NAHUM.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE.

(Division.)

1.1. THE TITLE.

\textbf{A}\textsuperscript{1} \textsuperscript{3} | 1. 2–4. JEHOVAH'S ATTRIBUTES DECLARED.
\textbf{A}\textsuperscript{2} | 1. 9—3. 19. JEHOVAH'S JUDGMENTS FORETOLD.

For the Canonical order and place of the Prophets, see Ap. 1, and pages 1206 and 1207.
For the Chronological order of the Prophets, see Ap. 77.
For the Formula of Prophetic utterance, see Ap. 82.
For the Inter-relation of the Prophetical Books, see Ap. 78.
For the Relation of Nahum to the twelve Minor (or Shorter) Prophets, see p. 1206.
For the References to the Pentateuch, see Ap. 92.

Nahum concludes the seven pre-captivity Prophets, being the last of the second group of three; and corresponding with Jonah, which also has Nineveh for its subject. See the Structure (p. 1206).

Some eighty-seven years before, Jonah had proclaimed Jehovah's favour to Nineveh, which had prolonged its existence till now, when Nahum's prophecy of coming judgment was fulfilled without further delay.

Nahum is undated; but, if 1. 11 refers primarily to the Rab-shakeh (as we believe it does) of 2 Kings 18, 26–28, then we have a clue of great importance, for that speaks of the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, and gives us the date as 693 B.C.

The Rab-shakeh = the chief of the captains, was apparently a renegade Jew, and a "counsellor" high in favour with the Assyrian king (Sennacherib). He was apparently, as to office, similar to our "Political Officer" in the Indian Frontier campaigns. He insisted on speaking to the common People on the wall in the Jews' language; indicating a freedom in the use of Hebrew that would scarcely be possessed by an Assyrian ambassador.

The Rab-shakeh's words certainly show a deadly animosity towards Jehovah; which is borne out by Nah. 1. 11, and Pss. 120. 2; 129. 3. See Ap. 67.

If this be correct, then we may date Nahum as living and prophesying in 693 B.C.
NAHUM.

TITLE

THE burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

A$^1$ A (p. 1262)

2 GOD is jealous, and the LORD re-vengeeth; the LORD re-vengeeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, and reserve wrath for His enemies.

B 3 The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked:

C the LORD hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet.

4 He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers; Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.

5 The mountains quake at Him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at His presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

6 Who can stand before His indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him.

7 The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him.

8 But with an overrunning flood He will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue His enemies.

A$^2$ D

9 What do ye imagine against the LORD? ye will make an utter end of the place thereof, and He will make it as fly over the dust, and as为空

D 11 There is one come out of the south, and his name shall be pure, and his word shall come forth in truth; he shall speak to this people.

12 Thus saith the LORD; Though they be quiet, and also many, yet shall they be as stubble fully dry.

1. 1 burden. Cp. Isa. 13. 1–27. 13. See the Structure, p. 930, and Habakkuk. A prophetic oracle: i.e., the prophetic doom of Nineveh, written about ninety (603–514 = c.) years before Nineveh’s doom; and while the Assyrian Empire was at its height. The doom of Nineveh came therefore 176 years after Jonah’s mission. The prophecy was addressed to Nahum’s own People, but as a menace to Nineveh.

Nahum. This heading is not “undoubtedly by a later hand,” as alluded. The words “the place thereof” (v. 8) would be unintelligible without it. Nineveh is not mentioned again until 2. 8; and is only hinted at elsewhere (3. 1, 18). The Structure below is the best commentary.

Nahum = the compassionate, or consoler. The name refers back to Jehovah’s compassion connected with Jonah’s mission eighty-seven years before. Nothing is known of Nahum beyond his book.

Elkoshite. Heb. Elkašiti. A village of this name exists to-day, twenty-four miles north of Nineveh (now Konyaşı). See Layard’s Nineveh and Its Remains, 1, p. 255.

2. 2–8 (A$^1$, p. 1261). JEHOVAH’S ATTRIBUTES DECLARED. (Introversion.)

A$^1$ 1 A 2 Vengeance.

B 3 Long-suffering.

C 4 Power. Unequalled.

C 5 Power. Irresistible.

B 7 Goodness.

A 8 Vengeance.


See the Structure, and note the subjects of “A,” “A’; “B” and “B’; “C” and “C’,” the LORD. Heb. Jehovah. Ap. 4. II. Note the Fig. Epizeuxis (Ap. 6); for great emphasis

revenge = avengeth.

is furious = a possessor of wrath. Heb. “lord of wrath”.

take vengeance on = be an Avenger to wrath. Fig. Ellipsis (Absolute). Ap. 5.

for = against.


acquit = clear, or hold guiltless.


burned = upheaved. world. Heb. 7 bid = the world as inhabited. 6 abide = stand up. Cp. Jer. 10. 10. Mal. 3. 2.

7 good. See the Structure “B,” above. Cp. 1 Chron. 16. 34. Ps. 100. 5. Jer. 33. 11. Lam. 3. 25.

strong hold = a place of safety. He knoweth, &c. Cp. Ps 1. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

trust in = for refuge to. Heb. madath. Ap. 69. II.

8 But, &c. Note the transition in v. 8, which is explained by the Structure “A,” above. Heb. her place; i.e. Nineveh’s. See note on title above (v. 1).

darkness, &c. or, “as for His foes, darkness shall pursue [them]”

1. 9–3. 19 (A$^3$, p. 1281). JEHOVAH’S JUDGMENTS FORETOLD. (Introversion.)

A$^2$ D 1. 9–12. Destruction of Nineveh.


9 imagine = devise. Cp. Ps 2. 1. affliction = distress, or trouble; Heb. 5 star, as in v. 7: i.e. the trouble that now threatens Nineveh. the second time.

10 folden = entangled. thorns. The emblem of hostile armies (Isa. 10. 17; 27. 4).


thou; i.e. Nineveh (fem.). evil. Cp. 44. viii. evil. Heb. rdt’. The counsellor probably = Rabshakeh; and Belial = Sonneracher. See note on p. 1281.

12 quiet = secure. cut down = cut down (like dry stubble). when he, &c. Ref. to Pent. (Ex. 12. 12).

CP. ISA. 8. 8. DAN. 11. 10

1282
1. -12-15 (E, p. 1262). DELIVERANCE OF JUDAH.

(division.)

   | F3 | 15. Good bestowed.

-12 Though, &c. = And [now, O Judah], &c. Through not seeing the Structure and the change of subject at "E", modern critics say "the first part of this verse is certainly more or less corrupt"; and they alter the Heb. text to make it agree with the last clause ("F3"), the subject changing there to the removal of evil from Judah.

thee: i.e. Judah (v. 13).

13 will I break, &c. Ref. to Pent. (Gen. 27. 40). Ap. 92.

his yoke. Some codices read "his rod".

14 no more of thy name, &c.: i.e. the dynasty of Nineveh shall end.

make = make [H]: i.e. "the house of thy gods"


15 Behold. Fig. Asterismos (Ap. 6), for emphasis, calling attention to the ref. to Isa. 59. 7, the hypothetical second Isaiah, 100 years before he is supposed by modern critics to have lived.

keep thy solemn feasts. Fig. Polypetos. Ap. 6.

Heb. "feast thy solemn feasts"; used for great emphasis. Ref. to Pent. (Deut. 16. 16, &c.; 23. 21, &c.). Ap. 92.

the wicked. Heb. [theman of] Bethel. See note on v. 11.

2. 1-3. 19 (D, p. 1962). DESTRUCTION OF NINEVEH.

(Introduction and Extended Alteration.)

    | L | 2. 3-10. Judgment. Invasion.
    | H | 3. 8-10. Examples. Citation.
    | F | K | 3. 18, 19. Causes.

1 He that dasheth, &c.; i.e. Cyaxares and Nabopolassar (Herod. i. 106). A reference or type of the future destruction of Antichrist.

dasheth, &c.: or, the breaker (Heb. מָפָה, battlement, or hammer (Prov. 25. 18)). Cp. Jer. 25. 29; 51. 20.


2 the LORD. Heb. Jehovah. Ap. 4. 11. The verse not "misplaced", as alleged. See the Structure above:

he hath turned away = restoration, or is on the way to bring back in good, or bad sense according to the context, in contrast with Israel; cp. Gen. 32. 28; 43. 6; 45. 24, 28.

2. 3-10 (L, above). JUDGMENT. INVASION.

(Alternation.)

   | O | 7. Captured.
   | Q | 9. Dismayed.
   | O | 10. Dismayed.

3 mighty men = mighty ones, or warriors. Cp. 1 Sam. 28. 1. Kings 1. 8, 10.

made red = reddened with blood.


are in scarlet = are clad in scarlet; as were the armies of the Persians.

the chariots shall be . . . torches: or, with the flashing of steel the chariots (glitter).

fr trees.

Fig. Metonymy (of Cause), Ap. 6, for the spears or lances made from them.

rage = rave [as though mad]. Heb. הֹלֵל. From Old French jouer, to tilt; from Low Latin jactare, to cast (as in tilting). Jacta = to push against, a frequentative form; but the Heb. (שָׁקַע) means to run to and fro, as in Isa. 33. 4. Joel 2. 9.

they shall seem = their appearance is.

run = rush, or flash. Heb. רוּז.

He. The king of Assyria (3. 18).

reckon = both = himself of. "worthies = nobles, who may assemble their troops; as in 3. 18. Judg. 5. 13. 2 Chron. 29. 20.

in their walk = as they march.

and = yet. the defence = the mantelet, or portable storming cover [of the besiegers].

6 gates = flood-gates, or sluices. the rivers. Nineveh lay on the east (or left) bank of the Tigris. The Khusur (a perennial stream) ran through it; also a canal from it to the Tigris ran through the city.

opened: i.e. by the enemy.

be dissolved = melt away [in fear], or was in dismay.

7 Huzza. The words which follow show which the queen or queen-mother meant: or, Huzza may be taken as a verb (duel of מֵזָה), and the "and" = though (like "but" in u. 8). In that case read: "though firmly established, she shall be dishonoured and taken captive"; the city being thus personified.
Nahum

2. 7. lead her = mourn for, or bemoaning.

3. 8. lead her = mourne for, or bemoaning.

taberning = drumming [with their fingers] incessantly.

Hab. 2: v. 5. toph = a drum. See note on Ex. 15. 20. 1 Sam. 10. 5.

breasts = hearts. Some codices read "heart" (sing.); but others, with eight early printed editions, read "hearts" (pl.).

But Though, to answer to the "yet" of the next line.

is of old, &c. Read "hath been from old [filled with men] as a pool [full of water]."

beg: i.e. the defenders. Flee away. Before their besiegers.

they: i.e. the captives.

9 take the spoil.

Note the Fig. Epizeuxis (Ap. 6), for emphasis.

M P (p. 1264)
none end, &c. = [there are] treasures without end, [and] stores of all covetable vessels.

10 empty, . . . void, . . . waste. Note the Fig. Paronomasia (Ap. 6), for emphasis. Heb. bâqûh ’amanûth.

and. Note the Fig. Polyseides (Ap. 6), for emphasis.

the faces of them all, &c. Only here, and in Joel 2. 6. The reference is to Joel 2. 6 (as 1. 15 is to Is. 52. 7); not vice versa.

2. 11–3. 7 (M, p. 1263). CAUSES.

(Alteration.)

Q | 2. 13. The cause. Hostility.

11 Where . . . ? Fig. Erotetics (Ap. 6), for emphasis.

Lions. Note the Fig. Synonymia (Ap. 6), for emphasis.

This is Jehovah’s answer to Sennacherib’s taunt in 2 Kings 18. 34, looking back after the fulfilment of this prophecy.

old lion = lioness.

13 did tear = was tearing. Nineveh again personified in 2 Kings 18. 34.

Behold.

Fig. Asterisms. Ap. 6.

saith the LORD of Hosts = is the oracle of Jehovah Sabaoth.

the LORD. Hab. Jehovah, as in v. 2. The phrase, "Jehovah of hosts," occurs only here in Nahum ("Q") and in the corresponding member ("Q", 3. 5). See note on 1 Sam. 1. 5.

in the smoke = into smoke.

messengers = ambassadors. Cp. 2 Kings 18. 17, 19; 18. 9, 23.

3. 1 bloody city = city of great bloodshed (Ezek. 22. 2, 3; 24. 6, 9. Hab. 2. 12).

departeth not = will not be lacking. Captive princes were exposed to public contumely in cages, &c.

2 The noise, &c. Between vv. 1 and 2 supply the logical Ellipsis (Ap. 6), thus: "is not released. [Hark! The enemy is within thy gates!] The noise of a whip . . . chariot."

and. Note the Fig. Polyseides (Ap. 6), for emphasis.

jumping = bumping, or sounding.

bright = gleaming, or flashing.

they: i.e. the slaves. Heb. text margin, with some codices, and four early printed editions, reads "so that they stumble", &c.

6 make thee vile = disgrace thee.

7 her. Some codices, with two early printed editions, Aram., Syr., and Vulg., read "thee". But the Codex B. Mughah, quoted in the Masoretic (Ap. 50), reads "her". Better, or situated better.

populous No = No-Amon. Amon = the Egyptian net, meaning the city; now known as "Thebes". (Cp. Jer. 46. 25. Ezek. 30. 14, 15, 16).
was situate among "the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was "the sea, and her wall was "from "the sea? 9 Ethiopia, "and Egypt were her strength, and it was "infinite. "Put and "Libum were thy helpers.

Yet was "she carried away, she went into captivity: her young children also were dashed in pieces at the hand of all the streets: and they cast lots for her honourable men, and all her great men were bound in chains.

Then also shalt thou be drunken: they shall be hid, then also shalt thou seek "strength because of the enemy.

All thy strong holds shall be like fig trees with the firstripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater. Behold, thy people in the midst of thee "are women: the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies: the fire shall devour thy bars.

Draw thee waters for the siege, fortify thy strong holds: "go into clay, and "tread the morter, make strong "the brickkiln.

There shall be the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like the "cankerworm: "make thyself many as the "cankerworm, "make thyself many as the "locusts.

Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the "cankerworm "spoileth, and fleeth away.

Thy "crowned are as the locusts, and thy "captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the "hedges in the cold day, but when the sun ariseth they "flee away, and their place is not known where they "are.

Thy "shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall "dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and "no man gathereth them.

There is no "healing of thy "bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the "bruith of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for "upon whom hath not thy "wickedness passed continually?"


the rivers = the Nile streams. Heb. yēḥōrim, the regular word for the Nile and its canals, &c. First occurrence Gen. 41. 1; rendered "flood" (Jer. 46. 7, 8; Amos 8. 8; 9. 6); "brooks" (Isa. 19. 6, 7, 8); "streams" (Isa. 33. 21).

the sea. The Nile so called in Job 41. 31. Isa. 18. 2; 19. 5. from = of: i.e. consisted of. and. Some codices, cited in the Masorah (Ap. 30), omit this word "and"; in which case we should render the clause: "Ethiopia strengthened her; Egypt (defended her with countless hosts or hosts without"

infinite. Heb. = and there is no end. See the above note; and cp. 2. 9; 3. 3. Isa. 2. 7. Put. Gen. 10. 6, the third son of Ham, next to Cush (Ethiopia) and Mëriim (Egypt). Put was among the mercenaries of Tyre (Ezek. 27. 15). Cp. Jer. 46. 9. Lubim = Lybians. Cp. 2 Chron. 12. 3. Dan. 11. 43. 10 Y et was "she, &c. The cuneiform monuments tell us that Thebes, the old capital of Egypt, was destroyed by Assyria about 663 b.c. Assurbanipal has recorded his conquest. Nahum, writing about 693 b.c., refers to this as a well-known event, and likely to be remembered. Nineveh fell later, just as Nahum had foretold. See note on 1. 1. Yet Nahum refers to the Pentateuch! See Ap. 92. "she: i.e. Thebes. Theoh: i.e. Nineveh.

be drunken: i.e. drink of the cup [of judgment]; or, be stupefied by thy calamity. be hid = hide thyself. strength = strength [for defence]; hence = "thou shalt seek a stronghold, or refuge [in vain]".

Draw thee = Draw for thyself.

go . . . tread, &c. = i.e. make plenty of bricks [for the strongholds].

the brickkiln = the brick-work [fortifications, or walls] built with bricks. Heb. malben. See notes on 2 Sam. 12. 31. Jer. 43. 9; and Ap. 87.

cankerworm = the young locust. Heb. yeleb. See note on Joel 1. 4.

make thyself many = [though thou be] numerous. Fig. Irony (Ap. 6).

locusts = the young locust. Heb. larbeh. See note on Joel 1. 4.

16 Thou = [Thou] hast them, &c. spoileth = strip itself, or cast off the skin.


captains = master-masters, or marshals. Heb. tiḥsarr. Occurs only here, and Jer. 51. 27. Like the Assyrian duparrā = a tablet-writer.

hedges = loose stone walls.

flee away = are in flight.