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“Minor Prophets: Eternal Questions”

Summary of The Message of Nahum: Who’s in Charge?

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in the middle of the seventh century B.C., God’s people found themselves in so many situations with so little control when the prophet Nahum wrote his book. Nahum is one of the minor prophets, whose books comprise the last twelve books in the Old Testament. We do not know anything about Nahum the man, except that he was an Elkoshite. Of course, we don’t know where Elkosh was. Nahum is unusual among the prophets for writing a book: *“An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite”* (Nah. 1:1). Usually, the prophecies were verbally given and then written down. But Nahum seems to have been composed as a book. Chapter 1 of Nahum begins with an introductory psalm on the character of God (1:2-8). In the rest of chapter 1 and the beginning of chapter 2 (1:9-2:2), Nahum moves back and forth between addressing God’s people, Judah, and addressing the city of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. Several verses into chapter 2, the prophet begins to speak to Nineveh at length (2:3-3:19), and it becomes clear what this vision is about: God’s promise to destroy the Ninevites utterly as judgment for their sins.