

Nahum 1-3

Good evening, Church... thank you for coming out tonight to study God's Word.

As we make our way through the Old Testament, we have come to the Book of Nahum.

Please open your Bibles to Nahum Chapter 1.

This week, with all the wars happening around the world, I have been talking a lot with my kids.

They have many questions about war.

I am not a parent who likes to hide truths from them, even hard truths.

But our discussions have reminded me of some of the images I have seen in my own lifetime of war.

One of the most remarkable scenes I can look back on is when I saw on the News after working a long Wednesday on April 9th in 2003.

Coming home, plopping on the couch, and seeing it there on my TV Screen.

Saddam Hussein, our nation's archenemy since I was a child, his regime had collapsed, and there in Baghdad, in Firdos Square, the proof of it all was right before me. I almost did not believe it until I saw it.

For years, that man ruled with an iron fist through fear. His statues stood tall across the country – those symbols were meant to remind everyone that his power was absolute and unshakable.

And there it was, this one statue in Bagdad that towered over the square, so massive, intimidating, and meant to proclaim: This ruler will never fall.

But when the regime collapsed, the people gathered in that square. A U.S. military vehicle hooked a cable to the statue's neck.

And slowly... it began to tilt... at first it only moved slightly... then the entire monument... that once stood so intimidating – crashed to the ground.

The Crowds rushed forward, some hit it with shoes, a sign of contempt.

What seemed permanent was suddenly powerless.

For years, that statue symbolized unstoppable authority.

But in a single day, it became scrap metal.

I read that it is not known what happened to most of the statue of Saddam, but souvenir hunters took pieces of it.¹

Now, the Book of Nahum is about another empire that looked just as invincible: Written to its capital, Nineveh.

The Assyrian Empire was brutal. They conquered nations, enslaved peoples, and ruled with terror.

To the world, Nineveh seemed untouchable – like a statue that would stand forever.

But Nahum's message was simple.

God sees evil, God is patient, but God will not allow wickedness to stand forever.

The prophet will point out that God is slow to anger and yet great in power, and the guilty will have to own up to their actions.

¹ <https://thearabweekly.com/once-everywhere-visual-presence-saddam-vanishes-baghdad>

And just like that statue in Bagdad, the mighty city of Nineveh eventually fell and was destroyed in 612 BC.

What looks permanent to people is never permanent to God.

Empires rise, men boast of their power, and they seem unstoppable.

But the prophet Nahum reminds us that no power on earth is stronger than the justice of God.

This is exactly what I have been telling my kids...

The peace and safety we have in our nation, the boasting we have in our great might, the immense wealth, none of it is owed to us...

I tell them things can change in a moment... and as long as the people of this nation look to our military, our economy, our government structure, we could fall like every other great empire.

Because God's Word tells us very clearly, there is one thing that will make a nation great again...

Or how a nation will rise or fall...

Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation,

But sin *is* a reproach to *any* people.

It is only by us turning back to God and crying out for His mercy that this nation will do what no other superpower has done: endure through the years in the face of the justice of God.

Let's pray, and we will get into it...

Now, Nahum the prophet is given an incredibly vivid vision of what is to come.

It will seem like he is a direct eyewitness to events.

Remember, Jonah had already pronounced a judgment on the people of Nineveh.

The people repented, and were able to prolong that judgment...

Nahum comes 150 years later and says the time has come.

The timing of his prophecy is debated; some say that Nahum was a contemporary of Isaiah and prophesied during the reign of Hezekiah, while others place him later, around 620 BC.

He no doubt prophesied when Nineveh was a mighty city, and delivered this Word at the height of her power.

Eventually, Assyria would fall to the Babylonians and Medes.

Nebuchadnezzar's father would actually lead the army against Assyria and lay siege to them for 3 years.

The Assyrians made many advances against their enemies, inflicting severe damage on the Babylonians.

They had a hard time maintaining the siege.

But the prophetic Word of God would prevail over the events.

A flood would come through the land, and many of the walls of the Assyrians would be washed away.

This allowed the enemy to enter, and a fierce battle ensued, in which the Assyrians were defeated and destroyed.

The great city of Nineveh fell, to never rise again.

Look at verse 1 with me...

God's Mercy and Judgment

1:1 The burden against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

Nahum calls this prophecy “the burden against Nineveh.”

Burden means a heavy message.

This is a Word from God with huge implications.

The prophet himself was born in Elkosh.

It is unknown exactly where that city is.

Although his birthplace is unknown, he spent much of his time on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee.

A town was named after him there... some of you were just there.

This is actually where Jesus did much of His own ministry as well.

In fact, when our guide would pronounce the name of the city, he would say Caper-Nahum...

We say Capernaum.

This is where Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law... and they actually found what is believed to be Peter's first-century home.

The Catholic Church built a huge monument over it... It looks like a giant spaceship... but it is protecting the ruins from the sun.

Picture #1

Picture #2

Jesus also healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath day, very near to Peter's house, in fact, as we saw, the Synagogue was only a stone's throw away.

Picture #2... Two handsome gentlemen inside it...

This is also the place where the woman was healed of her bleeding for 12 years...

And Jairus's daughter was also raised from the dead.

Kafar Nahum was Jesus's main headquarters in Galilee.

So, where the Lord's burden came from, we eventually saw the Lord's miracles in Jesus.

It did not matter where Nahum lived; however, the focus of his prophecy was elsewhere.

No doubt, the region he was in, the Galilea region, was greatly impacted by these monstrous people and their terrible tactics.

And his vision was toward them... Oh, how Jonah would have loved to be part of this ministry.

He would have written this down and joyfully skipped all the way to Nineveh.

But he was there to witness one of the greatest revivals in history.

Nahum is here now to inform them that their chances are up, destruction is coming, and God will finally judge their sins.

Nahum will start by telling them that God is jealous.

Not that He is insecure or has low self-worth.

No, God is not insecure, or weak, or paranoid in His love for humanity.

He has no lack or need.

I was sitting before Him this morning with this realization... He does not need me. He does not need you. It is funny sometimes how important we convince ourselves we are.

He doesn't need any of us...

But He does love us.

And on His end, in many ways, God has been loyal to us, and so faithful, and incredibly gracious.

He sacrificed His only Son so that we can be forgiven.

He blesses our lives every day with countless blessings.

He deserves our love and loyalty.

And when He does not get it, He is justifiably jealous.

So, He will be angry with Assyria, has decided on divorce, and sends Nahum with the paperwork.

Infidelity will not be overlooked...

Verse 2...

God's Wrath on His Enemies

2 God *is* jealous, and the LORD avenges;

The LORD avenges and *is* furious.

The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries,
And He reserves *wrath* for His enemies;

3 The LORD *is* slow to anger and great in power,
And will not at all acquit *the wicked*.

The LORD has His way.

In the whirlwind and in the storm,
And the clouds *are* the dust of His feet.

We see the double the edge of the Sword of Spirit here as it swings both ways...

God has both judgment and mercy...

In Christ, we are told... we have

Eph. 1:3 every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,

But here we see, “He reserves wrath for His enemies.”

Maybe you are wondering who God’s enemies are tonight.

Some people believe that playing Switzerland with God is safe...

They won’t choose God, but they certainly don’t want to be His enemy.

I had a co-worker once who said, “I just want God to stay out of my way, and I will stay out of His.”

He believed that if he gave to this Christian Camp every year, it would appease God despite his heathen living.

But Jesus made it clear...

Matt 12:30 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

If you have not committed to Jesus fully, you are not for Him, and you are actually against Him.

An enemy of God.

But the Sword Swings in verse 3, the Lord is slow to anger.

And He is so patient with us...

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

I would caution you here: never mistake His patience for approval of your wicked choices.

In the end, wickedness left unaddressed will be judged.

Either it will be judged by the cross, or by His wrath.

God put up with Nineveh's evil for a century and a half, but time was now up...

Nahum says, "The Lord has His way."

And if you go against His way, there is a huge cost to pay.

Look now at verse 4.

4 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry,
And dries up all the rivers.
Bashan and Carmel wither,
And the flower of Lebanon wilts.

5 The mountains quake before Him,
The hills melt,
And the earth heaves at His presence,
Yes, the world and all who dwell in it.

6 Who can stand before His indignation?
And who can endure the fierceness of His anger?
His fury is poured out like fire,
And the rocks are thrown down by Him.

7 The LORD *is* good,
A stronghold in the day of trouble;
And He knows those who trust in Him.

8 But with an overflowing flood
He will make an utter end of its place,
And darkness will pursue His enemies.

9 What do you conspire against the LORD?
He will make an utter end *of it*.
Affliction will not rise up a second time.

Verse 4 shows God making barren Bashan and Carmel, these lush green hillsides, full of Olive Groves.

God's fury looks like a volcano to the prophet.

Nahum wonders here at the sight of this, "Who can stand before His indignation and fierceness?"

When God's fury and wrath are portrayed in God's Word, it does one thing in my heart.

It brings up a heart of Gratitude, as I ponder the forgiveness and Grace of God.

God could do incredible damage to me and to my life if He chose to.

"The Lord has His way."

But He chose to show me Grace, when I asked for it...

This is key... submit to His will, and it will spare you the greatest agony in life.

Don't hope that God is on your side; you must choose to be on His side.

Consider verse 7, "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who trust in Him."

Do you ever wonder if God loses you in the crowd? If in the chaos of this world, if He even has time for you?

There are billions of people, and one of Him...

How are we of any concern to Him?

The Word assures us here, "He knows those who trust Him."

The Lord is so Good, but again, if a person comes against Him, makes Him jealous, "with an overflowing flood He will make an utter end to them."

It is interesting here that literally with an overwhelming flood, the city of Nineveh fell.

Look now at verse 10...

10 For while tangled *like* thorns,
And while drunken *like* drunkards,
They shall be devoured like stubble fully dried.

11 From you comes forth *one*
Who plots evil against the LORD,
A wicked counselor.

12 Thus says the LORD :

"Though *they are* safe, and likewise many,
Yet in this manner they will be cut down
When he passes through.
Though I have afflicted you,
I will afflict you no more;

13 For now I will break off his yoke from you,
And burst your bonds apart."

Here, God is speaking to Judah.

The Hebrews in the southern Kingdom were afflicted terribly by the Assyrians for 150 years.

They had to pay tribute to Assyria to avoid being attacked and to have a measure of protection as well.

Yet, God is giving them a promise now that the brutal bonds of the Assyrians will be broken.

And if you remember, in the days of Isaiah, when the angel of the Lord was sent out to deliver them, and he slaughtered in one night 185,000 Assyrians.

But during Nahum's day, that had not yet happened.

Assyria had so much power and might, ruling from the Nile River all the way to the Tigris...

No one could ever imagine them being weakened like that.

Yet today, there are no Assyrians... God's Word would prevail once more...

Verse 14...

14 The LORD has given a command concerning you:

"Your name shall be perpetuated no longer.

Out of the house of your gods

I will cut off the carved image and the molded image.

I will dig your grave,

For you are vile."

15 Behold, on the mountains

The feet of him who brings good tidings,

Who proclaims peace!

O Judah, keep your appointed feasts,

Perform your vows.

For the wicked one shall no more pass through you;

He is utterly cut off.

What sobering words to hear from the God of the Universe.

“I will dig your grave, for you are vile.”

But that Double-Edged Sword now swings, and Judah is spoken to in verse 15...

They are encouraged to trust the Lord and to worship Him at the appointed times and feasts.

Remain faithful to God, no matter what the outside circumstances are.

A day will come when a messenger will arrive to say that your enemy has been defeated; they are assured of this.

Tonight, if you are with God, know that your struggle is not permanent.

There is coming a day when a messenger will come and say this chapter is over, the problem is finished, the person is done or gone, no longer to torment your life.

1 Thess. 5:24 He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

God will get you through...

Look now at Chapter 2...

The Destruction of Nineveh

2:1 He who scatters has come up before your face.

Man the fort!

Watch the road!

Strengthen *your* flanks!

Fortify *your* power mightily.

2 For the LORD WILL restore the excellence of Jacob

Like the excellence of Israel,

For the emptiers have emptied them out

And ruined their vine branches.

3 The shields of his mighty men *are* made red,

The valiant men *are* in scarlet.

The chariots *come* with flaming torches.

In the day of his preparation,

And the spears are brandished.

4 The chariots rage in the streets,

They jostle one another in the broad roads;

They seem like torches,

They run like lightning.

5 He remembers his nobles;

They stumble in their walk;

They make haste to her walls,

And the defense is prepared.

6 The gates of the rivers are opened,

And the palace is dissolved.

Notice how Nahum writes... He brings us into the sights and sounds of the battle.

The orders being shouted, the chariot wheels crashing, the swords coming out of their sheaths, engaging one another.

Nahum describes the mighty Babylonian army, allied with the Medes, that will invade Assyria.

Supposedly, Scarlet and Red were the battle colors of the Medes.

In football, any team that we played with Red on their jerseys was automatically intimidating...

Red, even then, was a color of intimidation.

It hid the blood in the heat of the battle, so as not to embolden the enemy as well, and allowed for a tactical advantage.

Nahum describes here the fall of this mighty city...

The ruins were found in modern times, located across from Mosul in Iraq.

The ruins testify to its size... 1800 acres would have given it a population well past 300,000...

It is interesting that, once again, Nahum mentions the gates of the city being open to the rivers.

The Tigris River is recorded as having unusually severe flooding during the siege, contributing to the capture of the Assyrian capital.

God spoke of it well in advance, 20 years before it took place.

Never forget that this Book we look into each week is a supernatural Church... proven time and time again.

Verse 7...

7 It is decreed:

**She shall be led away captive,
She shall be brought up;**

And her maidservants shall lead *her* as with the voice
of doves,

Beating their breasts.

8 Though Nineveh of old *was* like a pool of water,

Now they flee away.

'Halt! Halt!' *they cry*;

But no one turns back.

9 Take spoil of silver!

Take spoil of gold!

There is no end of treasure,

Or wealth of every desirable prize.

10 She is empty, desolate, and waste!

The heart melts, and the knees shake;

Much pain *is* in every side,

And all their faces are drained of color.

We see Nineveh once again as a pool of water.

She is flooded.

Everyone had to abandon the city.

Imagine this once beautiful city, once the center of this thriving and powerful empire, being told these things.

That everyone would be fleeing, trying to escape...

When the city was finally plundered, the spoil of the city could not even be counted.

This was by far the richest city on earth, but in the end, it would be nothing, and today, it sits in ruins, her wealth gone forever.

Now, from here, until the end of Nahum's prophecies, he will use four metaphors to depict this incredible fall.

Nahum is a man after my own heart... he loves word pictures...

He will use a lion, a prostitute, a drunk, and locust to capture the imagination...

Look now in verse 11...

11 Where *is* the dwelling of the lions,
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.

13 "Behold, I *am* against you," says the LORD of hosts, "I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more."

The Assyrian Empire was king of the jungle for so long. As a lion, she ravaged her prey.

But now, God will judge, and the lion will be devoured.

And God speaks words here that no one ever wants to hear: "I am against you."

What a terrible thing to shake your fist at God and declare war against Him.

Who are we to stand against our Creator?

But for those who know their place... who come to God through His Son...

There is a whole other reality to consider...

Ps 103:13-14 As a father pities *his* children,
So the LORD pities those who fear Him.

14 For He knows our frame;

He remembers that we *are* dust.

If we can humble ourselves to a place of submission.

And come to our heavenly Father through Grace...

Listen, He knows our weakness, our frame, that our lives are really only a blink here on the scale of eternity.

So, on the other side of it all, in Christ, we have this promise...

Rom 8:31 If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?

A worthy question...

Which is answered.

Rom 8:38-39 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

That is the reality of the one who puts their hope in Jesus...

The Ninevites relied on their large army, powerful economy, widening empire, and the fear and dread they instilled in the world around them through their reputation and propaganda.

God is telling them that in a moment it will all be taken from them...

They couldn't see how... they couldn't believe it... impossible... we are too big to fail, too big to fall, too big to flood...

But as always, history stands on the side of God's Word.

Could you imagine a prophet today standing against the superpower of our world, saying that only in a couple of decades, it will be no more...

In our minds, the impossibility of it all would cause us to laugh them back to their little church, where they came from.

Nahum had a tough task...

Look now as Chapter 3 begins...

The Woe of Nineveh

3:1 Woe to the bloody city!

It is all full of lies and robbery.

Its victim never departs.

We have discussed at length in previous studies the cruelty of the Assyrians.

Their barbarity was second to none.

We see here that it angered God tremendously that they attacked their fellow man, who was made in His image.

They skinned their enemies alive; their kings boasted of flaying their enemies and displaying their skins on the walls.

Decapitation, burning alive, the removal of limbs and facial extremities, carrying around heads on sticks, are some of the recorded tactics of the kings.

They liked to bury their enemies alive in the walls of their buildings.

Defeated kings were treated like dogs and put in kennels.

These people were torture experts... Rome modified many of their techniques.

God cared deeply about how they treated their fellow man.

This is an important point... God emphasizes this throughout His Word.

He cares not only how we treat Him but also how we treat every person we come into contact with.

You understand this? Man, woman, young, old, married, or single, black, white, born, or unborn, citizen, immigrant, handicapped, straight or gay, rich or poor, convict, Christian, Jew or Muslim,... so on...

Every human carries the image and likeness of God.

Christians should care deeply about human rights.

Maybe America is becoming this bloody city... when over a million babies are murdered each year...

When society is divided up into subgroups of skin color, ideologies, and political activists, and stand on sides of the street screaming at each other, fighting non-stop with each other.

When we see violence on our streets rising at alarming rates...

Drugs are stealing our loved ones' souls...

Domestic abuse in the homes and child abuse are being ignored.

Anger and hostility are seen everywhere...

I see just in my kids' school parking lot... rage is overflowing in people's hearts...

The gossip and slander in people's mouths, destroying people's reputations with no thought...

School violence is wild...

I remember the year after I graduated, the first widely known school shooting took place in Littleton, Colorado... At Columbine High School, 12 students died, and it was terrifying... and it sparked a debate about school safety that is still taking place today...

But I remember hearing something then, and I looked it up... and read it... and it is still as eye-opening today for that debate as it was then...

It was about guns in this debate... and I am not advocating for guns... but the reality of what was said in this is pretty gnarly...

It was read on the air on the Paul Harvey Radio Program...

For the life of me, I can't understand what could have gone wrong in Littleton, Colorado. If the parents had only kept their children away from the guns, we wouldn't have had such a tragedy. Yeah, it must have been the guns.

It couldn't have been because over half of our children are being raised in broken homes.

It couldn't have been because our children spend, on average, only 30 seconds in meaningful conversation with their parents each day. After all, we give our children quality time.

It couldn't have been because we treat our children as pets and our pets as children.

It couldn't have been because we place our children in daycare centers where they learn socialization skills among their peers under the law of the jungle, while 16-year-old employees who have no vested interest in the children look on and make sure no blood is spilled.

It couldn't have been because we allow our children to watch on average 7 hours of television a day, filled

with the glorification of sex and violence that isn't fit for adult consumption.

It couldn't have been because we allow our children to enter into virtual worlds in which to win the game, one must kill as many opponents as possible in the most sadistic way possible.

It couldn't have been because we have sterilized and contracepted our families down to sizes so small that the children we do have are so spoiled with the material that they come to equate the receiving of the material with love.

It couldn't have been because our children, who have historically been seen as a blessing from God, are now being viewed as either a mistake created when contraception fails or inconveniences that parents try to raise in their spare time.

It couldn't have been because our nation is the world leader in developing a "culture of death" in which 20 to 30 million babies have been killed by abortion.

It couldn't have been because we give 2-year prison sentences to teenagers who kill their own newborns.

It couldn't have been because our school systems teach the children that they are nothing but glorified apes that have evolutionized out of some primordial soup of mud by teaching evolution as fact and by handing out condoms as if they were candy.

It couldn't have been because we teach our children that there are no laws of morality that transcend us, that everything is relative, and that actions don't have consequences. What the heck, the President gets away with it.

Nah, it must have been the guns.²

There is something to this... and perhaps we live pretty close to the bloody city as well.

God is going to judge the bloody city, and Nahum describes this judgment now on Nineveh...

**2 The noise of a whip
And the noise of rattling wheels,
Of galloping horses,
Of clattering chariots!**

² <https://www.catholicfamilycatalog.com/it-must-have-been-the-guns.htm>

3 Horsemen charge with bright sword and glittering spear.

There is a multitude of slain,
A great number of bodies,
Countless corpses —
They stumble over the corpses —

4 Because of the multitude of harlotries of the
seductive harlot,
The mistress of sorceries,
Who sells nations through her harlotries,
And families through her sorceries.

5 "Behold, I *am* against you," says the LORD of hosts;
"I will lift your skirts over your face,
I will show the nations your nakedness,
And the kingdoms your shame.

6 I will cast abominable filth upon you,
Make you vile,
And make you a spectacle.

7 It shall come to pass *that* all who look upon you
Will flee from you, and say,
'Nineveh is laid waste!
Who will bemoan her?'
Where shall I seek comforters for you?"

God is going to bring a violent army against Nineveh.
But understand, it is not an innocent city.

They are guilty, incredibly guilty.

Here, the prophet depicts the pandemonium of the siege.

Whips and horses, the screams and moans!

They are judged because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot.

She used her military power and the threat of incredible force to bend the nations to do her bidding and even to worship her pantheon of gods.

Nineveh was like the world's policeman, the strong arm of the world, and with the threat of their mighty military, they made the nations pay tribute, trade, and even buy their protection, with their worship of their false gods.

And God is going to punish them like a prostitute.

As the village leaders would lift a prostitute's skirt and expose her, and shamefully parade her through town, allowing the townspeople to pelt her with objects, this is how the nations would treat Nineveh.

Verse 8 now...

8 Are you better than No Amon

That was situated by the River,
That had the waters around her,
Whose rampart *was* the sea,
Whose wall *was* the sea?

9 Ethiopia and Egypt *were* her strength,

And *it was* boundless;
Put and Lubim were your helpers.

10 Yet she *was* carried away,

She went into captivity;
Her young children also were dashed to pieces
At the head of every street;
They cast lots for her honorable men,
And all her great men were bound in chains.

11 You also will be drunk;

You will be hidden;
You also will seek refuge from the enemy.

The prophet now compares Nineveh to No Amon, modern-day Thebes in Egypt.

Then it had the meaning of “City of Amon,” the Egyptians sun god.

This was another influential city in antiquity, very well protected, wealthy, large, and hidden away on the Nile.

It was fertile and lush... and no one would ever think that it could be reduced or destroyed.

Yet, it was the Assyrians who brought the proud city low, set fire to its villages, surrounded the city, and sacked it in 662 BC.

It was too far from home to rule, so they enslaved the people and killed all the children in the streets, trying to subdue all of Egypt with fear tactics.

No one thought the city could fall, yet it did.

No one alive during Nahum's time thought Nineveh could ever fall, but God uses No Amon and says, "This has been said before."

And even as predicted here in verse 11, down to the details of this prophecy, God was right...

The historian Diodorus records that the Assyrian officers were drunk the night Nineveh fell to the Babylonians and the Medes.³

³ <https://www.sandyadams.org/sermon/nahum-1-3/>

Verse 12 now...

12 All your strongholds *are* fig trees with ripened figs:

If they are shaken,
They fall into the mouth of the eater.

13 Surely, your people in your midst *are* women!
The gates of your land are wide open for your enemies;

Fire shall devour the bars of your *gates*.

14 Draw your water for the siege!

Fortify your strongholds!
Go into the clay and tread the mortar!
Make strong the brick kiln!

15 There the fire will devour you,
The sword will cut you off;
It will eat you up like a locust.
Make yourself many — like the locust!

Make yourself many — like the *swarming* locusts!

16 You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars of heaven.

The locust plunders and flies away.

17 Your commanders *are* like *swarming* locusts,

And your generals like great grasshoppers,
Which camp in the hedges on a cold day;
When the sun rises they flee away,
And the place where they *are* is not known.

18 Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria;
Your nobles rest *in the dust*.

Your people are scattered on the mountains,
And no one gathers them.

19 Your injury *has* no healing,
Your wound is severe.

All who hear news of you
Will clap *their* hands over you,
For upon whom has not your wickedness passed
continually?

Nineveh is seen here as ripe for judgment.

They once swarmed the world like locusts, pillaging
nation after nation... they came in and devoured each
country's treasures, carrying them away.

But they grew proud, and the prophet sees clearly
that they will fall.

And Nahum is given a view even beyond the fall of Nineveh, and sees that the Assyrian people will disappear altogether.

She will be scattered, and will not be brought back.

Now, think about that... other, similar, kingdoms and empires have come and gone, but the people lived on...

The Assyrians were around for 2000 years.... And dominated a huge area... yet it lost its independent character...

I read a more recent article, because historians marvel at this...

And they are still trying to make sense of it all...

So to give a solid conclusion on the matter, this is what historians say, “And that appears to be what happened to Assyria when a megadrought lasting for 60 years crippled food production, contributing to domestic strife that may have played a role in the civil wars and weakened the empire enough that their

enemies banded together to take advantage of an opportunity to conquer their top competitor.”⁴

As historians search and scramble for answers about the disappearance of Nineveh and its people, we can see here that it is not hard to figure out.

Whenever a person, or people, love themselves most...

They disregard God and their fellow man, and treat others with disdain and disrepute...

When they ignore God’s Word and God’s Way....

It does not matter how the economy is doing, how powerful the military is...

It doesn’t matter how great one claims to be...

**Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation,
But sin *is* a reproach to *any* people.**

It is only by our turning back to God and crying out for His mercy that this nation will do what no other superpower has done: withstand the justice of God.

A star-breathing God owes no man or nation anything...

⁴ <https://www.ancient-code.com/new-study-reveals-what-brought-down-the-powerful-assyrian-empire>

And ultimately, how we treat others determines how we are treated.

Jesus taught things like this...

Matt 7:2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

and

Matt 6:14-15 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. **15** But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

and

Luke 6:35-36 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. **36** Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

You see, it is clear how we treat others determines how we get treated...

Nahum saw this clearly, and God brought it to pass.

God help us to be like Jesus...

To allow His righteousness to rule and reign in our lives...

May we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may lift us up... the alternative is not good.

Let's pray...