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THE MINOR PROPHETS
BOOK 8 – NAHUM

The Old Testament may be categorized in four sections of redemption (Mosaic Law), History (Joshua to Esther) Poetry (Job to Lamentations) and Prophecy (The prophecies from Isaiah to Malachi).

Nahum is a book of prophecy, but it is also classic Hebrew poetry. Chapter one is the first poem, while chapters two and three make up the second poem. Hebrew poetry is very different from what the Western culture thinks of as poetry because it comes from an eastern culture. It uses imagery and repetitiveness in a staccato fashion.

An oracle (message) from God delivered by a prophet is often called his “burden.” The “burden of Nineveh” was Nahum’s oracle of judgment upon that evil nation. Nineveh was the capital of the vast Assyrian Empire that preceded the Babylonian Empire. They were wicked, warlike, and vicious. They were known to stake their captured enemy to the ground and skin them alive.

Jonah had preached to them, and it brought them to repentance, but it didn’t last. They soon became much more evil than ever. God had a plan to use them to punish wicked Israel (Samaria) for their idolatry. More than 100 years after Jonah was there, Assyria defeated the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C. They took away more than 200,000 Hebrews and relocated them to other pagan nations. They took people of those pagan nations and repopulated Israel (Samaria) with these foreign pagans. The northern kingdom of Israel never again existed and became known only as Samaria. The Samaritans, being of mixed blood and mixed religious, were utterly despised by the Jews in Jesus’ day.

Although Assyria was used for God’s purpose, that did not give them a reprieve from God’s judgment for destroying Israel. They had also taken forty cities of Judea but could not touch Jerusalem.

Because they destroyed Israel God condemned Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire. Nahum’s two prophetic poems pronounced the fall of Assyria decades before it fell to Babylon in 612 B.C. Nahum 3:19 says, **“There is no healing of thy bruise”** or their fall. The fallen Assyrian Empire and Nineveh never again rose to prominence or power.

This shows that God does not forget or forgive evil that is done against His people. Punishment will come. **“Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the LORD.”** (Romans 12:19 and Deut. 35:32). God’s vengeance will also come against the beast and anti-Christ of the end times.