicked*” also is the language of *justice, law courts* and the *courts of kings* who have supreme power.
3. Nahum 1:3 stresses “*God is slow to anger*” is something Jonah emphasised years before (see Jonah 4:2). But note in Nahum 1:2, Nahum twice referred to God’s present fury or anger towards the people of Nineveh. In other words, Nahum was saying that even though God is slow to become angry, the Ninevites had gone too far in their devotion to evil and wickedness.
4. In Nahum 1:2, Nahum says “*God is jealous*”. Here God refers to *His ownership as Creator of all people*. Because He owns the Assyrians, He has the right to judge them.
5. The destruction of Nineveh showed the world that even the strongest nation could not stand against the justice, wrath and power of the only true God – the God of Nahum the prophet.
6. Nahum 1:7 stresses that God is good and He intimately knows those humans who trust in Him: “*The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.*”

Relevance to today

Nahum shows *God holds all nations throughout history and today responsible* for their actions and will punish them if their sins become too great and they refuse to repent. The Ninevites were not under the Mosaic Covenant but God still held them accountable for their attitudes and actions.

A wonderful prediction

Nahum 2:6 is an amazing prophecy of how a vital part of the city walls of Nineveh would be carried away by a great flood. This flood ruined the defences of Nineveh allowing the besieging Medes and Chaldeans to conquer the city.