

## ~NINEVEH (324)

### (Nin'e-veh)

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- A city of Assyria founded by Nimrod, a mighty hunter in opposition to Yehowah. Together with Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen it constituted the great city.
- He displayed himself a mighty hunter in opposition to Yehowah. That is why there is a saying; Just like Nimrod a mighty hunter in opposition to Yehowah. ([Genesis 10:9](#))
- Out of that land he went forth into Assyria and set himself to building **Nineveh** and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah. ([Genesis 10:11](#))
- And Resen between **Nineveh** and Calah, this is the great city. ([Genesis 10:12](#))
- And they will actually shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in its entrances. And he will certainly bring about deliverance from the Assyrian, when he comes into our land and when he treads upon our territory. ([Micah 5:6](#))
- Much later it became the capital of the Assyrian Empire. As such, **Nineveh** was a city of bloodshed.
- Woe to the city of bloodshed. She is all full of deception and of robbery. Prey does not depart! ([Nahum 3:1](#))
- For the Assyrians waged many wars of conquest and employed brutal methods in killing captured warriors. Doubtless the military campaigns contributed greatly to the city's wealth.
- Plunder silver, you men, plunder gold, as there is no limit to the things in arrangement. There is a heavy amount of all sorts of desirable articles. ([Nahum 2:9](#))

- The principal deity of **Nineveh** appears to have been Ishtar, a goddess of love and war.

## • Archaeological Investigation

- Kuyunjik and Nebi Yunus, Prophet Jonah, two mounds located on the East bank of the Tigris River opposite Mosul, North Iraq, mark the site of what was once the great city of **Nineveh**.

- A modern village, with a cemetery and a mosque, occupies Nebi Yunus. Therefore this mound, which covers a palace of Esar-haddon, has been little investigated.

- At Kuyunjik, however, excavations have brought to light much that testifies to **Nineveh's** past glory. The findings include thousands of cuneiform tablets from Ashurbanipal's library and the ruins of the palace of Sennacherib and that of Ashurbanipal.

- These palaces were impressive structures. Based on his findings, Sir Austen Layard wrote:

- The interior of the Assyrian palace must have been as magnificent as imposing. I have led the reader through its ruins, and he may judge of the impression its halls were calculated to make upon the stranger who in the days of old, entered for the first time the abode of the Assyrian kings.

- He was ushered in through the portal guarded by the colossal lions or bulls of white alabaster. In the first hall he found himself surrounded by the sculptured records of the empire. Battles, sieges, triumphs, the exploits of the chase, the ceremonies of religion, were portrayed on the walls, sculptured in alabaster, and painted in gorgeous colors.

- Under each picture were engraved, in characters filled up with bright copper, inscriptions describing the scenes represented. Above the sculptures were painted other events the king, attended by his eunuchs and warriors, receiving his prisoners, entering into alliances with other monarchs, or performing some sacred duty.

- These representations were inclosed in colored borders, of elaborate and elegant design. The emblematic tree, winged bulls, and monstrous animals, were conspicuous amongst the ornaments. At the

upper end of the hall was the colossal figure of the king in adoration before the supreme deity, or receiving from his eunuch the holy cup.

- He was attended by warriors bearing his arms, and by the priests or presiding divinities. His robes, and those of his followers, were adorned with groups of figures, animals, and flowers, all painted with brilliant colors.

- The stranger trod upon alabaster slabs, each bearing an inscription, recording the titles, genealogy, and achievements of the great king.

- Several doorways, formed by gigantic winged lions or bulls, or by the figures of guardian deities, led into other apartments, which again opened into more distant halls.

- In each were new sculptures. On the walls of some were processions of colossal figures armed men and eunuchs following the king, warriors laden with spoil, leading prisoners, or bearing presents and offerings to the gods.

- On the walls of others were portrayed the winged priests, or presiding divinities, standing before the sacred trees.

- The ceilings above him were divided into square compartments, painted with flowers, or with the figures of animals. Some were inlaid with ivory, each compartment being surrounded by elegant borders and mouldings.

- The beams, as well as the sides of the chambers, may have been gilded, or even plated, with gold and silver, and the rarest woods, in which the cedar was conspicuous, were used for the woodwork. Square openings in the ceilings of the chambers admitted the light of day. [Nineveh and Its Remains, 1856, Part II, pp. 207-209]

## • In The Time Of Jonah

- Yehowah's prophet Jonah, in the Ninth Century B.C.E, declared impending doom for Nineveh because of the wickedness of its inhabitants. However, since the people, including the king, repented, Yehowah spared the city.

- And the word of Yehowah began to occur to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying; (Jonah 1:1)

- Get up, go to **Nineveh** the great city, and proclaim to her the proclamation that I am speaking to you. (**Jonah 3:2**)
- And the men of **Nineveh** began to put faith in God, and they proceeded to proclaim a fast and to put on sackcloth, from the greatest one of them even to the least one of them. (**Jonah 3:5**)
- When the word reached the king of **Nineveh**, then he rose up from his throne and put off his official garment from himself and covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the ashes. (**Jonah 3:6**)
- Furthermore, he had the cry made, and he had it said in **Nineveh**, by the decree of the king and his great ones, saying; No man and no domestic animal, no herd and no flock, should taste anything at all. None should take food. Even water they should not drink. (**Jonah 3:7**)
- And let them cover themselves with sackcloth, man and domestic animal, and let them call out to God with strength and come back, each one from his bad way and from the violence that was in their hands. (**Jonah 3:8**)
- Who is there knowing whether the true God may turn back and actually feel regret and turn back from his burning anger, so that we may not perish? (**Jonah 3:9**)
- And the true God got to see their works, that they had turned back from their bad way, and so the true God felt regret over the calamity that he had spoken of causing to them, and he did not cause it. (**Jonah 3:10**)
- At that time Nineveh was a great city, with a walking distance of three days.
- At that, Jonah got up and went to **Nineveh** in accord with the word of Yehowah. Now **Nineveh** herself proved to be a city great to God, with a walking distance of three days. (**Jonah 3:3**)
- Its population numbered more than 120,000 men.
- And, for my part, ought I not to feel sorry for **Nineveh** the great city, in which there exist more than one hundred and twenty

thousand men who do not at all know the difference between their right hand and their left, besides many domestic animals?  
(Jonah 4:11)

- This Biblical description is not controverted by archaeological evidence. Observed André Parrot, Curator-in-Chief of the French National Museums:

- Just as today, that part of London which lies within its ancient boundary is very different from what is called greater London a term which includes the suburbs and denotes a much larger area so it may be that people who lived far away from Assyria understood by the word **Nineveh** what is now known as the Assyrian triangle, which stretches from Khorsabad in the north to Nimrud in the south, and, with an almost unbroken string of settlements, covers a distance of some twenty-six miles.

- Felix Jones estimated that the population of **Nineveh** might have numbered 174,000 persons, and quite recently, in his excavations at Nimrud, M. E. L. Mallowan discovered a stele of Ashurnazirpal on which it is recorded that he invited to a banquet the fabulous number of 69,574 guests.

- Mallowan considers that, allowing for foreigners, the population of Kalakh or Nimrud, might have been 65,000. But Nineveh is twice the area of Nimrud, and thus it may be reckoned that the figure in (Jonah 4:11) is indirectly confirmed. [Nineveh and the Old Testament, 1955, pp. 85,86]

See Also JONAH 1

See Also JONAH, BOOK OF

## .. Its Destruction Fulfills Prophecy

- Although repenting at the preaching of Jonah
- How he entered into the house of God and they ate the loaves of presentation, something that it was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those with him, but for the priests only? (Matthew 12:4)
- For just as Jonah became a sign to the **Ninevites**, in the same way will the Son of man be also to this generation. (Luke 11:30)
- The men of **Nineveh** will rise in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at what

Jonah preached, but, look! Something more than Jonah is here.  
([Luke 11:32](#))

- The **Ninevites** relapsed and again took to their wicked ways. It was some years after Assyrian King Sennacherib had been murdered at **Nineveh** in the house of his god Nisroch.
- Therefore Sennacherib the king of Assyria pulled away and went and returned, and he took up dwelling in **Nineveh**. ([2 Kings 19:36](#))
- And it came about that as he was bowing down at the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, themselves struck him down with the sword, and they themselves escaped to the land of Ararat. And Esar-haddon his son began to reign in place of him. ([2 Kings 19:37](#))
- Hence Sennacherib the king of Assyria pulled away and went and returned and took up dwelling in **Nineveh**. ([Isaiah 37:37](#))
- And it came about that as he was bowing down at the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his own sons, struck him down with the sword, and they themselves escaped to the land of Ararat. And Esar-haddon his son began to reign in place of him. ([Isaiah 37:38](#))
- The pronouncement against **Nineveh**. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. ([Nahum 1:1](#))
- Hence Sennacherib the king of Assyria pulled away and went and returned and took up dwelling in **Nineveh**. ([Isaiah 37:37](#))
- And it came about that as he was bowing down at the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his own sons, struck him down with the sword, and they themselves escaped to the land of Ararat. And Esar-haddon his son began to reign in place of him. ([Isaiah 37:38](#))
- And Nineveh, from the days that she has been, was like a pool of waters, but they are fleeing. Stand still, you men! Stand still! But there is no one turning back. ([Nahum 2:8](#))
- Woe to the city of bloodshed. She is all full of deception and of robbery. Prey does not depart! ([Nahum 3:1](#))

- And he will stretch out his hand toward the north, and he will destroy Assyria. And he will make **Nineveh** a desolate waste, a waterless region like the wilderness. (**Zephaniah 2:13**)
- And in the midst of her, droves will certainly lie stretched out, all the wild animals of a nation. Both pelican and porcupine will spend the night right among her pillar capitals. A voice will keep singing in the window. There will be devastation at the threshold, for he will certainly lay bare the very wainscoting. (**Zephaniah 2:14**)
- This is the exultant city that was sitting in security, that was saying in her heart; I am, and there is nobody else. O how she has become an object of astonishment, a place for the wild animals to lie stretched out! Everyone passing along by her will whistle, he will wag his hand. (**Zephaniah 2:15**)
- Foretold the destruction of that wicked city. Their prophecies were fulfilled when the combined forces of Nabopolassar the king of Babylon and of Cyaxares the Mede besieged and captured **Nineveh**.
- The city was evidently subjected to burning, for many Assyrian reliefs show damage or stain from fire and accompanying smoke. With reference to **Nineveh**, a Babylonian chronicle reports:
- They carried off the vast booty of the city and the temple (and) turned the city into a ruin heap. [*Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, by A. Grayson, 1975, p. 94]
- To this day **Nineveh** is a desolate waste, and in the spring, flocks graze near or atop the mound of Kuyunjik.

## •• Date Of Nineveh's Fall

- Though effaced from the extant cuneiform tablet that relates the fall of **Nineveh**, the date for this event, the 14th year of Nabopolassar, can be supplied from the context.
- It is also possible to place the destruction of **Nineveh** in the framework of Bible chronology. According to a Babylonian chronicle, the Egyptians were defeated at Carchemish in the 21st year of Nabopolassar's reign. The Bible shows this to have taken place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign or in **625 B.C.E.**

- For Egypt, concerning the military force of Pharaoh Necho the king of Egypt, who happened to be by the river Euphrates at Carchemish, whom Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah. (**Jeremiah 46:2**)
- Therefore, the capture of **Nineveh**, about seven years earlier in the 14th year of Nabopolassar's reign would fall in the year **632 B.C.E.**

**See Also ASSYRIA (The Fall Of The Empire)**