NAHUM. †

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE.

1: 2-8. JEHOWAH'S ATTRIBUTES DECLARED.
1: 9–3: 19. JEHOWAH'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 603 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; 123: 3. See Ap. 67.

If this be correct, then we may date Nahum as living and prophesying in 603 B.C.
1. The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

2. God is jealous, and the LORD avengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is a possessor of wrath; the LORD will be an Avenger to His adversaries, and He reserveth wrath against His enemies.

3. The LORD is long-suffering, and of great power, and will not at all hold guiltless the wicked: 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 upheaved at His presence, yea, the world as inhabited, and all that dwell therein.

6. Who can stand before His indignation? and who can stand up 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 place of safety in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that flee for refuge to Him.

8. But with an overrunning flood He will make an utter end of her place [Nineveh's], as for His foes, darkness shall pursue them.

9. What do ye devise against the LORD? He will make an utter end: trouble shall not rise up the second time.

10. For while they be entangled together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.

11. There is one come out of thee, that deviseth evil against the LORD, a counsellor of Belial.

12. Thus saith the LORD: Though they be secure, and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down like dry stubble, when He shall pass through.
And now, O Judah, I have afflicted thee; I will afflict thee no more.

13 For now I will break his yoke from off Judah, and will burst thy bonds in sunder.

14 And the LORD hath given a commandment concerning thee, that the dynasty of Nineveh should end: out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image: I will make the house of thy gods thy grave; for thou art despicable.

15 Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.

2 He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: fortify the fortress, watch the way, be courageous, strengthen thee with power mightily.

2 For the LORD restoreth pre-eminence of Jacob [the natural seed], as He will restore the excellency of Israel: for the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine branches.

3 The shield of his warriors is reddened with blood, the valiant men are clad in scarlet: with the flashing of steel the chariots glitter in the day of his preparation, and the spears shall be terribly shaken.

4 The chariots shall rave as though mad in the streets, they shall run to and fro one against another in the broad ways: their appearance is like torches, they shall flash like the lightnings.

5 He [the king of Assyria] shall bethink himself of his nobles, who may assemble their troops: they shall stumble as they march; they shall make haste to her wall [the wall of Nineveh], yet the portable storming cover of the besiegers shall be prepared.

6 The flood-gates of the Tigris river shall be opened [by the enemy], and the palace shall melt away in fear.

7 And Huzzab shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall made red = reddened [with blood].

the chariots shall be = red, as in their walk = as they march.

the financiers shall revolt = be courageous.

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

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

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.

The Companion Bible (Condensed)  Page: 1263 (3)
9 Take ye the spoil of silver, *take* the spoil of gold: *for there are treasures without end, and stores of all covetable vessels.*

10 She is *empty,* and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness.

11 *Where is* the dwelling of the *lions,* and the feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, *even* the *lioness,* walked, *and* the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?

12 The lion *was tearing* in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin.

13 *Behold, I am* against thee, *is the oracle of Jehovah Sabaoth,* and I will burn her chariots into smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: *and I will cut off thy prey from the earth,* and the voice of thy ambassadors shall no more be heard.

3 Woe to the city of great bloodshed! *it is* all full of lies and robbery; the prey *will not be lacking;* the noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the pransing horses, and of the sounding chariots.

2 *The noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the pransing horses,* and of the sounding chariots.

3 The horseman lifeth up both the gleaming sword and the flashing spear: *and there is* a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases: *and there is* none end of their corpses; *so that the slayers stumble over their corpses.*

4 *Because of* the multitude of the idolatries of the well-favoured harlot, *the mistress of sorceries,* that sellett nations through her idolatries, and families through her sorceries.

5 *Behold, I am* against thee, *is the oracle of Jehovah Sabaoth,* and *I will discover thy skirts upon thy face,* and *I will shew the nations thy nakedness,* and the kingdom thy shame.

6 And *I will cast abominable filth upon thee,* and *disgrace thee,* and will set thee as a gazinestock.

7 And it shall come to pass, *that all* they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, *'Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan *her?*"* whence shall I seek comforters for thee?

8 *Art thou situated better than Thebes,* that

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| lead her = mourn for, or bemoaning. tabering = drumming [with their fingers] incessantly. Heb. taphaph, from toph = a drum. See note on Ex. 15. 20. 1 Sam. 10. 6. breasts = hearts. Some codices read "heart" (sing.); but others, with eight early printed editions, read "hearts" (pl.). 8 But = Though, to answer to the "yet" of the next line. is of old, &c. Read "hath been from of old [filled with men] as a pool [is full] of water." they: = i.e. the defenders. flee away. Before their besiegers. they: = i.e. the captains. take the spoil. Note the Fig. Epizeuxis (Ap. 6), for emphasis. none end, &c. = [there are] treasures without end, [and] stores of all covetable vessels. empty . . . void . . . waste. Note the Fig. Paronomasia (Ap. 6), for emphasis. Heb. bukah umbukah um'ballakah. 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 Isa. 52. 7); not vice versa. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2: 11--3: 7.</th>
<th>CAUSES.</th>
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11 Where . . . ? *Fig. Erotesis (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. 14, looking back after the fulfillment of this prophecy. old lion = lioness.

12 did tear = was tearing. Nineveh again personified in vv. 11, 12.

13 saith the LORD of Hosts = [is] the oracle of Jehovah Sabaoth. the LORD. Heb. Jehovah, as in vv. 2. The full expression, "Jehovah of hosts", occurs only here in Nahum ("2: 13") and in the corresponding member ("3: 5"). See note on l Sam. 1. 3. in the smoke = into smoke.


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".

jumping = bumping, or sounding.

3 bright = gleaming. glittering = flashing. they: = i.e. the slayers. Heb. text margin, with some codices, and four early printed editions, reads "so that they stumble", &c.

upon = over.

4 Because, &c. Note the Structure, which shows that here, in the member "4-7", we have the cause, corresponding with "2: 13".

whoredoms = idolatries.


5 saith the LORD of Hosts = [is] the oracle of Jehovah Sabaoth. See note on 2. 13.

I will discover. Carrying out the symbol of whoredom for idolatry. Cp. 2. 13. 3. 5.


6 make thee vile = disgrace thee.

7 her. Some codices, with two early printed editions, Aram., Syr., and vulg., read "thee"; but the Codex "Mugah", quoted in the Massorah (Ap. 30), reads "her".

8 better = situated better.

populous No = N'o-'Amon. 'Amon is not a Heb. word meaning "multitude", but an Egyptian word meaning the Egyptian god "Amon". No = the Egyptian net, meaning the city; now known as "Thebes". (Cp. Jer. 46. 25. Ezek. 30. 14, 15, 16).
was situate among the Nile streams, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was "the sea, and her wall was consisted of the sea."

9 Ethiopia strengthened her; Egypt defended her with hosts without end, θ Put and Lybians were thy helpers.

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

11 Nineveh also shalt drink of the cup of judgment: thou shalt hide thyself, thou also shalt seek refuge in vain because of the enemy.

12 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.

13 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.

14 Draw for thyself waters for the siege, fortify thy strong holds: make plenty of bricks for the strongholds, make strong the walls built with bricks.

15 There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like the young locust: though thou be numerous as the young locust, though thou be numerous as the young locusts.

16 Though thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the young locusts cast of the skin, and flie away.

17 Thy mercenary crowds are as the locusts, and thy marshals as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the loose stone walls in the cold day, but when the sun ariseth they are in flight, and their place is not known where they are.

18 Thy generals slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall lie down in death: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them.

19 There is no alleviation of thy ruin; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the report of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for over whom hath not thy cruelty passed continually?"