

ADDRESSES THE TRAGEDY OF VIOLENT OPPRESSION & HUMAN SUFFERING IN HISTORY

GOD IS GRIEVED BY THE DEATH OF THE INNOCENT

GOD'S GOODNESS & JUSTICE COMPEL HIM TO ORCHESTRATE THE DOWNFALL OF OPPRESSIVE NATIONS etc...

NAHUM

NAHUM IS PORTRAYING NINEVEH'S FALL AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW GOD WON'T ALLOW VIOLENT EMPIRES TO ENDURE. (SEE DANIEL)

ASSYRIA BABYLON PERSIA GREECE ROME etc...

COLLECTION OF POETS ANNOUNCING THE DOWNFALL OF ASSYRIA & NINEVEH

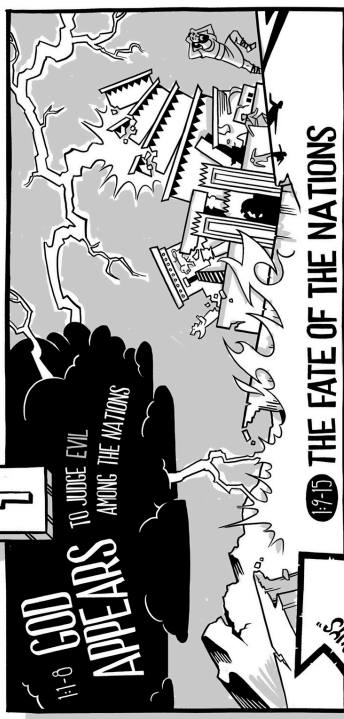
11-612 BC

ASSYRIA'S RISE AND FALL

11-612 BC

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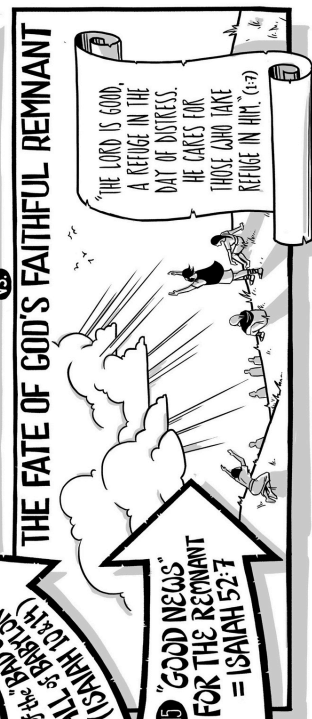
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SIMILAR TO MICAH ch.1 & HABAKKUK ch.3

"THE LORD IS SLOW TO ANGER & GREAT IN POWER, & HE DOESN'T LEAVE EVIL UNPUNISHED." (1:3) (QUOTING EXODUS 34:6-7)

17-15 THE FATE OF THE NATIONS



16-9-14 NABUCHADREZZAR'S FALL & BABYLON'S FALL (ISAIAH 13:18)

16-9-14 "GOOD NEWS" FOR THE REMNANT = ISAIAH 52:7

NAHUM NOWHERE MENTIONS NINEVEH IN ch.1

2 THE FALL OF NINEVEH



3 ASSYRIA'S DOWNFALL

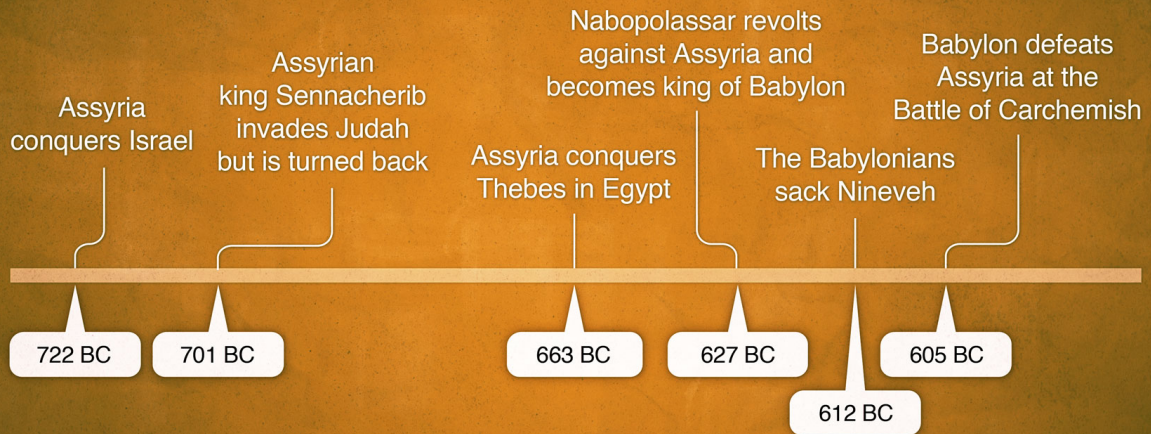


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WEEK 6

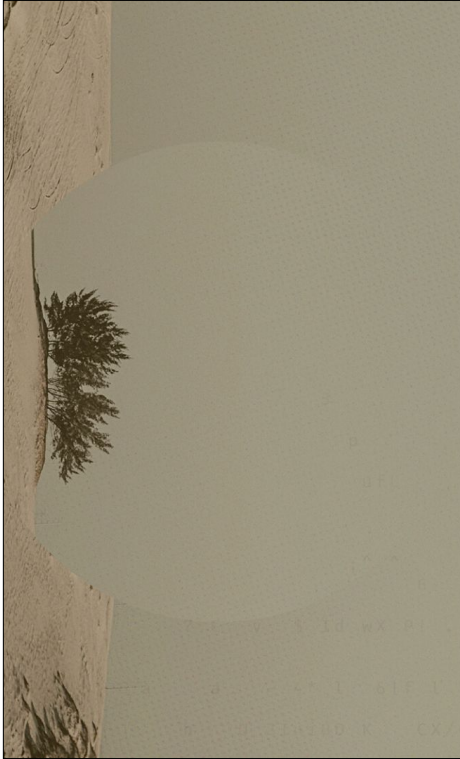
TIMELINE

NAHUM



*All dates are approximate





NAHUM

- Very little is known about Nahum because he does not mention himself outside of the introduction, and he is mentioned nowhere else in the OT.
- His name means “comfort” and he comforted the people of Judah with a prophecy of the coming destruction of the Assyrian capital of Ninevah.
- He is from Elkosh (possibly in Galilee?).
- His oracles against Ninevah is interesting because only he and Jonah were preoccupied with Assyria.
 - Jonah presents Ninevah as an illustration of God’s universal redemptive concern.
 - Nahum is burdened by the reality of God’s judgment on it.

- To pronounce the doom of Ninevah.
 - This was not a “ebb and flow” of history but the action of the Sovereign God against the nations.
 - He announced Nineveh’s doom, and he would accomplish it.
- Yahweh is a stronghold only for those who accept his terms of peace, but he will justly judge all his unrepentant enemies.
- Unlikely that the oracle was meant to be given directly to the Assyrians (as it was with Jonah) but was given as an encouragement to those of Judah who had suffered under Assyrian domination.

NAHUM’S PURPOSE STATEMENT

- It has been suggested that Nahum owed a literary debt to Isaiah because there are many parallel phrasings, themes, motifs, and vocabulary choices.
- We can see that Nahum was following the tradition of the great classical prophets before him.
- Nah 1:5 "On the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace" (see Is 52:7)

THE WRITING OF NAHUM



- In the 8th century, Jonah went to the city of Ninevah to proclaim a judgment oracle, and the people responded in repentance and they were spared.
- More than a century later, Nahum declares judgment upon the people. There was no repentance, and the city was not spared.
- While we can't precisely date the oracle, it seems that the end was already beginning when it was written.
- Ninevah would fall to Babylon in 612, but there was a lack of discussion of the Babylonians in Nahum.
- While Ninevah didn't officially fall until 612, its breaking point came about 650.

THE BACKGROUND OF NAHUM

- This suggests that Nahum was a little removed from the actual historical event of the fall.
- Nahum references Thebes, which fell in 663, and Nahum also seems removed from this event.
- This suggests a time of 640-627 during the last years of Ashurbanipal's reign, just before it became apparent that Nabopolassar would be the agent of Assyria's destruction.
 - By 627, Babylon had gained independence, and they, along with the Medes, began dismantling the Assyrian state.
- By this point, King Josiah (who was fiercely anti-Assyrian) had become king in Judah. Nahum's words of encouragement to Josiah, whose own policies (and those of his grandfather Manasseh) had resulted in Assyrian oppression.
 - Nahum 2:11-13



- Assyria holds pride of place as the archvillain of the OT.
- Though the Babylonians would later be responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, they were not comparable to the Assyrians in terms of brutality.
- Assyria used well-developed propaganda to convince the nations around them that they were invincible.
- Failure to submit had consequences, and Assyrians had no problem making public examples of those who rebelled.
 - Enemies and prisoners were publicly subjected to torture that included flaying, burning alive, and amputation of body parts.
- This psychological warfare had the effect of reducing the need for extensive military engagement.

ASSYRIA IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

ASSYRIAN EMPIRE

THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE 7-8TH CENTURY B.C.



- Introductory hymn (1:2-8) is the form of a partial acrostic which describes Yahweh's avenging majesty.
- The emphasis of the psalm is on the attributes of God.
- Affirms his inclination and ability to bring judgment on Nineveh.
- This is a disputed section because it is unusual for an oracle to be introduced by a psalm.
- The psalm is considered to be a fragment from an alphabetic acrostic that Nahum used as a psalmic introduction.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF NAHUM

- After the introduction, the prophet addresses both Judah and Nineveh with the message that Nineveh is on the brink of destruction because of its vile idolatry and cruel treatment of God's people.
- The messages are alternating—while the messages seem to be given to Nineveh, it is actually addressed to Judah.
- No amount of preparation would help, for Assyria's tragic end was a foregone conclusion.
- Once it fell, it would never rise again, for its wound would be forever and fatal.
- The people will be free from Assyrian control, and she will have peace to celebrate her festivals.
- This is later fulfilled when King Josiah reinstituted the Passover celebration (622BC)// 2 Chron 35.



- The final section details the siege and sack of Nineveh.
- ***Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder— no end to the prey! (3:1)***
 - This is the reason for God's actions against them.
 - There is no formal indictment, but none was needed.
 - Nineveh was only being treated the way she treated others.
 - *Behold, I am against you, declares the LORD of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will make nations look at your nakedness and kingdoms at your shame. (3:5)*

Exodus 34:6-7

THE LORD, THE LORD, A GOD MERCIFUL & GRACIOUS

slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and fourth generation.

- *The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. (1:3)*
- Nahum, like Micah, refers back to the Exodus 34 confession.
- If you remember from Joel and Jonah, God resolved the tension we see between justice and mercy in favor of mercy whenever he saw repentance.
- Without some repentance, we see the same Assyrian nation that Jonah spoke to now subject to judgement.

COVENANT

- Sennacherib (704-681BC) had fashioned Nineveh into a jewel in the Assyrian crown.
- He had tripled the size of the city, made it the capital, constructed a palace, parks, botanical gardens, and a zoo.
- Its splendor was matched likely only by Babylon in the ANE.
- Yet, despite its splendor, Nineveh represented the brutal wickedness of Assyria that the Lord had determined to punish.
 - Isaiah 14:24-25
 - Zephaniah 2:13-15

THE FALL OF NINEVAH

2022

CONCLUSION

- The minor prophets affirmed God's amazing love for Israel as well as the reality of sin's horrific nature.
- They clarified the implications of Yahweh's covenantal commitment to Israel.
- They also stressed the need for God's people to reflect God's character.
- They emphasized the future day of judgment for the wicked and salvation for the righteous.
- Announced the coming of a new David who would bring God's kingdom.