

# Nahum Devotionals & Sermon Illustrations

## NAHUM 1

**Nahum 1:2 A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; The LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies.**

Of the thirty Roman Emperors and Governors who persecuted Christians, not one came to a peaceful end. - D L Moody

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**Nahum 1:3. Slow to anger.**

Make haste to help me.—Psalm 40:13.

Though the Lord often spares reproof, He never spares commendation. He is slow to anger; He makes haste to be gracious. - D L Moody

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**AN ILLUSTRATION** - Micah pressed home to Israel and to us the need of Christ as precedent to victory. If you ever visit Florence in Italy, and go into the Uffizi Gallery, you will see there a magnificent painting of the Battle of Ivry, in which the forces of Henry IV of Navarre are contending against the host led on by his enemies. The picture, true to life, represents a terrific struggle. There is no suggestion of retreat by the one side, nor a suggestion of victory for the other, but both are mingled in awful onslaught, fierce and bloody. But there is one part of the picture from which the artist's brush speaks in no uncertain evidence of the issues of the day. On one side of the picture, up in the corner, hovers a great company of warrior angels, with swords drawn. You know, at once, that God is on the side of Henry IV of Navarre, and you know whose is the victory.

When the Syrian host surrounded Elisha, the man of God, his servant trembled and cried, "How shall we do?" But Elisha said, "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." And when he had prayed, the young man's eyes were opened and he saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about them.

Sometimes when the forces of evil have arrayed themselves against the good, the conflict has seemed uncertain and sometimes it has seemed as though iniquity was destined to prevail. Even the bravest souls of earth, have been tempted here and tried, because the days were dark, and it seemed, for the time, as if there were no God. But, if we only had the eyes to see, we'd find an angel host about us, leading us on to victory. It is true that vice often wears the purple and virtue is clothed in rags. Truth is often on the scaffold and wrong is on the throne. But you may be sure that within the shadow of the scaffold, God is standing, keeping watch over His own. W. E. B.

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### **Nahum Illustration -**

Queen Victoria was celebrating sixty years on the British throne when Rudyard Kipling published his poem "Recessional." Not everybody in Great Britain liked the poem because it punctured national pride at a time when the empire was at its peak. "Recessional" was a warning that other empires had vanished from the stage of history and theirs might follow in their train. God was still the Judge of the nations. Kipling wrote:

Far-called, our navies melt away;  
On dune and headland sinks the fire:  
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday  
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!  
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The prophet Nahum would have applauded the poem, especially Kipling's reference to Nineveh, for it was Nahum who wrote the Old Testament book that vividly describes the destruction of Nineveh, the event that marked the beginning of the end for the Assyrian Empire. Nahum made it clear that God is indeed the Judge of the nations, and that "[p]ride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18, NKJV). In the seventh century B.C., the very mention of Nineveh brought fear to people's hearts, but today, Nineveh is mentioned primarily by Bible students, archeologists, and people interested in ancient history. Sic transit gloria! (See [McDowell's detailed discussion of Nineveh's Fall](#)) (Warren Wiersbe - Be Amazed)

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## **Nahum 1:1 Today in the Word**

Marian Anderson was a renowned African American contralto. Looking for a concert venue in Washington, D.C., her agent discovered that Constitution Hall, owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), was available only to white artists. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who was on the DAR board, resigned in protest and helped arrange for the concert to be held instead on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial. On Easter Sunday, 1939, a record audience gathered there, with millions more listening on the radio. Anderson opened by singing, "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing." Later she would sing at the inaugurations of Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy, among many other achievements and awards.

Anderson thought of herself as a musician, not a civil rights hero, but her story of achievement required perseverance, courage, and justice. The book of Nahum is also about courage and justice. It was risky for Nahum to prophesy judgment on Nineveh, because Assyria was a powerful empire known for its cruel treatment of defeated nations and leaders. This message of justice included God's condemnation of Nineveh's sin. More than a century after Jonah's time, Nineveh was completely destroyed in 612 B.C. as an act of divine judgment.

As a prophet, Nahum is among those who constitute the foundation of our faith (Eph. 2:19–20). He ministered during the reign of Josiah, likely overlapping with a young Jeremiah. His name means "comfort" or "consolation" and his message of judgment on Assyria, which had conquered the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C., would certainly have been a word of comfort or consolation for Judah. Nothing is known about his hometown of Elkosh. The book of Nahum is not a narrative like Jonah, but rather resembles other prophetic books in that it is an "oracle" or a "vision," meaning a prophetic message or sermon. Most oracles contain a message of blessing to balance the one of judgment, but that is not the case here.

### **Apply the Word**

Each generation must take responsibility for its own moral and spiritual choices (Ezek. 18:20–24). In Jonah's day, the people of Nineveh responded with repentant hearts to the word of the Lord. But the Ninevites of Nahum's day made different choices and stood guilty before God. Their city would be permanently destroyed as a result of their wickedness. While past church leaders and revivals are a heritage from God, they cannot replace our responsibility to be faithful.

### **Apply the Word**

God's love cannot ignore or overlook sin. We should rejoice in divine justice and judgment because it represents the triumph of holiness. If these truths or the doctrine of hell are troubling you, consider doing additional Bible study on these topics. You might also read one of the books by C. S. Lewis mentioned above. The Screwtape Letters offer "advice" from a senior devil to a junior one, while The Great Divorce narrates a "bus tour" from hell to the edges of heaven.

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## **Nahum 1:2**

### **C H Spurgeon**

#### **Morning and Evening**

"God is jealous." — Nahum 1:2

Your Lord is very jealous of your love, O believer. Did he choose you? He cannot bear that you should choose another. Did he buy you with his own blood? He cannot endure that you should think that you are your own, or that you belong to this world. He loved you with such a love that he would not stop in heaven without you; he would sooner die than you should perish, and he cannot endure that anything should stand between your heart's love and himself. He is very jealous of your trust. He will not permit you to trust in an arm of flesh. He cannot bear that you should hew out broken cisterns, when the overflowing fountain is always free to you. When we lean upon him, he is glad, but when we transfer our dependence to another, when we rely upon our own wisdom, or the wisdom of a friend—worst of all, when we trust in any works of our own, he is displeased, and will chasten us that he may bring us to himself. He is also very jealous of our company. There should be no one with whom we converse so much as with Jesus. To abide in him only, this is true love; but to commune with the world, to find sufficient solace in our carnal comforts, to prefer even the society of our fellow Christians to secret intercourse with him, this is grievous to our jealous Lord. He would fain have us abide in him, and enjoy constant fellowship with himself; and many of the trials which he sends us are for the purpose of weaning our hearts from the creature, and fixing them more closely upon himself. Let this jealousy which would keep us near to Christ be also a comfort to us, for if he loves us so much as to care thus about our love we may be sure that he will suffer nothing to harm us, and will protect us from all our enemies. Oh that we may have grace this day to keep our hearts in sacred chastity for our Beloved alone, with sacred jealousy shutting our eyes to all the fascinations of the world!

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In Thoughts for the Quiet Hour, C. H. Spurgeon wrote "The Bible is the writing of the living God." He explained that though "Moses was employed to write his histories with his fiery pen, God guided that pen. It may be that David touched his harp and let sweet psalms of melody drop from his fingers, but God moved his hands over the living strings of his golden harp. Solomon sang canticles of love and gave forth words of consummate wisdom, but God directed his lips and made the preacher eloquent. If I follow the thundering **Nahum**, when his horses plow the waters; or Habakkuk, when he sees the tents of Cushan in affliction; if I read Malachi, when the earth is burning like an oven; or the rugged chapters of Peter, who speaks of fire devouring God's enemies; if I turn aside to Jude, who launches forth anathemas on the foes of God—everywhere I find God speaking. It is God's voice, not man's." The Bible is the only book whose Author is always present when it is read.

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## **Nahum 1:1-8**

**September 21, 2006**

### **The Good And The Bad**

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble. —Nahum 1:7

Nineveh was in trouble with God. Big trouble! Despite the good work of the reluctant prophet Jonah, Nineveh had returned to its evil ways. The Ninevites had oppressed other countries, worshiped idols, and performed acts of cruelty.

God saw this evil, and through the words of Nahum He spoke of Nineveh's coming destruction, using words such as wrath and vengeance. Nineveh was about to face judgment.

Why would God's prophet tell the people of Judah about this? How could Nahum's frightening words help those who lived in the Promised Land?

There is help for answering those questions in Nahum 1:7-8. His prophecy of the destruction of those who reject God stands in sharp contrast to God's promise to those "who trust in Him." The godly, rather than facing judgment, would be cared for. They would have a refuge in Him.

God is not one-sided. He provides refuge, help, and comfort for those who trust Him, and He also sends judgment against those who disobey His standards.

The message for us is the same as it was for Judah. Through trust and obedience, we can enjoy the comfort of God's refuge—even in times of trouble. —Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

How oft in the conflict, when pressed by the foe,  
I have fled to my Refuge and breathed out my woe;  
How often, when trials like sea billows roll,  
Have I hidden in Thee, O Thou Rock of my soul. —Cushing

**Everyone must face God as Savior or as Judge.**

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## **Nahum 1:1-8**

**September 4, 2005**

### **God Is Great, God Is Good**

When we were children, my brother and I recited this prayer every night before supper: "God is great, God is good. Let us thank Him for this food." For years I spoke the words of this prayer without stopping to consider what life would be like if it were not true—if God were not both great and good.

Without His greatness maintaining order in the universe, the galaxies would be a junkyard of banged-up stars and planets. And without His goodness saying "enough" to every evil despot, the earth would be a playground ruled by the biggest bully.

That simple childhood prayer celebrates two profound attributes of God: His transcendence and His immanence. Transcendence means that His greatness is beyond our comprehension. Immanence describes His nearness to us. The greatness of the almighty God sends us to our knees in humility. But the goodness of God lifts us back to our feet in grateful, jubilant praise. The One who is above everything humbled Himself and became one of us (Psalm 135:5; Philippians 2:8).

Thank God that He uses His greatness not to destroy us but to save us, and that He uses His goodness not as a reason to reject us but as a way to reach us. — Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious—Thy great name we praise. —Smith

**When you taste God's goodness,  
His praise will be on your lips.**

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### **Nahum 1:2-6 Today in the Word**

The first African ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize was Albert John Lutuli, a nephew of Zulu kings who himself was elected Chief. Born in modern-day Zimbabwe, he was in 1952 elected President of the African National Congress (ANC), which opposed the apartheid regime in South Africa. During Lutuli's 15-year leadership of the ANC, their protests were mostly peaceful, including a bus boycott. One reason Lutuli fought for racial justice was his deeply held Christian faith. He said: "My own urge because I am a Christian, is to get into the thick of the struggle . . . taking my Christianity with me and praying that it may be used to influence for good the character of the resistance."

As we see in today's reading, justice was also one of the main concerns of the prophet Nahum. Chapter 1 is primarily a description of the character of God, as historically contextualized in His judgment on Nineveh. In the first part of the chapter, Nahum focused on the justice and power of the wrath of God, while in the second part he dealt more with God's patience and holiness. In today's reading, we find a poetic picture of a God who hates the worship of false idols, punishes sin, and feels righteous anger at evil (vv. 2–3a). He is slow to anger, great in power, and perfect in justice. We also find a poetic picture of God's power, conveyed through natural imagery (vv. 3b–5). Like a whirlwind or fierce storm, God's power is beyond human control. To say He can dry up seas and rivers and cause Bashan, Carmel, and Lebanon (all fruitful places) to wither is to say He has control over even the elements of nature. It's like saying He can wipe out the corn in Iowa or the oranges in Florida. This kind of absolute power inspires holy fear, as pictured in the mountains quaking and the hills melting.

To conclude, Nahum asks, "Who can withstand his indignation?" (v. 6). No one, of course. God's wrath is like a consuming fire—it will destroy whatever He chooses. It made no difference that Assyria was a world superpower. This wicked nation would be utterly unable to stand against the righteous power of God.

### **Apply the Word**

Some people want to ignore God's wrath and judgment. They say there's the "God of the Old Testament," but the "God of the New Testament" is all about love. But there is only one God and He's the God of the whole Bible. He's merciful and loving in both testaments, and holy and righteous in both testaments. His holy wrath and judgment are found throughout Scripture. The fact that judgment is also a New Testament doctrine can be seen, for example, in Romans 2:1–10.

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### **God Is Great, God Is Good**

The Lord is slow to anger and great in power . . . The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble. —  
Nahum 1:3,7

Today's Scripture: Nahum 1:1-8

When we were children, my brother and I recited this prayer every night before supper: "God is great, God is good. Let us thank Him for this food." For years I spoke the words of this prayer without stopping to consider what life would be like if it were not true—if God were not both great and good.

Without His greatness maintaining order in the universe, the galaxies would be a junkyard of banged-up stars and planets. And without His goodness saying "enough" to every evil despot, the earth would be a playground ruled by the biggest bully.

That simple childhood prayer celebrates two profound attributes of God: His transcendence and His immanence. Transcendence means that His greatness is beyond our comprehension. Immanence describes His nearness to us. The greatness of the almighty God sends us to our knees in humility. But the goodness of God lifts us back to our feet in grateful, jubilant praise. The One who is above everything humbled Himself and became one of us (Psalm 135:5; Philippians 2:8).

Thank God that He uses His greatness not to destroy us but to save us, and that He uses His goodness not as a reason to reject us but as a way to reach us. By: Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious—Thy great name we praise.  
—Smith

When you taste God's goodness, His praise will be on your lips.

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### **Nahum 1:3**

**C H Spurgeon**

#### **Daily Help**

“The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power” (Nah. 1:3), but the greatness of His power brings us mercy. Dear reader, what is your state this day? Can you by humble faith look to Jesus and say, “My substitute, You are my rock, my trust”? Then, beloved, be not afraid of God’s power, for now that you are forgiven and accepted, now that by faith you have fled to Christ for refuge, the power of God need no more terrify you than the shield and sword of the warrior need terrify those whom he loves. Rather rejoice that He who is “great in power” is your Father and Friend.

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### **Nahum 1:3**

**C H Spurgeon**

#### **Morning and Evening**

“The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power.” — Nahum 1:3

Jehovah “is slow to anger.” When mercy cometh into the world she driveth winged steeds; the axles of her chariot-wheels are red hot with speed; but when wrath goeth forth, it toileth on with tardy footsteps, for God taketh no pleasure in the sinner’s death. God’s rod of mercy is ever in his hands outstretched; his sword of justice is in its scabbard, held down by that pierced hand of love which bled for the sins of men. “The Lord is slow to anger,” because he is great in power. He is truly great in power who hath power over himself. When God’s power doth restrain himself, then it is power indeed: the power that binds omnipotence is omnipotence surpassed. A man who has a strong mind can bear to be insulted long, and only resents the wrong when a sense of right demands his action. The weak mind is irritated at a little: the strong mind bears it like a rock which moveth not, though a thousand breakers dash upon it, and cast their pitiful malice in spray upon its summit. God marketh his enemies, and yet he bestirs not himself, but holdeth in his anger. If he were less divine than he is, he would long ere this have sent forth the whole of his thunders, and emptied the magazines of heaven; he would long ere this have blasted the earth with the wondrous fires of its lower regions, and man would have been utterly destroyed; but the greatness of his power brings us mercy. Dear reader, what is your state this evening? Can you by humble faith look to Jesus, and say, “My substitute, thou art my rock, my trust”? Then, beloved, be not afraid of God’s power; for by faith you have fled to Christ for refuge, the power of God need no more terrify you, than the shield and sword of the warrior need terrify those whom he loves. Rather rejoice that he who is “great in power” is your Father and Friend.

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### **Nahum 1:1-8**

**December 23, 2002**

#### **Nahum’s Message**

**READ: Nahum 1:1-8**

The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked. —Nahum 1:3

If you ever read the book of Nahum, you’re likely to say, “There’s not much joy in that book!” That’s because Nahum spoke of the destruction of Assyria and its capital city Nineveh.

Nahum revealed the angry side of God as He railed against Assyria (2:13; 3:5). Many years before, in mercy and for His own

purposes, He had sent the reluctant prophet Jonah to preach to Nineveh. At that time the people repented, and the city was spared.

Few things are worse than repenting of repentance, but that's what happened to Assyria. A later generation returned to their forefathers' wicked ways. Assyria then attacked Israel, and God determined to punish her.

"The Lord is slow to anger" (1:3). But He is just and will not let sin go unpunished (1:3-6). Nineveh was about to find that out.

Maybe that's why I was so disturbed after talking with an old friend. For many years he had professed to be a believer, but then he turned his back on Christ. His defection raises the question of whether he is a wayward Christian, or perhaps one who never truly believed. In either case, he will find out that the Lord does not let sin go unpunished.

Lord Jesus, I plead with You to protect me from ever repenting of my repentance. Amen.—David C. Egner [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Our sinful ways can sap our joy  
And isolate us from the Lord;  
Confession and repentance, though,  
Assure that we will be restored. —Sper

**Once we turn away from sin,  
there should be no turning back**

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**Nahum 1:2,7**

**God's Moral Integrity**

The Lord avenges and is furious....

The Lord is good,...

and He knows those who trust in Him.- Nahum 1:2,7

Bertrand Russell became an atheist after he read the words of Jesus about hell. He apparently wanted a God who would never become angry or punish anyone. Dr. Russell certainly wouldn't like today's scripture reading, which speaks of God

as one who "avenges and is furious."

Personally, I would have trouble believing in a god who never became angry and didn't punish sin. Such a good God would not be a good God. What would you think, for example, of a witness to a brutal murder who felt no emotion and remained indifferent toward punishing the wrongdoer? Would you consider such a person a good person? Hardly!

God gives us a freewill and usually doesn't stop us from carrying out our wrong choices. But He does hold us accountable, and he will judge us.

In Nahum's day, the Ninevites were a cruel people who committed unbelievable atrocities. But the prophet assured the Israelites that God saw the wickedness of those people, was angered by it, and would just plain punish them.

I'm thankful that God possesses that kind of moral integrity. It gives me reason to trust him to keep all his promises, and it assures me that he will right all the wrongs of history. - Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Sometimes it seems that sin's ignored  
And evil has it's way;  
But don't be fooled,  
God's eye's aren't closed;  
He'll judge us all someday. -Sper

**God's judgment may not be immediate, but it is inevitable.**

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**Nahum 1:2**

The Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries (Nahum 1:2).

Nahum means "consolation, full of comfort." And that's what Nahum's message of doom upon Nineveh and Assyria brought to the people of Judah. Mighty Assyria had made Judah a vassal state, extracting heavy taxes and inflicting harsh slavery on them. With their security constantly threatened by pillaging raiders from Nineveh, God's people were asking, "Has Jehovah forsaken us? Why does an evil nation prosper while we suffer?" Against this background—Assyria's pride, cruelty, and seemingly invincible power in contrast to Judah's forlorn hopelessness—Nahum thunders his prophecy: "Nineveh will fall! God has not forsaken His people."

Translating the prophet's message into today's language, it might sound something like this: "Might does not make right. Countries with the most nuclear weapons and the biggest armies are not exempt from divine wrath. Any nation that thwarts justice and oppresses people will ultimately fall into ruin—whether it be Libya, Russia, China, Great Britain, Germany, or the United States."

The next time the evening news shows a dictator living in luxury while the people languish in poverty or innocent victims suffer under the cruelty of tyrants, recall the message of Nahum. The sovereign Ruler of this world will have His day. Justice will prevail. What a Nahum. What a consolation. —D J De Haan ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**The highways of history are strewn  
with the wreckage of nations that forgot God.**

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**Nahum 1:2**

**God is Jealous**

**C H Spurgeon**

Believer, your Lord is jealous of your love. Did He choose you? Then He cannot bear that you would choose another. Did He buy you with His own blood? Then He cannot endure that you would think you are your own or that you belong to this world. He loved you with such a love that He would sooner die than you should perish. He cannot endure anything standing between Him and your heart's love.

He is jealous of your trust. He will not permit you to trust in an arm of flesh. He cannot bear that you should hew broken cisterns that can hold no water (Jer. 2:13).

When we lean on Him, He is glad. But when we transfer our dependence to another, when we rely on our own wisdom or that of a friend, or worst of all, when we trust in any works of our own, then He is displeased, and He will chasten us to bring us back to Him.

He is also jealous of our company. There should be no one with whom we converse so much as with Jesus. To abide in Him alone is true love. To fellowship with the world, to find sufficient solace in our carnal comforts, is grievous to our jealous Lord. He wants us to abide in Him and enjoy His constant fellowship. Many of the trials He sends are to wean our hearts from the creature and fix them more closely on Him.

Let this jealousy, which should keep us near Christ, also comfort us. If He loves so much as to care about our love, we may be sure that nothing will harm us, for He will protect us from all enemies.

May we have grace today to keep our hearts in a sacred purity for our Beloved alone. May we with sacred jealousy shut our eyes to all the fascinations of the world.

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**Nahum 1:3**

**F B Meyer**

**Our Daily Homily**

Nahum 1:3 The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm.

GOD'S dealings are often terrible. — He rides on the whirlwind, and wraps Himself in the storm. But the child of God looks beneath the dress to the Father's heart, which beats with as much love when attired thus as when arrayed in the smiles of a summer eve. The whirlwind serves a useful purpose in cleaning the trees of rotten boughs, and searching the corners of fetid courts; the storm, in deluging the galleys and drains; the clouds, in forming the fertilizing showers on the thirsty land. God is in it all. God is behind the tempests that sweep over and desolate your life: this is his way; and the clouds that overcast your sky are the pavement of his feet; on our side they seem dark and lowering; but on the other side they are like burnished gold, as He steps across them. Whenever clouds are above, remember that God is at hand. They are the dust of his feet.

God's way is generally hidden. — The clouds as dust conceal Him; but we must not dwell with melancholy foreboding on the clouds, as if they were all. God is behind them, working for us, coming to our rescue, showing Himself strong on our behalf. Whenever the clouds gather over your life, say God cannot be far off—see, the dust He raises in his mighty progress betrays Him.

God counts our great things as very trifling. — A cloud is a great thing to us; it sometimes seems to equal the Alps in magnificence, in height, in girth; but to God it is only as a grain of dust to us. Our difficulties, perplexities, and anxieties, are very little things to Him. With one movement of his hand He could sweep them away, as you can move dust-motes from your table. Trust Him! Your tears are much to Him; your difficulties nothing.

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### **Nahum 1:3**

#### **A Funeral Sermon**

"The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet."—Nahum 1:3

Massillon, one of the famous divines of France, was called to preach the funeral sermon of the departed king. The vast cathedral was crowded. The reigning king, the royal family, the flower of the French nobility, and the members of the chamber were there. The solemn service was intoned. The organ reverberated its awful and impressive sound. The incense pervaded the atmosphere. The priests retired to their seats. The preacher ascended the pulpit. Massillon arose and stood amid that vast assemblage rigid and pale as a statue. A deathlike silence reigned as he stood there saying naught. His gleaming eye alone indicated self-possession. Solemnly he surveyed them all. Now his eye rested on the emblazoned banners and drooping ensigns—now on the glittering coronets of the nobles—now on the royal family, then on the king, until at length he fixed his gaze upon the coffin. Minutes passed. Some thought he was struck dumb before that august assemblage. At last he slowly raised his hand and turned his glance upon the king, saying, with infinite solemnity, "There is nothing great but God."

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### **Nahum 1:7**

#### **Today in the Word**

Amy Carmichael's life seems to have been directed by a series of specific verses from the Bible. We can see how Scripture influenced her life since she had the habit of noting in her Bible the lesson learned and the date it occurred.

When her father died when she was 18, her mother frequently quoted Nahum 1:7: "The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him." This strengthened Amy's already deep faith

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#### **Nahum 1:7 - Mention the Lovingkindness of God, Part 2 - Ann Shorb**

Excerpt - A flat tire isn't usually considered a blessing, but in my case it was—maybe it was even a life saver. Last week I shared with you a story of finding blessings even when I discovered a flat tire that changed my plans one Sunday morning. After writing that, I learned that there was an even bigger blessing behind the scene that I wasn't aware of at the time. ([click full devotional](#))

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#### **Nahum 1:7-11 Today in the Word**

When Elena Desserich was just five years old, doctors diagnosed her with pediatric brain cancer. Her parents didn't tell her the news, but somehow she must have come to understand what was happening in the nine months before she died. After her passing in 2007, her parents and little sister found hundreds of her notes written on scraps of paper tucked in random corners all over the house. Elena loved to draw, and many of her notes featured purple hearts and the words, "I love you." She had hidden them everywhere for her family to find.

Such incredible love in the heart of a dying child inspires awe. God's love, the source and fountain of all human love, is awe-inspiring as well. In today's reading, Nahum's description of God's character continues, this time focusing on His lovingkindness. He is good, a caring refuge for those who trust in Him (v. 7). This doesn't mean He's a pushover. He is just in His condemnation of Nineveh's sin (vv. 8–10). And He is powerful—there is no escape from His judgment. To be enemies of the Lord is to be doomed. They will be burned up like stubble in a dry field. There is no way to resist His will. No plot can possibly succeed against His sovereign decree. Those who try will be caught in their own traps or made drunk by their own wine—that is, people will reap what they sow. To be God's enemy is synonymous with being wicked, leading to the opposite inference that to be God's friend is to pursue love and righteousness.



The identity of the “one” in verse 11 is uncertain. Some commentators think it was Sennacherib (1 Kings 19), while others speculate it might have been Ashurbanipal, the last great emperor of Assyria. In any case, Assyria had chosen the wrong “refuge” or stronghold, trusting in its military power above all. The city of Nineveh was well-known for its strong walls (see September 8). These, however, were nothing compared to the strength and power of God. No refuge is perfectly secure except Him (cf. Pss. 9:9; 46:1; 59:16).

Apply the Word

Reaping what one sows is a general moral principle God has built into the structure of the universe (see Job 4:8). This principle is not absolute, or we would all reap the penalty of death for our sins (Rom. 6:23). God’s grace and mercy rescue and redeem us from normal processes of cause and effect, and getting what we deserve. Even so, we are not to presume upon His grace but rather we are to live as those who have been freed from slavery to sin (Rom. 6:1–6).

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### **Nahum 1:7, Ps 46:1**

Memorizing Verses - In our church's vacation Bible school, one of the four-year-old boys rushed jubilantly to his father at the close of the evening's activities and announced proudly that he had learned his Bible verse—Psalm 46:1 "That's great, Jacob! Say it for me," replied his father, Harry. Jacob beamed as he said, "God is our refuge and strength, and our President's in trouble."

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### **Nahum 1:7**

#### **Just You and God**

#### **Our Daily Bread**

My friend Ron wasn't having a good week. His new job had thrust him in the midst of some people who were foul-mouthed, rude, and obnoxious. Ron is one tough guy, but after 2 months of working in that environment, he wasn't sure he could tolerate any more ungodly, uncouth behavior.

Ron is by no means alone. Perhaps you too are in an environment that is not friendly to godliness—either at work, at home, or elsewhere. If so, what can you do? Here are some suggestions that may help you survive and even thrive:

Concentrate on God's goodness and depend on it. Our circumstances do not change the truth that the Lord is good all the time (Nahum 1:7).

Stay true to your convictions. Daniel refused to give in when he was surrounded by the ungodly (Daniel 1).

Immerse yourself in the Bible. Listen to God in His Word. It will encourage you (Psalm 119:49-50).

Do good for those who oppose you. Return good for evil (Matthew 5:44).

Trust God to be your companion. He will never leave you. And He won't forsake you (Hebrews 13:5).

When it's just you and God, that's enough.

When we are weak and in despair,

Our mighty God is near;

He'll give us strength and joy and hope,

And calm our inner fear. —Sper

With God behind you and His arms beneath you, you can face whatever is before you.

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### **Nahum 1:7 - Justice And Mercy Combined**

March 21, 2015

Read: Nahum 1:1-9

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble. —Nahum 1:7

When a defendant stands before a judge, he or she is at the mercy of the court. If the defendant is innocent, the court should be a

refuge. But if the defendant is guilty, we expect the court to exact punishment.

In Nahum, we see God as both a refuge and a judge. It says, “The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble” (Nahum 1:7 niv). But it also says, “He will make an end of Nineveh; he will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness” (Nahum 1:8 niv). Over 100 years earlier, Nineveh had repented after Jonah preached God’s forgiveness, and the land was safe (Jonah 3:10). But during Nahum’s day, Nineveh was plotting “evil against the Lord” (Nah. 1:11). In chapter 3, Nahum details Nineveh’s destruction.

Many people know only one side of God’s dealings with the human race but not the other. They think that He is holy and wants only to punish us, or that He is merciful and wants only to show kindness. In truth, He is judge and refuge. Peter writes that Jesus “committed Himself to Him who judges righteously” (1 Peter 2:23). As a result, He “bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness” (1Pe 2:24).

The whole truth about God is good news! He is judge, but because of Jesus, we can go to Him as our refuge.

Lord, never let us underestimate You by seeing only one side of Your role in our lives. Help us to enjoy Your love and kindness while recognizing how much You hate sin.

### **God’s justice and mercy intersect at the cross.**

INSIGHT: Nahum’s prophecy in many ways is a reflection of his name, which means “consolation.” Some believe that the prophet Nahum may have been from Galilee because the fishing village of Capernaum was on the shores of Galilee and Capernaum means “the village or town of Nahum.”

By Dave Branon

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## **Nahum 1:7**

### **Two Tails of One City**

The book of Jonah has the makings of a great movie plot. It contains a runaway prophet, a terrible storm at sea, the prophet swallowed by a great fish, God sparing the prophet’s life, and the repentance of a pagan city.

But Jonah’s sequel—the book of Nahum—might not be so popular. Nahum ministered in Nineveh just as Jonah had, but about 100 years later. This time, the Ninevites had no interest in repentance. Because of this, Nahum condemns Nineveh and proclaims judgment on the people.

To unrepentant Nineveh, the prophet preached: “The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked” (Nah. 1:3). But Nahum also had a message of mercy. To comfort the people of Judah, he proclaimed: “The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him” (v.7).

We see in the stories of Jonah and Nahum that with every new generation comes the necessity of an individual response to God. No one’s spiritual life can be handed off to another; we must each choose to serve the Lord from our own heart. God’s message is as fresh today as it was hundreds of years ago: judgment for the unrepentant but mercy for the repentant. How will you respond? - Dennis Fisher, Our Daily Bread

Your mercy, Lord, how great it is  
To overrule our sin!  
So help us know Your righteousness  
And choose to walk therein.  
—D. De Haan

God’s judgment is certain, but so is His mercy.

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## **Nahum 1:7**

### **Safest Place In A Storm**

#### **READ: Psalm 46:1-11**

The safest place in South Florida during the hurricane season may be the National Hurricane Center in Miami. The \$5 million structure boasts 10-inch concrete walls designed to withstand the force of 130 mph winds. Because the fierce storms come every year, the Center is there to provide a safe working environment for the people who monitor the weather and issue the warnings.

When other residents leave, they must stay.

Just like hurricanes, the storms of our lives arrive with unnerving regularity. Often they strike without warning and linger without welcome, testing the limits of our faith and endurance. But God has given us a place of safety in the midst of our circumstances.

The prophet Nahum wrote,

**The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him** (Nahum 1:7).

And the psalmist confidently stated, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed" (Ps. 46:1-2).

God Himself is our center of safety. It is not our strength but His that shields us from the whirling winds of circumstance and change.  
— David C. McCasland

Give me a spirit of peace, dear Lord,  
Midst the storms and tempests that roll,  
That I may find rest and quiet within,  
A calm buried deep in my soul. --Dawe

When trouble blows into your life,  
seek shelter in God.

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### **Nahum 1:8-14 - Description of the Finality of God's Awesome Wrath**

Illustration: Watching movies with my kids, whenever the bad guy was knocked down I always made a point to holler "Finish him off!" There's nothing I hate more than seeing the bad guy inevitably rise up again to make one last attack on the good guy – especially when it would have been so easy to blast him with another couple of rounds. Here we see that God makes certain that he finishes off the wicked and allows no possibility for a second chance. ([Paul Apple's commentary - recommended](#))

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### **Nahum 1:12**

**C H Spurgeon**

**Faith's Checkbook**

**Better Farther On**

"Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee nomore." —Nahum 1:12

THERE is a limit to affliction. God sends it and God removes it. Do you sigh, and say "when will the end be?" Remember that our griefs will surely and finally end when this poor earthly life is over. Let us quietly wait, and patiently endure the will of the Lord till He cometh.

Meanwhile, our Father in heaven takes away the rod when His design in using it is fully served. When He has whipped away our folly, there will be no more strokes. Or, if the affliction is sent for testing us, that our graces may glorify God, it will end when the Lord has made us bear witness to His praise. We would not wish the affliction to depart till God has gotten out of us all the honor which we can possibly yield Him.

There may today be "a great calm." Who knows how soon those raging billows will give place to a sea of glass, and the sea birds sit on the gentle waves? After long tribulation the flail is hung up, and the wheat rests in the garner. We may, before many hours are past, be just as happy as now we are sorrowful. It is not hard for the Lord to turn night into day. He that sends the clouds can as easily clear the skies. Let us be of good cheer. It is better on before. Let us sing Hallelujah by anticipation.

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### **Nahum 1:12-15 Today in the Word**

Earlier this year, researchers at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) built the world's most precise clock. It is an experimental atomic clock based on a single aluminum atom, and according to NIST measurements it won't alter as much as one second in 3.7 billion years. By comparison, the current national clock for civilians, kept by a NIST-F1 cesium fountain clock, can keep to within one second for "only" 100 million years. The NIST physicists call their latest effort a "quantum logic clock."

By any measure, Nineveh's time had run out. God had been patient, but He is holy and will not tolerate evil forever. Though Israel was God's chosen people, this hadn't exempted them from His judgment on their sins. And though Assyria had been God's instrument of judgment on the northern kingdom, this wouldn't protect them from His judgment on their sins as well. Assyria's military strength and numerous allies wouldn't matter (v. 12). God's judgment was a sure thing. This judgment would be more than a military defeat, though that was part of it. It would also be a spiritual defeat, in which false idols were destroyed and God's supremacy vindicated. The prophecy included a cultural shocker—no descendants and a "vile" or "worthless" grave (v. 14). A family line or people group dying out was the worst fate imaginable.

Nahum spoke of Nineveh's destruction as an accomplished fact (v. 15). From his point of view, the messenger was already arriving in Judah with the good news of peace—the good news that an antagonist had been defeated. For God's people, it would be as though a yoke had been broken or chains removed (v. 13). The former conqueror, Assyria, would itself be overthrown and the nation would again be free to celebrate holy days and keep vows, that is, to pursue covenant faithfulness and worship the Lord. How complete would Nineveh's destruction be? Centuries later, during a battle involving Alexander the Great, he would not even realize that it took place near the site of the former imperial capital.

#### Apply the Word

Nahum's picture of the "one who brings good news" (v. 15) reminds us of a picture of a person who spreads the gospel. In the words of Isaiah: "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim . . . salvation" (52:7; cf. Rom. 10:13–15). Having "beautiful feet" and actively sharing the good news of the gospel is the calling of every follower of Christ. Are we being faithful to bring life-giving news to others and glory to God?

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### **Nahum 1:13**

#### **C H Spurgeon**

#### **Faith's Checkbook**

#### **Immediate Freedom**

"For now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder."—Nahum 1:13

THE Assyrian was allowed for a season to oppress the Lord's people, but there came a time for his power to be broken. Just so, many a heart is held in bondage by Satan and frets sorely under the yoke. Oh, that to such prisoners of hope the word of the Lord may come at once, according to the text: "Now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder!"

See! the Lord promises a present deliverance: "Now will I break his yoke from off thee." Believe for immediate freedom; and, according to thy faith, so shall it be unto thee at this very hour. When God saith "now," let no man say tomorrow.

See how complete the rescue is to be; for the yoke is not to be removed, but broken; and the bonds are not to be untied, but burst asunder. Here is a display of divine force which guarantees that the oppressor shall not return. His yoke is broken, we cannot again be bowed down by its weight. His bonds are burst asunder, they can no longer hold us. Oh, to believe in Jesus for complete and everlasting emancipation! "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Come, Lord, and set free thy captives, according to thy word.

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### **Nahum 1:15**

#### **Peace On Earth**

"Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!"—Nahum 1:15

"At the close of the last war with Great Britain," says an American writer, "the prospects of our nation were shrouded in gloom. Our harbours were blockaded. Communication coastwise between our ports was cut off. Our immense annual products were mouldering in our warehouses. Our currency was reduced to irredeemable paper. Differences of political opinion were embittering the peace of many households. No one could predict when the contest would terminate, or discover the means by which it could much longer be protracted. It happened that one afternoon in February a ship was discovered in the offing, which was supposed to be a cartel, bringing home our commissioners at Ghent from their unsuccessful mission. The sun had set gloomily before any intelligence from the vessel had reached the city. Expectation became painfully intense as the hours of darkness drew on. At length a boat reached the wharf, announcing the fact that a treaty of peace had been signed, and was waiting for nothing but the action of our Government to become a law. The men on whose ears these words first fell rushed in breathless haste into the city to repeat them to their friends, shouting as they ran through the streets, 'Peace! Peace! Peace!' Every one who heard the sound repeated it From house to house,

from street to street, the news spread with electric rapidity. The whole city was in commotion. Men bearing lighted torches were flying to and fro, shouting, 'Peace! Peace! Peace!' When the rapture had partially subsided, one idea occupied every mind. But few men slept that night. In groups they were gathered in the streets, and by the fireside, beguiling the hours of midnight by reminding each other that the agony of war was over, and that a worn-out and distracted country was about to enter again upon its wonted career of prosperity. Thus, every one becoming a herald, the news soon reached every man, woman, and child in the city, and filled their hearts with joy."

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## **Nahum 1.14 Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible**

### **G Campbell Morgan**

I will make thy grave; for thou art vile.—Nahum 1.14

This is the prophecy which sets forth, more clearly than any other, the truth concerning the wrath of God, in its national application. Its burden is that of vengeance. It contains three messages. The first is a statement of the verdict of vengeance (1); the second gives us the vision of that vengeance (2); the third is an argument in vindication of that vengeance (3). It was concerned with Nineveh, and was delivered almost certainly when she was at the height of her power. One hundred years before, Jonah had preached in her streets, and she had repented, and been spared. In the interval she had repented of her repentance, had continued her oppressions and cruelties. Her spirit had become incarnate in one who defied Jehovah (see Nah 1:11, the reference being to Sennacherib); therefore, the time of the "full end" had come. In these words we have sentence and verdict. The sentence was that this great and arrogant and brutal power should be buried, the verdict against her being that she was vile. Thus the Divine vengeance is revealed as to its principle of action and its completeness of execution. The whole message is remarkable for the care with which the prophet insisted upon the goodness of God, thus emphasizing the righteousness of His vengeance, in that it proceeds only against those who have finally resisted His mercy. But when that is done, then His wrath makes a full end; it is irresistible, complete, final. All this is good tidings. That pride and cruelty and vice are doomed, because God reigns, is certain, and the certainty is comfort indeed.

## **NAHUM 2**

### **Nahum 2:2**

### **F B Meyer**

### **Our Daily Homily**

Nahum 2:2 The Lord bringeth again the excellency of Jacob.

Too long Nineveh had exerted her malign influence upon the fortunes of the chosen people; that, to use the expressive simile of Nahum 2:11, it had resembled a den of lions, whence ravenous beasts prowl forth to devour the villagers. The Assyrians, pouring forth from their mighty metropolis, had devastated the excellency of Jacob, the cry of the land had gone up to Jehovah; and He here declares his determination to quell the enemy and avenger, and to bring again the excellency of the people whom He loved.

It may be that you, too, have been carried into captivity, or devastated by strongly besetting sins; though you pray and yearn for emancipation, still you are kept low by the depredations of the power of evil. But be of good cheer; God is moving to your help. He is against those who are against you; He will bring again your excellency. He resembles the mother, whose child is smitten with small-pox. Does she love it less? Nay, but comes nearer, that they may fight the disease together.

You shall excel in faith when the hindrance is removed. The faith that once characterized you shall arouse with its former vigor, and make an open pathway down which heavens beat blessings may enter your life. At its summons the unseen will become more real than the seen, and God will be all in all. You shall excel also in hope. This is the realizing faculty, accepting the assurances of faith, following them as the beacon-lights that guide weary sailors; for hope is more than faith, as the artist is more than the preparer of colors. You shall also excel in love. When self-will looses its hold upon the soul, love springs spontaneously from its soil.

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## **Nahum 2:10 Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible**

### **G Campbell Morgan**

She is empty and void and waste, and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and anguish is in all loins, and the faces of

them all are waxed pale. Nahum 2.10

These words describe the effect of the Divine vengeance, as manifested in the city and the people. The condition of the former is set forth with graphic force in three words, "empty, void, waste." There is the utmost of finality in this collocation of words. Nothing remains to be said. The proud city, of splendid architecture, of accumulated treasure, of the utmost luxury, is seen as a dreary, degraded desolation. The literal fulfilment of this Divine sentence is a matter of history. The condition of the people as the result of the vengeance is described with equal force. When the Divinely appointed scourge fell in hammer blows upon the vile nation, the heart melted, that is, inward courage failed; therefore, the knees smote together, that is, outward courage failed; anguish was in all loins, that is, the vital forces were filled with agony; and the faces of all waxed pale, that is they paled in death. What a commentary this prediction, and its historic fulfilment, are on the exclamation of the writer of the letter to the Hebrews, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." These aspects of the Divine government abide. He is still "slow to anger," but when men or nations persist in wickedness in spite of His patience, then still "with an overrunning flood, He will make a full end." And again we say, this certainly gives the trusting heart comfort and courage. However proudly evil rear its head and vaunt itself, it is doomed.

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### **Nahum 2:1-10 Today in the Word**

After finishing dead last among the 32 teams in the 1998 World Cup, no one expected much from the U.S. men's national soccer team in 2002. Their first opponent, Portugal, was widely considered a dark horse favorite to win the tournament. So when the Americans scored three goals in the first half against the overconfident Portuguese and went on to win the game 3–2, the sports world was stunned! The U.S. team made it to the quarterfinals that year in their best modern World Cup showing ever.

The phrase "how the mighty have fallen" describes the Portuguese defeat in that memorable soccer match, as well as the conquest of Nineveh in today's reading. Though God's righteous judgment of Nineveh was clear in chapter 1, Nahum wasn't ready to leave the topic just yet. Chapter 2 gives us a vivid narrative of the city's downfall. We might imagine that the messenger of Nahum 1:15 has arrived and is delivering this news or telling this story to a highly appreciative audience. First, there is an announcement, a mocking warning to Nineveh to brace for an attack (v. 1). The narrative then mentions the big picture of national Jewish restoration (v. 2) before picturing the arrival of an impressive enemy army at the gates of Nineveh (v. 3). The battle is soon over in the city's outer section, as the invaders' chariots roam freely through the streets (v. 4). Behind the inner walls, things aren't going well either. Elite Assyrian troops stumble on the way to their defensive positions (v. 5).

Nineveh's final defeat is pictured in terms of water, as if the city was being swept away by a flood (v. 6). The palace collapses, the battle is lost, the city is plundered, and the people are exiled (vv. 7, 9–10). In fact, many historians believe the Babylonians used the Assyrians' own dams against them to damage their fortifications. By opening floodgates on the Khoser River, they may have won a swift victory. In a powerful final image that is then true both literally and figuratively, Nineveh spirals down the drain (v. 8).

#### **Apply the Word**

Biblical prophets often spoke of the future they were predicting as if it had already happened. They knew they were speaking the absolutely true and unbreakable word of the Lord. Speaking of prophecies as accomplished involved no risk whatsoever. That's how sure God's promises are! As Joshua told the Israelites: "Not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed" (Josh. 23:14). What good promise of God do you need to believe today?

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### **Nahum 2:11-13 Today in the Word**

Lions were a symbol of the Assyrian Empire in Bible times. A pair of enormous stone lions, for example, stood on either side of the entrance to a temple dedicated to Ishtar, Assyrian goddess of fertility and warfare. The lions measured eight-and-a-half feet high and more than seven feet across. Their mouths were open, as if they were roaring, and their expressions communicated power and ferocity. Written on one lion was a prayer to Ishtar as well as a record of a particular king's achievements. The temple was excavated in 1849 in northern Iraq, and today that lion can be seen in the British Museum in London.

Knowing that lions symbolized the Assyrian Empire shows today's reading to be highly ironic. Like a marauding lion, Assyria had been on the prowl, hunting and conquering other nations. In Nahum's prophecy the tables are turned and the hunter becomes the hunted; the fearless become the fearful. "Where now is the lions' den?" (v. 11) is a taunting question. To American ears this might sound like something we would describe as unsportsmanlike trash talk, but culturally and literarily it was an appropriate way to highlight the meaning of this significant event. The overthrow of Nineveh meant that God's words were true and His sovereignty absolute. To look at this in terms of the overall biblical storyline, the supreme lion is the Lion of Judah, Jesus Christ (Rev. 5:5).

Assyria would experience a complete reversal of fortune (v. 12). What a contrast with the Nineveh of Jonah's day—from hearts open to God's tender mercies to hearts determined to set themselves up against God Himself. Once powerful, Nineveh would become helpless. Once rich, it would be plundered. Once in pursuit of fresh prey, it would become the prey of others. Once a place of

security and stability, it would soon see war refugees fleeing for their lives. How would all this happen? Why would chariots go up in smoke? Why would the army be defeated? Why would the empire's political power vanish? The reason was God's fearsome statement, "I am against you" (v. 13).

Apply the Word - The results of opposing God are always disastrous. To reject His Word and His gospel is to make oneself His enemy. "Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (James 4:4). One might expect to lose when pitting human knowledge against God's wisdom and human power against His might. So why do people do it? They are irrational and prideful—sins that can characterize whole societies (like Nineveh) as well as individuals (like Jonah).

## NAHUM 3

### Nahum 3:1-19 - GOD IS JUST: WHY NINEVEH WILL FALL

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25) God is long-suffering, but there comes a time when His hand of judgment falls. "You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked; you have blotted out their name forever and ever" (Ps. 9:5, NKJV). Nahum gives three reasons why Nineveh deserved to be judged.

- Their ruthless bloodshed (Nahum 3:1–3)
- Their idolatry (Nahum 3:4–7)

Often in Scripture, idolatry is associated with prostitution, and when you consider that the chief deity of Nineveh was Ishtar, goddess of sexual passion, fertility, and war, you can understand why Nahum used this metaphor. Because of their spiritual blindness, the Assyrians were ensnared by this evil goddess and were under the control of lust, greed, and violence. People become like the god that they worship (Ps. 115:8), for what we believe determines how we behave. Assyria spread this evil influence to other nations and enslaved them by their sorcery. (See the description of the corrupt end-times religious system given in Rev. 17.) In ancient times, prostitutes were often shamed by being publicly exposed, and this is what God promised to do to Nineveh. God would expose Assyria's nakedness before all the nations, and this would be the end of their evil influence. The magnificent wealthy city would become a heap of ruins.

- Their pride and self-confidence (Nahum 3:8–19).

Like the Book of Jonah, the Book of Nahum ends with a question: "for who has not felt your endless cruelty?" (v. 19, NIV) Nahum emphasizes the same truth that was declared by the Prophet Amos: God punishes cruel nations that follow inhumane policies and brutal practices (Amos 1–2). Whether it's practicing genocide, exploiting the poor, supporting slavery, or failing to provide people with the necessities of life, the sins of national leaders are known by God and He eventually judges. If you question that fact, go and search for Nineveh. (Warren Wiersbe - Be Amazed).

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### Nahum 3:1-7 Today in the Word

In 1839, the *Amistad* sailed for Cuba with a shipload of African slaves. The captives, led by a man known as Cinque, escaped from their chains and took over the ship. As seen in an award-winning movie, also called *Amistad*, they then attempted to return to Africa but were captured by the U.S. Navy and imprisoned while the case was investigated. Spain tried to pressure President Martin Van Buren into extraditing the group so they could be tried for piracy and murder, but abolitionists succeeded in having the case tried in the United States. Two years after the original mutiny, the Supreme Court finally ruled that they had been taken captive illegally and were thus free to go. Justice had been done!

In vivid and intense language, Nahum 3 reiterates the justice of God's judgment on Nineveh and poetically addresses the reasons for it—which is, in short, their sins. This "city of blood" (v. 1) was guilty of cruelty, pride, idolatry, deceit, and witchcraft, and one gets the feeling that Nahum's list is a sampler, not a complete record. The Lord's justice would be poetic: Sins done in private would be made public. Shamelessness would be shamed. "I will pelt you with filth," said God, "I will treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle" (v. 6). This may sound extreme, but the literary device of hyperbole (exaggeration for effect) reflects the true heinousness of Nineveh's sins.

Assyria was not just a superpower, but a sadistic and evil one. History testifies to their bloody cruelties. They are alleged to have cut

off enemies' hands, feet, and noses; gouged out their eyes; flayed or skinned them alive; ripped open pregnant women; beheaded and then burned the bodies in huge piles; and carried out many massacres. Their lust for power is comparable to a lust for sex—the "harlot" (v. 4) is probably Ishtar, goddess of both fertility and war. Given all this, it's no surprise that no one will mourn the destruction of Nineveh, no one will offer words of comfort. Instead, Assyria's former victims will rejoice in their liberation (v. 7).

#### Apply the Word

Justice is often about reaping what we sow. Sowing the wind, the Assyrians were bound to reap the whirlwind (Hos. 8:7). We need to remember, though, that God can and does break this pattern with His mercy and grace. He can make it so that "those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy" (Ps. 126:5). In Christ, He has made it so that those condemned to death can receive eternal life (John 3:16).

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### **Nahum 3:7 Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible**

#### **G Campbell Morgan**

Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?—Nahum 3.7

The final message of Nahum was concerned with the righteousness of the wrath of God, and is a vindication of the activity of His vengeance. It alternates between descriptions of Nineveh's vice, and Jehovah's judgment. To study it, is to be convinced that the vice demanded the vengeance. In the presence of corruption so complete, of cruelties so brutal, of depravity so profound, any other method than that of a vengeance so complete as to blot out the plague, would have been injustice. In this question there is revealed a principle often insisted upon by these Hebrew prophets. The idea is that in the overthrow of Nineveh, all nations would agree. None would bemoan her. None would pity her. None would be found to comfort her. The principle is that in the underlying conscience of man the sense of justice is never destroyed; and that means that the beauty of righteousness is recognized, and the repulsiveness of evil is admitted. This is ever so. Men and nations go in evil ways, and persist therein; but they do so, knowing the wrong of it. For some fancied temporary advantage, they sin against this deep conviction; but it is still there, and it surges to the surface when the wrath of God proceeds in vengeance; and it always agrees with the rightness' of His action. When the full process of the Divine government has completed its work, the whole universe will agree with its righteousness and its judgment. That which then is doomed, will .be so, not by God only, but by the consent of the whole creation.

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### **Nahum 3:8-13 Today in the Word**

The survey discussed earlier on September 9 suggested that Americans are mixing and matching their religious beliefs for personal reasons. Another recent survey focused on American "millennials"—the generation born about 1980 that came of age at the turn of the millennium—sees a similar decline in orthodox Christian beliefs: Twenty-six percent of this generation are not affiliated with any church or faith tradition, even though 41 percent pray daily and 53 percent are "certain God exists." Only 18 percent attend any worship service weekly. Among all Americans, more than half say they combine their religion with New Age and Eastern beliefs such as astrology and reincarnation.

Although these numbers show a thirst for spirituality, God will not bless those who make up their own truth. They will reap what they sow, just as in today's reading. This passage is another reminder that God's judgment is certain because His power is absolute. If the Ninevites doubted, all they needed to do was remember

Thebes (vv. 8–10). Thebes, located about 400 miles south of Cairo on the eastern bank of the Nile River, was the capital of Upper Egypt. Defended by many moats and canals and with strong allies, Thebes was nonetheless destroyed by Assyria in 663 B.C. Assyrian records contain many details of this great victory, such as the exile of the city's people, the enslavement of its nobles, and the slaughter of its infants. Jeremiah (46:25) and Ezekiel (30:14–16) both prophesied about this.

Nahum's point was that Nineveh would suffer the same horrifying, humbling fate (vv. 11–13). Though now on top of the world, they would soon be running and hiding like refugees or like women (given that war was a "manly" pursuit in that day and age). Their defenses would fall like ripe figs—a startling simile, like comparing nuclear missiles to dandelion seeds blown away by the wind. Furthermore, the figs do not merely drop and spoil, rather, they are hungrily and effortlessly devoured, just as Nineveh would be by the armies of Babylon.

#### Apply the Word

In the face of temptation, let us pray our defenses do not drop like ripe figs! When under spiritual attack we must "put on the full armor of God." We are to "stand firm" with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, and other spiritual truths pictured as pieces of military equipment. Behind the shield of faith, we are safe from the "flaming arrows of the evil



one,” and with the “sword of the Spirit” we can disarm him (Eph. 6:10–18).

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### **Nahum 3:14-19 Today in the Word**

How can a loving God judge and destroy? This question applies not only to the city of Nineveh in today's passage but also to the doctrine of hell. Writer and apologist C. S. Lewis explored this issue in his books *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Great Divorce*. He argues that those condemned to hell get not only what they deserve but also what they have chosen. In *The Great Divorce* he wrote: “There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’ All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. To those who knock it is opened.”

One of the challenges of faith is to come to terms with truths that at first glance seem appalling. Judgment and hell are among these. Today's final reading in the book of Nahum again describes the defeat of Nineveh (vv. 14–15). Though Assyria was a commercial empire and center of world trade, it would be devoured by locusts, as it were. Merchants would take what they could and run (v. 16). Political leaders would disappear during the crisis (vv. 17–18). While a king named Ashur–uballit would try for several years to keep the empire going from another city, Nineveh's defeat would essentially be the death blow (v. 19). No one would grieve, for “who has not felt your endless cruelty?” The book ends with one of the many rhetorical questions, an effective literary technique in this prophecy.

How are we to respond to the fact that Nineveh was completely wiped out? It was never rebuilt, though archaeologists discovered its ruins in 1842. Was this overkill on God's part? Not at all. The wonder is that He waits so patiently and offers so much mercy in the face of human wickedness! If we had a true sense of His holiness and our own sin, we would, like Isaiah, fall to the ground in reverence for Him and in horror with ourselves: “Woe to me!” (Isa. 6:5).

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### **Nahum 3:19 F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

Nahum 3:19 There is no assuaging of thy hurt; thy wound is grievous. (r.v.)

This is one of the greatest chapters in Old Testament prophecy. Nahum the Elkoshite was a man of uncommon power of imagination and force of eloquence. His denunciation of Nineveh is remarkably forcible and eloquent. You can almost hear the crack of the whip, the rattling of wheels, and see the heap of corpses that block the passages. Every traveller, from Layard downwards, has attested the literal fulfillment of these predictions. For Nineveh, from the time of her fall to the present, has been utterly waste. Her hurt has never been assuaged. A scar upon the earth's surface alone marks her site.

From such a spectacle we may well turn to our beloved country, and seriously question whether we are doing all that we can to stay a similar fate. There are many signs that she is being swept along in the same stream as has borne many mighty nations down to ruin. The growing luxury of the rich; the abject poverty of the poor (a child was burned in Whitechapel the other day through the mother having to sell the fire-guard to buy bread); the gross impurity and immorality of our streets; the increasing desecration of the Rest Day; and the overwhelming bill for drink—these things cannot be unpunished. May we not indeed fear that God will soon rise against us? Let us use our influence as citizens, and our prayer as saints, to avert a fate which if it comes will be irretrievable.

Ah, reader, is this thy case? Hast thou an inward hurt, of which no balm or medicine has brought assuagement? Hast thou a wound, so grievous that no art has sufficed to heal it? Take it to the Living Savior. Each of his miracles, in the days of his flesh, has a spiritual counterpart

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## **Nahum 1:7 The Stronghold**

### **Sermon Notes by C H Spurgeon**

The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.— Nahum 1:7

HERE we come upon an island in Nahum's stormy lake. All is calm in this verse, though the whole context is tossed with tempest.

The text is full of God, and brims over with his praise.

#### **I. GOD HIMSELF "Jehovah is good."**

1. Good in himself essentially and independently.

2. Good eternally and unchangeable.
3. Good in each person: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
4. Good in all his acts of grace.
5. Good in all former acts of providence.
6. Good in his present act, be it what it may.
7. Good for a stronghold: to be trusted in trouble.
8. Good to his own people, who find their goodness in him.

Let us praise him as good in the most emphatic and unlimited sense.

Whoever else may or may not be good, we know that the Lord is good. Yea, "there is none good but one, that is, God" (Matt. 19:17).

## **II. GOD TO US. "A strong hold in the day of trouble."**

1. Under special circumstances our resort.

The day of trouble, when trial is special and vehement.

The day of trouble: temporary, but yet long enough to last through our life unless the Lord prevent.

The day of trouble: when within, without, around, there seem to be only care, and fear, and want, and grief.

2. Securing our safety at all times: for a stronghold is always strong, even when there is no immediate war.
3. Maintaining our peace. Within the walls of a castle men walk at ease, for they are shut in from enemies.
4. Defying our foes, who dare not attack such a fortress.
5. Abiding for ever the same: always a sure refuge for the needy.

Let us run to him, as the poor people of the open country fly to the walled towns in the time of war.

## **III. GOD WITH US. "He knoweth them that trust in him."**

The term "he knoweth them" includes—

1. His intimate acquaintance with their persons, conditions, etc.
2. His tender care to supply all their necessities.
3. His divine approval of them. To others he says, "I know you not" (Luke 13:25).
4. His loving communion with them, which is the best proof that they are known to him, and are his beloved friends.
5. His open acknowledgment: he owns them now, and will confess them before assembled worlds (Rev. 3:5).

Let us believe in the goodness of the Lord even when we cannot discern it with the eye of sense.

Let us fly to his protection when storms of trouble fall.

Let us confide in his loving care when hunted by our enemies.

Let us take care that we rely upon him, in Christ Jesus, for salvation.

## **Testimonies**

The only place of safety in this world is the one in which we are sure to meet God, and to be "under the shadow of his wing." The Bible sets forth, in grand metaphor, this idea, by speaking of a "fortress into which the righteous runneth, and is safe"; and of a strong tower; and of the shadow of a great rock." When we were in the Yosemite Valley, lately, our driver told us of a series of terrific earthquakes, which visited the valley several years ago. The few inhabitants who dwelt there were thrown out of their beds in the night. Frail cottages were overturned. Loose rocks were hurled down from the precipices into the valley. These shocks were repeated for several days until the people were panic-stricken and ready to despair. "What did you do?" we inquired. The driver (pointing to the mighty and immovable rock, El Capitan, which rises for three thousand feet on the south side of the valley, and has a base of three solid miles) replied: "We determined to go and camp under old Capitan; for if that ever moved we knew the world

would be coming to an end." — Dr. Cuyler

Tamar may disguise herself, and walk in an unaccustomed path, so that Judah may not know her; Isaac, through the dimness of his sight, may bless Jacob, and pass over Esau; want of time may make Joseph forget, or be forgotten of, his brethren; Solomon may doubt to whom of right the child belongeth; and Christ may come to his own, and not be received: but the Lord knoweth them that are his, and his eye is always over them. Time, place, speech, or apparel cannot obscure or darken his eye or ear. He can discern Daniel in the den; and Job, though never so much changed, on the dung-hill. Let Jonah be lodged in the whale's belly, Peter be put into a close prison, or Lazarus be wrapped in rags, or Abel rolled in blood, yet can he call them by name, and send his angels to comfort them. Ignorance and forgetfulness may cause love and knowledge to be estranged in the creature, but the Lord is not incident to either, for his eye, as his essence, is everywhere; he knoweth all things. — Spencer's "Things New and Old"

A safe stronghold our God is still,  
A trusty shield and weapon;  
He'll help us clear from all the ill  
That hath us now o'ertaken.  
The ancient Prince of hell  
Hath risen with purpose fell;  
Strong mail of craft and power  
He weareth in this hour,  
On earth is not his fellow.

With force of arms we nothing can,  
Full soon were we down-trodden;  
But for us fights the proper Man,  
Whom God himself hath bidden.  
Ask ye, "Who is this same?"  
Christ Jesus is his name,  
The Lord Zebaoth's Son,  
He and no other one  
Shall conquer in the battle.  
— Martin Luther

Many talk of trusting God when indeed they know nothing of real faith. How are we to know who is, and who is not, a believer? This question is hard to answer in times of prosperity, but not in the day of trouble: then the true truster is calm and quiet in his God, and the mere pretender is at his wits' end. Our text seems to hint as much. Everybody can find a bird's nest in winter when the trees are bare, but the green leaves hide them; so are believers discovered by adversity. One thing, however, should\*never be forgotten: whether we know believers or not, God knows them. He does not include one hypocrite in the number, nor exclude one sincere truster, even though he be of little faith. He knows infallibly, and universally. Does he know me, even me, as one of those who trust in him? The Lord knoweth them that are his, and they know him as their stronghold. Have I such knowledge?

## **NINEVEH'S DESTRUCTION FULFILLMENT OF NAHUM'S PROPHECY JOSH MCDOWELL**

From [Evidence that Demands a Verdict \(borrow from archive.org\)](https://www.evidenceforfaith.com/post/evidence-that-demands-a-verdict-borrow-from-archive-org)

### **8. NINEVEH**

The next two prophetic areas should be remembered together as they are very similar. The two major cities of the ancient world were Nineveh and Babylon. They were both incredibly strong cities as you will soon see. They were populous and highly militaristic—centers of extremely strong military empires. Yet at around their respective peaks in power and influence, prophecies of doom were cast against their impregnable walls, and soon afterward they were conquered—Nineveh after a three-month (very short) siege and Babylon without a fight.

The first to be investigated will be Nineveh, the evil capital of the Assyrian Empire. Nahum was sent to preach repentance—there was no repentance—and then to prophesy the Lord's will.

## 1A. SCRIPTURE

Nahum (661—before 612 B.C.)

Nahum 1:8 But with an overflowing flood He will make a complete end of its site, And will pursue His enemies into darkness.

Nahum 1:10 Like tangled thorns, And like those who are drunken with their drink, They are consumed As stubble completely withered.

Nahum 2:6 The gates of the rivers are opened, And the palace is dissolved.

Nahum 3:10 Yet she became an exile, She went into captivity: Also her small children were dashed to pieces At the head of every street; They cast lots for her honorable men, And all her great men were bound with fetters.

Nahum 3:13 Behold, your people are women in your midst! The gates of your land are opened wide to your enemies; Fire consumes your gate bars.

Nahum 3:19 There is no relief for your breakdown, Your wound is incurable. All who hear about you Will clap their hands over you, For on whom has not your evil passed continually? (NASV)

## 2A. PREDICTIONS AND EXPLANATION

1B. Would be destroyed in a state of drunkenness (Nahum 1:10).

2B. Would be destroyed in "an overflowing flood" (Nahum 1:8, 2:6).

3B. Would be burned (Nahum 3:13).

4B. Totally destroyed ("Your wound is incurable") and never rebuilt (Nahum 3:19).

## 3A. DATING

For the dating of Nahum, we have George E. Meisinger writing: "The earliest and latest possible date of Nahum are established by the prophet himself. The earliest date is fixed in 3:8 where the prophet looks at the conquest of Noamon (Thebes) as a past event. One learns from the Assyrian Annals that Assurbanipal destroyed Thebes in 663 B.C. [John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 289.]

"The latest possible date is fixed by the nature of the contents of the book, i.e. it looks at the fall of Nineveh as a future event. The Babylonian Chronicle fixes the date of Nineveh's fall as 612 B.C. [D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings (685-556 B.C.)* In the British Museum (London: Published by the Trustees of the British Museum, 1956), pp. 24-26.] " 35/12

## 4A. BACKGROUND

As further study will show, the rivers around Nineveh will play an important part in the history.

"Sennacherib, Ashurbanipal's grandfather," writes Walter A. Mair (*The Book of Nahum*, Concordia Publishing House, 1959, used by permission), "complained that the river not only rose above its bank repeatedly during the centuries, but also undermined the foundations of some palaces and probably was the cause for their demolition. In his days the river constituted such a menace that he changed its course, perhaps removing some of the bends in order to expedite its flow. He also strengthened the foundations of the temple with 'mighty slabs of limestone,' so that 'its platform might not be weakened by the flood of high water.' " 32/124

Nineveh's defenses were very impressive. From certain sources (Diodorus 12, I, xxvi-xxvii; II. ii.3, iii.2 [12] ; International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, p. 2148-51 [20]) we can get a fair idea of the specifications of Nineveh.

unequaled in size of all the ancient cities inner wall: 100 feet tall (10-story building), 50 feet thick (6-7 cars abreast), three chariots abreast towers 200 feet tall (20-story) 15 gates, 150 foot wide moat, 7 mile circumference

Austen H. Layard, a specialist on Nineveh and Babylon, made this comment in his book *Discoveries Among the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon* (Harper and Brothers, 1953): "An enemy coming from the east, the side on which the inclosure was most open to attack, had consequently first to force a stupendous wall strengthened by detached forts. Two deep ditches and two more walls, the inner being scarcely inferior in size to the outer, had then to be passed before the city could be taken. (According to Mr. Rich, the distance from the inside of the inner wall to the inside of the outer wall was 2007 feet. Allowing 200 feet for the outer, the breadth of the whole fortifications would be about 2200 feet, or not far from half a mile.)

"The remains still existing of these fortifications almost confirm the statements of Diodorus Siculus, that the walls were a hundred

feet high, and that three chariots could drive upon them abreast; and lead to the conclusion that in describing the ramparts forming the circuit round the whole city, ancient historians were confounding them with those which inclosed only a separate quarter or a royal residence, as they have also done in speaking of Babylon. Whilst the inner walls were constructed of stone and brick masonry, the outer appear to have consisted of little else than of the earth, loose pebbles, and rubble dug out from the ditches, which were cut with enormous labor into the solid conglomerate rock." 30/660

## 5A. HISTORY

The history will begin with an eerie analysis by George Meisinger (The Fall of Nineveh, Master's Thesis presented to the faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary, 1968):

"Psammetichus [an Egyptian revolutionary against Assyrian rule] soon began a minor rise in power that forever thwarted Assyrian aspirations in Egypt. The Elamite territory was lost before Assurbanipal's death. Though minor losses, as they had been minor gains, they were indicative of the fact that the wheels of Providence were now turning against Assyria. Her last act on the stage of History was in process. One of the bewildering riddles of history is that this nation—at her apex in 663 B.C.—fell to oblivion in just fifty-one years, never to be heard from again." 35/65

Assyria seemed to crumble, even though the Nineveh walls were good.

"In the summer of 614 B.C.," continues Meisinger, "Cyxares marched against Nineveh itself, and though the text becomes defective, it is clear he was unable to breach the walls. He then turned to greener pastures. Tarbis, a few miles northwest of Nineveh, was sacked. Then Cyxares marched south. Nimrud was sacked. [M. E. L. Mallowan, Nimrud and Its Remains (London: Collins St. James Place, 1966), II, 388, 389, 391.] " 35/82

And further, "Granted that national and/or military reverses in recent years had trod down the morale of the army, yet one still is unable to explain the wholesale terror exhibited in the 612 debacle by the Assyrian army on that basis. Something extraordinary must account for Nineveh's emotional reaction." 35/88

Meisinger builds his case: "Overwhelming military might cannot satisfy the requirements of Nahum's picture. Allowing that the coalition had all the most advanced techniques, military savvy, and armaments of its era, it still would not be able to penetrate Nineveh's walls with 'ease.' Walls that are one-hundred feet high, with towers manned by a veteran army, plus a hundred and fifty foot wide moat do not succumb easily within three months." 35/88

And then, the final blow. "At the conclusion of Assurbanipal's reign, the Medes and the confederated tribes of the Umman—Manda 'were fast gathering . . . like vultures awaiting the last moments of their victim [H. R. Hall, The Ancient History of the Near East (London: Methuen and Co. L.T.D., 1932), p. 511] .' The vultures swooped upon their victim in 612 B.C., and thoroughly devoured it." 35/97

A three-month siege is incredible. "When one considers that Psammetichus besieged Ashdod for twenty-nine years [Herodotus, II, 157 (Axotus =Ashdod)] , a city of considerably lesser dimensions than Nineveh, it is amazing that Nineveh fell in just three months. However, the prophet Nahum predicted that this great city would fall with ease. He prophesied that as a ripe fig falls off a tree when shaken, so Nineveh will fall" (Nahum 3:12). 35/87

We now switch from Meisinger to Gleason Archer (A Survey of Old Testament Introduction, Moody Press, 1964): "Nahum 2:6 contains a remarkably exact prediction, for subsequent history records that a vital part of the city walls of Nineveh was carried away by a great flood, and this ruin of the defensive system permitted the besieging Medes and Chaldeans to storm the city without difficulty." (Prediction 2B) 1/341 Nineveh fell hard. The following is a paraphrase from Diodorus of Sicily II, 26 and 27. 12/

Camped outside the city walls, the king of Assyria, who had been unaware of his deteriorating position militarily and overaware of his victories against the enemy, became lax in his vigilance and began to indulge with his soldiers in a feast of animals and much wine and drinking. This fact of decline in the Assyrians' defenses reached the enemy general, Arbaces, through deserters, and a night attack was pursued. With great success, Arbaces' organized troops routed the disorganized camp of the Assyrians and sent them back in flight to their city with great losses. This battle, decided apparently entirely by the Assyrian drunkenness and disorganization, was the final scene before the actual battle for the city itself—the siege. Realizing the precarious situation he was in, the Assyrian leader, Sardanapallus, made preparations for the defense of his city as well as his kingdom. A prophecy was in the land which stated, "No enemy will ever take Nineveh by storm unless the river shall first become the city's enemy." Sardanapallus decided this would never be and therefore felt secure.

The enemy of the Assyrians was very happy with its successes to this point, but could not break down the mighty city walls. The inhabitants had great amounts of food stored away and as a result, the city remained a resistance to the attackers for three years; but after three years and heavy rains, the river, swelling wide, broke down a distance of the city walls and flooded a portion of the

city. The king panicked, believing the forementioned prophecy had been completed. He gave up hope and ordered his kingly possessions as well as concubines, etc. into a portion of his palace and sealing off that palace, burned the whole thing down. The siegers, learning of the break in the wall, attacked this point, forcing entry into the city, and took over as victors of the whole city. Arbaces was crowned its king and given supreme authority.

"Extensive traces of ash which represent the sack of the city by Babylonians, Scythians, and Medes in 612 B.C. have been observed in many parts of the Acropolis. Thereafter the city ceased to be important." We now reach the present. Joseph P. Free (Archaeology and Bible History, Scripture Press, 1972), states that "A century ago such familiar Biblical cities as . . . Nineveh . . . and many others were shapeless mounds, the very identity of which, in some cases, had been forgotten." (Prediction 5B) 15/5

Edward Chiera (They Wrote on Clay, Ed. by George C. Cameron, University of Chicago Press, 1966) adds that "If the tourist of today, after all that has been written about the ancient civilizations of Babylon and Assyria, fails to get an accurate conception of what the past was, one can easily imagine that the first travelers crossed and recrossed the land without suspecting that they were close to the historical sites of Babylon and Nineveh. Even scientifically-minded travelers who knew from the Bible of the existence of these two cities, and attempted to find them, several times passed over their very ruins without knowing it." (Prediction 5B) 6/40

Merrill Unger (Unger's Bible Dictionary, Moody Press, 1957, revised 1966) records the devastation of Nineveh: "In 612 B.C. the ancient splendid city and capital of the Assyrian Empire was so completely obliterated, according to its prophesied decimation by Hebrew prophets, that it became like a myth until its discovery by Sir Austen Layard and others in the 19th century. The site has now been extensively excavated." 48/795

George Meisinger speaks to the critics that jeered at even the prior existence of Nineveh: "The priceless records of this once dauntless empire, had been withheld from the annals of world history until the nineteenth century A.D.. Sir Henry Layard, that indefatigable, English pioneer archaeologist, was the first to unlock the mysteries of this nation—a nation which had refused to yield her secrets to mankind for so long. Yet, almost from the first turn of Layard's spade, the city [Nineveh] began to surrender hundreds and then thousands of informative clues to the past. For centuries the only knowledge that such an empire existed was to be found in the direct and indirect statements of Scripture. As the centuries rolled by, and as no archaeological evidence turned up to "substantiate" the Biblical record, doubt began to grow as to whether such a people ever existed. The historian puzzled; the skeptic jeered the scriptural accounts. So complete was Assyria's extinction!" 35/4, 5

Archaeologists face a predicament, writes Merrill Unger: "Nineveh is a site so huge that perhaps it never will be completely excavated. A modern village covers one of the larger palaces. Cemeteries which cannot be disturbed cover other areas. Excavators have to bore through 30-45 feet of debris before Assyrian strata are reached." 48/796

M. E. L. Mallawan (Nimrud and Its Remains, Collins, 1966) vividly records the destruction of Assyria. His description of the downfall is similar to the disaster in Nineveh. "The condition in which we found it [throne room at Fort Shalmanassar] was a dramatic illustration of the final sack: the wall plaster had been packed hard and burnt yellow by the flames and then blackened with soot which had penetrated into the brickwork itself. The intense heat had caused the south wall to bend inwards at a dangerous angle and the floor of the chamber itself was buried under a great pile of burnt debris over a metre and a half in depth, filled with ash, charcoal, small antiquities . . . there were also many hundreds of mutilated fragments of ivory carvings burnt black and gray, sometimes to a high polish from the heat. This debris was mixed with inflammable cereals which consisted of millet, barley, wheat, and emmer. I have in my time witnessed the debris of many an ancient fire—at Ur of the Chaldees, at Nineveh, at Arpachiyah, on sites in the Habur and Balih valleys—but never have I seen so perfect an example of a vengeful bonfire, loose-packed as bonfires are, the soot still permeating the air as we approached. After this great holocaust parts of the walls toppled over into the chamber, which was filled to a total height of three metres in all with mud brick. The hard upper packing, amounting to another metre and a half of debris over that of the bonfire, thus finally sealed the contents which were left undisturbed [sic] until we reached them in 1958." 33/ii.434

#### **4A. SPECIFIC FULFILLMENTS**

The prophecy mentioned a flood. What follows by Walter Maier (The Book of Nahum, Concordia Publishing House, copyright, 1959) is strong evidence supporting the flood. "Three times Nahum predicts that Nineveh is to be destroyed by a flood ... (Nah 1:8) ... (Nah 2:7) ... (Nah 2:9). This triple emphasis on inundation is more than figurative, and the expressions 'gates of the rivers,' 'overrunning flood,' 'pool of water' cannot be described away as poetic imagery." 32/118

George Meisinger says: "It was further shown that even the coalition was unable to account for all the details involved in Nineveh's fall. For this reason, the traditions of a flood were pursued. Sufficient evidence—this paper contends—was presented to demonstrate that a flood solution to Nineveh's collapse is the only satisfactory answer, accounting for all details. A flood that destroyed a degree of Nineveh's defense system permitted the coalition to sack and vent its vengeance on Nineveh." 35/96

Walter Maier states that: "The Babylonian tablet inferentially offers an acceptable background for the fulfillment of Nahum's

prophecy. According to its chronology

Nineveh fell in the month of Ab. The season of the heavy rainfall in Nineveh occurs normally in March, while the rivers attain their greatest height in the months of April and May, the period roughly parallel to Ab." 32/118, 119

Meisinger refers to Gadd, (The Fall of Nineveh: The Newly Discovered Babylonian Chronicle, No. 21, 901, In the British Museum, London: Oxford University Press, 1923, pp. 27-30) when he says, "The most famous of the ancient accounts is that of Diodorus who quotes the much earlier Ctesias. He related that assaults were continually made upon the walls without success, but that in the third year (This evidently figures from 614 B.C. when Cyaxares made his abortive attempt to breach the walls of Nineveh. It was not a three-year continual siege, for the Babylonian Chronicle is clear that the Medes were absent from Assyria in 613, and that the Assyrian army was on offensive maneuvers against the Babylonian army that same year a succession of heavy downpours swelled the Euphrates [sic], flooded part of the city, and cast down the wall to a length of 20 stades." 35/89, 90

George Badger records that: "The fact [of the flood] here recorded [Nahum 1:8; 2:7] literally fulfills the prophecy of Nahum and accounts for a stratum of pebble and sand which has been found a few feet below the surface [of the river] in the mounds of Koyoonjuk and Nimrud." 3/1, 78, 79

Some scholars believe the Tigris didn't even flow past ancient Nineveh since it does not at present.

Walter Maier (The Book of Nahum, Concordia Publishing House, 1959) answers these critics and gives reference for further checking: ". . . the majority of scholars have held that the Tigris flowed directly past the city on the west. (Karl Ritter, Die Erdkunde (1822-59), p. 224. Sir Austin Henry Layard, Nineveh and Babylon (1875), p. 77. Felix Jones, "Nineveh's Location," Journal of Royal Asiatic Society 1855, XV, 316, 323. F. E. Peiser, "Tigris to the East of Nineveh," Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft, III, 277, 278. C. F. Lehmann and Paul Haupt, Israel, seine Entwicklung im Rahmen der Weltgeschichte, 1911, p. 149. Claude Hermann Walter Johns "Location of Tigris," in Encyclopaedia Britannica. 11th ed., 1911, XIX, Col. 3, 421.)" 32/120

Meisinger adds that "Debate is waning to the effect that this river (Tigris), at high flood level, could not destroy a river gate." 35/93

Not only could the Tigris River have done it, but also there are two other possibilities:

Walter Maier (The Book of Nahum, Concordia Publishing House, copyrighted 1959) continues: "The second river which could have caused the overrunning flood was the Khosr . . . At both of these dams [to hold out the high-water from the Khosr], constructed in the typical Assyrian style, the investigators believe, there was originally a gate or sluice to regulate the water flow. How easy, then, for the besieging army to impound the Khosr River at this place, close the sluices of the agammu, cut off this source of water supply (the water of the Tigris was not drinkable), and then, open the river gates, let the mass of dammed waters sweep down on the doomed city, carry the river gates away, flood the lower sections of the city, and thus help spell the beginning of Nineveh's end! Even today, at the supposed site of the Ninlil Gate in the city's walls, the Khosr broadens to recall the prophet's words: 'Nineveh is like a pool of water ' (2:9). 32/121, 122

"The third river, whose gates could have been opened or whose waters could have produced the overrunning flood, is the Tebiltu. This stream, as its name implies (it is significantly derived from the Assyrian verb tabalu, 'to take away,' 'to tear away') could become a raging torrent." 32/123

### **By way of review, the predictions have been fulfilled.**

1. Nineveh fell in a state of drunkenness. Bernard Ramm (Protestant Christian Evidences, Moody Press, 1957) states: "Part of the success of the Medes was due to the optimism of the Ninevites who assumed the enemy was permanently repulsed and gave themselves to drinking and feasting." 43/107

We can honestly assume that:

2. Nineveh was destroyed in a flood.
3. Nineveh was burned
4. Nineveh was totally destroyed.