

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Prophecy

October 20: Nahum 1-3 (Wade Stanley)

Good morning everyone! It's a beautiful morning in south Missouri at the tail end of a wonderful week with beautiful brethren. Our assignment for today is the book of Nahum.

We know nothing about Nahum except that he hailed from Elkosh, a village whose location is unknown. In 3:8-10, he mentions the destruction of Thebes in Egypt which took place in 663 BC. Given the book's dedication to the ultimate judgment of Assyria, it was likely written in the latter half of the 7th century BC. Nineveh was conquered by a coalition of nations led by Babylon in 612.

The book is dedicated in its entirety to condemning Assyria. Since the time of Jonah, Assyria served as God's tool to punish the northern kingdom of Israel and had nearly conquered Judah in the days of Hezekiah. You will notice tones of vengeance toward Assyria intermingled with assurances of deliverance and preservation directed to Judah. God will respond with justice to the barbaric cruelty of the Assyrians.

The Archaeological Study Bible provides a few good insights:

It was common practice for peoples in the ancient world to identify their deities with observable, awe-inspiring natural phenomena (1:3-6).

Nineveh's wall, which was almost 8 miles (13 km) long with 15 gates, was surrounded by a moat 150 feet (nearly 46 m) wide. The moat had to be filled in before attackers could reach the city wall. The "protective shield" refers to a large defensive shelter covered with hides to deflect stones and arrows (2:5).

The lion is an appropriate image for Assyria, which was known for its viciousness. Nineveh itself contained numerous lion sculptures (2:11).

The Assyrian king Sargon II boasted of having erected a pyramid of chopped-off heads in front of an enemy's city. Other Assyrian kings stacked corpses like cordwood by the gates of defeated cities (3:3).

Atrocities against civilians were common in ancient warfare: Infants were routinely killed, leaders often put in chains and lots cast to determine which prisoners of war would be taken into exile and resettled in other lands (3:10).

Nineveh's destruction was so complete that the decimated city was never rebuilt. Within a few centuries it was covered with windblown sand, leaving no trace except a mound that is known today as Tell Kuyunjik, "the mound of many sheep" (3:19).

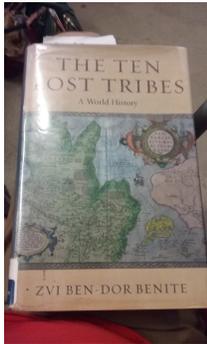
Happy reading to you all!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, brother Wade!

Comment:

Steven Wright:
Where did they all go?



Replies:

Steven Wright:
I had only just begun to read this book when I made this post. Not a recommend! Having by now investigated it, I will say that while it does address the issues in a more or less scholarly way, it is a disappointment over all.

Wade Stanley:
Thanks for making us aware!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Fascinating, Wade! Thanks for sharing those insights from the Archaeological Study Bible. Would you bring that with you to Iowa Friday? I'd like to look at it if you don't mind. I'm wondering if I'd like to purchase one. Thanks again. And! I gotta mention marc and I giggled at 3:13. But perhaps only a girl should bring that up here. 😂

Replies:

Wade Stanley:
I have the Archaeological Study Bible on a Bible app, Olive Tree. I purchased it while it was on sale earlier this year. I'll be glad to show it to you on my tablet.

Comment:

Joanne Caffie:
Just 2 be clear, Nineveh repented in the time of Jonah but was later utterly destroyed?

Replies:

Wade Stanley:

Yes Joanne, about 150 years later. We don't know for sure when Jonah went to Nineveh, but it was likely in the early 700's BC. Nahum prophesied in the latter half of the 600's BC. Nineveh was destroyed in 612 BC. So the fruits of repentance they showed in the time of Jonah had departed from the nation.

Joanne Caffie:

Sounds like the USA 🙄😏😭