



Lions No More

September 13, 2026

*¹³ "I am against you," declares the Lord Almighty.
"I will burn up your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your
young lions. I will leave you no prey on the earth.
The voices of your messengers
will no longer be heard."*

Nahum 2:13 (read vv. 1-13)

Over 100 years before Nahum, Jonah preach to Nineveh and, apparently, they repented. It was not to last, however, as we see in Nahum's *burden* ("prophecy") concerning this ancient imperial foe (1:1). Ever expanding, ever greedy, ever violent and merciless, Assyria's reign engulfed the ancient world for over one hundred years. But the prophets are not just presenting a lesson in ancient history; they put all of human history before the God who rules over heaven and earth. The time for God's relenting over Nineveh's evil was over; now his face was set against their cruel oppression of the world (v. 13).

History tells us that it was indeed the Babylonians who rose up and finally put an end to and increasingly weakened Assyria after the death of Ashurbanipal in 627 BC. But Nahum's images ultimately serve to point to God's judgement enacted on unjust regimes in the annals of history. He points to the avenging God who orchestrates other agents of his justice, all the while holding these same instruments accountable to his justice (whether it be Babylon, Persia or even Israel/Judah herself).

God cannot be a God of love if he is not a God of justice. In our sanitized postmodernism where everyone, it is asserted, is equally guilty, we need the corrective of the "good news" when "the wicked... will be completely destroyed" (1:15). Yes we are all implicated in evil. Only by the blood of Jesus do we have hope for mercy. Yet God works to put a final end to wickedness forever. God's wrath over evil and wickedness is good news, especially for the poor, weak and vulnerable. (3:1; Matthew 25:31-46).

Small Group Guide

September 13, 2026

What did you hear in this morning's message that stood out to you? What was interesting, important, or confusing?

How can we apply God's opposition to Nineveh to our everyday lives? Is it good news to you God responds to injustice in this way?

How do we recognize that while all sin and fall short of God's glory, God still holds accountable the ones who cause deep harm?

How we viewing Nineveh as a spiritual foe arrayed against God's people and will help us read Nahum with fresh eyes?

Some Background

The city of Nineveh was astounding in its size and ability. It constructed an enclosed city wall measuring 8 miles in circumference, in which an estimated 300,000 inhabitants would live. The Assyrian kings had redirected the Khosr River to flow through the city which channeled into the Tigris River. Nineveh also had an intricate system of dams which may have been sabotaged as part of Nineveh's overthrow (2:6). Excavations of Nineveh have uncovered an Assyrian palace with a showroom depicting Sennacherib's assault on the Judean city of Lachish (British Museum of London). Ancient Assyria was indomitable force... Or so they thought. Through the prophets' oracles, God reminded the people of Israel that God alone was the one whose reign was invisible and secure.

Reflections

All people are created in the image of God. Nahum knew this as well as any Israelite. Yet he also knew that God had to put an end to the injustices of the powers that sought to destroy God's creation. Remember that by Nahum's time, the kingdom of Israel had already been overthrown and sent into exile. God's justice implicated his own people as well. But how does seeing that God fights for his people renew our hope and trust in him? How might it invigorate our faith, knowing that God is set against the powers that seek to destroy his creation, both physically and spiritually?

Today, connect with the God who is eternally for us in Christ.