

Nahum

¹ This book is the vision of Nahum from Elkosh. This is the sad message about the city of Nineveh.*

The Lord Is Angry at Nineveh

² The LORD is a jealous God.

The LORD punishes the guilty,
and he is very angry.

The LORD punishes his enemies,
and he stays angry with them.

³ The LORD is patient,
but he is also very powerful!

The LORD will punish the guilty;
he will not let them go free.

He will use whirlwinds and storms to show his power.

People walk on the dusty ground, but he walks on the
clouds.

⁴ He will speak harshly to the sea, and it will become dry.
He will dry up all the rivers.

The rich lands of Bashan and Carmel become dry and
dead.

The flowers in Lebanon fade away.

⁵ The Lord will come,
and the mountains will shake
and the hills will melt away.

He will come,
and the earth will shake with fear.

The earth and everyone on it
will shake with fear.

⁶ No one can stand against his great anger.

* 1:1 Nineveh The capital city of the country of Assyria. Assyria destroyed Israel in 722-721 B.C.

No one can endure his terrible anger.

His anger will burn like fire.

The rocks will shatter when he comes.

⁷ The LORD is good.

He is a safe place to go to in times of trouble.

He takes care of those who trust him.

⁸ But he will completely destroy his enemies.

He will wash them away like a flood
and chase them into the darkness.

⁹ Why are you making plans against the LORD?

He will bring complete destruction,
so you will not cause trouble again.

¹⁰ You will be destroyed completely
like thornbushes burning under a pot.

You will be destroyed
like dry weeds that burn quickly.

¹¹ Someone from Nineveh is making evil plans against the
LORD.

That advisor is a worthless troublemaker.

¹² This is what the LORD said:

“The people of Assyria are at full strength.

They have many soldiers, but they will all be cut
down.

They will all be finished.

My people, I made you suffer,
but I will make you suffer no more.

¹³ Now I will set you free from the power of Assyria.

I will take the yoke off your neck
and tear away the chains holding you.”

¹⁴ King of Assyria, the LORD gave this command about
you:

“You will not have any descendants to wear your name.
 I will destroy your carved idols
 and metal statues that are in the temple of your gods.
 I am preparing your grave,
 because your end is coming soon![†]”

¹⁵ Judah, look!
 There, coming over the mountains, is a messenger
 bringing good news!
 He says there is peace.
 Judah, celebrate your special festivals
 and do what you promised.
 Those worthless troublemakers will not come through
 and attack you again.
 They have all been destroyed.

2

Nineveh Will Be Destroyed

¹ An enemy is coming to attack you,
 so guard the strong places of your city.
 Watch the road.

Get ready for war.

Prepare for battle!

² Yes, the LORD changed Jacob’s pride.
 He made it like Israel’s pride.
 The enemy destroyed them
 and ruined their grapevines.

³ The shields of his soldiers are red.

[†] 1:14 because your end is coming soon Or “you are not important” or “you are so hated.”

Their uniforms are bright red.
Their chariots are shining like flames of fire
and are lined up for battle.
Their horses are ready to go.
4 The chariots race wildly through the streets
and rush back and forth through the square.
They look like burning torches,
like lightning flashing from place to place!

5 The enemy calls for his best soldiers.
They stumble as they rush ahead.
They run to the wall
and set up their shield over the battering ram.
6 But the gates by the rivers are open,
and the enemy comes flooding in and destroys the
king's palace.
7 The enemy takes away the queen,
and her slave girls moan sadly like doves.
They beat their breasts to show their sadness.

8 Nineveh is like a pool whose water
is draining away.
People yell, "Stop! Stop running away!"
But it does not do any good.

9 Take the silver!
Take the gold!
There are many things to take.
There are many treasures.
10 Now Nineveh is empty.
Everything is stolen.
The city is ruined.
People have lost their courage,

their hearts melt with fear,
 their knees knock together,
 their bodies shake,
 and their faces turn pale.

¹¹ Where is that great city now?

It was like a den where the lions feed their young.
 It was a place where people felt safe,
 like lions in a cave with no one there to harm them.

¹² The lion was able to catch plenty of food
 to feed his cubs and his mate.

He filled his cave with the animals he killed.
 He filled his den with the meat he gathered.

¹³ The LORD All-Powerful says,

“I am against you, Nineveh.
 I will burn your chariots
 and kill your ‘young lions’ in battle.
 You will not hunt anyone on earth again.
 People will never again hear bad news
 from your messengers.”

3

Bad News for Nineveh

¹ It will be very bad for that city of murderers.

Nineveh is a city full of lies.
 It is filled with things taken from other countries.
 It is filled with plenty of people that it hunted and
 killed.

² You can hear the sounds of whips
 and the noise of wheels.
 You can hear horses galloping
 and chariots bouncing along!

³ Soldiers on horses are attacking,
their swords are shining,
their spears are gleaming!

There are many dead people.

Dead bodies are piled up—too many bodies to count.
People are tripping over the dead bodies.

⁴ All this happened because of Nineveh.

Nineveh is like a prostitute who could never get
enough.

She wanted more and more.

She sold herself to many nations,

and she used her magic to make them her slaves.

⁵ The LORD All-Powerful says,

“I am against you, Nineveh.

I will pull your dress* up over your face.

I will let the nations see your naked body.

The kingdoms will see your shame.

⁶ I will throw dirty things on you

and treat you in a hateful way.

People will look at you and laugh.

⁷ Everyone who sees you will be shocked.

They will say, ‘Nineveh is destroyed.

Who will cry for her?’

I know I cannot find anyone to comfort you, Nineveh.”

⁸ Nineveh, are you better than Thebes† on the Nile River? Thebes also had water all around her to protect herself from enemies. She used that water like a wall

* 3:5 pull your dress This is a wordplay in Hebrew. The Hebrew word also means “to destroy a country and take its people away as prisoners to other nations.” † 3:8 Thebes A great city in Egypt. It was destroyed in 663 B.C. by the Assyrian army.

too. ⁹ Ethiopia and Egypt made Thebes strong. Libya and the Sudan supported her, ¹⁰ but Thebes was defeated. Her people were taken away as prisoners to a foreign country. Soldiers beat her small children to death at every street corner. They threw lots to see who got to keep the important people as slaves. They put chains on all the important men of Thebes.

¹¹ So, Nineveh, you will also fall like a drunk. You will try to hide. You will look for a safe place away from the enemy. ¹² But Nineveh, all your strong places will be like fig trees. When new figs become ripe, people come and shake the tree. The figs fall into their mouths. They eat them, and the figs are gone.

¹³ Nineveh, your people are all like women—and the enemy soldiers are ready to take them. The gates of your land are open wide for your enemies to come in. Fire has destroyed the wooden bars across the gates.

¹⁴ Get water and store it inside your city, because the enemy soldiers will surround your city. Make your defenses strong! Get clay to make more bricks and mix the mortar. Get the molds for making bricks. ¹⁵ You can do all these things, but the fire will still destroy you completely. And the sword will kill you. Your land will look like a swarm of grasshoppers came and ate everything.

Nineveh, you grew and grew. You became like a swarm of grasshoppers. You were like a swarm of locusts. ¹⁶ You have many traders who go places and buy things. They are as many as the stars in the sky. They are like locusts that come and eat until everything is gone and then leave. ¹⁷ And your government officials are also like locusts that settle on a stone wall on a cold day. But when the sun comes up, the rocks become warm, and the locusts all fly away. And no one knows where.

¹⁸ King of Assyria, your shepherds fell asleep. These powerful men are sleeping. And now your sheep have wandered away on the mountains. There is no one to bring them back. ¹⁹ Nineveh, you have been hurt badly, and nothing can heal your wound. Everyone who hears the news of your destruction claps their hands. They are all happy, because they all felt the pain you caused again and again.

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