

Nahum

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As Micah on a small scale noticed both Babylon and the Assyrian which Isaiah presented much more fully, Nahum is occupied only with Nineveh and its chief before the world-powers were ordained. For such was the order historically, as prophetically it will be the inverse. (Compare Isa. 13 and Isa. 14 with Micah 4, Micah 5) For what answers to Babylon, the imperial Beast or fourth empire revived for judgment at the consummation of the age, will meet its doom before the Assyrian comes up with the external nations for final destruction when Israel shall be owned of Jehovah; but the reign of righteousness and peace is not yet fully established. Who can deny the special place designed for Nahum as to Nineveh, any more than the peculiar task given to Obadiah as to Edom?

Nahum was a Galilean like Jonah; and if the latter was sent long before to warn the haughty Gentile, and on repentance to defer the judgment in divine mercy, the former was given, on its raising its head still more proudly, to pronounce Jehovah's indignant vengeance, however slow to anger; for He is as great as He is good. In vain went forth out of Nineveh one that imagined evil against Jehovah, a counsellor of Belial. He will make a full end-trouble shall not rise a second time; as Sennacherib proved, his yoke broken, His people's bonds burst, out of the house of the Assyrian's gods graven and molten images cut off, and his grave prepared. The scourge finally past is followed by the enduring peace of His people (Nahum 1).

What more superb than the lifelike graphic sketch of the dashing in pieces (Nahum 2)? But all ends, not in Jerusalem taken, but in Nineveh and its palace melting away in its own rivers which burst the gates, the converse of Babylon's later fate. The lair of the lions would be an utter ruin, instead of a terror (Nahum 3). Nineveh was no better than Thebes, or No-Amon; there is no healing of her breach.