

Nahum chapter 2

We are essentially continuing very colourful, Psalm like double sided prophetic message from prophet Nahum. A prophesy of hope to the Jews in Judah and a prophesy of impending doom to the Assyrians in Nineveh.

Verse 1

*He (**Nebuchadnezzar king of the Babylonians and the Medes**) who scatters (**KJV dasheth or dashes**) (**breaks into pieces and scatters**) has come up before your face.*

- "Scatters" Assyria had made a practice of dispersing captives to many nations; now she would receive similar judgment.
- Over time, God wanted to remove the Assyrian's from power because of their many sins. He decided to use the Babylonians to accomplish this task.
- He wanted the Babylonians to become powerful so that they could be used against the idolatrous Judeans.
- The Babylonians were a conquered people living under the dominion of the Assyrians and about 625 B.C. they rose to power and launched an assault against the Assyrian empire. The Babylonians pushed toward Nineveh, which was the seat of Assyrian power. While the Assyrians were preoccupied with the Babylonians, a tribal group known as the Medes assaulted Nineveh and destroyed the city. (**show Assyrian map**)

*Man the fort! Watch the road! Strengthen your flanks! (**Your borders**) Fortify your power mightily.*

- The prophet, with irony and satire, ordered the Assyrians to prepare for the coming invasion from Babylon.
- Nahum tells Nineveh, that they had better prepare, because war is coming. They had been very cruel in their dealings with God's people, and now, God is sending His judgment upon them. They can prepare all they want to, but God will destroy them for their evil deeds.

Verse 2

*For the Lord (**JEHOVAH EL-ASHIYB**) will restore (**rescue, rebuild, strengthen, re-establish**) the excellence (**the wisdom, wealth, valiance**) of Jacob (**In this case Judah**) Like the excellence of Israel (**10 lost tribes of Israel conquered by king Shalmaneser of Assyria**)*

- According to the Bible, the Kingdom of Israel (or Northern Kingdom) was one of the successor states to the older United Monarchy (also called the Kingdom of Israel), which came into existence in about the 930s BCE after the northern Tribes of Israel rejected Solomon's son Rehoboam as their king. Nine tribes formed the Northern Kingdom under Jeroboam: the tribes of Reuben, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim and Manasseh. In addition, some members of Tribe of Levi, who had no land allocation, were found in the Northern Kingdom.
- The Tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to Rehoboam, and formed the Kingdom of Judah (or Southern Kingdom). Members of Levi and the remnant of Simeon were also found in the Southern Kingdom.
- According to **2 Chronicles 15:9**, members of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon "fled" to Judah during the reign of Asa of Judah (c. 911 - 870 BCE).

*For the emptiers (**the Assyrians who robbed and plundered them**) have emptied them out (**taken them captive, deported and exhausted them**) and ruined their vine branches (**impoverished them by destroying their source of income**) or (**destroying their men and women because the nation was always compared to a vine**).*

Verse 3

*The shields of his mighty men (**Medes and Chaldeans**) are made red (**stained with dried blood from the slain**), the valiant men (**Courageous, brave fearless, heroic**) are in scarlet (**a matching colour to red to terrify the enemy or hide their own wounds**). The chariots (**war machines, tanks**) come with flaming torches (**which were used either to light up the battlefields by night or to burn the houses in the cities they conquered**) in the day of his preparation (**assembling of his armies for war**). And the spears are brandished (**waved, displayed, and showed off**).*

Verse 4

*The chariots (**war machines of terror**) rage (**with fury, anger, wrath, excitement**) in the streets, they jostle one another (**collide, hit against, push roughly**) in the broad (**wide**) roads; they seem like torches (**shining from the shields, swords and spears**), They run like lightning (**very fast and swift leaving no defense or hope for the Ninevites**).*

Verse 5

*He (**the king of Nineveh**) remembers his nobles (**so called officers and commanders**); they stumble in their walk (**panic and hurry, drunken fear and helplessness**); they make haste to her walls (**last hope of defense**), and the defense is prepared.*

- The king is surprised, he is caught unawares, and he suddenly remembers his so called nobles, who can do nothing at this point but try to defend their walls from the inevitable.

Verse 6

*The gates of the rivers (**of the city towards the river Tigris**) are opened, And the palace (**symbol of a government, order, power, royalty, comfort, wealth**) is dissolved. (**Melted, broken down, disintegrates**) (**Show images of palace**).*

- Inevitably, the enemies shall possess all the avenues towards the several streams of the river Tigris, and so become masters of the city. This shall make the heart of the king and all his court to melt for fear, and quite lose all their courage.
- This is a powerful, vivid, and very descriptive imagery of how Nineveh, once a symbol of power and greatness is systematically torn down and destroyed.

Verse 7

NKJ

*And Huzzab (**that which was established**) shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead her as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts.*

*It is decreed (**proclaimed, ordered, commanded by God**): She (**Nineveh**) shall be led away captive, She shall be brought up (**made to pay**); and her maidservants (**symbolism for the other lesser Assyrian cities**) shall lead her as with the voice of doves (**voices of sadness, lamentation and mourning like a mourning dove**), (**show image**)*

Isaiah 38:14 Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me.

*Beating their breasts (**as a sign of mourning instead of beating drums as a sign of victory**).*

(Read Isaiah 47:1)

- Nineveh is described as a great princess carried captive with her maids of honour attending her, and wailing about her's and their condition, while beating their breasts, and other expressions of lamentation:
- The maids, representing the lesser cities under their jurisdiction, are meant to be sharers with her in the same calamity.
- So Nineveh is represented as “a tender and delicate lady,” undergoing the hardships of captivity.

Verse 8

*Though Nineveh of old (**a very ancient city, great and famous**) was like a pool of water (**very populated like with fish, numerous**), Now they flee away. "Halt! Halt!" (**Stop! stand and fight!**) They cry (**the commanders cry**); But no one turns back.*

- So much fear and horror grips them such that there is crying and fleeing from the once valiant, brave men of Nineveh.

Verse 9

*Take **(God commands)** spoil of silver! Take spoil of gold! There is no end of treasure, or wealth of every desirable prize.*

- The Prophet here promises the enemy much spoils of gold and silver.
- God allows the Medes and Chaldeans to plunder Nineveh. The enemy may easily plunder the city of all its riches and costly furniture, for there is none to make any resistance.

Verse 10

*She **(Nineveh)** is empty, desolate, and waste! **(Unoccupied, deserted and destroyed)** The heart melts **(no more courage and hope from the Ninevites)**, and the knees shake **(much fear and terror of what awaits them)**; Much pain is in every side **(they are beaten and battered with no strength left in their hips)**, and all their faces are drained of color **(filled with confusion, horror and the fear of death)**.*

Jeremiah 30:6

Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale?

Daniel 5:6

Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other.

Verse 11 and 12

*11 Where is the dwelling of the lions **(its gone. footsteps, No remnant)**, and the feeding place of the young lions, Where the lion walked, the lioness and lion's cub, And no one made them afraid?*

12 The lion tore in pieces enough for his cubs, Killed for his lionesses, Filled his caves with prey, and his dens with flesh

- The princes of Nineveh had been as lions, as beasts of prey; They were worse than cruel tyrants. They had no humanity, they were indeed lions, they would not prey upon those of their own kind. But in the shape of men they had the cruelty of lions: they walked in Nineveh as a lion in the woods, and none made them afraid; every one stood in awe of them, and they were under no worry of danger from any; though nobody loved them, everybody feared them, and that was all they desired.

Verse 13

*"Behold (**see, pay attention**), I am against you (**the God of Israel whom you blasphemed and despised**)," says the LORD of hosts, "I will burn your chariots in smoke (**fury and wrath**), and the sword (**of the Chaldeans and Medes**) shall devour your young lions (**princes**); I will cut off your prey from the earth (**stop you from preying against the weak**), and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more."
(**Army recruiters, ambassadors, tribute collectors**)*

Conclusion

The Lord through Nahum gives us a detailed account of what He intended to do to His enemies and the enemies of those He called His own.

If you consider yourself a child of God then all your enemies will be God's enemies. God will fight for you. If your enemies fail to repent, he will totally destroy them. We ought to be Just like Judah, which did not lift a finger to fight but found all their sufficiency in Jehovah.

However, if we turn away from God, he will raise up someone or something just to get your attention and bring you back to Him.