THE BOOK OF NAHUM

I. INTRODUCTION - 1:1

A. Name: נאהם

1. Full of Comfort
2. Consolation or Comforter

B. Family - Nothing Known

C. Date

1. At the Time of Writing
   a. Nineveh in full strength
   b. Before her fall in 612
2. After the Fall of No-Amon - 3:8
   a. Destroyed by Ashurbanipal - 665-664 B.C./664-663 B.C.
   b. Thebes regained in 654
3. Conclusion: 663-654 - During Reign of Mannasseh

D. Locale: Elkosh - סְלָסָלָה - Three Possibilities

1. El Cush in Assyria - Not Likely
2. Capernaum - “Village of Nahum”
   a. Does not correspond to the Hebrew of Elkosh
   b. Nahum was a very common name
3. Judah
   a. Elkese - Near Beth Guvrin in the Shephelah
b. Israel is already fallen

c. Only Judah is mentioned - 1:15

E. Historical Setting

1. Nineveh founded by Nimrod - Genesis 10:8-12

2. First contact with Judah under Shalmaneser III

3. Destroyed Israel and Devastated Judah

4. Sennecherib made it the Capital of Assyria
   a. Build it up into a complex of four cities
   b. Inner wall - 6.2 miles
   c. Outer wall
      (1) 54 miles
      (2) 175 square miles
      (3) 50 feet thick at the base
      (4) 12 feet thick at top - Three chariots abreast could ride on it
      (5) 100 feet high
      (6) Fortified by 150 towers all 200 feet high

d. Palace - Great Hall was 40 x 150 feet

e. Armory - Six years to build up

f. Main street - 75 feet wide

5. Last Emperor
a. Sinharishkun

b. Greek: Saradanapalus

6. Destroyed in 612 by a Combination of Two Armies

   a. Nabopolassar – Babylon
   
   b. Cyaxares – Media

7. Fell in Two Stages

   a. First stage: 614 - 1:10; 2:4, 15; 3:11

      (1) Battle at the outer wall

      (2) Three battles (May/June - July/August) - Invaders defeated

      (3) Ninevites carousing

      (4) Invaders get into outer wall and lay siege to inner wall

   b. Second stage: 614-612 - 1:8; 2:6, 8; 3:13

      (1) Battle for the inner wall

      (2) Unexpected rains - July/August 612

      (3) Tigris floods - Two miles of wall ruined

      (4) City captured

8. Sources

   a. Ctesias

   b. Diodorus Siculus - 20 B.C.

The Greek Sources
Until the close of the last century the chief sources of information regarding the fall of Nineveh were Greek. Thus Herodotus (484-425 B.C.) in his History (I, 103, 106, 178) reports that Phraortes, king of the Medes (ca. 647-625 B.C.), attacked Assyria but was killed and his army defeated. Cyaxares, son and successor of Phraortes, filled with a desire to avenge his father, moved energetically against Nineveh. At first success crowned his efforts. The Assyrian capital was cut off and besieged; but a formidable army of Scythians led by Medyes, son of Protophyas, drove him away and lifted the siege. The exact date of this ill-fated campaign is not known. Probably it was about 620 B.C. A few years later, it seems, Cyaxares defeated the Scythians and soon began a second campaign against Assyria. Ctesias, Greek court physician to Artaxerxes Mnemon, claims to have consulted documentary sources in the Persian royal archives while writing his Persica, a chronicle of Assyria and Persia in 23 books. Only fragments of this work survive, especially in the Chronicles of Diodorus Siculus (ca. 20 B.C.). This author draws the following picture of Nineveh's end: The Assyrian king was Sardanapalus, an effeminate and thoroughly corrupt monarch. Arbakes, a general of the Medes, and Belesys, a Chaldean official, vassals of Assyria, met in Nineveh. Arbakes gained admittance to the royal quarter of the palace, witnessed the depravity of the king, and determined to organize a rebellion of the conquered countries against him, especially since Belesys had predicted that Arbakes would capture Sardanapalus' empire. At first Sardanapalus was successful over the rebel army consisting of Persians, Medes, Babylonians, and Arabians; but victory in these battles made his people careless, and Arbakes attacked them stealthily at night while the Assyrian soldiers were feasting and drinking. After their defeat the inhabitants of Nineveh were tightly locked within their walls. The siege extended over two years, for Sardanapalus had provisioned the city beforehand. Inordinately heavy rains raised the river to such a level that the walls collapsed. This was regarded at the fulfillment of an ancient oracle to the effect that Nineveh would fall only when the river itself declared war against it. Therefore Sardanapalus built a huge mound containing gold and silver objects, royal apparel, and placing his concubines and eunuchs in the midst of this funeral pyre, destroyed himself,
his dependents, and his palace by fire. As the flames arose, the rebels stormed the city, captured it, and made Arbakes king.

Popeius Trogus (ca. 20 B.C.), Nicolaus Damascenus, Velleius Paterculus (19 B.C. - A.D. 31) and later authors perpetuate the tradition that Sardanapalus, the last Assyrian king, was a degenerate and an effeminate ruler.

Admittedly the light which Greek sources shed on the last days of Nineveh is meager and disappointing. However, they agree on this, that the Medes were prominently connected with the capture of the city. The accounts generally center in Sardanapalus, a mythical, composite figure with the effeminate characteristics of Ashurbanipal, whose legendary end is reminiscent of Shamash-shum-ukin’s (668-646 B.C.) or Sin-shar-ishkun’s (612 B.C.) suicide by fire. The Median general who is pictured as opposing him bears the name Arbakes or some similar designation and plays the role later actually filled by Cyaxares.

On the other hand, the statements of the Greek historians cannot be completely discarded, and some Assyriologists now find a germ of truth in certain declaration. Recent investigations seem to point to the possibility and, in a few instances, to the credibility of some of their assertions. A long siege, the prominence of the Medes in the assault, the devastation by fire, the complete obliteration of the city, are recognized parts in Nineveh’s debacle. The facts of the destruction in some respects also present the background required for certain episodes transmitted by Greek historians. The possibility that Nineveh’s walls broke because of the rising river is endorsed by known instances of such collapse as well as by the season height of the river at the time of the city’s fall. That Ashurbanipal, despite his frequent claims of prowess, was a lily-livered coward who more than once shrank from active fighting is recognized by modern historians. The drunkenness associated with the city’s end was not an exceptional vice, as bas-reliefs from Nineveh, picturing drinking scenes, testify. (The Book of Nahum by Walter A. Maier, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959; pp.108-110)
Cuneiform Sources

Much more important are the cuneiform records with their older and better witness to Nineveh's destruction. These cuneiform accounts are the following:

1. Nabopolassar's (625-605 B.C.) inscriptions summarize boastfully yet vaguely: "As for the Assyrians, who since distant days had ruled over all the people and with heavy yoke had brought misery to the people of the land, from the land of Akkad I banished their feet and cast off their yoke." The same king also boasts: "I killed the Subaruean (The Assyrian) and turned his land (Variant: The enemy land) into rubble and ruins."

2. The Stele of Nabu-naid. This is a semicircular basalt inscription found in 1895 at Mujelibe, near the modern Hillah, and dates no later than the middle of the sixth century B.C. In the second of the ten preserved columns its ancient record offers a cuneiform summary of the Assyrian Empire's end. The city of Nineveh is not specifically mentioned, and the tablet is broken at several points of vital context; but lines 14 to 19 ("The king of Umman Manda, the fearless, destroyed their sanctuaries, those of the gods of Assyria, in their totality") as well as the inferences summarized by Messerschmidt and Gadd leave no doubt that this section of the stele deals with the destruction of the Assyrian Empire. Gadd believes that this passage has nothing to do with the fall of Nineveh, "But is concerned with the wars against the neo-Assyrian kingdom at Harran, in which the Umman Manda took the leading part." The language of Nabunaid's record, however, is too sweeping and comprehensive to eliminate Nineveh. The stele seems to be a telescoped account of Cyaxares' operations throughout Assyria before and after the city's fall.

3. British Museum Tablet 21, 901. The contents of this remarkable document were published in 1923 in Cyril John Gadd's The Fall of Nineveh. Although the tablet is not dated, its neo-Babylon characters show that it is part of the chronicle literature which originated in the earlier years of the
Achaemenid period (550-330 B.C.). The references pertaining to the fall of Nineveh are partially fragmentary on account of the damage which the tablet has suffered, and even the complete sections, written in the annalistic style of the *Babylonian Chronicle*, contain relatively meager information regarding the city's capture. But in summarizing the events from Nabopolassar's tenth year until the beginning of his eighteenth year (616-609 B.C.) this tablet offers invaluable data concerning the preliminary siege of the city and its subsequent destinies.

The beginning of this document pictures Nabopolassar, the founder of the neo-Babylonian empire, in open rebellion against the Assyrians, who were fatally weakened by the attacking Scythian hordes. These anti-Assyrian efforts, which may have begun a few years before, centered in the 616 B.C. battles for certain Assyrian provinces; but in 615 B.C. Nabopolassar launched his offensive against the heart of the Assyrian Empire and besieged Ashur, ancient capital. This campaign appears to have been ambitious. Relief troops from Nineveh helped the Assyrian forces at Ashur throw the Babylonians into hurried flight. In the autumn of that year the Medes, seemingly on their own responsibility, without alliance, attacked one of the Assyrian provinces. In 614 B.C. the lines of military operation were drawn more closely about Nineveh, and the siege of the city was begun by the Medes, under Cyaxares. A sector of the suburban territory was taken, but a break in the tablet perhaps removes the reason for the escape of Nineveh itself. When the cuneiform record continues, it recounts the capture of Ashur by the Medes, its destruction, the brutal massacre of its inhabitants, and the ominous alliance made between Cyaxares and Nabopolassar. The year 613 B.C. produced the lull before the storm, a period marked in the annals only by a notice regarding a provincial revolt (With Assyrian support) against Babylon and the consequent punitive expeditions. With 612 B.C. the doom arrived. Apparently (the lines are partially obliterated) the Babylonians, the Scythians, and the Medes were allied, marching up the left bank of the Tigris, against Nineveh. The Chronicle indicates that Cyaxares and his Medes played the major part in the subsequent attack and that under his leadership the Babylonians and Scythians assumed the minor
role. The siege of the city itself lasted almost three months. While the precise presentation of the Chronicle and its mutilated condition preclude the possibility of learning the details of the siege, it seems apparent that three battles were fought before Nineveh fell in the month of Ab (April-May), 612 B.C. The city was “turned into a mound and ruin,” yet before the bloody end, in which Nineveh’s “chief men” were killed and plunder beyond counting was taken, a company of Ninevites seized an appropriate opportunity to escape the vigils of the besiegers and under the leadership of one Ashuruballit established a petty Assyrian kingdom at Haran. (Ibid, pp. 111-113.)

F. Major Points

1. God’s Rule in the Kingdom of Men

2. God’s Vengeance

3. The Outworking of the Abrahamic Covenant

4. God is a Stronghold in Time of Trouble

G. New Testament Quotations - Possibly 1:15 is Quoted in Romans 10:15

H. Theme - The Doom of Nineveh

1. Concerned with a nation outside the Jewish Kingdom

2. Concerned with Nineveh specifically as a city

3. Source of comfort to Judah

4. Completes Jonah’s prophecy

I. The Verse: The Burden of Nineveh

1. נַח (Nah) - Heavy Burden, Message

2. The Book of the Vision – Only prophet to use this formula

3. The Author: Of Nahum the Elkashite
II. THE DOOM OF NINEVEH - 1:2-15

A. The Destroyer of Nineveh - 1:2-8

1. The God of Vengeance - 1:2

   a. Basic theme - God will render vengeance against Nineveh
      
      (1) *Jehovah is a jealous God and avenges*
      
      (2) *Jehovah avenges and is full of wrath*
      
      (3) *Jehovah takes vengeance on His adversaries*
      
      (4) *He reserves wrath for His enemies*

   b. Vengeance on behalf of Israel

2. The God of Patience - 1:3a

   a. *Jehovah is slow to anger* - Based on Exodus 34:6-7
      
      (1) God has been patient with Nineveh
      
      (2) Warned of vengeance through Jonah

   b. *Great in power* - Therefore he can judge Nineveh

   c. *Will by no means clear the guilty*

   d. Nineveh has returned to her old ways

3. The God of Power - 1:3b-5

   a. In control of the weather – 1:3b
      
      (1) *Jehovah has His way*

      (a) *In the whirlwind*
      
      (b) *In the storm*
(2) *The clouds are the dust of His feet*

b. In control of the water supply - 1:4

(1) *He rebukes the sea and makes it dry* - A reference to the Red Sea Miracle

(2) *Dries up all the rivers* - Part of Nineveh’s defense system

(3) Bashan - Carmel - Lebanon - These places are usually well watered

(a) *Bashan languishes*

(b) *And Carmel*

(c) *The flower of Lebanon languishes*

c. In control of the dry land - 1:5a

(1) *The mountains quake at Him*

(2) *The hills melt*

(3) *The earth is upheaved at His presence*

d. In control of humanity - 1:5b

(1) *Yea - The world*

(2) *And all that dwell therein*

4. The God of Wrath - 1:6

a. *Who can stand before His indignation?*

b. *Who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?*

c. *His wrath is poured out like fire*

d. *The rocks are broken asunder by Him*
e. Points

(1) None can survive the wrath of God

(2) Know that wrath is to be poured out on Nineveh

5. The God of Refuge - 1:7

a. Jehovah is good

b. A stronghold in the Day of Trouble: In the midst of wrath – This God is a Rock of Refuge

c. He knows them that take refuge in Him - Limited to those who seek refuge in Him

6. The God Who Destroys Nineveh - 1:8

a. But with an overwhelming flood

(1) By means of a flood - Fall of Nineveh

(2) Literal - A flood really did take place

(3) Symbolic - Military invasion

b. He will make a full end of her place

c. God will pursue His enemies into darkness

d. Fulfillment

(1) Three hundred years later, Xenophon passed by the site of Nineveh and did not even know that a city had existed there

(2) Disappeared to such an extent that only rediscovered in 1845 by Layard in Kuyunjik

B. The Destruction of Nineveh - 1:9-14

1. Nineveh Addressed - 1:9-11
a. Nineveh’s device - 1:9

(1) *What do ye devise against Jehovah?* - Nineveh’s evils have been against God

(2) *He will make a full end* - Now Nineveh will become a full end

(3) *Affliction shall not rise up the second time*

(a) Brought an end to Israel but will not do so to Judah

(b) Nineveh - Unlike others will not rise again

b. Destined to destruction - 1:10

(1) *For entangled like thorns* - Thorns and stubble easily burned

(2) *Drunken as with their drink*

(a) False hope because of drunkenness

(b) Surprised while in revelry

(3) *They are consumed utterly as dry stubble*

(4) Alliteration - עַד לָתֵם ּוֹצְעַקְךָ בָּאָצְקָךָ בָּאָצְקָךָ בָּאָצְקָךָ יִלָּכָן


c. The sin of Sennacherib - 1:11

(1) *There is one gone forth - Out of you* – Sennacherib

(2) His sin - *That devises evil against Jehovah*

(3) *That counsels wickedness*

(a) הֵלֶלְיָא - Beliel: A worthless wicked one

(b) Messenger of Satan
2. Judah Addressed - 1:12-13
   a. The fall of Assyria: *Thus says Jehovah* - 1:12
      (1) *Though they will be in full strength* - Full armor
      (2) *Likewise many* - Numerous and fully armed
      (3) *Even so shall they be cut down* - Army destroyed
      (4) *He shall pass away* - The king and all
      (5) *Though I have afflicted you* - By Assyria under
          Sennecherib
      (6) *I will afflict you no more* - By Assyria
   b. The freedom of Judah - 1:13
      (1) *And now*
          (a) Imminence
          (b) Judah’s freedom from Assyria is imminent
      (2) *Will I break his yoke from off you*
      (3) *I will burst your bonds in sunder*

3. Assyria Addressed - 1:14
   a. The fall of the Assyrian Kingdom - 1:14a
      (1) *Jehovah has given commandment concerning you*
      (2) *That no more of your name be sown* - Assyrians were
          especially concerned that their name be perpetuated
   b. The fall of the Assyrian gods - 1:14b
(1) *Out of the house of your gods will I cut off*

(a) The graven images

(b) The molten images

(2) Isaiah 36:18-20

(3) Isaiah 27:10-13

c. The fall of Assyria - 1:14c

(1) *I will make your grave* - Permanent and not temporary

(2) The reason - *For you are vile*

C. The Comfort of Judah - 1:15

1. Quotation of Isaiah 52:7 - 1:15a

a. Behold - Upon the mountains the feet of him

(1) That brings good tidings

(2) That publishes peace

b. The distinction

(1) Isaiah - Comfort of Messiah

(2) Nahum - Comfort of Nineveh’s fall

2. Judah’s Response - 1:15b

a. The obligations

(1) *Keep your feasts: O Judah*

(a) Passover

(b) Pentecost
(c) Tabernacles

(2) Perform your vows

b. Reason

(1) For the wicked one shall no more pass through you

(a) Assyria will no longer pass through - They cannot cause any interruptions

(b) צֶּרֶן - Messenger of Satan will not pass through

(2) He is utterly cut off - Her destruction is total
III. THE DESCRIPTION OF NINEVEH’S DOOM - 2:1-13

A. The Description of the Invasion - 2:1-7

1. The Approach of the Invaders - 2:1

   a. *He that dashes in pieces is come up against you*

      (1) Babylonians

      (2) Medes

      (3) Scythians

   b. The Admonitions

      (1) *Keep the fortress –* Alliteration

         (a) ﻦَارِتْ ﻦَارِتْ

         (b) Fences your defenses

      (2) *Watch the way –* The road

      (3) *Make your loins strong –* Take courage

   c. *Fortify your power mightily*

2. The Approach Marks God’s Vengeance on Behalf of Israel - 2:2

   a. Israel’s excellency to be restored

      (1) *For Jehovah will restore the excellency of Jacob*

      (2) *As the excellency of Israel*

   b. She whom the emptiers (Assyria) have emptied

      (1) *For the emptiers have emptied them out*

      (2) *And destroyed their vine branches –* Taken land, wealth, and security
3. The Armor of the Invaders - 2:3
   a. Shields: *The shield of her mighty men is made red* - Colored red
   b. Uniforms: *The valiant men are in scarlet* - Dressed in scarlet
   c. Chariots: *The chariots flash with steel in the day of his preparation* - Of fiery iron
   d. Spears: *The cypress spears are brandished* - Of hard cypress wood

4. The Battle in the Suburbs - 2:4
   a. Fighting in the outer streets is won
      (1) *The chariots rage in the streets*
      (2) *They rush to and fro in the broad ways*
   b. Victory is achieved with speed
      (1) *The appearance of them is like torches*
      (2) *They run like the lightnings*

5. Arrival at the Wall - 2:5
   a. *He remembered his nobles*
   b. *They stumble in their match* - Arrive at city wall so quick that they stumble over each other
   c. *They make haste to the wall thereof*
   d. *The mantelet is prepared* - Siege engines is laid

6. Destruction Comes by Water - 2:6
   a. *The gates of the rivers are opened* - 2:6a
(1) North of east bank of the Tigris
(2) River Khosr connected to the Tigris by a canal
(3) Ran through the city to join the Tigris
(4) River floods destroying two miles of wall - Breach is made

b. *The palace is dissolved* - 2:6b

(1) Sardanapalus - Emperor
(2) Flooding of river recalled an ancient oracle - Nineveh will fall when the river becomes its enemy
(3) Made a huge funeral pyre in palace and burned himself and all his concubines

7. The Queen is Captured - 2:7

a. *It is decreed*

(1) *She is uncovered*

(a) הָצָּא - Hutzav is uncovered
(b) *Hutzav - Queen standing for goddess Ishtar*
(c) Now she is stripped as a sign of a conquered queen

(2) *She is carried away - She goes into captivity*

b. *Her handmaids moan - Her handmaids go into mourning*

(1) *As with the voice of doves*
(2) *Beating upon their breasts*

B. The Description of the Destruction - 2:8-13
1. The Flight of Nineveh’s Soldiers - 2:8
   a. But Nineveh has been from of old like a pool of water - Stable and sure
   b. Yet they flee away
   c. The call: Stand, stand, they cry - Asking the soldiers to stand firm
   d. The response: But none look back - The flee ahead

2. The Taking of the Spoil - 2:9
   a. Take ye the spoil of silver
   b. Take ye the spoil of gold
   c. For there is no end of the store - Nineveh was a very rich city
   d. The glory of all goodly furniture

3. The Sacking of the City - 2:10
   a. She is empty and void and wasted
      (1) Alliteration: בוכת וסבוך וסובלתָה
      (2) Possible paraphrases
         (a) Sack - Sacking – Ransacking
         (b) Destruction - Devastation – Dilapidation
         (c) Blasted - Balked – Bard
         (d) Dissolved - Desolated – Drained
   b. Inhabitants - Characterized by fear
      (1) The heart is melted
      (2) The knees smite together
(3) *Anguish is in all their loins*

(4) *The face of them are waxed pale*

4. **The Lion of Assyria Felled Forever - 2:11-13**

a. **Lion:** Symbol of Assyria - Now the lion is no more - 2:11

   (1) *Where is the den of lions*

   (2) *And the feeding place of the young lions*

   (3) *Where the lion and lioness walked*

   (4) *The lions whelp*

   (5) *And none made them afraid?*

b. **Once the lion destroyed - 2:12**

   (1) *The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps*

   (2) *And strangled for his lionesses*

   (3) *He filled*

      (a) *His caves with prey*

      (b) *His dens with ravin*

c. **Now God will destroy the lion - 2:13**

   (1) *Behold: I am against you - Says Jehovah of Hosts*

   (2) *I will burn her chariots in smoke*

   (3) *The sword shall devour you young lions*

   (4) *I will cut off your prey from the earth*

   (5) *The voice of your messengers shall no more be heard – The Assyrian Ambassadors*
IV. THE REASONS FOR NINEVEH’S DOOM - 3:1-19

A. Its History of Blood - 3:1-3

1. The Sin - 3:1

   a. Woe - To the bloody city

      (1) יִירָאָם - City of Bloods

      (2) Manifold blood shedding

   b. It is all full of lies and rapine - Deceived nations with vain promises of help and protection

   c. The prey departs not - Lust of conquest

2. The Punishment - 3:2-3

   a. The noise of conflict - 3:2-3a

      (1) The noise of the whip

      (2) The noise of the rattling of wheels

      (3) The prancing horses

      (4) Bounding chariots

      (5) The horsemen mounting

      (6) The flashing sword

      (7) The glittering spear

   b. The shedding of manifold blood - 3:3b

      (1) A multitude of slain

      (2) A great heap of corpses

      (3) There is no end of the bodies
(4) They stumble upon their bodies

(5) v. 1 Woe to a bloody city!

All of it (is) falsehood. (It is) full of robbery.
Prey doth not depart

The third chief section of Nahum's book contains further oracles against Nineveh, a series of predictions foretelling the inevitable ruin to engulf the city. First, in a series of short, quick ejaculations the prophet pictures the Assyrian capital at the height of her cruel power and then records the assault which will spell her collapse (3:1-3). He commences this denunciation with the word that (as in Hab. 2:6) summarizes his message, "woe," a threat, a taunt, a derision.

This woe is directed against Nineveh as "a bloody city" (lit.: "A city of bloods," the pl. in the Hebrew denoting shed blood or the guilt involved in its shedding, Ezek. 24:9). This epithet will describes the doomed capital, for the Assyrians were among the most cruel and bloodthirsty of all ancient peoples who have left their records.

The cuneiform tablets furnish appalling testimony to the calculated cruelty inflicted by the armies mustered in Nineveh. Ashurbanipal II (885-860 B.C.), for instance, lists his atrocities on a monument commemorating the first eighteen years of his reign (see Lickenbill, Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia, I, 142 ff.) Among them are:

"Great number of them in the land of Kirhi I slew...260 of their fighting men I cut down with the sword. I cut off their heads, and I formed them into pillars...Bubu, son of Buba...I flayed in the city of Arbela and I spread his skin upon the city wall.

I flayed all the chief men [in the city of Suru] who had revolted, and I covered the pillar with their skins; some I walled up within the pillar, some I impaled upon the
pillar on stakes, and others I bound to stakes round about the pillar; many within the border of my own land I flayed, and I spread their skins upon the walls; and I cut off the limbs of the officers, of the royal officers who had rebelled. Ahiababa I took to Nineveh, I flayed him, I spread his skin upon the wall of Nineveh.

"600 of their [the people in the city of Hulai] warriors I put to the sword; 3,000 captives I burned with fire; I did not leave a single one among them alive to serve as a hostage...Their corpses I formed into pillars; their young men and maidens I burned in the fire. Hulai, then governor, I flayed, his skin I spread upon the wall of the city of Damdamusa.

"50 of their [the people in the city of Mariru] warriors I put to the sword; 200 of their captives I burned with fire.

"3,000 of their [the people in the city of Têla] warriors I put to the sword...Many captives from among them I burned with fire. From some I cut off their hands and their fingers, and from others I cut off their noses, their ears, and their fingers (?), of many I put out the eyes. I made one pillar of the living, and another of heads, and I bound their heads to posts (tree trunks) round about the city. Their young men and maidens I burned in the fire, the city I destroyed.

"In the midst of the might mountain I slaughtered them, with their blood I dyed the mountain red like wool, with the rest of them I darkened the gullies and precipices of the mountains...The heads of their warriors I cut off, and I formed them into a pillar over against their city, their young men and their maidens I burned in the fire.

"I slew the inhabitants [of the city Hudun]...their young men and their maidens I burned in the flames.
The city of Kisirto...together with ten cities of its neighborhood, I captured, I slew their inhabitants.

"50 of Ameka's warriors I slew in the field, I cut off their heads and bound them to the tree trunks within his palace court. Twenty men I captured alive, and I immured them I the wall of his palace.

"800 of their [the people in Pitura] fighting men I put to the sword and cut off their heads. Multitudes I captured alive, and the rest of them I burned with fire...I formed a pillar of the living and of heads over against his city gate and 700 men I impaled on stakes...Their young men and their maidens I burned in the fire.

"1,400 of their[ the people in the city of Uda] fighting men I put to the sword, 580 men I captured alive, 3,000 prisoners I brought out. The living men I impaled on stakes...of the others I put out the eyes."

The atrocious practice of cutting off hands and feet, ears and noses gouging out eyes, lopping off heads and then binding them to vines or heaping them up before city gates; the utter fiendishness by which captives could be impaled or flayed alive through a process in which their skin was gradually and completely removed - this planned frightfulness systematically enforced by the "bloody city" was now to be avenged. (Ibid, pp. 290-292.)

B. Its Involvement with the Occult - 3:4-7

1. The Sin - 3:4

   a. Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favored harlot

      (1) Multitude of religious prostitution

      (2) Multitude of witchcraft - Practice of black arts
(3) Leaders in religious prostitution and occult

(4) Caused others (like Ahaz) to practice Assyrian occult - II Kings 16:10-19

b. The mistress of witchcraft

c. That sells

(1) Nations through her whoredoms

(2) Families through her witchcraft

2. The punishment: Behold - I am against you says Jehovah of Hosts - 3:5-7

a. First: Nineveh to be uncovered naked - Sign of humiliation - 3:5

(1) I will uncover your skirts upon your face

(2) I will show the nations your nakedness

(3) The kingdom your shame

b. Second: Nineveh will be pelted with detestable filth - 3:6a

(1) I will cast abominable filth upon you

(2) And make you vile

c. Third: Becoming a gazing-stock - 3:6b

(1) I will set you as a gazing stock

(2) Further humiliation

d. Fourth: None to comfort Nineveh for none feel sorry for her - 3:7

(1) And it shall come to pass that all that look upon you
(a) Shall flee from you

(b) And say

   i) Nineveh is laid waste

   ii) Who will bemoan her?

(2) Whence shall I seek comforters for you?

   (a) Comforters - נַעֲמָיו

   (b) Play upon Nahum’s name

C. Its Treatment of No-Amon - 3:8-12

1. The Sin - 3:8-10

   a. Her watery defenses - 3:8

      (1) Are you better than No-Amon

         (a) Thebes - Capital of Upper Egypt under the 18th-20th dynasty (1550-1085 B.C.)

         (b) Center of the Sun-god Amon, the chief god of Egypt - Known to Greeks as Diospolis

         (c) Today comprise the ruins of Luxoranz Kamsic

      (2) That was situated among the rivers - Surrounded by four channels of the Nile

         (a) That had waters round about her

         (b) Whose rampart was the sea

         (c) And her wall was the sea?

      (3) 20,000 chariots

      (4) 100 gates
(5) Thebes better protected than Nineveh - Yet Thebes fell

b. Headed up alliances - 3:9

(1) *Ethiopia and Egypt was her strength* - And it was infinite

(a) *Ethiopia*

(b) *Egypt – Lower*

(2) *Put and Lubim were your helpers*

(a) *Put – Somaliland*

(b) *Lubim – Lybia*

c. Nevertheless Thebes fell - 3:10

(1) In spite of defenses and alliances - Thebes fell

(2) *Yet: She was carried away* - Taken by Assyrians under Ashurbanipal

(3) *She went into captivity: Inhabitants went into captivity*

(4) *Her young children also were dashed in pieces at the head of all the streets* - Young children dashed in pieces by the head square

(5) The leaders were divided by lot to become slaves

(a) *The cast lots for her honorable men*

(b) *And all her great men were bound in chains*

d. We now have the original Assyrian records describing in detail the conquest of Thebes. After several delays, Ashurbanipal set out for Egypt on a punitive expedition. He swept over the delta cities, leaving a horrifying trail of fire, ruin and death. In many cases those who refused to acknowledge his overlordship were flayed alive and their
skins were bleached on the city walls, while large numbers of others were impaled. At Memphis the deltaic overlords acknowledged his sovereignty, with the exception of perfidious Tanut-Amen. Driven relentlessly from one refuge to another, Tanu-Amen reached Thebes; yet instead of making a stand within its well-protected fortifications, the fear of Assyrian vengeance gripping his heart, he abandoned the city to its doom and fled into the almost inaccessible hideout of Ethiopia. Descending in swift marches, Ashurbanipal’s armies soon gathered before Thebes. Resistance was futile, and the proud city, whose victorious armies had spread wide consternation, fell victim to the terror of the revenge-crazed Assyrians. Ashurbanipal’s own account is concise. He says: “That city (Thebes) in its entirety, my hands conquered [with] the help of Ashur (and) Ishtar...[Sil]ver, gold, precious stones, the goods of his [Tanut-Amen’s] palace, all there was, brightly colo [red] (and) linen garments, great horses, [the people] men and women, two tall obelisks fashioned of glittering electrum, whose weight was 2500 talents...[I re]moved from the[ir] positions and to[ok] off to Assyria. Booty, heavy (and) [countless, I carried away] fr[om The]bes.” Convinced that he could not properly govern a city with the dimensions and traditions of Thebes from a capital as far removed as Nineveh, Ashurbanipal resorted to well-planned savagery. He made the razing of Thebes so complete and terrifying that the very recollection of his dealings with the perfidious city would help prevent further uprisings. His procedure, then, was that implied by Nahum. The city leveled with the ground, the people of No-Amon went into exile. They were not merely deported - They were made captive. (Ibid, pp.324-325.)

2. The Judgment - 3:11-12

a. Nineveh too will be besieged - 3:11

(1) *You also shall be drunken* - With the wrath of God

(a) Isaiah 51:17, 21-23

(b) Jeremiah 25:15-29
(c) Lamentations 4:21
(d) Ezekiel 23:33-34
(e) Obadiah 16
(f) Habakkuk 2:16

(2) You shall be hid - Until discovered in 1842

(3) You also shall see a stronghold because of the enemy

b. Nineveh will be destroyed - 3:12

(1) All your fortresses shall be like fig trees with the first ripe figs

(a) Like first ripe figs - Always eaten and consumed quickly

(b) If it can happen to Thebes - It can happen to Nineveh

(2) If they be shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater - Nineveh will fall easier than expected

D. Its Homosexuality - 3:13

1. The Sin - 3:13a

a. Behold: Your people in the midst of you are women

b. Sardanapalus (Sinsharishkun) always dressed in female clothes and surrounded by concubines

2. The Punishment - 3:13b

a. The gates of your land are set open wide unto your enemies - They ran through the breach in the wall

b. The fire has devoured your bars: City burned with fire - Manner of destruction
E. The Fall of Nineveh - 3:14-19

1. The Call to the People for siege - 3:14
   a. Use of irony and sarcasm to prepare for the siege
      (1) *Draw water for the siege*
      (2) *Strengthen your fortresses*
      (3) *Go into the clay* - To fill in holes in defenses
      (4) *Tread the mortar* - To make brick
      (5) *Make strong the brick kiln* - To bake the brick
   b. Any preparation for siege will prove useless

2. The Totality of Destruction - 3:15-17
   a. Devoured by fire and sword - 3:15a
      (1) *There shall the fire devour you*
      (2) *The sword shall cut you off*
   b. The massiveness of population (locusts) will not help - 3:15b-17
      (1) There are many - 3:15b
         (a) *It shall devour you like the cankerworm*
         (b) *Make yourself many as the cankerworm*
         (c) *Make yourself many as the locust*
      (2) Nineveh looted by her own citizens - 3:16
         (a) *You have multiplied your merchants above the stars of heaven*
(b) **The cankerworm ravages - And flees away**

(3) The leaders themselves are powerless and flee - 3:17

(a) The comparison

i) *Your princes are as the locusts*

ii) *Your marshals as the swarm of grasshoppers*

(b) The application

i) *Which encamp in the hedges in the cold day - Grow numb when it is cold*

ii) Disappear when it is warm

   a) *But when the sun arises they flee away*

   b) *Their place is not known where they are*

3. **The Results of the Destruction - 3:18**

   a. Addressed to the King of Assyria: *O King of Assyria*

   b. *Your shepherds – Slumber*

   c. *Your nobles: At rest - In death*

   d. *Your people: Population dispersed beyond any possibility of regathering*

      (1) *Are scattered upon the mountains*

      (2) *There is none to gather them*

4. **No Comfort for Nineveh - 3:19**

   a. Nineveh’s wound is not curable
(1)  *There is no assuaging of your hurt*

(2)  *Your wound is grievous*

b. Others rejoice over Nineveh's fall - *All that hear the report of you clap their hands over you*

c. The reason: They have suffered at the hand of Nineveh - *For upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?*