

Directions:

This is a booklet to aid you in your personal study of this book. Read through the text first, discovering God's precious truths for yourself. Write down the main point of each section of text in the space provided. Use the margins on each side of the text and the backside of the page to make notations of the truths you discover and passages you do not understand. When you believe you have seen all there is in text, read and answer the questions in the booklet pertaining to that section of text. The questions are not an exhaustive list of things to look for in the text. The questions are to help you consider the points that the author was trying to convey to his audience. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Introduction:

The most that is known about Nahum is given in 1:1. Thus, we know that Nahum was from Elkosh, but archaeology has not determined where Elkosh is located. The date of Nahum's ministry is 663-612 B.C., with the writing of the book possibly written at about 614 B.C. Nahum preaches solely to Ninevah, the capital of Assyria. It is interesting to note that about 120 years earlier Jonah had preached to this very city. Jonah had been very successful in turning the people of Ninevah from evil. Apparently the next generation did not continue the reverence toward God but turned back to their evil ways. Farrar gives a vivid description of the character of the Assyrian people:

"Judged from the vaunting inscriptions of her kings, no power more useless, more savage, more terrible, ever cast its gigantic shadow on the page of history as it passed on the way to ruin. The kings of Assyria tormented the miserable world. They exult to record how "space failed for corpses"; how unsparing a destroyer is their goddess Ishtar; how they flung away the bodies of soldiers like so much clay; how they made pyramids of human heads; how they burned cities; how they filled populous lands with death and devastation; how they reddened broad deserts with carnage of warriors; how they scattered whole countries with the corpses of their defenders as with chaff; how they impaled "heaps of men" on stakes, and strewed the mountains and choked rivers with dead bones; how they cut off the hands of kings and nailed them on the walls, and left their bodies to rot with bears and dogs on the entrance gates of cities; how they employed nations of captives in making brick in fetters; how they cut down warriors like weeds, or smote them like wild beasts in the forests, and covered pillars with the flayed skins of rival monarchs."

It was to this people that the nation of Israel was taken captive and destroyed. With all of this in mind, Nahum is sent to preach judgment.

Take your Bible and skim through the book of Nahum, looking at the subheadings of each paragraph in each chapter.

1. What do you think is the theme of the book?

Life Application:

2. What can we learn from the people of Ninevah about their inability to pass on to the next generation the knowledge of God?

1 An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.

2 The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD is avenging and wrathful; the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. 3 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. 4 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry; he dries up all the rivers; Bashan and Carmel wither; the bloom of Lebanon withers. 5 The mountains quake before him; the hills melt; the earth heaves before him, the world and all who dwell in it.

6 Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him. 7 The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him. 8 But with an overflowing flood he will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness. 9 What do you plot against the LORD? He will make a complete end; trouble will not rise up a second time. 10 For they are like entangled thorns, like drunkards as they drink; they are consumed like stubble fully dried. 11 From you came one who plotted evil against the LORD, a worthless counselor.

12 Thus says the LORD, "Though they are at full strength and many, they will be cut down and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more. 13 And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds apart."

14 The LORD has given commandment about you: "No more shall your name be perpetuated; from the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the metal image. I will make your grave, for you are vile."

15 Behold, upon the mountains, the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace! Keep your feasts, O Judah; fulfill your vows, for never again shall the worthless pass through you; he is utterly cut off. (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

1. List the characteristics of God that are found in 1:2-8.

2. Explain the imagery found in 1:9-15.

1 Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder— no end to the prey! 2 The crack of the whip, and rumble of the wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot! 3 Horsemen charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, hosts of slain, heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end— they stumble over the bodies! 4 And all for the countless whorings of the prostitute, graceful and of deadly charms, who betrays nations with her whorings, and peoples with her charms.

5 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. 6 I will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. 7 And all who look at you will shrink from you and say, “Wasted is Nineveh; who will grieve for her?” Where shall I seek comforters for you?

8 Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile, with water around her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall? 9 Cush was her strength; Egypt too, and that without limit; Put and the Libyans were her helpers.

10 Yet she became an exile; she went into captivity; her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of every street; for her honored men lots were cast, and all her great men were bound in chains. 11 You also will be drunken; you will go into hiding; you will seek a refuge from the enemy. 12 All your fortresses are like fig trees with first-ripe figs— if shaken they fall into the mouth of the eater. 13 Behold, your troops are women in your midst. The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has devoured your bars.

14 Draw water for the siege; strengthen your forts; go into the clay; tread the mortar; take hold of the brick mold! 15 There will the fire devour you; the sword will cut you off. It will devour you like the locust. Multiply yourselves like the locust; multiply like the grasshopper! 16 You increased your merchants more than the stars of the heavens. The locust spreads its wings and flies away.

17 Your princes are like grasshoppers, your scribes like clouds of locusts settling on the fences in a day of cold— when the sun rises, they fly away; no one knows where they are.

18 Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to gather them. 19 There is no easing your hurt; your wound is grievous. All who hear the news about you clap their hands over you. For upon whom has not come your unceasing evil? (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

1. Explain the imagery given by Nahum in 3:5-7.
2. How was No Amon like Ninevah?
3. Explain the figure of the locusts in 3:17.
4. Why does the rest of the world clap their hands at the fall of Ninevah?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS LESSON:

1. Severe destruction is coming upon Ninevah.
2. 1:14-- “I will make your grave, for you are worthless.” (NRSV)

NAHUM



A SELF-STUDY WORKBOOK

by: Brent Kercheville