



**God Is Awesome!  
Nineveh and Their Gods, Not So Much  
Nahum 1:1-7**

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God is awesome. Nahum is all about judgement coming to the people of Nineveh, but God is a God of mercy, and He is awesome. Nahum begins with that.

Sometimes we tend to forget His heart, “that He longs to show mercy and that He prefers to show mercy. In fact, according to the Scriptures, the Lord will look for every opportunity to show mercy before He pours out judgment.” (Brown 2023, 160)

Welcome to the book of Nahum. The prophecy that Nahum delivers is serious bad news for Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire. Which means it is really good news for Judah.

What do we know about Nahum, the Prophet. Only what we see here in the book.

Nahum 1:1 “The pronouncement of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite:” (NASB 2020)

We learn in verse 1 that this is about Nineveh, and what is to happen to it is described as the vision of Nahum, who is from Elkosh.

Recall that there was another prophet we have studied, Jonah, who also prophesied about Nineveh.



So, what do we know about Nahum? His name means “comforter; comforted; full of comfort; consolation; compassionate.” (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 181)

Being from Elkosh, he is, as the verse tells us, an Elkoshite. That word means “God my bow; i.e., my defense. The gathered of God.” (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 66)

So literally, this is the book of the vision of the comforted gathered of God. Seeing that this is addressed to Assyria, we find that a bit strange, since this is one extended prophecy about Nineveh which predicts the end of Assyria as a world power. But it is also about YAHWEH reflecting His purpose to inflict judgement on the oppressor of Israel and Judah.

### Minor Prophets

- Hosea – Israel 748 – 686 BC
- Joel – Judah 835 – 796 BC
- Amos – Israel 786 – 746 BC
- Obadiah – Edom 848 – 841 BC
- Jonah – Assyria 771 – 754 BC
- Micah – Israel / Judah 750 – 686 BC
- **Nahum – Assyria 661 BC**
- Habakkuk – Judah 625 – 597 BC
- Zephaniah – Judah 640 – 608 BC
- Haggai – Judah 520 BC
- Zechariah – Judah 520 – 480 BC
- Malachi – Judah 455 – 432 BC

As we can tell based on our chart of the prophets, Nahum is prophesying after the Northern Kingdom of Israel has been taken away into exile. Other than what we have in this book, there is no other reference to the Prophet Nahum anywhere else in the scriptures. But the book is quoted, and the apocryphal book of Tobit makes a reference to him and his prophecy.

Oh, and we have no idea where Elkosh is. That doesn't stop conjectures having him be from Assyria, post-exile Israel, or Judah. Multiple pages have been written on one verse. For example:

There is much greater reason for inferring, from the many points of coincidence between Nahum and Isaiah, that he was born in Galilee during the Assyrian invasions, and that he emigrated to Judaea, where he lived and prophesied. Nothing whatever is known of the circumstances of his life. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 352)

But that is really all conjecture because other than verse 1, we have no idea who Nahum is.

“The historical setting of most of the book of Nahum is dated to the second half of the seventh century by the majority of scholars. Nahum 3:8 looks back to the fall of Thebes (No-Amon) in 664 or 663 (or, less likely, 667) BC and must therefore be later. There is general agreement that no other part of the book originated earlier than 663 BC. The fall of Nineveh in 612 BC is the focus of much of the book and appears to lie in the future.” I like 661 BC as a potential date. (Renz 2021, 40-41, Renz 2021)

Earlier I touched on this being the second book in the Minor Prophets dealing with Nineveh. We first confronted the people of that city in Jonah. That was prior to it becoming the capital of Assyria. “Jonah had brought a message to Nineveh which revealed the love of God, and now the message of the Book of Nahum reveals the justice of God—the two go together. Although God will judge a nation, He is still love, and He still loves—you cannot escape that.” (McGee 1997, 815)



God loved Nineveh; Jonah wanted Nineveh to be destroyed but they repented. God spared the city at that time, but that was then.

This current generation living in Nineveh has a totally different outlook. Just as we had previously witnessed with the people who lived in Canaan during the time of Abraham, time is allowed for them to repent or to further harden their hearts.

Genesis 15:16

“And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” (ESV)

For Nineveh, they had reached the point of being so hardened in their sin that the grace of God was no longer reachable for them. “When you pass over that mark, it is not that the grace of God cannot reach you but that you cannot reach God for the simple reason that you have come to the place where you are hardened and in a state of unbelief which cannot be changed. This can be true of a nation, and it can be true of an individual.” (McGee 1997, 815)

How can that be fair?

Jesus confronted an individual who had reached that point of no return. Herod had imprisoned John the Baptist and heard God’s word from him multiple times prior to having him beheaded. Herod though rejected the message to repent. So fast forward to one of the illegal trials of Jesus.

Luke 23:8–9

“Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned Him with many words, but **He answered him nothing.**” (NKJV)

God had nothing more to say to Herod. He had made up his mind and wanted nothing to do with repentance. God is just and He also allows His creatures, us to make our own decisions about what to do with Him and His offer of salvation.

C.S. Lewis wrote about this.

I willingly believe that the damned are, in one sense, successful, rebels to the end; that the doors of hell are locked on the inside. I do not mean that the ghosts may not wish to come out of hell, in the vague fashion wherein an envious man ‘wishes’ to be happy: but they certainly do not will even the first preliminary stages of that self-abandonment through which alone the soul can reach any good. They enjoy forever the horrible freedom they have demanded, and are therefore self-enslaved: just as the blessed, forever submitting to obedience, obedience, become through all eternity more and more free. (Lewis 2009, 131)

Nahum is about judgment. We have already seen that is a major message of the prophets, but as we will find in Nahum, He is slow to anger and great in power. He is not a God who waits for us to blow it and then drops the hammer. He prefers mercy.

Isaiah 1:18–20

“The LORD says, “Now, let’s settle the matter. You are stained red with sin, but I will wash you as clean as snow. Although your stains are deep red, you will be as white as wool. If you will only obey me, you will eat the good things the land produces. But if you defy me, you are doomed to die. I, the LORD, have spoken.”” (GNB)



1 John 4:7–12

“Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been fathered by God and knows God. The person who does not love does not know God, because God is love. By this the love of God is revealed in us: that God has sent his one and only Son into the world so that we may live through him. **In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.** Dear friends, if God so loved us, then we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God resides in us, and his love is perfected in us.” (NET 2nd ed.)

However, we can reject that love. In other words, those who reject God get what they want and prefer. They believe they are good enough without relying on His sacrifice on the cross.

“Now compare God’s goodness to our badness. We hate one another. We steal from one another. We murder one another. We commit adultery. We go to war and commit atrocities against one another... We lie, deceive, and cheat. We are full of pride, greed, and lust. We are self-righteous. We are hypocrites. The list is really endless. Just look at our conduct on social media. We are vicious, heartless, and nasty. We bully, embarrass, and humiliate. We are harsh, judgmental, and impatient. This is a picture of the human heart!” (Brown 2023, 166)

Assyria had repented when Jonah came by, but now they have moved on and no longer believe in those things. They went right back to the behavior that put them on God’s radar to begin with.

Assyria had served the purposes of God. They were used as an instrument of discipline for Israel and for Judah. Now they are done.

This is a message meant to comfort YAHWEH’s people that those who oppress them and abuse them, will have a time of accountability for what it is they have done.

Sennacherib is the one who built up Assyria and Nineveh into a world power. He worked hard to try and make Nineveh into a magnificent city to memorialize his magnificence.

Nineveh (Akkadian Ninuwa, Ninua, Ninâ), which is located on the east bank of the Tigris opposite Mosul and near the mounds of Nebi Yunus and Tell Küyünjik, was founded in approximately 5000 BCE and enjoyed a checkered history until Sennacherib (704–681 BCE) made it the capital of the Assyrian Empire. Sennacherib spent twenty-five years restoring and enlarging the old city of Nineveh, building temples, palaces, gardens, and aqueducts. (Christensen 2009, 156)

Sennacherib was followed by two able kings, who in turn were also great builders, his son Esarhaddon (680–668 BCE) and grandson Ashurbanipal (668–627 BCE). This was Assyria’s golden age; her empire covered the whole of the Fertile Crescent, from the Persian Gulf to Egypt. The palaces in Nineveh were filled with the wealth of subject nations, and behind its double line of ramparts, the city appeared to be invulnerable. So Nineveh became the symbol of Assyrian power in the ancient Near East. (Christensen 2009, 156-157)

“Nonetheless, the great city of Nineveh disappeared altogether less than seventy years after Sennacherib’s death, as described in vivid poetic imagery in the forty-seven verses that make up the book of Nahum.” (Christensen 2009, 2) Each generation is responsible for their own sin and how they respond to God.

This is a short book of only 3 chapters with an outline that is relatively straight forward.



## Outline

1. God is awesome – 1:1 – 15
2. Nineveh is toast – 2:1 – 13
3. The Why and the Certainty of Judgement – 3:1 – 19

Jonah presented the mercy of God and His dealings with Nineveh; Nahum will present the justice of God.

The theme is the doom of Nineveh.

The idea of these two attributes of God are clearly reflected with what God said to Moses when he went to have a second set of stones prepared with the big 10.

Exodus 34:6–7

“The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, **but who will by no means clear the guilty**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”” (ESV)

God is merciful but He is also just. Because He is just, He exercises wrath.

As applied to God, wrath means His anger at and hatred of sin, His righteous indignation at all evil, and His jealous execution of judgment on unrighteousness. However, wrath, while rooted in God’s essential nature as just, is not an attribute, but an act that flows from His unchanging righteousness. (Geisler 2003, 397)

God’s wrath is based in several of His attributes, including His holiness, righteousness, and jealousy. (Geisler 2003, 398)

Verses from Nahum are quoted, possibly, in two places in the NT.

- Nahum 1:15 is quoted by Paul in Romans 10:15
- Nahum 3:4 is quoted by John in Revelation 17:2

The Essene community at Qumran produced a commentary on Nahum, 4Q169 (4QpNah) 4Q Nahum Pesh. (Garcia Martinez and Tigchelaar 1997-1998, 335)

Nahum also shows up in the apocryphal book of Tobit as part of Tobit’s dying words.

Tobit 14:3–4

“Just before he died, he called his son Tobiah and Tobiah’s seven sons, and gave him this command: “Son, take your children and flee into Media, for **I believe God’s word which was spoken by Nahum against Nineveh**. It shall all happen, and shall overtake Assyria and Nineveh; indeed, whatever was said by Israel’s prophets, whom God commissioned, shall occur. Not one of all the oracles shall remain unfulfilled, but everything shall take place in the time appointed for it. So it will be safer in Media than in Assyria or Babylon. For I know and believe that whatever God has spoken will be accomplished. It shall happen, and not a single word of the prophecies shall prove false. As for our kinsmen who dwell in Israel, they shall all be scattered and led away into exile from the Good Land. The entire country of Israel shall become desolate; even Samaria and Jerusalem shall become desolate! God’s temple there shall be burnt to the ground and shall be desolate for a while.” (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Board of Trustees, Catholic Church, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and United States Catholic Conference Administrative Board 1996, Tobit 14:3-4)



#### Nahum 1:1–8

“The pronouncement of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite: A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; The LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies. The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In the gale and the storm is His way, And clouds are the dust beneath His feet. He rebukes the sea and dries it up; He dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither, The blossoms of Lebanon wither. Mountains quake because of Him, And the hills come apart; Indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, The world and all the inhabitants in it. Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath gushes forth like fire, And the rocks are broken up by Him. The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him. But with an overflowing flood He will make a complete end of its site, And will pursue His enemies into darkness.” (NASB 2020)

God is direct. The first thing we encounter is learning that God is jealous and avenging. We are getting a lesson in some of the attributes of God.

When we read that God is a jealous God here in Nahum, what we are reading about is God’s passionate loyalty. “God is right to be jealous for the love of his people. Their love should be given to no-one else. God is also right to be jealous for his honour. It is right that no-one else should be given his place as God. The Assyrians were claiming lordship over God’s people. God’s character, his nature, is such that he could not abide by such a false claim. His people belonged to him, not to the Assyrians. He alone was to be honoured as their Lord. He was jealous for that honour.” (Pakula 2014, 20)

The object of God’s jealousy is first and foremost His own nature, then His name, His people (Israel), His land (the Holy Land), and His city (Jerusalem). (Geisler 2003, 339)

Because God is jealous for the love of His people, and the people of Assyria, more specifically the leadership based in Nineveh were usurping that claiming lordship over His own people. YAHWEH’s exclusive relationship, even though one sided at this point because of apostasy, meant He still would not tolerate that. Hessed.

He is jealous for his people. As a result, He will take vengeance on behalf of His people and will deal with Assyria. As we read this, it is important for us to remember this, we too are His people. He still takes seriously the well-being of His own.

#### Luke 17:1–4

“One day Jesus said to his disciples, “There will always be temptations to sin, but **what sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting! It would be better to be thrown into the sea with a millstone hung around your neck than to cause one of these little ones to fall into sin. So watch yourselves!** If another believer sins, rebuke that person; then if there is repentance, forgive. Even if that person wrongs you seven times a day and each time turns again and asks forgiveness, you must forgive.”” (NLT)

God desires our exclusive focus to be on Him and if someone or something draws that away.

#### Philippians 2:5–11

“You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross! As a result God highly exalted him and gave him the name, that is above every name, so that **at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—in heaven and on earth and under the earth—and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.**” (NET 2nd ed.)



Jesus Christ is Lord. “We don’t tell people to make Christ the Lord of their lives. Why don’t we tell them that? Because He is, it’s not up to them. It’s not up to me or you. Christ is Lord of all our lives.” (Platt 2008, 1502-1503)

God is a jealous God. He is Lord!

Nahum 1:2

“A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; The LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies.” (NASB 2020)

As we look at this verse, we see something else about our God, He loves us, He is jealous for us, and He takes personally the actions taken by others against His own, against us.

For the many Christians persecuted in our world today, the book of Nahum should be a comfort. ‘The LORD is a jealous and avenging God.’ He does not ignore wrongs and injustice, especially when it concerns his people. (Pakula 2014, 22)

Three times in this verse we read He is avenging His people, “some of the Jewish writers think has respect to the three times the king of Assyria carried the people of Israel captive, and for which the Lord would be revenged on him, and punish him.” (Gill 1810, 596)

Historically, by the time Nahum would be writing down His prophecy, Assyria had attacked Israel, they then took Israel away into exile in 722 BC. Assyria returned and attacked Judah in 701 BC destroying most of the cities in and around Jerusalem. God miraculously protected Jerusalem as a result of King Hezekiah humbling himself and seeking the Lord in sackcloth and ash.

King Manasseh was treated as a vassal of Assyria even being imprisoned by them until his repentance towards the end of his life.

To hear a message of vengeance from YAHWEH about Assyria was comforting to His people.

Not only does the Almighty, all-knowing, all-just God return to the sinner an appropriate repayment for every evil that he has done; he also renders this repayment in a context of righteous indignation, disgust, and wrath. (Robertson 1990, 61)

At or near the end of the Great Tribulation, we read this about those who had been all about killing His people (See Revelation 6:9 & 10).

Revelation 6:15–17

“Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”” (ESV)

Not only is this a message for the Assyria of the present, but it also speaks to what will happen to the Assyrian of the future in the Tribulation.

How does God act in vengeance? The answer reveals God’s method. He used natural and supernatural forces to destroy Nineveh. The Babylonians invaded the city through a breach in the wall that the flooding Tigris River opened up. God supernaturally controlled weather conditions so that the walls gave way. He then led human soldiers to storm through that opening and take the city. (Constable 2003, Na 1:1)

This is judgement, from God, on an international scale.



As we see this being predicted here, again, we are drawn to the similarity between the Assyria of the time of Nahum, and the Assyrian of the Great Tribulation.

We see at the end of verse 2, “He reserves wrath for His enemies.” Who are His enemies? Judah’s enemies, Assyria, are His enemies.

In the Hebrew, there is also a message being communicated to His people who may be leaning towards idolatry and Baal worship. There is an intentional usage of the term baal. We read in our translation, “The Lord is avenging and wrathful...” In the Hebrew though, “ûba‘al hēmāh (“a lord [Ba‘al] of wrath”)” (Christensen 2009, 178)

Nahum is indeed comforting the people of Judah, but his use of the term “a lord of wrath” using the word baal is a subtle dig at the fact that YAHWEH is God, not Baal.

Leave it to the Holy Spirit to find every opportunity to attack the no gods. This will also be picked up again when it is pointed out that He is the one in the storm and is the cloud rider, not Baal.

“...it is likely that the author is making at least a subliminal allusion to the proper noun Ba‘al here (Becking 1995a: 287; Spronk 1997: 35). Becking (1993: 15) suggests that the use of the words ‘ēl and Ba‘al here reminds the reader that only YHWH is to be regarded as God and Lord.” (Christensen 2009, 179)

Nahum 1:3

“The LORD is **slow to anger and great in power**, And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In the gale and the storm is His way, And clouds are the dust beneath His feet.” (NASB 2020)

God does indeed keep track with detailed records. We get a glimpse of these records in 1 Chronicles 1 – 10.

In verse 3, Nahum quotes from Exodus 34:6 & 7. Yes, YAHWEH is about to take vengeance on Assyria for what they have done to His people. But there is a reminder for His people here about the long suffering of God. Jonah went to Nineveh 100 years or so ago and they repented. But since then, the people went back to their previous ways. He is patient, but He is also powerful.

We see two more attributes of God right here at the beginning of Nahum. “God is revealed not in a one-sided way, as either the God of vengeance or the God of endless patience. Rather, God is both the jealous and avenging God, and the God who is slow to anger and great in power.” God is awesome and worthy of our praise. (Snyman 2020, 22)

We forget this and so did the folks of Judah.

Being slow to anger is a reference to the simple fact that God is love. Because He is love, He gives time to repent. This also refers to His mercy. Nehemiah tied these together for us. When talking about the history of the Jewish people he said the following.

Nehemiah 9:17

“They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. **But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them.**” (ESV)



God, because these are attributes of His, is not only slow to anger with His people, but also with the nations. There is a limit though.

2 Peter 3:8–9

“But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.**” (ESV)

His desire is to see all come to repentance, but there is a point where the offer is withdrawn. The time to come to Him is always NOW.

God will hold the guilty accountable. No one will get away with sin and injustice—neither individuals nor nations. **Now is always the appropriate time to respond to God’s gracious patience with repentance and faith.** (Redmond, Curtis and Fentress 2016, 152)

2 Corinthians 6:1–2

“As God’s partners, we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God’s kindness and then ignore it. For God says, “At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you.” Indeed, **the “right time” is now.** Today is the day of salvation.” (NLT)

Nahum 1:3

“The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In the gale and the storm is His way, **And clouds are the dust beneath His feet.**” (NASB 2020)

In the second part of verse three, after teaching another lesson about His attributes so that Judah knows who He is, that He is indeed omnibenevolent and omnipotent, YAHWEH again points out who He is, in relation to Baal. God is the cloud rider, but Judah is playing around with someone else who alleges having the same capability.

RIDER ON THE CLOUDS (rkb ʿrpt). An epithet that originally referred to Baal, the bringer of rain and agricultural fertility. (Kim 2016)

In the mythological texts of Ras Shamra the god Baal repeatedly gets the epithet rkb ʿrpt. It is rendered with slight nuances as ‘Rider of the Clouds’, ‘Rider on the Clouds’, ‘Who mounts the Clouds’. (Herrmann 1999, 704)

As Nahum is presenting YAHWEH as being the awesome powerful God of the universe who can judge the nations, he is also continuing to dig at the false gods of Judah and the nations.

Old Testament writers were quite familiar with Baal. Baal was the main source of consternation about Israel’s propensity toward idolatry. In an effort to make the point that Yahweh, the God of Israel, deserved worship instead of Baal, the biblical writers occasionally pilfered this stock description of Baal as “cloud rider” and assigned it to Yahweh... (Heiser 2015, 251)

So, in the middle of providing comfort to Judah, Nahum is also lecturing Judah.

Nahum 1:4–5

“He rebukes the sea and dries it up; He dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither, The blossoms of Lebanon wither. Mountains quake because of Him, And the hills come apart; Indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, The world and all the inhabitants in it.” (NASB 2020)



Nahum continues by showing that God is completely capable of fulfilling judgement and taking vengeance on His enemies. In other words, what he will be communicating about impending judgment on Assyria will happen because God, not Baal, is the one who is involved.

He continues comparing God to those things attributed to Baal.

Point one, He is the one who rebukes the sea and it dries up. Remember the trip from Egypt into the wilderness? He is the one who was behind Exodus 14:21 – 31.

Even the crossing location was a commentary on what YAHWEH thought of Baal. “Then the LORD said to Moses: Tell the Israelites to turn back and camp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, **in front of Baal-zephon**; you shall camp opposite it, by the sea.” (Exodus 14:1–2, NRSV)

Yes, spiritual warfare was ongoing. The Exodus was a major defeat for the enemy.

“Baal-zaphon literally means the ‘lord of (mount) Zaphon’ and it is a designation of the Ugaritic god Baal. Due to mount Zaphon’s image as the cosmic mountain par excellence in Northwest-Semitic religions, the name ‘Baal-zaphon’ was transferred to further Baal-sanctuaries outside Ugarit. In the OT Baal-zaphon is a place name in northern Egypt where Israel rested during the exodus (Exod 14:2, 9; Num 33:7).” (Niehr 1999, 152) At the place dedicated to Baal, because YAHWEH knew what was coming, He defeated the powers of the enemy making a show of them as the nation crossed the Red Sea

Point two, remember crossing the Jordan River to enter Canaan in Joshua 3? Yes, He did that too.

“The emergence of dry ground from the river flood, which recalled Israel’s passage through the Red Sea that was likewise on dry ground, is clearly prompting us to recognize the work of the Lord God who first called forth the dry ground out of the waters of the original deep in the creation account, a sign that memorialized the work of God on the third day of creation (Gen 1:9–13).” (Gage 2013) Not Baal.

Point three, remember the drought that Elijah pronounced upon Israel (1 Kings 17)? This dried up Bashan, Carmel and Lebanon. Who did that? Yep, YAHWEH.

Baal is not the one driving his chariot of clouds to distribute rain. This is more than rain.

Bashan. “It was the Old Testament version of the gates of hell, the gateway to the underworld realm of the dead. It was known as “the place of the serpent” outside the Bible. It’s associated with Mount Hermon, the place where Jews believed the rebellious sons of God from Genesis 6:1–4 descended. Simply put, if you wanted to conjure up images of the demonic and death, you’d refer to Bashan.” (Heiser 2015, 289-290)

When we see Bashan withering, there is a natural and supernatural aspect to this statement.

It was the site of idol worship for the Northern Kingdom of Israel. It was also where King Og, a Rephaim, was defeated by Israel. For the nation, it was unholy ground. But YAHWEH is the one who can make it wither.

How about Carmel? That was the location where Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal. Baal was also called Melqart.

Melqart is usually identified with the Greek (or Roman) Heracles (Hercules). His character is that of a city god; his myths portray him as a hērōs. The identification of this god with the ‘king of Tyre’ mentioned in Ezekiel’s prophecy against Tyre (Ezek 28:1–19) makes good sense. According to some scholars, the Baal worshipped on the Mount Carmel and mocked by Elijah (1 Kgs 18:20–40) should be identified as the Tyrian Melqart. (Ribichini 1999, 563)



Lebanon withers as well. Yes, possibly another Baal. The Lebanon is referred to in Ugaritic texts as an area producing trees. The building of the palace of Baal is executed with beams from the Lebanon and the Sirion... (Röllig 1999, 506)

When God appears, the mountains quake and the hills come apart. By the way, there are no mountains or hills near Nineveh.

We know in the scriptures that these are common terms used to discuss the appearance of YAHWEH. WE also know, however, in Revelation, when He comes to reclaim the planet, He indeed shakes the entire planet causing the mountains to quake and the hills to fall apart.

Revelation 6:12–15

“I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,” (NKJV)

This is also just one more dig at Baal. Yes, God will shake the mountains and the hills will indeed come apart. We know that from what we are told in Revelation. But we also know that mountains and hills are the abodes of the false gods, to include Baal. They are also the locations where Judah goes to worship them. Ezekiel will later pronounce doom on Judah and Israel in Ezekiel 6.

Ezekiel will pronounce doom on “the mountains and hills, valleys and ravines (6:2–3). The whole landscape has been defiled by idol-worship. There are pagan altars on the ‘high places’ (hilltops or platforms) and incense-burning and immoral rites under green trees (pagan symbols of fertility). God is going to bring judgment in the form of war, famine and plague (6:11). The sites where the Baal-gods have been worshipped will be littered with corpses (6:5), and the survivors will be scattered to other countries (6:8).” (Knowles 2001, 326)

Nahum 1:6

“Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath gushes forth like fire, And the rocks are broken up by Him.” (NASB 2020)

In the middle of this picture of the awesomeness of God, how He moves in judgement and how He is worthy of praise and worship by those on whose behalf He is moving, we get a rhetorical question.

Are we talking about what He is about to do to Assyria or is He also pointing to another event yet in the future with someone else called the Assyrian.

Nahum 1:5 – 6 not only talks to the upcoming judgment of Assyria, but expands to cover events at the end of the age. “In the New Testament the closest relationship with Nahum occurs in the book of Revelation. There as well, great wars and terrible destructions appear. Thus the day of wrath with its earthquake appears in Nahum 1:5–6 and also in Revelation 6:12, 17. More generally the portrayals of Nineveh as a prostitute who will be abused and disgraced (Nah. 2:8–13) reappear in Revelation 17:2, 5, and 16, where it is now Babylon (i.e., Rome) that is so identified.” (Hess 2016, 663-664)

Back to the rhetorical question which has been directed to Nineveh – the answer is an obvious – no one. Without His mercy, without a Savior, we have no hope at all. God must judge sin and Nineveh has become the poster child for that. They should know the answer. They had personally experienced what YAHWEH could do. King Hezekiah prayed. God answered.



Isaiah 37:36

“Then the angel of the LORD set out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians; when morning dawned, they were all dead bodies.” (NRSV)

Nahum 1:7

“The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him.” (NASB 2020)

After the rhetorical question comes a statement of fact. A statement of comfort and a reminder to the people of Judah. The Lord is good.

Those who understand who He is understand the balance between His love, mercy and His justice and wrath. This is all the same God.

YHWH’s anger ensures that evil does not retain the upper hand, and thus he proves a reliable refuge for those who entrust themselves to him. (Renz 2021, 78)

Psalms 1:6

“for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.” (ESV)

2 Timothy 2:19

“But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.”” (ESV)

If you belong to Jesus, you have nothing to worry about. You belong to Him and I think we know about the extent He will go to take care of His own.

If you find yourself concerned though about perhaps being good rather than relying on the accomplished work of Jesus Christ on the cross, then I have good news for you, you can join us as one of His kids.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

### **ABC’s of Salvation**

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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