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Nahum

1 This book is the vision* of Nahum from Elkosh. This is the sad message about the city of Nineveh.*

The Lord Is Angry at Nineveh

- 2** The Lord is a jealous God.
The Lord punishes guilty people.
The Lord punishes guilty people,
and the Lord is very angry!
The Lord punishes his enemies.
He stays angry at his enemies.
- 3** The Lord is patient.
But he is also very powerful!
And the Lord will punish guilty people.
He will not let them go free.
The Lord is coming to punish bad people.
He will use whirlwinds and storms
to show his power.
A man walks on the dust on the ground,
But the Lord walks on the clouds!
- 4** The Lord will speak harshly to the sea,
and it will become dry.
He will make all the rivers become dry!
The rich lands of Bashan and Carmel
become dry and dead.
The flowers in Lebanon fade away.
- 5** The Lord will come,
and the mountains will shake with fear,
and the hills will melt away.
The Lord will come,
and the earth will shake with fear.
The world and every person on it
will shake with fear.
- 6** No person can stand against
the Lord's great anger.
- No one can endure his terrible anger.
His anger will burn like fire.
The rocks will shatter when he comes.
- 7** The Lord is good.
He is a safe place to go to
in times of trouble.
He takes care of the people who
trust him.
- 8** But he will destroy completely his enemies.
He will wash them away like a flood.
He will chase his enemies
into the darkness.
- 9** Why are you making plans against
the Lord?
He will bring complete destruction,
so you will not cause trouble again!
- 10** You will be completely destroyed
like thorn bushes burning under a pot.
You will be destroyed quickly
like dry weeds that burn fast.
- 11** Assyria, a man came from you.
He made evil plans against the Lord.
He gave evil advice.
- 12** The Lord said these things to Judah:
"The people of Assyria are at full strength.
They have many soldiers.
But they will all be cut down.
They will all be finished.
My people, I made you suffer.
But I will make you suffer no more.
- 13** Now I will set you free
from the power of Assyria.
I will take that yoke* off your neck.
I will tear away the chains holding you."

vision(s) Something like a dream that God used to speak to people.

Nineveh The capital city of the country of Assyria. Assyria destroyed Israel in 722-721 B.C.

yoke A pole people used for carrying things on their shoulder. This often showed that a person was a slave.

- 14 [King of Assyria,
the Lord gave this command about you:
“You will not have any descendants
to wear your name.
I will destroy your carved idols
and metal statues that are in the temple
of your gods.
I am preparing your grave for you
because your end is coming soon!*
- 15 Judah, look!
Look there, coming over the mountains.
Here comes a messenger
bringing good news!
He says there is peace!
Judah, celebrate your special holidays.
Judah, do the things you promised.
Those worthless people
will not come through
and attack you again!
Why? Because all those bad people
have been destroyed!

Nineveh Will Be Destroyed

- 2 An enemy is coming to attack you.
So guard the strong places of your city.
Watch the road.
Get ready for war.
Prepare for battle!
- 2 Yes, the Lord changed Jacob’s* pride.
He made it like Israel’s pride.
[The enemy] destroyed them
and ruined their grapevines.
- 3 The shields of those soldiers are red.
Their uniforms are bright red.
Their chariots* are lined up for battle,
and shining like flames of fire.
And their horses are ready to go.
- 4 The chariots race wildly through the streets.
They rush back and forth through the square.
They look like burning torches,
like lightning flashing
from place to place!

because your end is coming soon Or, “You are not important”
or “You are so hated.”

Jacob’s Another name for Israel. See Gen. 32:22-28.

chariot(s) A small wagon used in war.

- 5 [The enemy] calls for his best soldiers.
They stumble as they rush ahead.
They run to the wall and set up their shield
[over the battering ram].
- 6 But the gates by the rivers are open,
and the enemy comes flooding in
and destroys the king’s house.
- 7 The enemy takes away the queen.
And her slave girls moan sadly
like doves.
They beat their breasts
[to show their sadness].
- 8 Nineveh is like a pool whose water
is draining away.
People yell,
“Stop! Stop running away!”
But it doesn’t do any good!
- 9 [You soldiers that are destroying Nineveh],
take the silver!
Take the gold!
There are many things to take.
There are many treasures!
- 10 Now [Nineveh] is empty
Everything is stolen.
The city is ruined!
People have lost their courage,
their hearts are melting with fear,
their knees are knocking together,
their bodies are shaking,
their faces become pale from fear.
- 11 Where is the lion’s cave (*Nineveh*) now?
The male and female lions lived there.
Their babies were not afraid.
- 12 The lion (*king of Nineveh*) killed people
to feed his cubs and lionesses.
He filled his cave (*Nineveh*)
with men’s bodies.
He filled his cave
with women he had killed.
- 13 The Lord All-Powerful says,
“I am against you, [Nineveh]!
I will burn your chariots.
I will kill your ‘young lions’ in battle.
You will not hunt anyone on earth again.
People will never again hear bad news
from your messengers.”

Bad News for Nineveh

- 3 It will be very bad
for that city of murderers.
[Nineveh] is a city full of lies.
It is filled with things taken
from other countries.
It is filled with plenty of people
that it hunted and killed!
- 2 You can hear the sounds
of whips cracking,
the noise of wheels,
horses galloping,
and chariots bouncing along!
- 3 Soldiers on horses are attacking,
their swords are shining,
their spears are gleaming!
There are many dead people,
dead bodies piled up,
too many bodies to count!
People are tripping over all the dead bodies.
- 4 All this happened because of [Nineveh].
Nineveh is like a prostitute
that could never get enough.
She wanted more and more.
She sold herself to many nations,
and she used her magic
to make them her slaves.
- 5 The Lord All-Powerful says,
“I am against you Nineveh.
I will pull your dress* up over your face.
I will let the nations see your naked body.
Those kingdoms will see your shame.
- 6 I will throw dirty things on you.
I will treat you in a hateful way.
People will look at you and laugh.
- 7 Everyone who sees you will be shocked.
They will say,
‘Nineveh is destroyed.
Who will cry for her?’
I know I cannot find anyone
to comfort you, Nineveh.”

⁸Nineveh, are you better than Thebes* on the Nile River? No! Thebes also had water all

pull your dress This is a word play in Hebrew. The Hebrew word also means “to destroy a country and take its people away as prisoners to other nations.”

Thebes A great city in Egypt. It was destroyed in 663 B.C. by the Assyrian army.

around her. Thebes used the water to protect herself from enemies. She used that water like a wall too! ⁹Ethiopia and Egypt gave Thebes much strength. The Sudan and Libya supported her. ¹⁰But Thebes was defeated. Her people were taken away as prisoners to a foreign country. Soldiers beat her small children to death at every street corner. They threw lots* to see who got to keep the important people as slaves. They put chains on all the important men of Thebes.

¹¹So Nineveh, you will also fall like a drunk person! You will try to hide. You will look for a safe place away from the enemy. ¹²But [Nineveh], all your strong places will be like fig trees. New figs become ripe. A person comes and shakes the tree. The figs fall into the mouth of that person. He eats them, and they are gone!

¹³[Nineveh], your people are all like women—and the enemy soldiers are ready to take them. The gates of your land are open wide for your enemies to come in. Fire has destroyed the wooden bars across the gates.

¹⁴Get water and store it inside your city. Why? Because the enemy soldiers will surround your city. [They will not let any person bring food or water into the city.] Make your defenses strong! Get clay to make more bricks! Mix the mortar! Get the molds for making bricks! ¹⁵You can do all those things, but the fire will still destroy you completely! And the sword will kill you. Your land will look like a swarm of grasshoppers came and ate everything.

Nineveh, you grew and grew. You became like a swarm of grasshoppers. You were like a swarm of locusts. ¹⁶You have many, many businessmen that go places and buy things. They are as many as the stars in the sky! And they are like locusts that come, eat everything until it is finished, and then leave. ¹⁷And your government officials are also like locusts. They are like locusts that settle on a stone wall on a cold day. But when the sun comes up, the rocks become warm, and the locusts all fly

lots Sticks, stones, or pieces of bone used like dice for making decisions. See Proverbs 16:33.

away. And no one knows where! [Your officials will be like that.]

¹⁸King of Assyria, your shepherds (*leaders*) fell asleep. Those powerful men are sleeping. And now your sheep (*people*) have wandered away on the mountains. And there is no

person to bring them back. ¹⁹Nineveh, you have been hurt badly, and nothing can heal your wound. Everyone who hears the news of your destruction claps his hands. They are all happy! Why? Because they all felt the pain you always caused!