

IV. Nahum in Biblical Perspective
God's Word to Nations He has Blessed Who Oppose Him
"The Wrath of God Will Be Satisfied, Yet the People of God Will Be Justified"
Nahum 3

Dr. Harry L. Reeder III
August 17, 2014 – Morning Sermon

This is our fourth and final study in the book of Nahum. We are in Nahum 3 for this study. To give us context in what we've done in these last three studies in Nahum I want to go back and read some selected verses to give us the backdrop into this prophecy of this judgment brought against Nineveh and therefore Assyria. Nahum 1:1-3, 7, 2:13 says [1] *An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh. [2] 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. [3] The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. [7] The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.*

[2:13] 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, and the voice of your messengers shall no longer be heard.

The grass withers, the flower fades, God's Word abides forever by His grace and mercy may this His Word be preached for you.

I have a question to ask you. How many of you know who Chief Roy Brody is? I figured most of you would know who that was because I thought that most of you would have seen the iconic film *Jaws*. This is an interesting film especially now that it is somewhat sanitized. There is a poignant moment in that film for me. My favorite line in the movie is when Chief Brody turns around to the chief shark hunter and says "We're going to need a bigger boat." The most poignant moment in the film is when they know this man-eating shark is loose but for financial reasons, tourist reasons and serenity reasons they have intimidated Chief Brody into silence and the result is that a child was devoured by this shark. There is a moment when the parents of this child are either walking to or from the funeral where the mother is dressed in black and she walks up to Chief Brody and slaps him across the face. She begins to weep because this man had been silent concerning the danger – required silence, intimidated silence but silence.

Some of you might be wondering why I've selected Nahum. This has been an overwhelming book in my preparation of this study. It is a book of a constant reminder of God's judgment and in the context the reminder that God will secure His people even in the assured, inevitable judgment that He will bring and does bring in this world where the wrath of God has been revealed, Romans 1 says that it is being revealed and the book of Revelation tells us it will be revealed in an unending judgment but it must be endured for all eternity in a place called hell because God will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. There are numerous reasons why I felt the need to go through this book of Nahum.

One reason is that I believe this book has much to say to our nation, where we are and the parallels with Assyria/Nineveh. Secondly, is that I don't think you can preach the

Gospel of Good News until you put the backdrop of the bad news. If you attempt to preach the Gospel of Good News apart from the declaration of the bad news you will eventually distort the Gospel in some form or fashion. You will make it into something that it is not. The whole news of the Good News of the Gospel is what God has done to deliver us from the bad news. A third reason is that I don't want to be Chief Brody. I do not want people to step up to the judgment seat and say to me 'why didn't you warn me, why did you not tell me of the wrath to come, why did you not tell me of the wages of sin being not only a physical death and a spiritual death but an eternal death, why did you not do that?'

The backdrop of Nahum has been very clear. It has been God's sending of Nahum, an unpublicized prophet, one that we would not have known of other than this moment, and God has given him an unmistakable, non-equivocating message that God is going to bring judgment upon Nineveh. Nineveh is an ancient city and you find it in Genesis 10 plus you find its founder, Nimrod in Genesis 10 who also founded in Babylon and other cities that are mentioned who became city states as well. The affirmation of this is found in extra Biblical literature such as the Code of Hammurabi about this ancient city of Nineveh and its presence. Yet this ancient city of Nineveh has been unknown and unfound until finally excavated in the 1850s. It has been utterly covered over and not found even as this prophecy said.

That would be seemingly unthinkable for Nineveh was seemingly an impregnable, unconquerable and unassailable city. It's walls were 60 to 80 feet thick and 80 to 100 feet high. They would do chariot races on top of the walls around the city. The very temples and palaces were full of all of the plunder from the earth for Nineveh, Assyria was the unrivaled super power of that day. The Assyrian Kingdom ascended from what today we would know as Russia in the north all the way down near the mid part of Africa, from the West into Europe and all the way to the East to what today we would call Pakistan. No one could stand before them. They had fierce armies. They were an economic machine. They had military power and technology.

Now this non-descript, unannounced prophet shows up in 640 B.C. and makes the declaration that God who is great and good will secure His people from them and He is about to bring judgment upon them. I can imagine what they must have done with that. Of course Nahum is not the first prophet. There was a reluctant prophet had showed up about 110 years earlier and his name was Jonah. He didn't seem to spend much time on his sermon because it seems to be a pretty short one. 'In 40 days Nineveh shall be overthrown. Repent!' God in His amazing grace and mercy brought an awakening in Nineveh that the Bible tells us in the book of Jonah began at the lowest part of the society and went all the way to the king's palace. It went throughout the breadth, height, and depth of that entire society – male, female, young, old, rich, poor, master and slave. It was so powerful that when the news reached the palace, the king that he then demanded that Yahweh was to be worshipped and the people were to repent of their sins and celebrate only in Yahweh Himself. An amazing spiritual awakening had come. This country had been entrusted by God for the act of disciplining the ten Northern Tribes about 60 years later.

Then they apostatized. Idolatry flooded back into Nineveh. Violence, sexual aberration, sexual immorality, Ishtar was being worshipped and not only were the idols being worshipped but they would also become arrogant in their violence. I would

commend to you to get James Boyce's commentary on the Minor Prophets and turn to Nahum. Read the three pages they took from the tablets discovered in the Mesopotamian Valley on what they bragged what they did. It would be very difficult for me to read that in this setting to describe what they did. Their vileness, blasphemy, violence and arrogance now reached to the fact that they went down to threaten and intimidate the Southern Kingdom but God delivered the Southern Kingdom and then sent Nahum with a word of judgment.

Now we are at 110 years after that spiritual awakening and the full apostasy and idolatry of Nineveh at the height of its power and then comes this word of judgment. It will not be fulfilled for 28 years but in 612 A.D. Nineveh will be no more. It will be gone. The very prophecy of Nahum 1, the fire, drought, and the earthquake will be used to destroy its gates and the river water gates will crash down. Then the armies of the Babylonians will come in and utterly destroy the place. Then will come more earthquakes and floods and it will be covered over not to be seen for hundreds, and hundreds and hundreds of years, just as the prophet said.

Before we get to Nahum 3 here is a question for you. Here is a nation that God has announced His judgment upon. So what is the only hope of a nation that God has announced judgment upon? How can they be delivered? How can a nation that God has blessed that then opposes Him in apostasy, blasphemy, and mockery to His Name, His glory, His power, His Word and His people, be delivered? Let's look at Nahum 3 to see this prophetic judgment in its final installment described by Nahum through the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He gives a commentary of what is about to happen in Nahum 3.

Just one other word, when I was about 10 years old all of my friends were older than me and one day they came and got me and took me to an old shack in this overgrown field. This shack after being run down for years was occupied by rats, mice and all kinds of vermin. It also had spiders galore. You could open the door and as the sun shown in all you could see were spider webs. One of the older boys whipped out a pack of matches. He lit the match and set it to the spider web and in just a moment this expansive web that seemed everywhere just shriveled to nothing. That is what happened to Nineveh. It was an unbelievable empire and the riddle to historians is what happened and how did it happen so quickly? God not only tells you what happened but through Nahum He prophesied what would happen 28 years before it happened. Now let's look at what Nahum says in the final declaration and illustration of it in Nahum 3.

Nahum does two things. He gives the judgment of Nineveh as is promised and then he profiles Nineveh in its judgment. Nahum 3:1-4 says *[1] Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder— no end to the prey! [2] The crack of the whip, and rumble of the wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot! [3] Horsemen charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, hosts of slain, heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end—they stumble over the bodies! [4] 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 has not spent a lot of time detailing the apostasy and arrogance of Nineveh, this nation that God blessed 110 years previously and now they have begun to assault the glory of God, the name of God, the Word of God, and the people of God by which they had been blessed, when the people of God with the Word of God in the name

of God for the glory of God had come 110 years earlier but now they are striking back at it. What had it turned them into? It had turned them into a bloody city with unbelievable assaults on the sanctity of life with not only the people they conquered but those whom they controlled – the slaves, including God’s covenant people they had within their boundaries. The blood of many was upon their hands, even the most humanly innocent. Their number one idolater was Ishtar. The worship of Ishtar required child sacrifice. That’s exactly what was taking place. It was a bloody city.

It was not only a bloody city but it was a city full of lies and plunder – what they have stolen from other nations. There is no end to their prey for they are always looking for someone else to dominate and exercise dominion over. They were known for their whorings of the city for it was a city of sexual aberration and immorality that is again beyond what I can possibly describe here. It repeats this description twice and its charms which is referring to its dominion of sorcery and the occult in this city. Sorcery had become a dominate power within this city. Then comes the reminder in the next verse.

Nahum 3:5-7 says *[5] 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. [6] I will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. [7] And all who look at you will shrink from you and say, “Wasted is Nineveh; who will grieve for her?” Where shall I seek comforters for you?*

God tells them that He is against them and because of that they cannot stop this judgment that He will bring to them. The result will be that their skirts will be lifted up which is a declaration that God is going to shame them before all the other nations and the filth of your sin will come upon you and be thrown at them. Contempt will govern over them and they will be made a spectacle. There will be no one who cares. People will shrink back and no defenders will come for them. No one will grieve for them or show up to comfort them. You will be gone, forgotten and they will be glad that you’re gone and forgotten in the surrounding nations.

Nahum 3:8-10 says *[8] Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile, with water around her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall? [9] Cush was her strength; Egypt too, and that without limit; Put and the Libyans were her helpers. [10] 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.*

They think they were impregnable but so did Thebes. They had the Nile River that surrounded them. They had impregnable walls, in fact the river was a wall on one side. They were utterly unassailable and unconquerable yet they had a confederation of allies and Nahum names nation after nation that would stand with them but now they are in captivity. They are in slavery and their city has been destroyed and their people have been scattered. Guess who did that to Thebes, who conquered them just 18 years before this prophecy? It was Assyria. So what you did to them is about to happen to you. They are fully aware of what happened to Thebes. A man by the name of Ashurbanipal had taken them there and had brought these conquering hordes against all of them. That is what he had done specifically. Ashurbanipal is now gone. He is dead. Now stands Assyria so being reminded at what happened to Thebes at their hand, now look at what the Lord says in the next verse.

God’s judgment that is being poured out to them is now pictured like drinking from a cup that will cause you insensibility and stupor. Having to drink God’s wrath that

He is about to pour upon them will send them into a drunken stupor of insensibilities and inabilities. Nahum 3:11-13 says *[11] You also will be drunken; you will go into hiding; you will seek a refuge from the enemy. [12] All your fortresses are like fig trees with first-ripe figs— if shaken they fall into the mouth of the eater. [13] Behold, your troops are women in your midst. The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has devoured your bars.*

Remember that He said earlier that He had the fire, drought, storm, tornadoes and earthquakes and all that would be brought to bear. What will they do? They will turn back to their fortresses and armies but their armies are no better than domesticated women and their leaders will abandon them. Concerning their fortresses and all that they are putting their trust in, it is no different than a ripened fig tree where the figs will fall for all you have to do is tap the tree. Then comes the Divine taunt against Nineveh.

Nahum 3:14-16 says *[14] Draw water for the siege; strengthen your forts; go into the clay; tread the mortar; take hold of the brick mold! [15] There will the fire devour you; the sword will cut you off. It will devour you like the locust. Multiply yourselves like the locust; multiply like the grasshopper! [16] You increased your merchants more than the stars of the heavens. The locust spreads its wings and flies away.*

In the day where an army will come in and destroy your army will be like the locust that flies away in the face of that army.

Nahum 3:17 says *[17] 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.* In other words, no one knows where all these leaders, lawyers, teachers and princes, those who you are putting your trust in, are for when the Day of Judgment comes they will flee and you won't even be able to find them.

Nahum 3:18-19 says *[18] Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to gather them. [19] 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?*

This is a mortal wound. Here is a powerful text with a concluding declaration of judgment of God's wrath. I want you to remember the title of this study. As a reminder when the wrath of God is satisfied it is in the context of that, that the people of God will be justified. I want to try and explain this with three takeaways that I will conclude this study with.

The first takeaway is if there is no bad news declared then there is no good news to proclaim. The declaration of Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that is in Christ where you are delivered from the wrath to come, if you don't declare the wrath of God that will be satisfied that must be satisfied then you have no Gospel to preach. The Biblical Gospel is good news, the salvation of our sins and the judgment of God, because of what seems to be the unbearable, unescapable, unsolvable, un-inevitable, unendurable declaration of bad news.

The Bible says that God will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. I am not only guilty but I'm helpless. I am hopeless. I can't save myself. There is no one out here that can save me. There is no ritual act that can save me. There is no religion that can save me. God's judgment against evil and sin is assured. It is a fact. It is inescapable and inevitable and in me it is unsolvable and unavoidable. That's the bad

news and when that is understood now we can preach the Good News for our God has made a way and He gives this way to you as a way of escape as a gift.

It is not a cheap gift for it cost Him His Son Jesus Christ who took our place and the wrath of God that should have been poured out upon us into insensibility, was poured out upon Him who cried out "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*" which means, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*" (Mark 15:34). That God of glory and grace now made a way to be holy, just and save sinners who seemingly are unsavable. That's the Good News.

If we keep avoiding books like Nahum and Romans 1 where the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and sin, these texts of bad news, not only can we not preach the Gospel, we will eventually distort the Gospel. The Gospel is that Jesus Christ delivers us from the wrath of God and the power, penalty, the presence and the place of sin in our life. The message of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ delivers us from our sin, took the place of punishment for our evil, sets us free from the penalty and power of sin and He is eradicating the practice of sin and one day will deliver us from the very presence of sin. That is the Gospel and if you don't preach the bad news that describes the good that sets the background for Good News, then you can't preach the Gospel and eventually you'll distort it. We will end up turning the Gospel into 'happy time' talk or religious pick-me-up or Jesus My Coach or Jesus the Therapist for my self-esteem. We'll eventually turn the Gospel into a therapeutic, moralistic, religious message to help you get better. Jesus will become the "hole filler" for life.

The Gospel isn't that I have a hole in my life that only Jesus can fill. Here is why you have a hole in your life or a vacuum in your life. It is because Jesus is not your life. He doesn't fill the hole of your life, He takes hold of your life and that's what gets rid of the vacuum. He is not the additive to address the emptiness of idolatry. He is the One who forgives us of our idolatry to set us free and to set us on a course that now He is our life with an uneven, faltering, yet growing obedience to the end when faith on that Day will become sight. That's the Gospel of Good News. If we don't declare the bad news then we will distort the Gospel into something else that it is not intended to be. I know all of us recoil from declaring the bad news because that brings us to the scandal of the Gospel where nobody wants to be told they need a Savior, they cannot save themselves and they are under God's judgment. They won't even listen to the Good News many times.

So why should we do it if they won't listen? It is because the Holy Spirit moves. He has His people and when you declare the whole counsel of God – here's the bad news and here's the Good News – He is out there giving people eyes to see and ears to hear. It is not up to us to manipulate the message to get a carnal response to the Gospel. It is for us to lovingly give the Gospel and love people with the Gospel and tell them the truth.

Let's say you went to the doctor and the doctor uncovered in you a terminal disease. The doctor decides not to tell you that you have this terminal disease because he thinks you'll get mad at him and quit coming back to him. What kind of doctor would that be? Or the doctor might really like you and think if he tells you that you'll be mad at him and never want to speak to him again. No, you expect a doctor to have integrity because your life is at stake.

How much more should the ambassadors of Christ have integrity to speak the truth in love and it's not love to minimize the truth nor is it truth to bring the truth

without love. If there is no bad news declared then there is no good news that can be preached. It will turn Jesus into Jesus the additive for your life or Jesus the hole filler for your life and what a blasphemous thing. Jesus did not go to the cross for that. He went to the cross to love us and set us free from our sins.

Remember the four things. If we understand these things whenever we see catastrophic acts we know four things. Number one catastrophic acts are the initial judgment of God's enemies and evil, not the final judgment. Are there believers in the midst of these things? Absolutely, but God can multi-task. This brings up number two, as God is bringing initial condemning judgment against His enemies He is also doing corrective, maturing and refining discipline in the lives of His people in the very same events. Thirdly He is creating a platform for God's people to bring God's Gospel in word and deed to people. Fourthly, He is waving the warning flag. This is warning you of a judgment to come that you will endure the unendurable. It is inevitable but I want you to know I have made a way of escape and that is what is taking place.

So if I understand this then my question when I see those things is not to sort through whether these were unbelievers that were getting judged or are these people believers that are getting refined. No, the question I need to be asking myself is not why did it happen to them but why didn't it happen to me? What is God working in my life and how is God calling me to work in their life and what is God doing in this life to tell us of life to come in place of death to come that is everlasting?

The second takeaway is the revelation of God's wrath brings to comforts for God's people. Comfort number one is in a day when seemingly evil, sin, mocking and blasphemy are abounding and ascending and seemingly there is no stop to the mockery and assault of God's glory that grieves us, God's Word that sustains us, God's people that are precious to us and God's name that is dear to us, then whenever we see those things happening in that day stay the course. Don't be angry at sinners. Bring God's love and grace to them. Vengeance belongs to the Lord. God is reminding us that 'I will set the balances straight. I will be the One who accomplishes the judgment, not you. I haven't delivered that over to you but I've delivered a message of the Gospel to you to bring to them.'

Another comfort is whenever God's wrath is being satisfied His people are being justified. In other words, God's work of salvation in our life is simultaneously being accomplished in God's judgment and wrath and victory over His enemies and ours. As God brings judgment upon His enemies, those who are enemies of His Word, His people, His name, and His glory, He is delivering His people. That's why when you see God's judgment of the flood that covered the earth God's wrath is being satisfied at that very moment and God is delivering in salvation, Noah, in the ark that He has provided. As God's judgment falls on the sexual aberrations, immorality and perversions of Sodom and Gomorrah, God is delivering Lot up over the mountain. As God's judgment is falling upon Egypt and Pharaoh's armies are swallowed up with the Red Sea there is God's people being delivered through the Red Sea.

When Jesus Christ went to the cross, there He drank that cup of wrath which would have produced insensibility and stupor in me because the wrath of God is unendurable for me and He endured it. He drank that cup at the cross. While He is there He is not only taking my place, I am an enemy of God but that we might be made the sons and daughters of God and He is defeating God's enemies and my enemies – sin,

death, hell and the grave – to set us free to salvation. It is in the midst of the most profound catastrophe of all, the one time in history when hell is on earth and it is at that moment at the cross that God is delivering His people. It is in the wrath of God being satisfied that the people of God are being justified.

I am very grateful for the Gettys who wrote the song *In Christ Alone*. I love their music. The second verse of this song says “But on the cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied.” A denominational hymn committee came to the Gettys and said ‘We love your hymns and we want to pay you this much money to put them in our hymnals but there is this one hymn, *In Christ Alone* that we have a little edit on. We would like the second verse to say “There on the cross where Jesus died, the love of God was magnified.” Can we make that edit?’ A check was ready for them but they said ‘no’ to the edit. They said ‘We’ve already dealt with the majesty of the love of God and that’s the backdrop, the wrath of God.’

When you go to buy a diamond if a jeweler has any sense at all he is going to get you for he will take that diamond and show it to you with a black velvet cloth behind it. That black velvet cloth will make that diamond sparkle even brighter. Here is the black velvet cloth, no see the majesty for that is what magnifies the love of God. The Gettys told them they could not edit the hymn because they could not edit the Gospel. It is no accident that that same denomination in the last couple of years have decided blasphemously to redefine marriage and what Biblical sexuality is and they have now decided to define if you need to understand the deity of Christ and that you don’t have to worry about the Bible being the inerrant Word of God. Whenever you lose the theology of who God is it eventually will show up in what you believe and how you live. So the wrath of God is a part of who God is that sets the backdrop where you can see the grace, glory and majesty of God.

Romans 8:28-31 says [28] *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. [29] For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. [30] And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. [31] What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He was against His Son for you. If God is against us then who does it matter who is for us but if God be for us then who can be against us because God was against His Son to save you and this God who is for us says ‘I will be with you to the end and I will keep you.’ There is the Good News that we are now free to preach.*

The third takeaway is one last appeal. I want to answer the question I asked earlier in this study. What does a nation need that has been blessed? Have you noticed the timeline with Assyria/Nineveh and our nation? Assyria/Nineveh is a Gentile nation. America is a Gentile nation. They were the unrivaled super power of their day. We are considered the unrivaled super power of our day. They had been visited with the blessing of God in a spiritual awakening from top to bottom and we have been as well twice, from 1735 to 1780 and 1792 to 1880. We are about 110 years out just like they were. They opposed God. We oppose God. They were a bloody city and so are we. Do you think their Ishtar child sacrifices were something? Take a look our statistics for we are approaching 75 million babies that have been sacrificed on the altar of convenience.

I understand that we already have in place medical protocol when the help of a mother is at stake but that's a one percent factor that we already have in place with what to deal with and for any of you ladies that have been caught in this industry of sin with the deceits and false hopes that were given to it, I want you to know that you have a Savior who loves you. He is ready to forgive you, redeem you and He will replace what the locusts have eaten as we have been learning from our study in Joel. I also want you to know that we have to speak to this society.

We rightly get overwhelmed in our heart when we see a school in Connecticut where someone walks in and mows down 20 plus children. What a horrendous culture of death that is starting to take us into its own death spiral?! Yet five days a week twice that many children in Connecticut are being put to death every day in the abortion clinics of Connecticut and they are multiplied throughout our nation. We have legally and arrogantly declared ourselves as the definers of life. So we have gone from that to infanticide, now to active euthanasia and we're at the "duty" of the older to die. By the way, we're cooking up the way in the legal codes and the books to help you do it.

So here is a nation that is a bloody nation and has idolatry. We are the number one producers and purveyors of pornography in this world. Nobody comes close to us. Men, we need to uphold one another, encourage one another and support one another. What does such a nation need? Nineveh didn't get it. In 28 years, the year 612 B.C. here comes Nabopolassar and the Babylonians and Nineveh is gone, never to be discovered for hundreds and hundreds of years, even as it was prophesied.

What will happen to us (America) in the next, 5, 10, 15, 20 years or even the next 5 minutes for that spider web can go up quickly? I think I know. Why was the judgment coming? It is because they had rebelled against God's glory, His Name, His Word and His people. I would suggest to you the answer to a nation that has been blessed that now opposes God, is to reverse that. The answer is not going to be found anywhere else but then right here, where the people of God begin to live, love, learn and proclaim the Word of God with a relentless passion for the glory of God and call upon the Name of the Lord in prayer and call upon those who don't know Him to call upon His Name for salvation. That's the only hope for there is not another one. It's not the invention of another nuclear weapon. You cannot stop the judgment of God with mortars, bricks, technology, fame and economic prowess.

He will not be stopped but He might through His people send one more awakening, through a people who love You and Your Word. I know missions is big here at Briarwood and I love that but if we don't have a heart for this nation we will not long have a heart for The Nation. May God grant it to us. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. Thank You Father for the awesome challenge and yet privilege to walk through such a text. Father, my heart is not only that we as a people would become that people of God who are jealous for the glory of God, who are zealous for the Word of God, who call upon the name of the Lord in prayer and who call upon men and women to call upon the name of the Lord, for whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. So Father please do that work in us. Perhaps today there is someone reading this that You have drawn to this study and they have heard the truth about us being sinners and they have

heard of the love of God that Your Son took our place and that they can have now, not a private deity to put on a mantel to address the inadequacies of life but they can have the Lord of life who is ready to give them life if they will put their trust in Him and He will be their life. O praise His Name forever! If you have not made that prayer and you'd like to talk with someone please call us at Briarwood at (205) 776-5200 for there are many who'd like to pray and talk with you. That gift is only a matter of receiving by faith, in Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.