



**The Art Of The Lie  
And Where It Takes You  
Nahum 3:1-19**

**Scripture quotations are taken from the following translations:**

**ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.**

**Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB),  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973,  
1975, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation  
Used by permission. [www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org)**

**Scripture quoted by permission. Quotations designated (NET) are from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996, 2019 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://netbible.com> All rights reserved.**

**Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.**

**The Good News Translation Bible (GNB) text used in this product is being used by permission. Copyright © American Bible Society, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1992**

**Scripture taken from the Holy Bible: International Standard Version® Release 2.0. (ISV) Copyright © 1996–2011 by the ISV Foundation. Used by permission of Davidson Press, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INTERNATIONALLY**

**Scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible (NRSV), Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and are used by permission. All rights reserved**

**Scripture taken from the New King James Version (NKJV).  
Copyright 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.**

Ever wonder what a culture that lies to itself looks like?

Is our culture today becoming a classic example? News flash, we are not the first.

Nahum provides THE classic example to learn from with Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire.

Nineveh rejected the Lord even though they had a momentary encounter with Him thanks to Jonah. They turned from Him and fully embraced a lifestyle that looks an awful lot like what we see around us in the west today.

Nahum has taken us to the future, all the way to the end of the age as well as the soon to take place siege and destruction of the Assyrian Empire.

We have heard the message being sent to the people of Judah as well as to all of us today...“God is not mocked.” We think as a culture we can make a fool of God and sin however we want. But sowing and reaping is just as valid today as it was in the 7th century BC.

Galatians 6:7

“Do not be deceived. God will not be made a fool. For a person will reap what he sows,” (NET 2nd ed.)



Now we come to Nahum's concluding vision about Nineveh.

He outlines their more problematic cultural practices for us.

In other words, Nahum will outline, in detail, the cause for the destruction of Nineveh as well as the justification for it from the King of the Universe.

What was it like to live in the Assyrian Empire? What did life in the capital city of Nineveh mean for those residing there? What was the culture of the Empire and the city? We will find they are more like today than we really want to consider.

Nahum 3:1

"Woe to the **bloody city**, completely full of lies and pillage; Her prey does not leave." (NASB 2020)

Those who live in Nineveh have the Hebrew word דָּמִים (dā mīm) assigned to them. Here, the word, translated bloody, is plural and that specifically connotes something in the Hebrew; the murder of people and the guilt attached to that crime.

The plural is never used for the blood of animals...it is always used attributively in the sense of bloodguiltiness ('ish damim, "man of blood," 2 S. 16:17f.; etc.; 'ir haddamim, "city of blood, bloody city," Ezk. 22:2; beth haddamim, "house of blood," 2 S. 21:1). (Kedar-Kopfstein and Bergman 1978, 236)

Point number one, Nineveh is a city of violence. Those in it are murderers. They are living on the proceeds of wholesale slaughter of innocent victims conducted by the Assyrian Army and the King on behalf of the Empire. The reason Nineveh is rich...wholesale murder. Blood money and blood riches.

As we have already covered, the Assyrian Empire had a reputation of being brutal.

How brutal?

Shalmaneser III (858–824 BC; before Jeroboam II) memorialized Assyrian brutality on the gates to his palace at Balawat. Though the wooden doors did not survive time, bronze bands that encased the doors, and their engravings, did survive. One image shows Shalmaneser surrounded by his enemies' dismembered hands, feet, and heads, and an intact body impaled on a stake. Another portion shows three stakes, each impaled with eight enemy heads. Further evidence is found on reliefs commemorating Sennacherib's (705–681 BC; after Jeroboam II) invasion of Judah and Lachish (among others) in 701 BC. One image shows an Assyrian with a collection of heads at his feet; while another, more gruesome image, depicts the Assyrians skinning their enemies. (Hoyt 2018, 354-355)

This was a nation that practiced murder and lawlessness. They had no problem taking captive children and throwing them into bonfires.

When conquering a region, Assyria often practiced a form of psychological warfare by using a limited amount of actual force but threatening much more. Once they targeted a region, they used diplomacy and threats to try to motivate surrender. If these didn't work, they sent in the army, selected the easiest target from among several small cities, and conquered it. Then they subjected the place to extreme acts of cruelty, including looting, burning, murdering, raping, flaying, mutilating, and enslaving the population. They then broadcast news of these acts to nearby cities to convince them to surrender without further attack. (Seevers 2013, 241)

They worshipped Assur (Ashur) as the primary of their many gods. "He was "a war-god pure and simple." Assyrian religion taught that the king and empire existed "to expand the borders of the Land of Aššur." He appears fully formed and all powerful in the earliest Assyrian texts, giving no indication of evolution. To worship Ashur was to conquer. "All war ... was holy war. Moreover, other peoples, like the Assyrians,



believed that their patron god was not just one among many but the ruler over all the other gods. The Assyrians, however, seemed readier to take their ideas to the logical conclusion, that what was so in heaven must be made so on earth.” Unlike the other inhabitants of the Mesopotamian pantheon, Ashur remained a deity of Assyria alone. Archaeology has not found evidence that any people outside Assyria ever willingly worshiped Ashur.<sup>25</sup> After Assyria fell, Ashur worship ceased. (Cook 2019, 25)

Why so violent and brutal, it was part of their lifestyle and theology. They believed that they were serving one of their gods by doing so. It provided a good life for them too.

Here is the problem though, for much of the planet today, we are as brutal or far worse. Our culture in the west has decided it is okay to build the culture on the back of the blood of the most innocent of all...the unborn, the infirm and now, the elderly.

Abortion and euthanasia, physician assisted suicide, are becoming leading causes of death in select states and countries around the world.

It makes one wonder how much longer God will wait before He has Jesus remove the church.

In the west today, we have made murder acceptable to the degree that language has been twisted to remove the stigma attached. Now we talk about reproductive rights rather than abortion. We talk death with dignity. It helps provide for the “good life.”

Here is the important thing to remember, thanks to Jesus Christ, forgiveness is possible even if you have been involved in an abortion or a suicide.

1 John 1:9 is clear.

1 John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (ESV)

I would encourage anyone still having continuing guilt about past wrong decisions, including the mistaken decision to have an abortion or assist in euthanasia, to simply believe that verse. Have you confessed that sin to God and acknowledged that it was wrong? If so, His word says he is faithful to forgive you your sins, so it’s a matter of trusting him now that he has forgiven your sin. The Bible is very clear, “as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.” (Psalm 103:12, ESV)

Nineveh grew rich on the innocent blood of others, much like our culture today.

Nahum 3:1

“Woe to the bloody city, **completely full of lies** and pillage; Her prey does not leave.” (NASB 2020)

Point Two – the Assyrian Empire, it’s rulers and its people were all liars. We are told that Nineveh is “full of lies.”

You could not rely on the Assyrian Empire to ever keep their word. The prime example being King Hezekiah making a protection payment to Sennacherib and then learning after the payment was made, they lied. The real goal was for Jerusalem to surrender. This was a normal function for the leadership of Assyria.

Of course, we have advanced far from that in our western culture today and no longer have anyone in political leadership lying to us.



Dr. Christian Hart states the following. “I argue that people lie when 1) they see some benefit of lying, 2) they think the risks of lying are acceptable, and 3) they can morally justify their dishonesty. Dishonest politicians may regularly see the benefit of lying, feel like they can get away with lying, and see their lying as a necessary part of the job rather than a deep character flaw.” (Hart 2022)

Unfortunately, we are no better at truth when it comes to government, than the Assyrians. Do we even want leaders who tell the truth? “The frequency of these criticisms would seem to indicate that most people do not want a president who lies. And yet a recent study of presidential deception found that all American presidents – from Washington to Trump – have told lies, and knowingly so, in their public statements. The most effective of presidents have sometimes been effective precisely because they were skilled at manipulation and deception.” (Blake 2022)

Every time each citizen opens his mouth, beneath his most convincing, straightforward statement is a twist, a hidden intent, a conscious ambiguity. In order to flatter, to cover up, to detract from actual intent, the citizen of Assyria dissimulates, equivocates, veils the true purpose of his heart by the cautious form of the words he utters. By the prearranged pointing of the foot, by the wink of the eye, he and his secret accomplices victimize even the most cautious. (Robertson 1990, 101)

If politics is the art of lying, as some insist, Assyria developed that art to a high degree. (Christensen 1990, 336)

Our culture is no better than Assyria on the first two points mentioned by Nahum. In the west, your truth is your truth and my truth, well it might be different than yours.

What about point three?

Nahum 3:1

“Woe to the bloody city, **completely full of lies and pillage**; Her prey does not leave.” (NASB 2020)

The Hebrew word translated by the NASB as pillage is the word פָּרַק (pereq). It means parting of ways, plunder (lit. “that which is snatched away”). (Klein 1987, 532)

When you include the term for prey. You see profiteering and victimizing as a way of life. Theft is acceptable in the culture.

Both terms suggest a forced ripping of person or possessions (pereq and țereḇ). Like a wild beast shredding its prey, so the Assyrian devours his defenseless victim. (Robertson 1990, 102)

Our western culture has turned this into a fine art. We disguise plundering others with terms such as inflation, taxes, the increased cost of doing business, and on and on.

Nahum has outlined the problem in Nineveh. They kill the innocent without any regard for who they are, because that help to provide for their well-being. Every word they utter is a lie. The government lies, business lies, the people lie. They are all about the buck. If you need money, take it from the folks who live in the next country over. Invade them, kill them, enslave them and take whatever you want.

After all, isn't that what Ishtar, (the patron goddess of Nineveh) would want? Not a surprising outcome when you consider fallen angels and demons are involved.

It was built on bloodshed and deceit and can maintain itself and continue to grow only by ruthlessly devouring other cities and kingdoms. Its appetite for blood and plunder is insatiable. Nineveh was a great and powerful city, proud of its achievements. But now God gives his assessment. (Burge and Hill 2012, 879)



Nahum pivots from giving the reason why judgment is needed and necessary, back to some of the details of judgement being enforced on Nineveh. Back to the eyewitness account.

Nahum 3:2–3

“The sound of the whip, The sound of the roar of the wheel, Galloping horses And bounding chariots! Horsemen charging, Swords flashing, spears gleaming, Many killed, a mass of corpses, And there is no end to the dead bodies— They stumble over the dead bodies!” (NASB 2020)

We go again to the eyewitness account of Nahum. Someone who God transported to the future and is providing us a detailed account of events. Short pithy statements. Did he get it right?

Excavations of the Halzi Gate at Nineveh provides us insight to the veracity of the prophet.

Inside the outer door, and beyond the position of a hastily installed blocking stone, the excavated portion of the central corridor of the Halzi Gate has revealed the presence of more than a dozen persons who died a violent death—no doubt as they were caught in the fury of the assault. Each lies as he fell: one sprawled face down, one on his back with his arms outstretched, and still another (a mere 13-year-old boy) with a trilobate arrowhead lodged in his lower leg. Numerous bronze or iron arrowheads were found in the vicinity of these overlapping skeletons, together with the separate remains of a dagger, spearhead and pike. (Stronach and Lumsden 1992, 231-232)

Skeletons of individuals who were slaughtered on the roadway of the Halzi Gate at the time of the siege of Nineveh in 612 b.c.e. The scene of carnage recalls the “myriads of slain, heaps of corpses” referred to in the Book of Nahum. (Stronach and Lumsden 1992, 232)

The archaeological evidence reflects that bodies literally piled up at the gates of Nineveh as they tried to escape from their attackers.

Remember, Nahum is reporting this about 90 years before the events took place. His choice of word for corpse here also “implies that the corpses lie exposed (e.g., Isa 66:24; Amos 8:3; 1 Sam 17:46), and none are in the context of proper funerary practices.” (Renz 2021, 158)

Archaeology is cool.

After providing more detail of the carnage taking place at the hands of Babylon and the Medes, Nahum again turns to the why.

Nahum knows what he is reporting on is difficult to hear, it is a side of God that exists alongside his justice. He returns to the why.

Nahum 3:4

“All because of the many sexual acts of the prostitute, The charming one, the mistress of sorceries, Who sells nations by her sexual acts, And families by her sorceries.” (NASB 2020)

Nineveh is compared to a prostitute. The word is זֹנָה (zō nah). Here in Nahum, the term is being broadly used. “This probably refers not only to the trade of Nineveh, but also to her idol cult and magic arts (keshāphîm).” (Erlandsson 1980, 104)

What this means is that as idolators who worshipped Ishtar, among other gods, sacred prostitution would indeed be part of the picture. But this also talks about their merchant activities, their sorceries and drug usage as well as their magic arts and divination.

There was a real reason why God sent Jonah to them 100 years or so ago. They did repent, but they simply could not stay away from the lifestyle they loved.



In the New Testament, there is another town also called a prostitute, in the same broad sense of the term as Nineveh, Mystery Babylon.

Revelation 17:4–5

“The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and covered with gold ornaments, precious stones, and pearls. In her hand she held a gold cup full of obscene and filthy things, the result of her immorality. On her forehead was written a name that has a secret meaning: “Great Babylon, the mother of all the prostitutes and perverts in the world.”” (GNB)

The image of the harlot is taken from the Old Testament description, not of Babylon, which when personified is a virgin (Is. 47:1), but of Tyre (Is. 23:15 sqq.) and Nineveh (Nah. 3:4). The truth is, the Antichristian Empire is conceived as embodying the various forms of evil that existed in previous earthly empires. (Simcox 1894, 100)

Since this is later used by John and Jesus and pointed to as a type of the Antichrist, what else are we told about Nineveh that would make it stand out as a negative type?

We read they are “the charming one.” This implies the ability to make the even a pig wearing makeup look good. “This prostitute looks graceful on the outside: she seems attractive, beautiful, with much to offer; the city of Nineveh looked spectacular and seemed to offer much in the way of wealth and goods, comfort and sensuality. But this was an illusion.” (Pakula 2014, 51)

This prostitute, Nineveh, is also the “mistress of sorceries.” The lies are what draws them in. The lies are so powerful that they seem magical.

King Ahaz was one of those who was sucked in by this charm. He asked for help from the Assyrian Empire, he got more than he bargained for.

2 Chronicles 28:16–21

“At that time King Ahaz sent to the king of Assyria for help. For the Edomites had again invaded and defeated Judah and carried away captives. And the Philistines had made raids on the cities in the Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages. And they settled there. For the LORD humbled Judah because of Ahaz king of Israel, for he had made Judah act sinfully and had been very unfaithful to the LORD. **So Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him.** For Ahaz took a portion from the house of the LORD and the house of the king and of the princes, and gave tribute to the king of Assyria, but it did not help him.” (ESV)

Hezekiah and his son Manasseh also were sucked in. Hezekiah repented and was delivered after losing most of Judah to Assyria, Manasseh wound up being taken off to captivity by Assyria only to be released and returned to power after he repented.

2 Chronicles 33:11–13

“Therefore the LORD brought upon them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria, who captured Manasseh with hooks and bound him with chains of bronze and brought him to Babylon. And when he was in distress, he entreated the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. He prayed to him, and God was moved by his entreaty and heard his plea and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.” (ESV)

Then we come back to the supernatural source of this problem. “Ishtar, the patron deity of Nineveh, was worshipped as a prostitute. The specific accusation may be that Nineveh completely subjects nations and then disposes of them at will.” (Renz 2021, 159-160)



Assyria set aside any semblance of morality and practiced political prostitution by selling its military aid for money, enticing poorer, weaker nations to ally with them. They also practiced sacred prostitution in their religious rituals for the goddess Ishtar. They used a form of political sorcery to attract allies, but they also relied on sorcery and superstition for guidance. (Redmond, Curtis and Fentress 2016, 172)

Nineveh was not the wonderful and beautiful city she pretended to be. She was a common street prostitute who beguiled in order to make a profit, leading nations and families to destruction. She knows the weakness of sinful human flesh and preyed upon it for her own profit. (Pakula 2014, 51)

This behavior though made Nineveh a type of the end times capital city of the Beast. God's view?

Nahum 3:5-7

“Behold, I am against you,” declares the LORD of armies; “And I will lift up your skirts over your face, And show the nations your nakedness, And the kingdoms your shame. I will throw filth on you And declare you worthless, And set you up as a spectacle. And it will come about that all who see you Will shrink from you and say, ‘Nineveh is devastated! Who will have sympathy for her?’ Where shall I seek comforters for you?” (NASB 2020)

In the middle east of this time, the typical punishment for adultery and prostitution, if the culture condemned it, was to strip off all their clothes in public and expose them to shame and ridicule.

God is against them. We also know, thanks to Ezekiel, that they are at the head of the line of shame and dishonor in Sheol. Nineveh would be treated as an adulteress, as a prostitute. They would be exposed to all of the surrounding nations. Nothing would be hidden all would be open to view. The idea is public humiliation.

Nahum tells us that because of Nineveh's sin, she will be like a prostitute who is forced to walk along the streets so that the population can throw filth at her. (Bentley 1994, 121)

Assyria is so universally hated that the task of finding anyone who would show mercy to them is impossible. In fact, the picture is one of such complete revulsion, that as Nineveh metaphorically parades naked down the street, after throwing filth on her, those in attendance turn away and look elsewhere. There will be no one to mourn for the fall of Assyria. There will be no one to comfort because they had made themselves so abominable.

Assyria showed no mercy when in power, and at the end, they would receive no mercy. Instead, they would reap what they have sowed.

Or as it says in the Succession Treaty of Esarhaddon, “May your ghost have no one to care (for him) or pour libations.” (Cogan 2013, 78)

Nahum does a good job nailing the culture of Nineveh and letting us know just why judgement is coming to the city. But this is also something we need to take notice of here in the west. Doctor McGee ties it clearly together.

*“All of this description which is given here is something I do not want to pass over lightly because it has such a tremendous application for us today and is such an apt picture of the present day. The Book of Nahum reveals God's method in dealing with the nations of the world. I do not think He has changed His method, and if He hasn't, we are in trouble, and I mean deep trouble, my friend. We ought to be praying for our nation. God calls this city a harlot, saying that He is absolutely going to display all of the shame and filth and vileness of this great civilization and make it a gazing stock, a spectacle, to the world. Such was the end of the great Assyrian Empire.” (McGee 1997, 831)*



Malachi 3:6

“For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, have not perished.” (NRSV)

Nahum 3:8–10

“Are you better than No-amon, Which was situated by the canals of the Nile, With water surrounding her, Whose rampart was the sea, Whose wall consisted of the sea? Ethiopia was her might, Egypt too, without limits. Put and Lubim were among her helpers. Yet she became an exile, She went into captivity; Also her small children were smashed to pieces At the head of every street; They cast lots for her honorable men, And all her great men were bound with shackles.” (NASB 2020)

No-amon means the city of Amon. Amon was one of the Egyptian gods. The city is also known as Thebes. God is going to compare Nineveh to Thebes.

Capital of Egypt's Upper Kingdom for most of its history (about 2000–661 B.C.). The city waned only during the brief Hyksos period (about 1750–1550 B.C.). Thebes (called “No” in KJV) was the center of worship for the god Amon, a chief deity in Egyptian religion. (Thebes 2003, 1579-1580)

This is going to be personal. This is also going to be ironic since Nahum is going to talk about a city that was conquered by Assyria around 663 BC.

Thebes

Nahum is going to remind the citizens of Nineveh just what it is they did to Thebes when Ashurbanipal took the city.

Just as Nineveh was, Thebes too was well defended with natural and artificial water defenses to include the Nile River. The Nile River is what is being referred to as the Sea here in Nahum. At Thebes, the Nile is about ½ mile wide about 400 miles south of modern-day Cairo.

Who could get across that? The Assyrians did.

Nahum moves to talk about the quality and quantity of allies that could come to assist the Egyptians at Thebes. Ethiopia, the might of greater Egypt, Put and Libya.

So, the question, since Thebes fell to Assyria, what makes the people of Nineveh think they are any better than Thebes and won't fall?

“Yet Thebes fell. And no one should know this better than the people of Nineveh, for it was to the armies of Ashurbanipal, who had set out from Nineveh, that Thebes capitulated. Sometime between 668 and 662 B.C. Ashurbanipal marched through Egypt's delta country, leaving a trail of fire, ruin, and death behind him. He surrounded Thebes and took it after minimal delays. Convinced that he could not properly govern a city so far removed from Nineveh, Ashurbanipal determined to make an example of it so that the terrifying memory of what he had done would deter future uprisings. He took captive everyone he could and killed the rest. The children were massacred in the streets.” (Boice 2002, 384)

Nahum 3:10

“Yet she became an exile, She went into captivity; Also her small children were smashed to pieces At the head of every street; They cast lots for her honorable men, And all her great men were bound with shackles.” (NASB 2020)

Nahum reminds the people of Nineveh just what it is they did to the people of Thebes.

Who are we, today living in the west, to think that God will never judge the sin of our nation? God has not changed. A study of history will clearly show you that fact.





A study of the book of Revelation will also show you that in the last days, which we are living in, the nations of this planet will be subjected to the wrath of God as He answers them for the centuries of abuse that have been heaped on His kids by them.

Just as with Assyria being told time was up, we also see in the scriptures that all the signs showing us that time is up for our culture, are evident as well.

As we look round today, is everything falling apart? Anything getting better? Anywhere?

In the final days of a declining civilization everything seems to fly apart, and the fall, when it finally comes, often comes quickly. This is what Nahum says about Nineveh in the final verses of the prophecy. (Boice 2002, 385)

After providing the example of Thebes and embedding in it additional reasons why judgement is falling on Assyria, Nahum pivots back to what is in the future for the people of Nineveh.

Nahum 3:11–19

“You too will become drunk, You will be hidden. You too will search for a refuge from the enemy. All your fortifications are fig trees with ripe fruit— When shaken, they fall into the eater’s mouth. Behold, your people are women in your midst! The gates of your land are opened wide to your enemies; Fire consumes your gate bars. Draw for yourself water for a siege! Strengthen your fortifications! Go into the clay and tread the mortar! Take hold of the brick mold! There fire will consume you, The sword will cut you down; It will consume you as the creeping locust consumes a crop. Multiply yourself like the creeping locust, Multiply yourself like the migratory locust. You have made your traders more numerous than the stars of heaven— The creeping locust sheds its skin and flies away. Your courtiers are like the migratory locust. Your officials are like a swarm of locusts Settling in the stone shelters on a cold day. The sun rises and they flee, And the place where they are is not known. Your shepherds are sleeping, O king of Assyria; Your officers are lying down. Your people are scattered on the mountains And there is no one to gather them. There is no relief for your collapse, Your wound is incurable. All who hear about you Will clap their hands over you, For upon whom has your evil not come continually?” (NASB 2020)

The answer to the question, are you any better than Thebes, no, not hardly. Thebes appeared to be invincible, yet you took them. You appear to be invincible, that perception will fail.

Because they believe the defenses are strong, they’re busy drinking and getting drunk, but they will wind up having to hide from the enemy. The stumbling we read about earlier in chapter 2 could be due to this self-assured partying going on while the flood approaches. There is a problem with their defenses. They believe the defense are strong, but God has a rainstorm up stream in the plans.

The wall, over 2 miles of it, collapses meaning total access now for Babylon and the Medes. So much for their fortifications, they were no better than a line of fig trees. But the walls look pretty strong right now as Nahum writes. But “they need only to be shaken, and the figs will fall into the mouth of the eater. In other words, Nineveh’s fortifications are ripe for the taking; they will offer little resistance to the attacker.” (Roberts 1991, 75)

When the fortifications fall, those who were to be the brave defenders of the city, are no longer to be feared. The term used is one of derision commonly used at that time.

We miss it, but Nahum is using the same innuendo he began with in verse 4. Here he compares the defenders of the city to women. This is intentional and brings back the prostitute metaphor used earlier. Since Nineveh is a prostitute, her gates would be open and welcoming to all who came.

The gates though are open due to the flood being brought by God.



The mocking tone makes modern readers cringe but illustrates the depth of feelings in the late seventh century concerning the end of Assyrian hegemony. (Nogalski 2011, 632)

Nahum continues with instruction to the residents to prepare for a siege and pay attention to the fortifications, the brick and mortar.

He has told them in advance where the problem is, what they need to do, and they did nothing with the warning.

So much of the wall is gone that there is no chance to repair the breaches in it.

As the enemy enters, they begin to set fire to everything. “History tells us that this is what actually happened. The city was completely destroyed and the Assyrian king died in the flames of his own palace.” (Bentley 1994, 122)

The excavations at Kouyunjik have revealed the fact that most of the buildings there had suffered from fire. (Powis Smith, Ward and Bewer 1911, 349)

Nahum 3:15

“There fire will consume you, The sword will cut you down; It will consume you as the creeping locust consumes a crop. Multiply yourself like the creeping locust, Multiply yourself like the migratory locust.” (NASB 2020)

As the attack continues, it begins to resemble what a locust horde looks like covering a crop consuming and destroying everything visible.

Nahum sticks with the comparison saying the only thing that could possibly save Nineveh would be if they could multiply like locusts themselves. Then and only then a defense might be possible.

Nahum 3:16–17

“You have made your traders more numerous than the stars of heaven— The creeping locust sheds its skin and flies away. Your courtiers are like the migratory locust. Your officials are like a swarm of locusts Settling in the stone shelters on a cold day. The sun rises and they flee, And the place where they are is not known.” (NASB 2020)

Nineveh became rich through their predatory trade and military operations. But now, the tables are turned and the looting and pillaging taking place in Nineveh would be like locusts stripping the land of vegetation.

What happened to the Assyrian officials, ministers and military? They all ran. We already covered that earlier in Nahum but here he brings it up again as he continues with the locust imagery. Just as migratory locusts fly away in the evening, so too all of the defenders, leaders and rulers of Assyria. “The sun rises and they flee, And the place where they are is not known.” (Nahum 3:17b, NASB 2020)

So the crowned and the captains of Assyria disappear in the heat of battle. They leave no trace of their existence. Consequently their followers experience merciless mutilation by the enemy. (Robertson 1990, 126)

Where are they? That is the question asked by Nahum. What happened to all of those in leadership?

Nahum 3:18–19

“Your shepherds are sleeping, O king of Assyria; Your officers are lying down. Your people are scattered on the mountains And there is no one to gather them. There is no relief for your collapse, Your wound is



incurable. All who hear about you Will clap their hands over you, For upon whom has your evil not come continually?" (NASB 2020)

Nahum says a lot about Nineveh and why it disappeared, but at the same time I hear him talking about us. Nahum says, "Your shepherds are sleeping." Here in our nation, this statement is true.

What Nineveh needed, they once had but then turned from...revival.

What we need today is simply for the church to be serious about being the church. We need revival.

Nahum did not say to Nineveh, you can turn this around, you can be restored back to what you used to be. He simply told them that judgement is coming, and everyone around you is looking forward to seeing you go down.

Jesus told the last days church to repent. To become believers.

Revelation 3:15–20

"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." (NKJV)

He didn't say we can turn this around. He simply said repent. To listen to His voice and come to Him. Implying that many in the last days church, are not true followers of Jesus Christ.

Let us, then, fall to our knees with our Bibles open, reading God's words and being awakened to those words and coming to grips with the awful realities of our sin and disobedience. Let us also take hold of God's promises to pardon and restore, running to the throne of grace where we can obtain mercy and forgiveness (see Heb. 4:16). We are sicker than we realize but God's grace is nearer than we realize. Divine healing is our only hope, but we will never experience healing until we realize how sick we are. How we need the blood of Jesus! (Brown 2021, 42-44)

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (NKJV)

2 Timothy 2:19

"Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."" (NKJV)

If you are not a follower of Jesus Christ yet find yourself appalled at what is going on in our culture today, there is still time. Nineveh's time was up, but right now, we still have the opportunity to seek refuge in Christ.

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.

## Works Cited

- Bentley, Michael. 1994. *Balancing the Books: Micah and Nahum Simply Explained, Welwyn Commentary Series*. Darlington: Evangelical Press.
- Blake, Michael. 2022. "All American presidents have lied - the question is why and when." *The Conversation*. February 16. Accessed April 26, 2023. <https://theconversation.com/all-american-presidents-have-lied-the-question-is-why-and-when-176663>.
- Boice, James Montgomery. 2002. *The Minor Prophets: An Expositional Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Brown, Michael L. 2021. *Revival Or We Die: A Great Awakening is Our Only Hope*. Kindle. Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc.
- Burge, Gary M., and Andrew E. Hill, . 2012. *The Baker Illustrated Bible Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Christensen, Duane L. 1990. *Nahum: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, Anchor Yale Bible*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Cogan, Mordechai, trans. 2013. *Bound for Exile: Israelites and Judeans under Imperial Yoke: Documents from Assyria and Babylonia*. Jerusalem: A Carta Handbook.
- Cook, Gregory D. 2019. "Of Gods and Kings: Ashur Imagery in Nahum." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 29 (1).
- Erlandsson, S. 1980. "נָחֻם." In *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, translated by David E. Green. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Hart, Christian L. 2022. "Pathological Lying in Politics: Does politics attract big liars. or does it create them?" *Psychology Today*. December 29. Accessed April 26, 2023. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-nature-of-deception/202212/pathological-lying-in-politics>.
- Hoyt, JoAnna M. 2018. *Amos, Jonah, & Micah, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*. Edited by H. Wayne House and William D. Barrick. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.



- Kedar-Kopfstein, B., and Jan Bergman. 1978. "דָּם." In *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, translated by John T. Willis and Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Klein, Ernest. 1987. "פָּרֶקֶת." In *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English*, edited by Baruch Sarel. Jerusalem: Carta Jerusalem.
- McGee, J. Vernon. 1997. *Thru the Bible Commentary*. Electronic. Vol. 3. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
- Nogalski, James D. 2011. *The Book of the Twelve: Hosea-Malachi, Smyth & Helwys Commentary*. Edited by Leslie Andres and Samuel E. Balentine. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Incorporated.
- Pakula, Martin. 2014. *Nahum, Habakkuk & Zephaniah: The End of Evil, Reading the Bible Today Series*. Edited by Paul Barnett. Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press.
- Powis Smith, J. M., William Hayes Ward, and Julius August Bewer. 1911. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel, International Critical Commentary*. New York, NY: C. Scribner's Sons.
- Redmond, Eric, William Curtis, and Ken Fentress. 2016. *Exalting Jesus in Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk*. Nashville, TN: Holman Reference.
- Renz, Thomas. 2021. *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*. Edited by E. J. Young, R. K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard Jr. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Roberts, J. J. M. 1991. *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah: A Commentary, The Old Testament Library*. First. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press.
- Robertson, O. Palmer. 1990. *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Seevers, Boyd. 2013. *Warfare in the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications.
- Simcox, William Henry. 1894. *The Revelation of S. John the Divine with Notes and Introduction, The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stronach, David, and Stephen Lumsden. 1992. "UC Berkeley's Excavations at Nineveh." *Biblical Archaeologist* (American Schools of Oriental Research) 55.
2003. "Thebes." In *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, edited by Chad Brand, Charles Draper, Archie England, Steve Bond, E. Ray Clendenen, Trent C. Butler and Bill Latta. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.