



**The Fall Of Nineveh
Described in Detail and In Advance
Nahum 2:3 – 13**

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We are studying the little book of Nahum.

As a reminder, Nahum is all about the doom of Nineveh.

That being said, in chapter 1 Nahum has already covered the topic of how awesome the God we love and serve is. He has made an excursion to the end of the age and provided a lecture to Judah about their idol worshipping problem without making that the central topic.

He has also paved the way for the upcoming revival under King Josiah and made some promises to us and his people about the God we serve.

Now we are in the part of chapter 2 which is all about the pending doom of Nineveh and he begins to provide details, all in advance.

The attack on Nineveh is to be detailed for us by Nahum. His intelligence briefing, based on the military intelligence gleaned from being an in-person observer of the combat operations taking place on the battlefield, means he provides unparalleled access to events almost in real time. Here is the thing, these events will not take place for at least another 90 years.



The events he describes are ones all of the surrounding nations have anticipated. The nations all hate Assyria, and the hate has been earned.

The fall of Assyria will be reason for celebration in the entire region. "It is said that when the Assyrians were on the march, in many places an entire community which lay in the line of their march would commit suicide rather than fall into the hands of brutal Assyrians. They were dreaded and feared in the ancient world." (McGee, 1997, p. 824)

To emphasize the certainty of this message, Nahum described how the battle for Nineveh would be lost (2:3–13). The graphic picture of Nineveh's demise functioned as a persuasive reason to accept Nahum's new view of Nineveh. The troops around Nineveh would madly race around the city (2:3–5), but soon the river would flood, the walls would fall, and foreigners would plunder the city's riches (2:6–10). People would mock Assyria, the great lion of destruction that preyed on the nations (2:11; Isa. 5:29–30), because it would be nothing. God was against it and would end her bragging (2:11–13; see Isa. 36–37 for bragging). (Smith, 1994, p. 163)

Nahum has been to the battlefield. He has an eyewitness report to give, even though this battle is still over 90 years in the future. As all the prophets, he has seen the future. The intel he provides is excellent.

There are details that Nahum relates that some, who have difficulty with the supernatural aspects of the scriptures, have difficulty with.

Some even go as far as to state that historical evidence should be ignored as it couldn't possibly have happened that way.

Nahum did not get it wrong. Let's join him as he reports from the walls of Nineveh.

Nahum 2:3–7

"The shields of his warriors are dyed red, The warriors are dressed in scarlet, The chariots are fitted with flashing steel When he is prepared to march, And the juniper spears are brandished. The chariots drive wildly in the streets, They rush around in the public squares; Their appearance is like torches, They drive back and forth like lightning flashes. He remembers his officers; They stumble in their advance, They hurry to her wall, And the mantelet is set up. The gates of the rivers are opened And the palace sways back and forth. It is set: She is stripped, she is led away, And her slave women are sobbing like the sound of doves, Beating their breasts." (NASB 2020)

Nahum is describing the detail he sees in the vision that was given to him by YAHWEH. The first thing he explains to us is that this is a professional military attacking Nineveh.

The reddened shields, scarlet uniforms, elaborate chariot decorations, and rippling sea of spears or swaying chariots all underscore how professional and well equipped this army is. No ragtag collection of involuntary conscripts, this is a formidable military machine whose preparation for attack has been thorough and complete. (Roberts, 1991, p. 65)

Rebellion was nothing new in the Assyrian empire. That was what brought Israel into exile and the Assyrian military into Judah when Hezekiah was King. In the lead up to the fall of Nineveh, rebellion was becoming difficult to manage in the Empire. Babylon became a problem, and they developed a powerful professional army.

"In 616 Assyria began to lose further territory to Nabopolassar, who defeated them at Qablinu and took over the middle Euphrates and raided the Balikh. A Babylonian raid against Madanu (near Kirkûk) was repulsed. In 615 Asshur was raided and the Medes overran the Arrapha province; in the following year they moved against Tarbişu in alliance with the Babylonians and against Nineveh. The siege may have been raised by some sort of Scythian intervention. Nabopolassar suppressed a rebellion in the middle



Euphrates by the Suḥu tribe but withdrew from 'Anah when the Assyrian army approached. In 614 Asshur fell, and by 612 the Medes and Babylonians marched up the Tigris to Nineveh." (Wiseman, 1979-1988, p. 338)

Nahum describes the approaching forces. His eyewitness description is unnerving considering he is writing about events yet in the future.

The 'red' shields (3) may refer to blood-stained shields used in previous battles; or red could be the colour of the Babylonian army. The warriors clad in scarlet suggests the bright colour of their uniforms; the detail about the metal on their chariots flashing in the sunlight, and the spears of pine (3b) suggests some first-hand knowledge of the invaders from previous encounters; and the description of the chariots storming through the streets of the city, looking like flaming torches and darting about like lightning (cf. tanks in modern warfare) is vivid and dramatic. (Bridger, 2010, p. 146)

Why red? The enemy cannot tell when you are injured or not.

We have been given a view from the walls of Nineveh of the approaching army and what they look like as they approach the gates of Nineveh. Included in this is a commentary on the supporting combat operations of chariots in the surrounding suburbs outside the city walls. Nahum continues with his report from the walls. We know from Ezekiel that red was a favorite uniform color of Babylon.

Ezekiel 23:14

"But she increased her prostitution. She saw men carved on the wall, **images of the Chaldeans carved in bright red,**" (NET 2nd ed.)

Remember, Assyria has lived and prospered by the sword. Jesus had a word for Peter, right after he removed the ear of the high priest's slave, for those who rely on might.

Matthew 26:52

"Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place! **For all who take hold of the sword will die by the sword.**" (NET 2nd ed.)

For Assyria and the city of Nineveh, it is time to reap what they have sown. Nahum is a Jew, he wants to see Assyria fall, but he is also an observer reporting what he sees. He knows the history.

Nineveh has lived and prospered by the sword. It is now about to die by the sword. Nineveh is to be on the receiving end of the violence she has so freely meted out over the years (2:3-6). (Burge & Hill, 2012, p. 877)

Recapping, we have detailed intel of the attacking army, from someone watching on the wall. We also know about the combat operations of the supporting forces, chariots deployed against Nineveh as well.

Nahum's military intelligence briefing is top notch. He includes troop movements as well as cavalry and those armaments deployed.

Nahum continues with his briefing by pivoting to discuss actions being taken by those who are supposedly defending against this assault.

His description of the supposed active defense reveals a significant problem exists in Nineveh, surprise may have been achieved by the enemy as it appears the response is not well thought out or planned.

Something that was not anticipated appears to have taken place upsetting the overall defense plan.



Nahum 2:5–6

“He remembers his officers; They stumble in their advance, They hurry to her wall, And the mantelet is set up. The gates of the rivers are opened And the palace sways back and forth.” (NASB 2020)

With this, the focus moves from those who are attacking, to those who are defending Nineveh. The sentences are short and to the point. This is a military under siege fighting desperately to save the city and themselves. All their plans have gone out the window, it is now semper gumbly time, they have never been in that position before.

If you are about to, or have been under siege for some time, preparations for life under siege would have taken place. Nineveh and the defenses around it were built with the idea of defending a siege of over 20 years in length. The defenders would be briefed up, aware of what to expect, and prepared. But we read instead in Nahum’s report, of panic.

Shelters have not been put into place. Officers who are supposed to be in place and ready to go, aren’t. The defense plan has been thrown out and now an improvised defense seems to be taking place. We know why.

God remembers, and he knows that the “full end” envisioned in 1:8–10 is about to be accomplished in the sack of Nineveh. (Christensen, 2009, pp. 278-279)

As the enemy advances on Nineveh, those who are desperately defending, are doing so without any relief. The plan is trash at this point. There is no one available to back up their positions, there is no defense in depth. There are no fallback positions. The reason why is revealed to us in verse 6.

In Nineveh, the defense is in deep trouble; they are stumbling. The defense of the wall is failing and “the Assyrians rush their commanders and troops to the wall, stumbling in their haste to defend it and setting up a mantelet or “covering” (of whose meaning we can not be sure) to protect themselves from the hail of enemy arrows, spears, and catapulted missiles.” (Achte-meier, 1986, pp. 20-21)

There are enemy troops using siege tactics and weapons outside the wall, but those plans established with that as the only threat to defense, are now worthless. You see, there are also enemy troops inside the wall as well. The wall has been breached and not by enemy forces. God has shown up on the battlefield.

For someone planning the defense of the city, this is their worst nightmare coming true. They thought they had a viable defense plan; their plan pivoted on the barrier the wall provided. By providing a defense, the wall was to keep the troops outside the wall where they could be effectively managed by defensive operations and allow for those troops responding to be relieved on a regular basis. But that plan has a big hole in it, one exploited by the God of the Universe sending rain onto the watershed upstream of the city.

The breach of the wall at the river was a surprise, it was God showing up.

The military planners in Nineveh were not idiots. Their plan had been well thought out and they had the resources available to fund it and build it. But they had rejected God. Remember, at one point this was a city that had repented and turned to Him, but no longer. In fact, they had gone out of their way to challenge God.

There was this event that had taken place in the recent past where the Assyrian Empire expressed to King Hezekiah and to those living in Jerusalem, just what they thought of YAHWEH.



2 Kings 18:28–35

“Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: “Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! Thus says the king: ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you out of my hand. Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD by saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’ Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria: ‘Make your peace with me and come out to me. Then each one of you will eat of his own vine, and each one of his own fig tree, and each one of you will drink the water of his own cistern, until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, that you may live, and not die. **And do not listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you by saying, “The LORD will deliver us.” Has any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?** Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their lands out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?’ ”” (ESV)

Those comments not only were shocking to those who heard, but also drove Hezekiah into repentance. There would be a follow up letter sent which King Hezekiah would spread out before the Lord and God showed up for Jerusalem by destroying the Assyrian army overnight.

Nahum is now relating the final chapter for the people of Assyria.

Galatians 6:7

“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” (ESV)

In our culture today, we see those who are actively mocking God. Some are in government. For example, in September 2022, billboards, paid for by the State of California, appeared across the nation using Mark 12:31 to support abortion. (Hallowell, 2022)

In response an open letter from a California Pastor was sent to the Governor of California. In one section we read the following:

The Word of God pronounces judgment on those who call evil good and good evil (Isaiah 5:20), and yet many of your policies reflect this unholy, upside-down view of honor and morality. The diabolical effects of your worldview are evident in the statistics of California’s epidemics of crime, homelessness, sexual perversions (like homosexuality and transgenderism), and other malignant expressions of human misery that stem directly from corrupt public policy. (MacArthur, 2022)

There is encouragement to repent and to do so quickly in the letter.

In 2022, Newsom signed 15 abortion protection and reproductive health bills that provide safe sites, eliminate copays for procedures, and protect against out-of-state investigations. In November, the state’s voters enshrined abortion rights into California’s Constitution by passing Proposition 1. (Arredondo & Toohey, 2023)

Galatians 6:7

“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” (ESV)

So, what have we seen in California since then?

- 6.4 (12/22) and 5.2 (1/23) magnitude earthquakes
- Record breaking floods
- Record breaking snow (237% of historical average, and it still has to melt)
- Record breaking rain



- Tulare Lake reforming (Drained 100 years ago, once the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi)
- Owens Lake full for the first time in 100 years
- Worries over the snow melt (Plachta & The Sacramento Bee, 2023)

Galatians 6:7

“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” (ESV)

As of February 2023, the population of the State continues to decline. Just counting out-of-staters coming in and Californians leaving, the state’s population saw a 871,127 net decline. If you’re wondering why the state lost a congressional seat at the beginning of this decade, this is why. (Christopher, 2023)

Is God trying to get the attention of all of us that He is still on the throne? Yes. Just like He did Nineveh who ignored Him and mocked Him. Is our culture done? Hardly. There is still time to repent.

Are we headed for the world outlined in the book Revelation (Revelation 9:20 – 21), it appears the groundwork is rapidly being laid. A recent UN report from the International Commission of Jurists advocates for the legalization of pedophilia, prostitution and abortion, among other things and does so under a human rights-based approach. See (The International Commission of Jurists, 2023) located at <https://icj2.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/8-MARCH-Principles-FINAL-printer-version-1-MARCH-2023.pdf>

The U.N. report echoes the thinking of groups like the North American Man-Boy Love Association, which condones pedophilia and works to abolish age-of-consent laws. While the report stops short of calling for the legalization of sex with minors, it maintains that those under 18 years of age have the mental capacity to willingly have sex with older individuals. (Kredo, 2023)

We are becoming Assyria. Back to our text.

In their fear and haste, or half-drunken, they totter and stumble as they hasten to the walls of the city. (Spence-Jones, 1909, p. 26)

Nahum is telling us of an event taking place that reveals God is always in control of the events concerning His people. This is a miracle on their behalf, a flood on the Tigris River.

Nahum 2:6

“The gates of the rivers are opened And the palace sways back and forth.” (NASB 2020) The River flooded.

This interpretation corresponds essentially with the testimony of Diodorus Siculus, an ancient Greek historian, who indicates that in the fall of Nineveh a series of heavy rains swelled the Euphrates (an error for Tigris), flooded parts of the city, and overthrew the wall for a length of about two miles (twenty stadia). (Robertson, 1990, p. 90)

Nahum prophesied, 90 years in advance, that a key point in the fall of Nineveh would be a flood of the Tigris and Khosr Rivers. He saw it.

This flood would even impact the palace foundations as we see Nahum telling us it sways back and forth from the impact of the water breaching the walls. “Secular history tells us that part of the city wall was taken out. About two and one-half miles of the wall of Nineveh was right along by the side of the Tigris River. The city was situated well above the normal flow of the river, but with the river at flood stage, it took out a whole section of the wall, and the enemy was able to enter the city. In other words, the overflowing river made the breach that the enemy was attempting to make themselves. It would seem as though the Lord cooperated in the destruction of the city.” (McGee, 1997, p. 826)



The fall of Nineveh took place; just as Nahum prophesied. As you survey commentaries covering this book, there are some who flat out deny the supernatural aspect of Nahum's prophecy and make comments about the gates of the river being an analogy of the enemy forces flowing into a breach in the walls. Nineveh was built to withstand a 20-year long siege. It did not take 20 years for the Lord to destroy it, days was all it took.

As we look at the culture around us and the seemingly insurmountable aspect of seeing change take place, just remember, with God all things are possible.

Nahum 2:7

"It is set: She is stripped, she is led away, And her slave women are sobbing like the sound of doves, Beating their breasts." (NASB 2020)

Now Nahum shifts to the Assyrian court and refers to an unnamed woman. Some commentators say this is a reference to Nineveh, others to the queen or the women of the city.

What we are seeing is the aftermath. In the past it was the Assyrian military that humiliated those it conquered, but this time, it is Assyria being humiliated by their enemies.

God will not be mocked. Nineveh is experiencing a lethal dose of its own poison. Nations like Assyria will be brought to divine justice by the Lord. Sinners cannot trample on God's people with impunity. The Lord will defend His people. The speed and rapidity with which the assault on Nineveh is happening is breathtaking! (Redmond, Curtis, & Fentress, 2016, p. 163)

The Assyrian's consistently practiced relocating all they conquered, now that they have been conquered, they will be the ones who are relocated. God has stated "it is set."

It is 'established' (Gen. 28:12; cf. decreed NIV),²⁵ determined by God, that the captive Nineveh should be exiled, suffering the same fate Assyria had previously laid upon those whom she had conquered, including Israel (cf. 2 Kgs 17). Assyria's defeat is accentuated in that even 'her maids' moan and beat upon their breasts, showing their anguish. (Baker, 1988, p. 35)

We see a picture of the queen being led away with all the women of Nineveh.

Nineveh had repented, but then turned and went right back to their previous behavior. Where God sees evil, God deals with it. God sees Nineveh defeated and led away into exile.

Nahum gives us his eyewitness account of the women of the city as well as the queen being led away.

Nahum 2:8–10

"Though Nineveh was like a pool of water throughout her days, Yet they are fleeing; "Stop, stop," But no one turns back. Plunder the silver, Plunder the gold! For there is no end to the treasure— Wealth from every kind of desirable object. She is emptied! Yes, she is desolate and waste! Hearts are melting and knees wobbling! Also trembling is in the entire body, And all their faces have become pale!" (NASB 2020)

As the Assyrian military would move against someone they had earmarked for conquering, prior to the arrival of the army there would be refugees fleeing the approaching the army. In the past of Assyria, this was due to their reputation.

Nineveh was the premier urban center of the 7th century BC. We know from Jonah that at the time he was there, the Lord said "And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?" (Jonah 4:11, ESV)



By the time Nahum is writing, the population is much larger. Recall the size of the Assyrian army destroyed by the angel of the Lord was 185,000 (Isaiah 37:36).

“Though Nineveh was like a pool of water” is a way of letting us know that “Nineveh was overflowing with population even as a pool is filled with waters.” (Powis Smith, Ward, & Bewer, 1911, p. 322)

The city was filled with people, and the defenders of the city had never been tested as defenders, we find out that they are unwilling to hang around in the face of the sudden reversal on the battlefield.

The might of Assyria goes running away as fast as they can possibly run. They know what they did to enemy soldiers, and they suspect the same will be done to them.

The walls were not supposed to go down, they were designed to stand, but the flood may have taken two miles or more of the wall with it. A pool implies a quiet steady consistent environment, but that is not the case now. All the best laid plans of the defense planners have gone down the drain. We see a picture here of those dedicated to the defense of Nineveh, fleeing from the battlefield as fast as they can.

...the defenders of Nineveh disappear just at the time of greatest need. Just as the artificial ponds and moats, having so much to do with Nineveh’s defences, dry up when the dams are broken through and leave the city open to the invader, so the defenders on the inside fly at the approach of danger. (Powis Smith, Ward, & Bewer, 1911, p. 322)

As the army turns tail and runs, you can hear the call being made for them to stop. And it is not just the military who is running away for their lives. “The people, like water flowing out of a tank, would flee rapidly from the city. As they would leave in panic, some would shout for them to stop ... but no one would turn back. Who shouted stop is not stated. Perhaps they were the city leaders, or army officers, or perhaps even the attacking enemy.” (Johnson, 1985, p. 1501)

The rout is total. Justice prevails. Those who had made themselves wealthy by terrifying others now find themselves impoverished and in terror. (Robertson, 1990, p. 93)

Nahum tells us that as they ran, they left everything behind. The attackers quickly pick up on that. Do they chase the people running away, or do they take the plunder? Verse 9 provides the answer and also reveals just how quickly everyone left.

Nahum 2:9

“Plunder the silver, Plunder the gold! For there is no end to the treasure— Wealth from every kind of desirable object.” (NASB 2020)

The Assyrian Empire was well known for demanding all kinds of resources in exchange for a “we won’t attack you promise.” Sometime those promises were false, and they decided they wanted the rest of the booty as well. Just look at what King Hezekiah did.

He rebelled against Assyrian vassalage that his father had subjected Judah to. “The LORD was with him; he succeeded in all his endeavors. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and refused to submit to him.” (2 Kings 18:7, NET 2nd ed.)

Eventually though, the Assyrians caught up with him and his decision made in the third year of his reign resulted in some challenges in his fourteenth year. After the Assyrian empire conquered most of Judah, we read the following.

2 Kings 18:14–16

“King Hezekiah of Judah sent this message to the king of Assyria, who was at Lachish, “I have violated our treaty. If you leave, I will do whatever you demand.” **So the king of Assyria demanded that King**



Hezekiah of Judah pay 300 talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. Hezekiah gave him all the silver in the LORD's temple and in the treasuries of the royal palace. At that time King Hezekiah of Judah stripped the metal overlays from the doors of the LORD's temple and from the posts that he had plated and gave them to the king of Assyria." (NET 2nd ed.)

Up to this point, even though King Hezekiah is a Godly King, a good King for Judah, we do not see in the text that he has inquired of the Lord how to deal with Assyria geopolitically. In fact he didn't inquire of the Lord about anything dealing with his foreign entanglements and Isaiah pointed that out to him. That is all about to change.

After the King made his payment to the Assyrian protection racket, he learned that they were not too trustworthy. A message was delivered to Hezekiah, with an army behind it.

2 Kings 18:17–18

"The king of Assyria sent his commanding general, the chief eunuch, and the chief adviser from Lachish to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem, along with a large army. They went up and arrived at Jerusalem. They went and stood at the conduit of the upper pool which is located on the road to the field where they wash and dry cloth. They summoned the king, so Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna, the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went out to meet them." (NET 2nd ed.)

The bottom line, we want everything including the people.

In the process the Assyrian commander made himself odious to the God of the universe, we already covered that, and as a result, 185,000 of them never got home.

But the protection racket paid well, and the Assyrians had used it to their benefit for a long time. Now it was being used on them.

All that stuff they had taken, was going to be on someone else's mantel.

The decision of the armies surrounding and in Nineveh was simple, take everything including those things nailed down. And they did.

The city was left open for ransacking as the fleeing population of oppressors left their ill-gotten gains behind. The Assyrians had amassed an enormous amount of wealth as they plundered the nations. There was no end to their wealth (v 9). Now the call went out for the attackers to plunder them—verse 9: 'Plunder the silver, plunder the gold!' Once again the tables were turned and the punishment fitted the crime: as Assyria had done to others in her cruelty, others would now do to her. (Pakula, 2014, p. 42)

How much wealth was in Nineveh? The last part of verse 9 gives us a hint. "For there is no end to the treasure— Wealth from every kind of desirable object." (Nahum 2:9b, NASB 2020)

The word translated object is כֵּלָה (kle). This word means "vessel, receptacle; piece of equipment; implement, instrument; ornament, garment, weapon, ship, boat." (Brannan, 2020)

Literally, boat loads of treasure. More than anyone could carry or imagine.

Rather than chase down everyone who is running away, take the gold instead. We are talking about a serious payday for the troops who were involved in taking Nineveh.

Nahum 2:10

"She is emptied! Yes, she is desolate and waste! Hearts are melting and knees wobbling! Also trembling is in the entire body, And all their faces have become pale!" (NASB 2020)



Nahum wants us to understand the condition of Nineveh once the attack is finished. This not only speaks to the devastation left behind but also to the looting and plundering going on.

We see in the NASB translation the following conditions: emptied, desolate, and a waste. "...the first three words in Hebrew are similar to each other in both sound and meaning (Buqah umeBuqah umeBullaqah)." The idea is total desolation. (Clark & Hatton, 1989, p. 34)

Nineveh is desolate. Those who have remained behind, are experiencing what it is that the Assyrian empire had done to others over the years.

Terror reigns on every side. They who for generations have made a way of life out of striking fear in the hearts of others now know firsthand the horrors of divine judgment. (Robertson, 1990, p. 95)

Nahum has watched the whole thing happen. The most shocking, the Assyrian military turning tale and running away. This is what all the surrounding nations did when Assyria marched on them, now the Assyrians are being treated to the same.

This was "THE" urban and money center of the world at that time. For a sense of the size, all we need to do is look at the Palace. "The "palace without rival," or the "Southwest Palace" as it is known today, was built by Sennacherib between 703 and 691 and consists of a huge complex of interconnected rooms and courts (estimated at 1635 by 786 feet, an area large enough to fit twenty-five football fields). Those areas closest to the throne room were decorated with carved limestone facades, massive statuary (winged bulls and fish-scaled giants), and intricate reliefs of military campaigns, while the outer courts, with their more utilitarian functions, were devoid of elaborate design or statues. The palace has been excavated over a period of 120 years, starting in the 1850s by A. H. Layard, and is still not completely uncovered. (Matthews, Chavalas, & Walton, 2000, p. Na 2:6)

Nahum 2:10

"She is emptied! Yes, she is desolate and waste! Hearts are melting and knees wobbling! Also trembling is in the entire body, And all their faces have become pale!" (NASB 2020)

Everything is taken. Nineveh is emptied and left totally desolate.

Is anyone left in town as the plundering begins? Those who are still there, are in total terror and fear. They know what they did to conquered peoples, they know they are hated for it, and now they are a conquered people.

Nahum's intent is to reinforce the doom and gloom being felt by those in Nineveh. The Hebrew here means "literally, "emptiness, and emptiedness, and devastation." The accumulation of substantives without a verb (as in Na 3:2), the two first of the three being derivatives of the same root, and like in sound, and the number of syllables in them increasing in a kind of climax, intensify the gloomy effectiveness of the expression." (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1997, p. 699)

Remember back in verse 2 of chapter one where we read, three times, that the Lord would have vengeance on Nineveh. The three words here at the beginning of verse 10 balances that. Vengeance three times, destruction and devastation in response x3.

The fear though, manifests in those left behind. They are terrified. Their courage ('heart') melts away, their knees knock together, their loins are in anguish (stomach churning?); their faces grow pale in fright. Their experience of God's judgement is one of abject horror. (Pakula, 2014, p. 42)

I wonder what it will be like for those who are left behind after the rapture of the church. Terror, most likely. Anguish, fright, what is going on? We see here though the impact of God's judgement on those who do not believe.



Nahum 2:11–12

“Where is the den of the lions And the feeding place of the young lions, Where the lion, lioness, and lion’s cub went With nothing to disturb them? The lion tore enough for his cubs, Killed enough prey for his lionesses, And filled his lairs with prey And his dens with torn flesh.” (NASB 2020)

The way Nahum sees it, Nineveh is done. They are relegated to the front of Ezekiel’s line of dishonor. The den of lions is gone. But now, as we saw in verse 10, they are cowering in fear or worse yet, they have all runaway per verse 8.

Tiglath-pileser I boasted that he had fought and conquered sixty kings. In the beginning of his reign in combat with five kings he made the blood of the warriors to flow in the valleys and on the high places of the mountains. He cut off the heads of his enemies and piled them up outside their cities like heaps of grain. (Feinberg, 1990, p. 196)

The days of the Assyrian Empire tearing through the nations around them, taking what they wanted and destroying everything along the way is now gone. The city, once filled with slaves and servants, empty. In fact, desolate and waste.

Those days, using the lion as a picture, are gone. The storerooms of gold and silver are now empty. The stores of food gone. The city a ruin and the palace, plundered.

The lion was one of the national emblems of the Assyrian Empire, and they crushed and plundered other nations like lions destroying prey. Now Nahum asks, “Where is the dwelling of the lions?” God has brought them low, who once were so mighty. (Guzik, 2001, pp. Na 2:8-12)

Nahum 2:13

“Behold, I am against you,” declares the LORD of armies. “I will burn up her chariots in smoke, and a sword will devour your young lions; I will eliminate your prey from the land, and no longer will the voice of your messengers be heard.” (NASB 2020)

As believers in Jesus Christ, we know and our comforted by the fact that God is for us. But he announces to the people of Nineveh that He is against them.

They relied heavily on their chariots, today we would call it their armor, or tanks. God though says He will burn them all up.

The weapons that they relied on for combat, those weapons that gave them the edge, would be destroyed.

What about the young men serving in their military? The Lord says He is going to kill them all. They will no longer be able to hunt the nations around them taking prey from them, because they will become the prey.

To make Nineveh’s extinction complete Nahum declares that the voices of their messengers will no longer be heard. These same messengers had gone out all over the Assyrian empire, ‘to command, compel submission, and extort tribute from her miserable subjugate nations’. This would all come to an end. This kind of thing will happen no longer. (Bentley, 1994, p. 115)

Ever feel like the culture is working us over as believers? Judah felt like that when it came to Assyria. They either had to pay what the folks in Nineveh demanded, or they would be invaded, some would be killed, and the rest resettled somewhere a long way from home.



This was the ultimate protection racket. They were held captive by those who demanded things from them. Ever notice that when the world deals with us, they too demand things and issue threats of extinction.

Christians today are faced with at least three ways to respond: (1) assimilate the secular culture, (2) isolate from the secular culture, or (3) engage the secular culture. In light of the gospel, the only choice for the Christ follower is to engage. (Lutzer, 2018, pp. 12-13)

Romans 1:16–17

“For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile. This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, “It is through faith that a righteous person has life.”” (NLT)

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