

THE MINOR PROPHETS

Nahum – Who Is In Charge?

January 5, 2025

1. Background

A. Jonah — 100 years before Nahum

“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.” Jonah 1:2 (ESV)

...Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth.
Jonah 3:3 (ESV)

...should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left,...?” Jonah 4:11 (ESV)

B. Hezekiah — 50 years before Nahum

In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. Isaiah 36:1 (ESV)

Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: “...Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD by saying, “The LORD will surely deliver us. This city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” Isaiah 36:13–15 (ESV)

“...‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.... Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my fathers destroyed?...’ Isaiah 37:10–13 (ESV)

“So now, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the LORD.” Isaiah 37:20 (ESV)

“Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.” And the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies... Isaiah 37:33–37 (ESV)

2. Introduction

An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.
Nahum 1:1 (ESV)

- A. **Oracle** — A message of divine judgment.
- B. **Vision** — God gave Nahum a vision of the city's destruction. It is similar to the vision God gave John in Revelation.
- C. **Nahum** — His name means comforter.
- D. **Elkosh** — It may be modern-day Capernaum (the village of Nahum.)
- E. Nahum wrote between the fall of Thebes in 663 BC and the fall of Nineveh in 612 BC.

3. **Nahum 1:2-10 — God will punish sin, but He rescues those who take refuge in Him.**

The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD is avenging and wrathful; the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. Nahum 1:2 (ESV)

The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means clear the guilty... Nahum 1:3a (ESV)

His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebukes the sea and makes it dry; he dries up all the rivers; Bashan and Carmel wither; the bloom of Lebanon withers. Nahum 1:3b-4 (ESV)

The mountains quake before him; the hills melt; the earth heaves before him, the world and all who dwell in it. Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him. Nahum 1:5-6 (ESV)

The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him. Nahum 1:7 (ESV)

But with an overflowing flood he will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness. Nahum 1:8 (ESV)

'In the third year [of the siege] a series of heavy rains swelled the [Tigris], flooded part of the city, and overthrew the wall to a length [of about two miles].'

- Diodorus Siculus

What do you plot against the LORD? He will make a complete end; trouble will not rise up a second time. Nahum 1:9 (ESV)

4. **Nahum 1:11-15 — God promised to deliver Judah but destroy Nineveh.**

Thus says the LORD, "Though they are at full strength and many, they will be cut down and pass away..." Nahum 1:12a (ESV)

...Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more. And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds apart." Nahum 1:12b-13 (ESV)

The LORD has given commandment about you: “No more shall your name be perpetuated; from the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the metal image. I will make your grave, for you are vile.” Nahum 1:14 (ESV)

Behold, upon the mountains, the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace! Keep your feasts, O Judah; fulfill your vows, for never again shall the worthless pass through you; he is utterly cut off. Nahum 1:15 (ESV)

5. Nahum 2:1-13 — Nineveh’s destruction would be complete.

The scatterer has come up against you. Man the ramparts; watch the road; dress for battle; collect all your strength. Nahum 2:1 (ESV)

The shield of his mighty men is red; his soldiers are clothed in scarlet. The chariots come with flashing metal on the day he musters them; the cypress spears are brandished. Nahum 2:3 (ESV)

The chariots race madly through the streets; they rush to and fro through the squares; they gleam like torches; they dart like lightning. Nahum 2:4 (ESV)

He remembers his officers; they stumble as they go, they hasten to the wall; the siege tower is set up. Nahum 2:5 (ESV)

The river gates are opened; the palace melts away; Nahum 2:6 (ESV)

Nineveh is like a pool whose waters run away. “Halt! Halt!” they cry, but none turns back. Nahum 2:8 (ESV)

Plunder the silver, plunder the gold! There is no end of the treasure or of the wealth of all precious things. Desolate! Desolation and ruin!... Nahum 2:9–10a (ESV)

...Hearts melt and knees tremble; anguish is in all loins; all faces grow pale! Nahum 2:10b (ESV)

Where is the lions’ den, the feeding place of the young lions, where the lion and lioness went, where his cubs were, with none to disturb? The lion tore enough for his cubs and strangled prey for his lionesses; he filled his caves with prey and his dens with torn flesh. Behold, I am against you, declares the Lord of hosts, and I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions. I will cut off your prey from the earth,... Nahum 2:11–13 (ESV)

6. Nahum 3:1-19 — Nineveh’s destruction was the result of her sin.

Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder— no end to the prey! Nahum 3:1 (ESV)

And all for the countless whorings of the prostitute, graceful and of deadly charms, who betrays nations with her whorings, and peoples with her charms. Nahum 3:4 (ESV)

The crack of the whip, and rumble of the wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot! Horsemen charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, hosts of slain,

heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end— they stumble over the bodies!
Nahum 3:2–3 (ESV)

Behold, I am against you, declares the LORD of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will make nations look at your nakedness and kingdoms at your shame. I will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. Nahum 3:5-6 (ESV)

Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile, with water around her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall? Cush was her strength; Egypt too, and that without limit; Put and the Libyans were her helpers. Yet she became an exile; she went into captivity; her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of every street; for her honored men lots were cast, and all her great men were bound in chains. You also will be drunken; you will go into hiding; you will seek a refuge from the enemy.
Nahum 3:8–11 (ESV)

...Behold, your troops are women in your midst. The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has devoured your bars. Nahum 3:12-13 (ESV)

You increased your merchants more than the stars of the heavens. The locust spreads its wings and flies away. Your princes are like grasshoppers, your scribes like clouds of locusts settling on the fences in a day of cold— when the sun rises, they fly away; no one knows where they are. Nahum 3:16-17 (ESV)

Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to gather them. There is no easing your hurt; your wound is grievous. All who hear the news about you clap their hands over you. For upon whom has not come your unceasing evil? Nahum 3:18-19 (ESV)

7. Conclusion

1. God is large and in charge. No matter how influential evil people or nations become, God can wipe them from the face of the earth.
2. God's patience with sin shouldn't be misunderstood as weakness against sin. God promises to judge sin, sometimes in this life but always in the next.
3. God rescues those who trust in Him. He rescues us to the utmost through Jesus.
4. Prophecy fulfilled in history proves the Bible is trustworthy.

Life Group Questions

1. **Read Nahum 1:1-9.** What are the two elements of God's character found in these verses? What is terrifying? What is comforting?
2. **Read Nahum 2:1-10 and Isaiah 30:30-32.** What are the various ways God carried out his plan to destroy Nineveh? What does that teach us about the way God carries out His plans today?
3. **Read Nahum 3, Galatians 6:7-10, and Psalm 7:14-16.** Why did God destroy Nineveh? How will our good and evil choices ALWAYS impact our lives?