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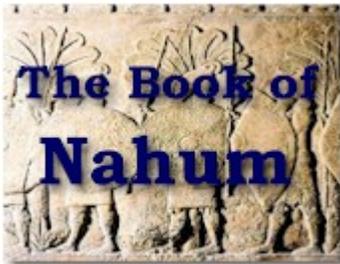
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## The Book of Nahum

by Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., October 1997

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Read the accompanying [Newsletter for August 2013](#)



The central theme of the Book of Nahum is the overthrow of the greatest capital city of the ancient Gentile world in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC. That capital was Nineveh. Though it looks like Nahum actually gave his prophecy in the last part of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, Nineveh itself was destroyed almost exactly as Nahum said, in the latter part of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. This prophecy, moreover, has relevance for the end time, as do all of the Minor Prophets. Nahum is the seventh of the Twelve Minor Prophets, following Micah.

Nahum's name means "consolation." His name has significance because the consolation of Nahum is one which will be shared by all Israelites once Nineveh (the capital city of the ancient Gentile nation of Assyria) is conquered.

### *Nineveh and Babylon*

There were two regions in Mesopotamia which paralleled one another politically and religiously. One represented political power led by Assyria, with Nineveh as its capital. The other represented religious power represented by Babylon 300 miles south of Nineveh.

This Babylonian system was the civilization that came to dominate the entire world since the time of Nebuchadnezzar in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, down to our time today.<sup>1</sup> The Book of Revelation sums up the totality of the heathen Babylonian system which governs us. This system is also connected with ancient Assyria. It emerged on earth from the area of Mesopotamia, the first region after the flood of Noah to have political and religious preeminence.

Table 1: Structure of the Twelve Prophets

1	<i>Assyrian Period</i>	}	Hosea
2			Joel
3			Amos
4			Obadiah
5			Jonah
6			Micah
7			<b>NAHUM</b>
8	<i>Babylonian Period</i>	}	Habakkuk
9			Zephaniah
10	<i>Post-Babylonian Period</i>	}	Haggai
11			Zechariah
12			Malachi

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Martin's articles, "[Prophetic Birth of Our Civilization](#)," "[Origin and Goal of Western Civilization, Part 1](#)" and "[Origin and Goal of Western Civilization, Part 2](#)." These articles give biblical context to Dr. Martin's historical view. *DWS*

While the prophecy of Nahum (3 chapters in the King James Version) centers primarily upon Nineveh, we have to consider the entire Mesopotamian area because at this time the Assyrian Empire was at its height. The Assyrians were the chief antagonists of most Middle East nations. They were the menace always on the horizon against Israel in the north, Judah in the south, Egypt farther south. Asia Minor (modern Turkey) was taken over almost entirely by Assyria, reaching to the Black Sea area and east almost to India.

While still at its height, Nahum prophesied the eclipse of that vast empire and its capital of Nineveh would fall. Next would be Babylon, the religious leader, although during the Neo-Babylonian Empire which arose after Assyria, they were political as well. Yet, what decided matters were the religious matters and the philosophical teachings which came from Babylon and penetrated to the farthest recesses of the earth. This is why the Book of Revelation characterizes the whole of civilization (to our present day) as Babylonian.

### *The Overthrow of Assyria*

The Assyrian side represents the prime political and military forces which cause the religious or the philosophical principals of Babylon to prevail, even to today. While Nahum prophesies the overthrow of the Assyrians, he did so when they were still very powerful — although when you read some sections of Nahum you might get the idea that Nineveh was already destroyed. This is nothing more than what in the Bible is called the “prophetic past.” This is used when a prophet is so certain future events will happen that verbs are used in the past tense to describe them. Nahum showed that Nineveh would be destroyed, and Israel would be completely redeemed one of these days.

Let us start from the beginning. Look at what the prophecy involves. It says **“The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.”** (Nahum 1:1). We know the general geographical area Nahum came from, but we cannot locate the precise location of Elkosh today. Nahum’s audience must have known where it was in ancient times. Nahum could be from that region though it is not specifically stated, or Nahum may have moved and operated from there at a later time.

Nahum’s vision in verse 1 is called **“the burden of Nineveh.”** Why is the term “burden” used? Most prophecies were called burdens in ancient times. How did the term come about? A prophet would be given information from God and it was like carrying a heavy weight. The more information he would receive the more he would bend over from the weight of this information. What the prophet would do was to rid himself of the burden by telling it to ancient Israel. The more he would tell, the more he would empty the load or burden of these prophetic messages. This is what the figure of speech **“the burden of Nineveh”** means. Nahum wants to rid himself of the burden and he does so by writing down his vision concerning Nineveh and its destruction. He starts out in verse 2 with YHWH expressing His anger and fury.

**“God is jealous, and YHWH revenges; YHWH revenges, and is furious; YHWH will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserves wrath for his enemies.”**

Note that God speaks of revenge two times, and His anger burns with fury:

**“YHWH is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: YHWH has his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebukes the sea, and makes it dry, and dries up all the rivers: Bashan languishes, and Carmel [languishes as well], and the flower of Lebanon languishes.”**

• **Nahum 1:3–4**

These geographical locations mentioned here, Bashan, Carmel, and Lebanon, are all in the north of Palestine. This may give you a hint that Nahum’s main tenure of office was in the north. We will see is the case as we go along.

Nahum 1:5 gives you the period in which Nahum was most interested. It was a time when YHWH, who controls the elements, as we just read in verses 3 and 4, the Powerful, the Wonderful, the most Majestic God of heaven and earth, He will do something on earth in short order according to Nahum. What will happen?

**“[1] The mountains quake at him, and [2] the hills melt, and [3] the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.”**

• **Nahum 1:5**

Here again we find a prophet speaking about the presence of God, just as the prophecy of Micah speaks of a time when God would come and the mountains would be molten under His feet.<sup>2</sup> The same thing is described here in Nahum at the presence of God. The apostle Paul also speaks about the second coming of Christ saying He will come in flaming fire (2 Thessalonians chapters 1 and 2).

We find in verse 5 the hills will **“melt, the earth is burned at His presence, ... Yea, the world, and all that dwell therein”** (Nahum 1:5). This event is not localized just in Palestine; it will be experienced in the entirety of this world. When you get the whole of the message of Nahum and connect it with the New Testament, this is the period of time relating to the second coming of our Lord back to this earth.

**“Who can stand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger [when He comes]? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him. [In spite of all of this] YHWH is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble.”**

• **Nahum 1:6–7**

This speaks of a time when there shall be a great day of trouble involving Israel and the entire world. In other sections of the Bible, this great day of trouble is called **“the time of Jacob’s trouble”** (Jeremiah 30:7). It is called in Matthew 24:21 in the Olivet prophecy a time of **“great tribulation”** as never was before and never will be again. It is described in Daniel chapter 12 in the same fashion. Nahum says of God:

**“YHWH is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble. And he knows them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood, he [God] will make an utter end of the place thereof [What place? This is “the burden of Nineveh” from verse 1], and darkness shall pursue his [God’s] enemies.”**

• **Nahum 1:7–8**

## ***Nineveh’s Judgment***

That prologue starts the prophecy of Nahum. Nineveh will be judged, but when? It will happen when the Lord Himself comes with His presence to this earth, when many cosmic events take place, seismic events as well, events that will effect the physical environment on earth, as well as the political and religious environments. From this point on, Nahum concentrates on the overthrow of Nineveh, and not only the city itself, but Nineveh as a capital of a world empire.<sup>3</sup> In Nahum, Nineveh represents the political arm, shall we say, of the Babylonian system of government and religion.

Nineveh has a long history. Assyria was much more powerful than Israel or Judah; it was more powerful than Egypt. In fact, it controlled the Middle East at this time. Later on, the Babylonians took over. Nahum is not only focusing on Nineveh because of the contemporaneous relevance in his day, but in a larger political sense, Nahum is focusing on Assyria because civilization was controlled at that time by Assyria. It also has a relevance back to an earlier period soon after the flood of Noah.

## ***Background in Genesis***

One of Noah’s sons, Ham, gave rise to an individual who became the world’s first despot. He was the

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Martin’s article, [“The Book of Micah.”](#) Note Micah 1:2–4:

**“Hear, all you people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord YHWH be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. For, behold, YHWH comes forth out of his place, and [He] will come down, and [He will] tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place.”**

DWS

<sup>3</sup> Most ancient empires had more than one capital city, a primary capital and two or three lesser ones. Travel was so slow and resources so difficult to procure and transport that having more than one capital city was useful to rulers. DWS

king of Assyria known as Nimrod<sup>4</sup> in Genesis 10:8–9 (see also 1 Chronicles 1:10).<sup>5</sup> In a way, Nahum is reflecting upon that period of time when the first rebellion after the flood of Noah took place on earth. Nimrod was the great grandson of Noah coming from Ham through Cush.

In Genesis chapter 10, we find the table of the 70 nations that developed after the flood of Noah, from Noah's three sons:

- In the first 5 verses, we have the sons of Japheth, the firstborn son of Noah.
- Then come the sons of Ham (verses 6 through 19), mainly giving rise to the dark people of the earth.
- Finally, the descendants of Shem verses 21 to 31 are listed. From this line the Caucasian, the olive skinned peoples, and Israel originated.

In the genealogy of the second born sons of Ham, we find he was the progenitor of four very important sons. Verse 7, **“The sons of Ham; [were] Cush, and Mizraim [Egyptians], and Phut, and Canaan.”** One particular son of Cush was mentioned in verse 8:

**“And Cush begat Nimrod [he was a great grandson of Noah]: he began to be a mighty one [gibbor in Hebrew] in the earth [a type of hero]. He was a mighty hunter before YHWH: wherefore it is said, ‘Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before YHWH.’ And the beginning of his [Nimrod’s] kingdom was Babel ...”**

• **Genesis 10:8–10**

This brings Babylon into the scene. Nimrod began his kingdom at Babylon. Keep that in mind. However, this was not the end of his kingdom as far as the authority was concerned. He reached out and included the Mesopotamian city of **“Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar”** (all three are cities in Mesopotamia, Genesis 10:10). Verse 11: **“Out of that land [Nimrod] went forth [to] Asshur,”** the area of Assyria. Asshur was a son of Shem (Genesis 10:22) who went to that region 2 or 3 generations after Noah.

So, here is Nimrod becoming the world's first despot. He goes to the territory of Asshur, conquers it, and builds a city there, which Nimrod calls Nineveh. **“And [Nimrod built] the city Rehoboth, and Calah, And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is the great city”** (Genesis 10:11–12). **“The great city”** was Nineveh. It was the long city about 60 miles long on each side of the River Tigris with smaller cities alongside like suburbs. This was the city Jonah prophesied to, and he was to tell the people of Nineveh to repent.<sup>6</sup> This goes back some 100 years before the time of Nahum. Nahum's prophecy was against the same city of Nineveh, the city founded by Nimrod.

Nimrod was later deified and supposedly put into the heavens as a god. The largest constellation in the heavens, straddling the celestial equator and known to the Greeks by the name of Orion, was named after Nimrod, the great hunter. This constellation contains the brightest star in the northern hemisphere, the Dog Star Sirius, the mighty hunter with his dog. Orion straddled both northern and southern parts of the celestial hemisphere, the equatorial region. This signaled that whoever Nimrod was, he was to be the controller of the

<sup>4</sup> Nimrod was the great grandson of Noah coming from Ham and Cush. As you read this, keep in mind that the name “Nimrod” is derived from a Hebrew root meaning “to rebel.” Who did Nimrod rebel against? The scriptural implication, and Jewish tradition, is that he rebelled against God. Identified as **“a mighty hunter before YHWH”** (Genesis 10:9), some scholars believe this refers to hunting human beings who would not submit to his rule. However, this is disputed by modern scholars. It is interesting that the LXX uses the word “giant” in Genesis 10:8–9, indicating he was one of the Nephilim. This aspect of Nimrod being a giant is not indicated in the Hebrew text. See the related articles “Nimrod” and “Nisroch” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, Karel van der Toorn, et al., eds. (Brill, 1999), pp. 627–632. DWS

<sup>5</sup> In Micah 5:6 the land of Assyria and the land of Nimrod are again identified together. DWS

<sup>6</sup> See Dr. Martin's articles **“[The Book of Jonah](#)”** and **“[Jonah and the New Testament](#)”** which give further background to Nineveh, the Assyrian period of history, and God's judgments against Assyria, as represented by Nineveh. DWS

entire world. Nimrod founded Babylon to be the religious head of the world and Nineveh was to be the political head of the world. Do you understand the symbolism?

To the ancients Nimrod was called a great hero, one of the earliest to be considered a god. After his death, it was said he went into the heavens and the pagans of the world began to worship him by various names. The Biblical name is Nimrod, the Greeks called him Orion. He was known by other names as well.

Nahum is talking about Nineveh at a time when the presence of YHWH will come on the scene. When the Lord comes, the earth will be burned at His presence (Nahum 1:5), and **“Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?”** (1:6). It will be the end of Nineveh and the end of the Babylonian system. This is why you can easily connect the three chapters of Nahum with the Book of Revelation which speaks about, in symbolic terms, the end of this great heathen system of human government.<sup>7</sup>

Remember also, Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar he was the head of gold. Following him would be the silver portion, Persia, then to the end with the 10 toes on two feet. Ten kings would come out of them and a mountain would be seen. A rock would come from the mountain. The great image of Daniel 2:37–49 would be hit by the rock, representing the Kingdom of God. It would hit the image on the toes, knock the image over, and the rock would pummel it into dust with the wind blowing the dust away.

This is also what Nahum talked about, although he does not go into detail as Daniel did. Nahum talked about the end of Nineveh, the political arm of Nimrod’s empire, the end of the kingdom begun at Babylon.

### *Nahum and Jonah*

This prophecy of Nahum is a book in which Nineveh will actually be destroyed. Nahum’s prophecy could have been the very prophecy Jonah wanted to give. He would have loved to give it, but the Ninevites in the time of Jonah repented. Jonah was a disappointed prophet; he was rebellious at first. Remember, he did not want to go to Nineveh. He ran off to Tarshish in the western Mediterranean. Then came the storm, Jonah was thrown overboard by the crew. He was swallowed by the fish, vomited onto the shore of the Black Sea, the closest point to where he was to go in the first place. He gets to Nineveh, begins to preach, and the people of evil Nineveh, including the king, repented. Jonah, the rebellious prophet, was angry.

In the Book of Nahum, the prophecy is not in Nineveh’s favor. It will result in the complete overthrow of Nimrod’s kingdom, the world kingdom begun at Babylon with its political side at Nineveh. The prophecy of Nahum was really the prophecy Jonah wanted to preach to Nineveh, but was not given or fulfilled in his generation. Jonah’s prophecy, which had a New Testament theme, was also related to events in the apostle Peter’s life.<sup>8</sup>

Nahum, like Jonah, also has a New Testament connection. In fact, there is more interconnection in this Bible than you could possibly imagine. Even though Nineveh is to be destroyed, at the same time the whole world will rejoice when the Kingdom of God will emerge on this earth, when Israel will be redeemed, when Jesus Christ is here in person. When His presence occurs with flaming fire soon after His arrival, universal peace, prosperity, and the Kingdom of God shall emerge on earth. The whole story in Nahum about the destruction of Nineveh (and the Babylonian system begun by Nimrod) will have its conclusion in the Book of Revelation by the apostle John, when Babylon in all of its glory is finally destroyed.

The Book of Nahum has other details of events with an end-time relevance. The Book of Revelation gives many details but it is essentially a skeleton scenario. You can put more flesh on that skeleton by looking at what Nahum says will take place at the end of the age, when God comes back to this earth in the person of Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup> See Dr. Martin’s article [“Mystery Babylon the Great.”](#) DWS

<sup>8</sup> Peter was also a headstrong and somewhat of a rebellious person. See [“Jonah and the New Testament”](#) in note 6 above. DWS

## **Back to Nahum**

As I said, the subject of the Book of Nahum is the overthrow and destruction of Nineveh, the political arm of the Babylonian empire. You must connect Nineveh and Babylon together as far as a political and religious power is concerned. According to the Book of Revelation the entire Babylonian world system will be eclipsed and overthrown by Christ. In Nahum, the destruction of the political arm of the Babylonian empire will be thorough.

It will be a time when God intervenes in world affairs, when God Himself has a presence here on earth. You and I hear a lot about God; we read a lot about God in the Bible. We read how God intervened in world affairs in the past with the flood and then with the Exodus. At other time, He intervened with miracles like those during the time of Elijah. When our Lord Christ Jesus was here, many miracles took place. In the time of the apostles, miracles also occurred but their frequency decreased. Some people in the world wonder, is there really a God, will He intervene in world affairs or not?

We find in the Minor Prophets, as well as in other Bible prophecies, there will be a personal appearance of God. He is coming in the personage of the name YHWH. That individual who has the power, authority, and that name is none other than Jesus Christ. He is coming back and His feet will touch down on the Mount of Olives, as we find in Zechariah chapter 14.

It is important to note again what Nahum tells us about that future time:

**“The mountains [will] quake at him [speaking of YHWH], and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.”**

• **Nahum 1:5**

As I mentioned, Nahum’s name means “consolation,” referring to a time of peace and security for ancient Israel and for the whole world. That consolation will not occur until the system created and advocated by Nimrod at Nineveh and Babylon is overthrown. When will that occur? It did not happen back in Nahum’s day. True, the Babylonians overthrew Nineveh in 612 BC, but from that time on the Babylonians themselves were called “Assyrians,” as well as “Babylonians” or “Chaldeans.” The whole structure that developed after was then called the Babylonian system no matter if it was Persian, Greek, or Roman. Our system today is Babylonian, stemming back to Nimrod, the founder.

Nahum concentrates primarily on the complete and thorough destruction or overthrow of Nineveh. This has never happened in history because the Babylonian system is still very much with us to this day. Nimrod’s system of idolatry and religious teaching was noticeable in the time of the apostles Paul, John, Peter, and others, and it is with us to this very day. That is why in the Minor Prophets, other prophets, and in the Psalms, we find condemnation by God on the systems that developed with idolatry as their basis.

Nahum’s prophecy is for the end time. The presence of YHWH has not yet happened. We are coming closer to that period when God will intervene personally into the world. He will not be way out in the corner somewhere where people will wonder if there is a God. He will make a personal appearance — and when He does, it will be dramatic. It says, **“the world and all that dwell therein”** will stand in awe when they see the presence of YHWH. He will come with fire which will burn the earth (Nahum 1:5).

**“[Though] YHWH is good, a strong hold in a day of trouble; and knows them that trust in him. But [when he comes] with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.”**

• **Nahum 1:7–8**

What place is Nahum prophesying to? Nineveh. The prophet Nahum wrote about his burden.<sup>9</sup> Nahum is a prologue to the destruction of the world civilization of Nimrod’s kingdom of Nineveh.

<sup>9</sup> As I said earlier, this prophecy was one which Jonah could have very well have uttered. In fact, it may be the very prophecy that he did utter as a threat. But the Assyrians repented under Jonah, and the reluctant prophet was surprised and very angry. He

## *Nahum and the New Testament*

Nahum also has a New Testament theme to it as well. Remember the parallels between Jonah and the apostle Peter? Jonah was from Galilee. We do not know if Nahum was from Galilee like Jonah or not, but I will show you the prophet Nahum had a prophetic administration which reached up to that area. Just as Jonah and Peter were parallel to one another in the things they did. Nahum also figures into the New Testament. Some scriptures the New Testament writers used to teach the Gospel come from Nahum. There is a New Testament geographical illustration which Christ centered on, which has to do with the prophet Nahum.

After writing about God's coming presence for the destruction of Nineveh, Nahum goes on to say:

**“What do you imagine [plot] against YHWH? He will make an utter end [to Nineveh]: affliction shall not rise up [a] second time.”**

• *Nahum 1:9*

The desolation of Nineveh will be so complete there would not be a second time for Nineveh to be destroyed. It was not done in 612 BC when ancient Nineveh was taken over by the Babylonians, but it will be so in the future for Nineveh to represent Nimrod's world governance.

**“For while they be folden together as thorns [ready for burning], and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry [burned to cinders and ash]. There is one come out of you that imagines [plot] evil against YHWH, a wicked counselor.”**

• *Nahum 1:10–11*

Who is this person introduced here in Nahum? Some individual will be called **“a wicked counselor”** coming from Assyria. The apostle Paul also spoke about a Wicked One at the end of the age who will meet and fight Christ when He comes. It is in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. He is called **“that man of sin,” “the son of perdition.”** In the Book of Revelation, he is called **“the beast.”** Here is a single individual who will come out of Assyria. This is interesting, but he is not further identified in Nahum other than as **“one come out of you that imagines evil against YHWH, a wicked counselor”** (Nahum 1:11).

A new thought begins in Nahum 1:12:

**“Thus says YHWH; ‘though they be quiet [Judah and the rest of Israel], and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down, when he [this “wicked counselor”], shall pass through [through the land of Judah]. Though I have afflicted you [Judah], I will afflict you no more.”**

• *Nahum 1:12*

The troubles of Judah will be over, once Nineveh is destroyed.

**“For now will I break his yoke [of this wicked counselor] from off you, [I] will burst your bonds in sunder. And YHWH has given a commandment concerning you [Judah, and Israel], that no more of your name be sown [broadcast and scattered throughout the world. You will be in the land]: out of the house of your gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image: I will make your grave; for you are vile.”**

• *Nahum 1:13–14*

That means you, wicked counselor, have been vile, and you are vile, but I will cut out the idols from Judah. Look at verse 15. This is a verse referred to in the New Testament:

**“Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that brings good tidings [or good news], that publishes peace! O Judah, keep your solemn feasts, perform your vows: for the wicked [beliya`al,**

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did not want their repentance to happen. With Nahum, however, at a time way into the future, Nineveh, Babylon, and the whole heathen system of religion and politics will end when Christ Jesus comes and establishes the Kingdom of God on this earth. *ELM*

in Hebrew] **shall no more pass through you; he is utterly cut off.**"

• *Nahum 1:15*

The idols will be cut off, Judah will be redeemed, and on the mountains, what will be taught? **"Good tidings."** Do you know what **"good tidings"** means? It means good news, the Gospel. This was a verse which the early New Testament people understood to be a Christian type of influence, because when Christ comes, He will overthrow the Nineveh government, the Babylonian government, and the idolatry permeating that system ever since.

Nineveh will be laid waste.

**"The gates of the rivers** [the river Tigris and other rivers in the area] **shall be opened, and the palace** [of Nineveh] **shall be dissolved. And Huzzab** [a suburb of Nineveh] **shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids** [maidens] **shall lead her as with the voice of doves, taber-**  
**ing upon their breasts."**<sup>10</sup>

• *Nahum 2:6-7*

This is a very obscure judgment. You might wonder what it means. The Hebrew shifts from the masculine to the feminine. When you refer to the feminine of a society, you go into the religious side of things. This Huzzab is no doubt the religious section of Nineveh. When it comes to the "she" portion of Nahum, it means not only will the political side (which is normally masculine) be judged, but the religious side will also come into judgment.

This is why the Book of Revelation speaks about a woman who rides a beast. It refers to the religious side of things. Throughout Scripture you find the true religion of God is written about in feminine terms. So too, false religions are written about in feminine terms. This is almost always the case. It is an easy way to distinguish between the secular and the religious in Scripture. Take the word "*ekklesia*" which most often is translated as "church." The *ekklesia* of Christ is called a woman; it is feminine. We also find the false woman of the Book of Revelation is called a queen of the harlots (Revelation chapters 17 and 18).

We find Nineveh referred to in the feminine gender by Nahum. Beginning in verse 8:

**"But Nineveh is of old** [going back to Nimrod] **like a pool of water** [deep, prosperous, full of beauty, bountiful]; **yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand** [stand still], **shall they cry; but none shall look back.** [They will flee, because of what happens] **Take you the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture.**

**She** [the religious side of Nineveh] **is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melts, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness.**

**Where is the dwelling of the lions** [the emblem of ancient Assyria was a lion], **and the feeding place of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid? The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with raven. Behold, I am against you** [the Assyrians or Nineveh], **says YHWH of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions: and I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messenger** [envoys, diplomats] **shall be heard no more."**

• *Nahum 2:8-13*

When will all this occur? Like Nahum said at the beginning — it will occur when God comes with His presence, when the earth quakes, when the earth burns, when the people see fire, when God Himself returns to earth.

Who is coming to be present as God, in the person of God? We find in the New Testament, and as clearly pointed to in the Old, it will be Jesus Christ. He is the one, as it says in Nahum 1:15, who will be **"upon the**

<sup>10</sup> According to the *Easton Bible Dictionary*, "**Tabering, playing on a small drum or tabret. In Na 2:7 where alone it occurs, it means beating on the breast, as players beat on the tabret.**" DWS

mountains **the feet of him that brings good tidings that publish peace,**" in other words, He will fulfill the Gospel. The Gospel has judgment. The Gospel also has glory and spiritual teaching. People shall repent when this evil system established by Nimrod at Babylon and Nineveh is finally eclipsed and destroyed as Nahum indicates.

### *New Testament Connections*

There is a New Testament relevance to all of this. This is the message that Jonah wanted to preach to the Ninevites. Whatever it was he preached, they heeded, and no destruction occurred at that time. Peter, called "**Simon, Bar** [son of] **Jonah,**" was also somewhat rebellious like Jonah. But Peter obeyed and went to the Romans in the person of the Roman centurion named Cornelius and his family. Just like the Assyrians, Cornelius repented.

Do you see the parallel between Jonah going to the Assyrians (who repented), and Peter going to the Romans, the equivalent leading power like the Assyrians (who also repented)? Why did the Romans repent? God opened their minds and Peter gave them — what? Peter traveled to the house of Cornelius by "**the feet of him that brings good tidings**" (Nahum 1:15). Peter gave Cornelius the Gospel of Christ.

### *The City of Nahum?*

We do not know where Nahum came from, but in the New Testament we may have identification with Nahum, and I think it is significant. Do you realize the geographical area where Jesus Christ performed most of His miracles, and where He presented the Gospel to the world in the fashion that was finally accepted? Even His disciples centered on this particular town where the Gospel coalesced into a message they could understand and take to the world. It was where Jesus did more miracles than any other place.

That place is on the north side of the Sea of Galilee. In New Testament times it was known as Kafir Nahum. It is named after the prophet Nahum. We call it, Capernaum. As Jonah was a type for Peter taking the Gospel to the Romans, who were like the Assyrians, we have Nahum who has a city named after him by New Testament times, where the great miracles of Christ were performed, more than any other. Jesus also presented the Gospel to the world in the city of Nahum.

Nahum was an Elkoshite, but no one knows where Elkosh was. Later in his career he could have been in north Galilee and Nahum's prophecies could have come from that region. Whatever the case, by the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD Capernaum was named after Nahum the prophet and it was in and near there, in Galilee of the nations, Jesus did most of His miracles and teaching. Mount Hermon, where the transfiguration took place, is not far away.

So there is a connection between the "**good tidings**" we find in Nahum 1:15, coming from the one who will have a presence on this earth at His second advent, with the teaching of the destruction of the Babylonian system as told by John (who also came from the Capernaum area, along with Peter). There are other connections from a New Testament point of view. Those connections also have to do with the end time.

In Nahum chapter 3 the destruction of this Nimrod system, established in Babylon and in Nineveh, is continuing. Why will Nineveh be destroyed? Nahum tells us:

**"Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departs not; the noise of a whip, the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots** [war-like, wanting to bring civilization to its knees by war, intimidation, and conquest].

**The horseman lifts up both the bright sword and the glittering spear; and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcasses; and there is none end of their corpses; they stumble upon their corpses** [this bloody city will be judged]: **Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favored harlot ..."**

• **Nahum 3:1–4**

Remember the "she" in Nahum chapter 2, the Huzzab (the suburb of Nineveh probably with many

religious buildings)? Who is **“the well favored harlot”**? In the Book of Revelation a harlot is mentioned. She is riding on the back of a beast. That beast is the wicked counselor, a political operative of Nahum 1:11–13. This is another New Testament connection. We are talking here about a harlot of whoredoms.

**“... the mistress of witchcrafts [discussed also in Revelation 17:1, 15–16 & 19:2] that sells nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.”**

• **Nahum 3:4**

This is the Babylon of Nimrod. This is the Nineveh of Nimrod. This is the Mesopotamian system, the system of Shinar that developed immediately after the flood, systematized further under Nebuchadnezzar and it continues today. The only thing that will overthrow it is the presence of God on this earth with the Kingdom of God. But He will come in goodness as well as with the Gospel. At the end, people will repent. But this city will be judged, why? It will be judged because it is a bloody city.

It is called a **“multitude of whoredoms of the well-favored harlot”** (verse 4), because the world has favored this harlot, **“that sells nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.”**<sup>11</sup> This is where idolatry comes in. The whole world has been influenced by this system which will be overthrown.

**“Behold I am against you, says YHWH of Hosts; and I will discover your skirts upon your face [I will reach down and take your skirts over your face], and I will show the nations your nakedness, and the kingdoms your shame. I will cast abominable filth upon you, and make you vile, and will set you as a gazingstock.”**<sup>12</sup>

**And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon you shall flee from you, and say, ‘Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforters for you?’”**

• **Nahum 3:5–7**

Note the end of 3:7. There are no “comforters” or consolations for Nineveh. They **“seek comforters”** but none will be found.

As Nahum goes on, an attack upon Egypt is also indicated. The two most important Gentile systems, Nineveh northeast of Israel and Egypt to the south of Israel, will be devastated. Nahum mentions the city of “No” in verse 8,<sup>13</sup> which is Thebes, the ancient Egyptian capital. Then Nahum mentions Ethiopia and Egypt in verse 9. They will be taken captive, verse 10. All the Gentile nations which have brought Israel into idolatrous relationships will be punished. Nahum goes on:

**“You [Nineveh] also shall be drunken: you shall be hid, you also shall seek strength [hire mercenary soldiers] because of the enemy. All your strong holds shall be like fig trees with the first-ripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater. Behold, your people in the midst of you are women [in strength, not like men]: the gates of your land shall be set wide open unto your enemies; fire shall devour your bars.**

**Draw your waters for the siege, fortify your strong holds: go into clay, and tread the mortar, make strong the brick kiln. There [in spite of that he says] shall the fire devour you, the sword shall cut you off, it shall eat you up like the cankerworm: make yourself many as the cankerworm, make yourself many as the locusts.”**

• **Nahum 3:11–15**

<sup>11</sup> The reference to selling may also refer to the return of slavery, even more widespread and public than it is today. See Revelation 18:13 where slavery is explicitly mentioned in connection with Babylon. *DWS*

<sup>12</sup> “Gazingstock,” n. A person or thing gazed at with scorn or abhorrence; an object of curiosity or contempt. —Bishop Hall. See “gazingstock.” *Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary*. MICRA, Inc., 23 Jul. 2013. It is a 17<sup>th</sup> century phrase known to readers of the King James Version. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/gazingstock>>. *DWS*

<sup>13</sup> In Hebrew the text “No-Amon,” means Thebes. The “Amon” is a reference to the Egyptian god Amon, not the Hebrew word for “multitude.” Thebes was in upper Egypt (far south of the Nile Delta) on the eastern bank of the Nile River, across from the Valley of the Kings. The same identification of Thebes is found in Jeremiah 46:25 and Ezekiel 30:14–16. *DWS*

Nineveh multiplied hired soldiers, their merchants will be like cankerworms, like great grasshoppers, eating everything in sight.

**“Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: your nobles shall dwell in the dust, your people is scattered upon the mountains, ... there is no healing of your bruise, your wound is grievous.”**

• **Nahum 3:18–19**

Nahum ends his prophecy. The end of Nineveh has come. What we find is the end of the Babylonian-Ninevite system established by Nimrod, the great Orion which straddles the celestial equator in the heavens. This is the end-time world which will exist at the end of the age when the presence of the Lord will put an end to it.

The language we read in Nahum chapter 3 is typical of the language you read in the Book of Revelation. Revelation chapters 17 and 18 speak about the great harlot. Now relate it to Nahum chapter 3 to give yourself additional insight, because these events will take place just prior to and during the second advent of Christ. Nahum is a prophecy of our future.

Nahum has a city named after him in New Testament times where the Gospel had its origination. That Gospel shows the eventual overthrow of the Babylonian and the Ninevite system, and that God will establish the Kingdom of God on earth. When that happens, Jesus Christ will do it. The Book of Revelation will come alive as never before.

If you want to know more about the details of how it will occur, hook the prophecies of the Book of Nahum onto the stem of Daniel and the Book of Revelation. Things will come alive as never before. Let us keep our eyes on the Middle East because the prophecies of the Bible are about to come to pass.

Ernest L. Martin, 1997  
David Sielaff, August 2013

### ***Addendum by David Sielaff***

Below is an introduction to Nahum from *The Bible Remembrancer: Containing an Analysis of the Whole Bible* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1848), p. 73.

**“Nineveh had repented at the preaching of Jonah; but a century and a half later the memory and the traces of that repentance had died away; and another prophet arises with his ‘burden’ of coming judgment and coming wrath. But sentence is yet deferred; and Zephaniah seventy or eighty years later still predicts the woe coming upon Nineveh, ‘the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly’ (Zephaniah 2:13–15). Some sixty years after the delivery of Zephaniah’s testimony Ezekiel tells of the ‘ruin’ of the city (Ezekiel 31:3–14).**

**In the days of Nahum, Nineveh was strong and powerful; but he declared ‘it shall come that all they that look upon you shall flee from you, and say, Nineveh is laid waste’ (3:7). He contrasts Nineveh with Thebes, the great Egyptian city, the metropolis of Upper Egypt, which had then been devastated, and cries, ‘Are you better than No [or No-Amon], that was situated among the rivers ... whose rampart was the sea?’ (3:8). At No sat the mighty statue of the vocal Memnon, with its companion; and near them the enormous statue of Ramsees the Great, consisting of a single block of marble at 887 tons weight. Near No was an avenue more than a mile long composed of Sphinxes with rams heads and lions’ bodies. The humiliation of No is understood to have been effected by Sargon, King of Assyria, as predicted by Isaiah (Isaiah 20:4–5). From that visitation No partially recovered; and a century and a quarter after the siege by Sargon both Jeremiah and Ezekiel foretell further catastrophes (Jeremiah 44:25; Ezekiel 30:14–16). The renowned city of a hundred gates now ‘consists of Arab huts amidst stately ruins and drifting sands.’”**

## Cobbin's Outline of Nahum

During the Reign of Hezekiah	Ch. 1	Majestic description of God's goodness to His people, and severity to His enemies.	Nineveh	2	Taking of Nineveh described.
				3	Utter destruction of Nineveh.

## David Dorsey, The Literary Structure of the Old Testament

Structuralist David Dorsey identifies the Book of Nahum as having seven major and symmetric literary units just like the Book of Micah. The last three sections of Nahum correspond to the first three, with the fourth section being the center of Nahum's message<sup>14</sup>:

- a YHWH, like a terrible force of nature, avenges his enemies but is good to those who trust him (1:2–10)
- b YHWH will destroy Nineveh but restore Judah (1:11–15)
- c vivid description of the attack upon Nineveh (2:1–10)
- d CENTER: lament over fall of Nineveh, the lions' den (2:11–13)
- c' vivid description of the looting of Nineveh (3:1–7)
- b' Nineveh will be destroyed: it is vulnerable, like Thebes (3:8–13)
- a' Nineveh, likened to a destructive force of nature, will be destroyed (3:14–19)<sup>15</sup>

Within this outline, which appeals to me for several reasons, it has been noted by several commentators the very complex shifting between masculine and feminine. Dr. Martin also noted this in his presentation. Cities as well as religious bodies are feminine in Scripture. In Nahum, while the proper noun Nineveh has no gender, when it is referred to as a city, a feminine pronoun is used. The Egyptian city of Thebes also has a feminine descriptive pronoun "she."

Let me quote the summary and historical background of the Book of Nahum by Professor Nogalski:

**"Nahum announces the end of Assyrian hegemony as anticipated in Micah, the previous writing [of the Minor Prophets]. At first, Assyria's downfall is treated as good news for Judah (1:15), but problems loom on the horizon. The message of [Nahum] 3:15–17 demonstrates that Assyria is overthrown by a nation more powerful than itself, a nation that can only be interpreted as Babylon, though it is not so named in Nahum. These verses also imply that Babylon will not be satisfied to destroy Assyria but will continue its own move westward to conquer new territories. This theme, the impending arrival of the Babylonians as a continuation of God's punishment against Judah, plays a central role in the next writing of the Book of the Twelve — Habakkuk."**

• Nogalski, "Nahum," pp. 606–607, brackets mine<sup>16</sup>

As Nogalski points out later (page 638), God used Assyria as His agent to punish the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah (Isaiah chapter 10). They excelled in evil, were too greedy and unbelievably cruel in their actions. (This was one reason Jonah wanted Nineveh punished in his day, to try to prevent God using Assyria as His tool to punish Israel.)

Within the text there is an interesting 3-fold time sequence that Nahum presents to us:

1. Nineveh and her king are threatened to occur in the future (Nahum 1:14).
2. Most of chapters 2 and 3 describe the punishment as if they are occurring or are in process.

<sup>14</sup> David Dorsey, "Chapter 33: Nahum: Where Now Is the Lion's Den," in *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi* (Grant Rapids: MI, Baker Books, 1999), pp. 301–305.

<sup>15</sup> I am quoting section "33.1 The Book of Nahum" in Dorsey, "Chapter 33: Nahum ...," p. 302.

<sup>16</sup> From James Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah–Malachi* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011). DWS

3. The last two verses (Nahum 3:18–19) indicate that many events have happened already.<sup>17</sup>

This time sequence does not preclude the future fulfillment of Nahum’s prophecies as Dr. Martin points out.

### *Connections of Nahum with Other Bible Books*

**“The theophany of Nahum [chapter] 1 plays a major theological role in the development of Micah–Habakkuk [the sequence of Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk]. In Micah 7:8–20, Lady Zion reproaches Lady Nineveh for taunting her, and Lady Zion receives a reprieve from YHWH’s judgment.**

**The theophany in Nahum 1:2–8 has one key message: YHWH will punish the wicked. ... In its current position as the introductory passage of Nahum, the hymn makes it clear that God will take down Nineveh/Assyria after God has used them to punish Judah and Jerusalem.”**

• ***Nogalski, The Book of the Twelve, p. 605***

Nahum addresses the Assyrian occupation and suppression of Judah, while the next book of the Minor Prophets, Habakkuk, gives the prophecy of the Babylonian attacks and destruction of the kingdom of Judah.

Passages in Nahum also connect with verses in Isaiah (Nahum 1:8–9 compare with Isaiah 8:8; 10:23; Nahum 2:10 with Isaiah 24:1; 21:3; Nahum 1:15 with Isaiah 52:7). Other intertextual links have been noted:

**“Plainly, Nahum is the last of the prophets of the Assyrian period. Jeremiah borrows from, and so stamps with inspiration, Nahum.**

**Jeremiah 10:19, compare Nahum 3:19;**

**Jeremiah 13:26, compare Nahum 3:5;**

**Jeremiah 50:37, 51:30, compare Nahum 3:13.”**

• ***“Nahum,” Fausset’s Bible Dictionary***

A.R. Fausset remarks that other passages tell situations in the time of Nahum that also occurred during the time of Hezekiah and Isaiah. Fausset also notes that Nahum was apparently written after the Assyrians captured Thebes in Egypt, but before the destruction of Nineveh. This also fits the period of Hezekiah and Isaiah. At no other time were these factors extant, a time when Judah trusted YHWH to be their stronghold and kept the feasts solemnly<sup>18</sup>:

**“Hezekiah’s time was that in which trust in Jehovah and the observance of the temple feasts prevailed as they did not before or after. So in Nahum 1:7, 15, ‘YHWH is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knows (with approval) them that trust in him. ... O Judah, keep your solemn feasts ...”**

• ***“Nahum,” Fausset’s Bible Dictionary***

To understand the extent of concern about the Assyrian horrors against their enemies and the deprivations against Assyria’s vassal kingdoms, several times alliances were made against Assyria to halt its expansion during its rise to power. One example was during the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century BC when King Ahab of Israel who sent an army to join an alliance with King Hadad-Ezer of Syria and ten other kings to fight against Assyria under King Shalmaneser III. The alliance was defeated, but the victory apparently was not decisive. See the article [“The Battle of Qarqar \(853 BC\)”](#) which tells of an Assyrian inscription about their victory over “the Twelve Kings.” Other alliances of northern peoples tried to throw off Assyrian dominance. Finally, a combined Persian and Babylonian force, along with other peoples, succeeded in overthrowing and destroying the core of the Assyrian empire. A more powerful Neo-Babylonian empire arose to dominance.

<sup>17</sup> Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, p. 604. *DWS*

<sup>18</sup> Nahum 3:8 discusses a capture of the city of Thebes by the Assyrians. Two other passages, Jeremiah 46:25 and Ezekiel 30:14–16 tell about a future conquest of Thebes and other Egyptian cities by the armies of Babylon. *DWS*

The descriptions of Nahum 3:1–4 are vivid and descriptive of Assyria’s own inhuman butchery they inflicted upon other peoples. It is likened in Nahum to a lion killing and tearing the flesh of victims to feed young lions. All nations celebrated the demise of the Assyrian Empire. The remaining Assyrian people were incorporated within the Babylonian Empire, which later was identified as Assyrian.

## Conclusion

Almost all commentaries on the Book of Nahum consider the three chapters to have only historical significance, although some do accept that Nahum prophesied the destruction of Nineveh before the event. I know of none which give the analysis as Dr. Martin does: that much of the Book of Nahum applies to our future, the time before Christ’s return. Some even ignore the existence of Assyria in the future. Note:

**“In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.”**

• *Isaiah 19:23*

In a passage telling God’s people how the King of Babylon will be destroyed, he is called **“the Assyrian.”** First note Nahum 1:13: **“For now will I break his yoke from off you, and will burst your bonds in sunder.”**

**“YHWH of hosts has sworn, saying, ‘Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.’”**

• *Isaiah 14:24–26*

The Book of Nahum communicates more than just past events. Dr. Martin’s analysis shows that Nahum communicates events which are still future to us. If such analysis is left out of the study of Nahum, it will result in important biblical information of future events being absent from the matrix of prophetic evidence. God has made the evidence openly available to us in Nahum and other books of Scripture.

Of course, the sum total of prophetic evidence has to do with “what happens when.” Concerning “when” events occur, we should strive to know their proper sequence, without reference to the calendar time of those events. Most Christians we will never know the times until the very end of the age, and even then many will not understand until Christ appears in the clouds (Matthew 24:30, 26:64; Mark 13:26, 14:62; Luke 21:27).

**“And he [Jesus] said unto them, ‘It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.’ ... And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. ... two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, ‘... this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.’”**

• *Acts 1:7, 9–11*

No prophecy should be left out. Every detail is important. There are no minor prophecies. If the interplay of the political actions of Nineveh with the religious actions of the Babylonian system is properly understood, we will not overlook important prophetic milestones as they occur in the future.

David Sielaff