

# “A Graphic Display of God’s Wrath”

(Nahum)

## Introduction

➤ In our “summer sermon series” on the minor prophets, we come now to the book of Nahum. Simply put, Nahum was the prophet God called to declare divine judgment against Nineveh, the capital of Assyria (1:1). Written around 660-630 B.C., Nahum’s prophecy announced that God’s patience with Nineveh had come to an end, and they would face God’s certain, just, and irrevocable wrath. Nahum is essentially a sequel to the book of Jonah. About a 100 years earlier, Jonah was called by God to proclaim God’s judgment against Nineveh if they did not repent. Much to Jonah’s suicidal displeasure (Jn.4:1-3, 9), Nineveh repented and God relented in bringing judgment (Jonah did not want to see his enemies saved, but wanted God to destroy them).

**Jonah 3:3-10** ~ “Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, ‘Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!’ <sup>5</sup>And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. ... <sup>10</sup>When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.”

➤ In a sense, Nahum got the assignment from God that Jonah wanted. We know very little about the prophet Nahum (1:1). Ironically, his name means “comfort” or “comforter” as his message to the Ninevites was that of annihilation and damnation. Nahum pronounced the certainty of God’s judgment against Nineveh, with no hope of deliverance for those who rebelled against God. The Assyrian empire, of which Nineveh was the capital, was notorious for its cruelty and brutality, its bloodshed and carnage, and its pillaging and destruction (e.g., hanging the bodies of their victims on poles and putting their skin on the walls of their tents). In 722 B.C. the Assyrians brought an end to the northern kingdom of Israel. The book of Nahum reveals that God’s patience with Ninevites had now also come to an end. History confirms the fall of Nineveh at the hands of the Babylonians, under Nabopolassar, in 612 B.C.

And yet, even though much of the book of Nahum is concerning God’s judgment, we see God’s merciful patience and saving grace. As we will see, even in this book which details the graphic execution of God’s wrath, God will save those who truly belong to Him.

**2 Tim 2:19** ~ “But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ ...”

**2 Peter 2:9** ~ “then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment”

## Main theme of Nahum:

The book of Nahum graphically illustrates the just and eternal judgment of God upon those who refuse to repent of their sins and worship Him as God, and beautifully reveals God’s sovereign love and saving grace to those who receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

## Key verses in Nahum:

*“The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; He knows those who take refuge in Him. But with an overflowing flood He will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue His enemies into darkness.” (1:7-8)*

➤ The book of Nahum reminds us of the importance of this warning: “You must not mistake God’s patience for His pardon.” Nahum reveals, underscores, that God is neither ignorant nor tolerant of sin. Just because God does not immediately punish every sinner, the moment he/she sins, that does not mean that God’s wrath is not kindled (being stored up; Rom.2:5) and that His judgment is not looming. God’s sovereignty (ultimate authority/right and power/might over all things) is revealed in His salvific grace and His just condemnation.

As is true of all Scripture, Nahum is a book that is completely relevant to our day providing us with practical applications concerning how we are to think and live. As this world (specifically our nation) seems to be going to “hell in a handbasket” (spiraling into further idolatry and depravity), we can be assured that God neither powerless to judge those who reject Him, or powerless to save those who truly seek and worship Him. God’s wrath is neither capricious nor unjust, as God is a patient (merciful, gracious) God. God’s wrath is neither misguided nor reckless, as God is all-knowing. God’s wrath is always justified, always for His glory, leaving those who are judged without excuse (Rom.1:20).

➤ For our study this morning, I have divided the book of Nahum into three major headings – each providing us with a unique aspect of God’s wrath.

### 1. God’s wrath is **DECLARED** (1:1-15)

➤ God’s wrath is the expression, or execution, of God’s judgment. God’s wrath is always holy, always just, and always justifiable. God’s wrath is also declared. In giving sinners the opportunity to repent, God forewarns people of His impending wrath. Therefore, when the time comes for God to unleash His wrath, no one can honestly say that they did not know or that they do not deserve it.

The proclamation of God’s wrath, known as a prophecy of “woe” (condemnation and damnation), was one of the two main prophecies of Old Testament prophets (the other being a prophecy of “weal”, blessing and prosperity). This is found in the New Testament as well. Jesus, as the Prophet of God, prophesied both “woe” (Matt.11:21; 18:7; 23:13-29) and “weal” (Matt.5:3-12; 11:6; 16:17; 24:46) during His earthly ministry. We find many forewarnings of God’s just and eternal wrath in the New Testament. For example:

**Rom 1:18-23** ~ “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup>For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup>For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup>For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup>Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup>and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.”

**Rom 2:5** ~ “But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up [*thēsaurizō*] wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.”

**Col 3:5-6** ~ “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup>On account of these the wrath of God is coming.”

**Eph 5:3-6** ~ “But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. <sup>4</sup>Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup>For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. <sup>6</sup>Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

➤ In the book of Nahum, we find another declaration of God's imminent wrath. In this case, however, the opportunity to repent has ended. In 612 B.C., the arrogant and godless capital of the Assyrian empire would be destroyed, at the hands of the Babylonians, by the sovereign decree of God.

#### A. A description of God's character (1:1-8)

➤ The manifestation of God's wrath is always seen in the context of the good character of God. Each of God's attributes work in harmony with all of God's attributes (no attribute is greater than the other, and no attribute is in conflict with another). Contrary to popular opinion, God's wrath does not represent an absence of God's goodness (and His goodness does not represent an absence of His wrath). It is because God is good that He is wrathful and exercises judgment. If God did not punish sin (wickedness, injustice, evil) then He would not be good, nor would He be just. Since God is both good and just – righteous and holy – He must (and does) punish sin.

God would have been incredibly unjust and unholy to turn a blind eye to the sinfulness and depravity of the Assyrians. After much patience, giving them ample time to repent, God sovereignly determined to execute His wrath against Nineveh.

➤ Nahum initially gave this prophetic truth in the context of God's divine character.

**Nah 1:2-8** ~ "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. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>He rebukes the sea and makes it dry; he dries up all the rivers; Bashan and Carmel wither; the bloom of Lebanon withers. <sup>5</sup>The mountains quake before him; the hills melt; the earth heaves before him, the world and all who dwell in it. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him. <sup>8</sup>But with an overflowing flood he will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness."

➤ God's jealousy (see Ex.20:5; 34:14) is neither an insecurity nor an envious desire. God's jealousy is not a sinful jealousy, as God is holy and has no needs. God is not jealous of anything; He is jealous for His glory and (to that end) for His people (2Cor.11:2). Notice that God's jealousy and wrath are guided by His patience ("*slow to anger*"; vs.3) and His goodness ("*good*"; vs.7), and His patience and goodness are fortified by His jealousy and wrath.

God's patience and goodness, however, does not negate His wrath. According to His sovereign will, and by His "*great ... power*" (vs.3), God's wrath is poured out on those who are at enmity with Him.

**Ps 7:11-13** ~ "God is a righteous judge, and a God who feels indignation every day. <sup>12</sup>If a man does not repent, God will whet his sword; he has bent and readied his bow; <sup>13</sup>he has prepared for him his deadly weapons, making his arrows fiery shafts."

➤ God is all-knowing (i.e., omniscient). He "*knows*" (vs.8). That is, those who belong to Him (2Tim.2:19). He will not condemn the righteous with the unrighteous. God does not know them because they are righteous, they are righteous because God knows them. These are those who, by faith, "*take refuge in Him*" (vs.8) as are saved by God's grace (see Eph.2:5-9; Rom.5:1; Gal.2:16; Tit.3:5).

God also knows those who do know belong to Him – those who are His "*adversaries*" (vs.8; 2Pet.2:9). Those who refuse to repent, who reject and rebel against the one true God, will suffer the just wrath and eternal judgment of God.

## B. The certainty of God's promise and the invincibility of God's power (1:9-15)

- There is no army or collection of armies, no nation or empire, that can defeat God or alter His sovereign will. There is nothing in all of creation that can rival God or ruin His plan. God is not insecure, He is not uncertain, He is not anxious, He is not fearful. When God wages war against His enemies, it is not a battle; it is a slaughter. God suffers not a single loss or casualty, and His enemies have not a single gain or survivor. This is not a multiple-round fight – there is no need for even a “*second*” (vs.9) round. When God executes the wrath of His judgment, it is “*complete*” (vs.9).

**Nah 1:9-15** ~ “What do you plot against the Lord? He will make a complete end; trouble will not rise up a second time. <sup>10</sup>For they are like entangled thorns, like drunkards as they drink; they are consumed like stubble fully dried. <sup>11</sup>From you came one who plotted evil against the Lord, a worthless counselor. <sup>12</sup>Thus says the Lord, ‘Though they are at full strength and many, they will be cut down and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more. <sup>13</sup>And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds apart.’ <sup>14</sup>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.’ <sup>15</sup>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.”

- From a human perspective, Assyria looked powerful and possibly even invincible. But they were no match for God. The Lord will bring chaos, confusion, and destruction to all those who “*plot against the Lord*” (vs.9 -10). God has used the Assyrians to discipline His people, but now the Assyrians will face the eternal condemnation of God.

**Ps 2:1-6** ~ “Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? <sup>2</sup>The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, <sup>3</sup>‘Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.’ <sup>4</sup>He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. <sup>5</sup>Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, <sup>6</sup>‘As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.’

Ps 37:12-13 ~ “The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at him, <sup>13</sup>but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming.”

Ps 59:7-8 ~ “There they are, bellowing with their mouths with swords in their lips – for ‘Who,’ they think, ‘will hear us?’ <sup>8</sup>But you, O Lord, laugh at them; you hold all the nations in derision.”

- Take heart, Christian. God is not asleep. God is not ignorant. God is not unjust. He will redeem all of His children and condemn all of His enemies just as He promised. Ultimately, and for all eternity, God will right every wrong, punish every sin, expose every lie, judge all immorality and idolatry, and condemn all evildoers. And He will forever redeem and glorify all received His Son, Jesus Christ, as their Lord and Savior.

## 2. God's wrath is DESCRIBED (2:1-13)

- In chapter two, we find a vivid description of God's wrath against Nineveh. With graphic poetic imagery, we find two truths that stand out in regard to God's judgment.

### A. God's judgment is exact (2:1-9)

- God's judgment is executed more like a sniper's rifle than a missile from a ship or bomb from a plane. That is to say, God's judgment is perfect – precisely targeted at those who are His adversaries, and sparing all those who are His children.

**Nah 2:1-9** ~ “The scatterer has come up against you. Man the ramparts; watch the road; dress for battle; collect all your strength. <sup>2</sup>For the Lord is restoring the majesty of Jacob as the majesty of Israel,

for plunderers have plundered them and ruined their branches. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>The chariots race madly through the streets; they rush to and fro through the squares; they gleam like torches; they dart like lightning. <sup>5</sup>He remembers his officers; they stumble as they go, they hasten to the wall; the siege tower is set up. <sup>6</sup>The river gates are opened; the palace melts away; <sup>7</sup>its mistress is stripped; she is carried off, her slave girls lamenting, moaning like doves and beating their breasts. <sup>8</sup>Nineveh is like a pool whose waters run away. ‘Halt! Halt!’ they cry, but none turns back. <sup>9</sup>Plunder the silver, plunder the gold! There is no end of the treasure or of the wealth of all precious things.”

- This is the imagery of a terrifying army invading an unsuspecting city. The result is a city in chaos and carnage, panic and defeat. In contrast, the invading army (Babylon) is systematic and victorious. The Ninevites were completely unprepared and utterly ineffective to slow or stop the massacre.

The opening of the “*river gates*” (vs.6) seems to be a reference to the Tigris river which flowed near Nineveh. The Ninevites constructed dams to protect the city from flooding. Apparently, either the dams broke or the river overflowed (or possibly both) bringing destruction to the city’s walls and enabled the Babylonians to have easier access to the city (see 1:8). This is a clear indication of the supernatural work of God.

#### B. God’s judgment is complete (2:10-13)

- The Assyrians were notorious for the plundering and carnage, and now they are the recipients of massive plundering and carnage. All of their wealth was stolen; their fortified city reduced to rubble; their very existence extinguished.

Why? Because they were at enmity with God, and God was “*against*” them (2:13; see 1:9, 11; 3:5)! There can hardly be any more terrifying words in all of Scripture! To hear God say, “*I am against you*” (2:13; 3:5), ought to shake us to the core. For if God is against you, it does not matter who is for you, and if God is for you, it does not matter who is against you (see Matt.12:30; Jn.10:28-30; Rom.8:31, 37; 1Jn.4:4). God was against the Ninevites, and there was no one and nothing that could save them from God’s wrath.

**Nah 2:10-13** ~ “Desolate! Desolation and ruin! Hearts melt and knees tremble; anguish is in all loins; all faces grow pale! <sup>11</sup>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? <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>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.”

**Heb 10:31** ~ “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

- After Nineveh was destroyed in 612 B.C., the site was not rediscovered until 1842 A.D. – that’s almost 2,500 years later!
- ✓ **Illust:** “There were certainly natural, political, and military explanations for what happened to Nineveh, and from a human perspective the fall of Nineveh to the Medes and Babylonians was just the stuff of history. But the spiritual explanation is far more significant. God was against them, and to be on the wrong side of God is certain doom and damnation. The Medes and Babylonians were unaware mercenaries employed by God to accomplish his will and purpose.”

(Nahum: A Commentary by Michael P.V. Barrett; <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/nahum/> [2:13]).

### 3. God's wrath is **DESERVED** (3:1-19)

➤ The Assyrians, the Ninevites, got exactly what they deserved. In the third, and final, chapter of Nahum, we can deduce three general reasons why God was just to condemn and destroy the Ninevites.

#### A. First reason (3:1-3) ~ because of their wickedness

➤ In their godlessness, and utter contempt for God, the Ninevites were cruel and wicked. Their atrocities against other nations were legendary. They tortured and murdered their victims, piling up dead bodies wherever they went. They were barbaric and sadistic, with no regard for the sanctity human life. Furthermore, they were liars who revealed in devilish deceit and insatiable greed.

**Nah 3:1-3** ~ “Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder – no end to the prey! <sup>2</sup>The crack of the whip, and rumble of the wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot! <sup>3</sup>Horsemen charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, hosts of slain, heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end – they stumble over the bodies!”

**John 8:44** ~ “You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

➤ This we see in our nation today – homicide, abortion, deception, greed, and all kinds of sinful passions. God’s judgment of Nineveh ought to be a sobering wakeup call for America.

✓ **Illust:** “If God doesn't soon bring judgment upon America, He'll have to go back and apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah!” [this quote is often attributed to Billy Graham, but was actually a comment made to him from his wife Ruth, after she read his manuscript describing the sinful condition of America in 1965]

More specifically, every one of us need to take seriously God’s wrath against sin, being quick to confess and sincere in repentance (see Matt.3:2-10; Lk.13:1-5; Acts 17:30).

#### B. Second reason (3:4-7) ~ They were immoral

➤ Through the prophet Nahum, God likened the city of Nineveh to that of a prostitute. While this is undoubtedly figurative language describing their spiritual and moral condition, it is also true that they were engaged in illicit sexual activity and possibly even sorcery (or divination).

**Nah 3:4-7** ~ “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. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>I will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. <sup>7</sup>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’s wrath would leave them with no comfort, no hope, no redemption. In many ways, America is awash in sexual immorality, perversity, and depravity – warranting the same fate that befell Nineveh (Rom.1:18-32). Even in many “evangelical” churches today, sexual immorality is accepted, condoned, and even celebrated (e.g., pornography, fornication, homosexuality). God has not changed, nor will He ever change, His view on sin (Num.23:19; Jms.1:17). He will indeed punish the unrepentant sinner.

#### C. Third reason (3:8-19) ~ They were arrogant

➤ The Ninevites believed they were invincible. Worse yet, they believed they had successfully blasphemed God and rebelled against His will. They mistook God’s patience for His permission. They presumed that because they were “getting away with it” that God would not judge them for it. They were sadly, gravely, mistaken. They ignored and mocked God, but they were self-deceived and delusional.

**Nah 3:8-14** ~ “Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile, with water around her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall? <sup>9</sup>Cush was her strength; Egypt too, and that without limit; Put and the Libyans were her helpers. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>You also will be drunken; you will go into hiding; you will seek a refuge from the enemy. <sup>12</sup>All your fortresses are like fig trees with first-ripe figs – if shaken they fall into the mouth of the eater. <sup>13</sup>Behold, your troops are women in your midst. The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has devoured your bars. <sup>14</sup>Draw water for the siege; strengthen your forts; go into the clay; tread the mortar; take hold of the brick mold!

- Although they thought they were mightier than God, impervious to God’s judgment, in reality they would be consumed by the “*fire*” (vs.13, 15) of God’s wrath – like swarms of locust devouring everything in their path.

**Nah 3:15-19** ~ “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! <sup>16</sup>You increased your merchants more than the stars of the heavens. The locust spreads its wings and flies away. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to gather them. <sup>19</sup>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?”

**Heb 12:29** ~ “... our God is a consuming fire.”

- The leaders of the city will flee, like “*grasshoppers*” (vs.17) and “*locusts*” (vs.17) but to no avail. Like sleeping “*shepherds*” (vs.18) they are helpless to save Nineveh from the wrath of God’s judgment. As their atrocities were legendary, so will be their demise. Their enemies will rejoice at God’s just condemnation of the Ninevites (vs.19).

✓ Illust: In his famous sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (preached in Enfield, Connecticut on July 8, 1741), Jonathan Edwards vividly stated this sobering truth:

“The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. It is true, that judgment against your evil works has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God’s vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the meantime is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are constantly rising, and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward. If God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God, would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power” (p.21-22).

## Conclusion

- While the book of Nahum is mostly about God’s just and terrifying wrath (and we must not ignore or reject this prophetic message) it also reveals the sovereign love and saving grace of God toward those who believe. As we have seen, specifically in our study of the minor prophets, the whole Bible is about the grace of God ultimately revealed in and through Jesus Christ (Lk.24:27, 44; Jn.5:39, 46). In essence, the whole Bible is about the Gospel – the “good news” of Jesus Christ (Rom.1:1-2; 1Pet.1:10-12) – and the book of Nahum is certainly no exception.

Since God is holy and righteous, He must punish sin. We all, like the Ninevites, have sinned before God (immoral, wicked, arrogant), and therefore no one is good enough to be saved by their own merit (see (Rom.10-12, 23; Eph.2:5, 8-9; Gal.2:16; 2Tim.1:9; Tit.3:3). Since God is loving and gracious, He made a way for us to escape His just wrath for our sin. Through His substitutionary death on the cross, Jesus bore the full penalty for the sins of all who would ever believe. He bore our sins on the cross, saving us from the just and eternal wrath of God.

✓**Illust:** “Christ exhausted the cup of God’s wrath. For all who trust in Him there is nothing more in the cup. It is empty” (Jerry Bridges; *The Gospel for Real Life*, p.54).

➤ Sprinkled throughout the book of Nahum, a book which graphically portrays the wrath of God, is the good news of the Gospel – God’s saving grace through Jesus Christ His Son.

**Nah 1:3** ~ “The Lord is slow to anger and great in power ...”

**Nah 1:7** ~ “The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.”

**Nah 1:12-13** ~ “Thus says the Lord, ‘Though they are at full strength and many, they will be cut down and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more. <sup>13</sup>And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds apart.’”

**Nah 2:2** ~ “For the Lord is restoring the majesty of Jacob as the majesty of Israel ...”

➤ Nineveh’s (Assyria’s) destruction God had used the Assyrians to discipline Israel (Judah), but God had not forgotten His covenant with His people. While the Assyrians were incredibly powerful, seemingly invincible, they were absolutely no match for God. The message of Nineveh’s destruction has a corollary message of Judah’s deliverance (from the Assyrians).

Nahum foreshadowed the salvation of all of God’s people that comes only through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, as Lord and Savior. This is seen in the New Testament as the apostle Paul cited the book of Nahum in defense of his preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The ultimate, and eternal, good news is through Christ God has delivered His people from sin and Satan.

**Nah 1:15** ~ “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.”

**Rom 10:14-17** ~ “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? <sup>15</sup>And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ <sup>16</sup>But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?’ <sup>17</sup>So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” (see Is.52:7)

➤ The good news (i.e., the Gospel) is that Jesus Christ bore the full penalty of God’s wrath for all who would ever believe.

**Rom 5:8-11** ~ “... God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup>Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup>For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. <sup>11</sup>More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”

**Eph 2:3-5** ~ “among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. <sup>4</sup>But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved”



**1 Thess 1:10** ~ “and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”

**1 Thess 5:9** ~ “For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ”

**2 Cor 5:21** ~ “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (see Is.53:4-6; Gal.3:13; Rom.3:23-25; 5:18-19; Heb.2:17; 1Pet.2:24; 3:18)

➤ Everyone needs to take seriously the prophetic message of the book of Nahum. As God’s inspired (inerrant/infallible) Word, it is as relevant and applicable to us today as it was in Nahum’s day. God is patient and slow to anger; He is loving and gracious. But God will not be mocked, nor will He acquiesce to our demands. He gives everyone opportunity to repent, and when they refuse and reject Him they will suffer the just judgment of His wrath. May we not be like the Ninevites who rejected God, disobeyed God’s Word, and (consequently) suffered God’s wrath.

✓ Illust: “The saddest road to hell is the one that runs under the pulpit, past the Bible, and through the middle of warnings and invitations” (J.C. Ryle; *Are You Asleep?*).