

Key to NAHUM

1. STATISTICS:

Writer, Nahum, a prophet of Elkosh (possibly related to later Capernaum which means "village of Nahum") in Galilee whose name means "consolation." Time of writing, approximately 100 years after Jonah (663-633 B.C.); key word, doom; key verses, 1:8,9.

2. THEME:

Essentially, Nahum is a continuation of Jonah with the latter recording the repentance of Nineveh, and Nahum its predicted doom. Humanly speaking, Nahum's prediction was impossible as Nineveh was the impregnable capital of a world-ruling empire. But as predicted, the vast Assyrian nation came to certain doom about 100 years after Nahum prophesied. The book of Nahum is almost wholly taken up with this one theme.

3. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Assyria's policy concerning captive peoples was one of exceeding cruelty. Its enormous wealth was gained mostly by plundering surrounding nations. Nahum likened it to a den of lions (2:1-13) which became beasts of prey. Captives were mutilated by having eyes torn out and tongues extracted.

Nahum's prediction brought comfort to hearts of dwellers in Jerusalem, for Assyria had been the hated and feared enemy for nearly two centuries.

4. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:

While GOD's people had sinned, and GOD in faithfulness had to punish them, still the nations which He used came to know His wrath also, and this was the case with the Assyrian Empire.

The collapse of Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire came suddenly. The Medes and Babylonians had besieged the capital for two years when a sudden flood of the Tigris river carried away part of the protecting wall and opened the way for the attacking army to enter and conquer. This was pre-written by Nahum 100 years before.

There is a possible reference to the disastrous defeat of Sennacherib as he confronted Jerusalem (II Kings 19:35), in 1:10-13. The untimely end of the king himself is outlined in the following verses.

5. INTERESTING FEATURES:

Ezekiel (31:3-14) and Zephaniah (2:13-15) besides Jonah concern themselves with Nineveh's fate.

The city's walls were 100 feet high and broad enough to drive four spans of chariot horses

abreast; there were 1500 watch towers, for defenses. There was never a prophecy more unlikely!

6. KEY TO UNDERSTANDING:

Who but GOD could predict minutely events of such magnitude and infinitude hundreds of years before they came to pass? This is true comfort to those who study prophecy today relating to tomorrow. GOD is faithful.

~ end of Nahum ~

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