

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
9-26-18

Nahum 1

The LORD's Anger Against Nineveh - Verses 1-8

¹A prophecy concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

²The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The LORD takes vengeance on his foes and vents his wrath against his enemies.

³The LORD is slow to anger but great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet. ⁴He rebukes the sea and dries it up; he makes all the rivers run dry. Bashan and Carmel wither and the blossoms of Lebanon fade. ⁵The mountains quake before him and the hills melt away. The earth trembles at his presence, the world and all who live in it. ⁶Who can withstand his indignation? Who can endure his fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before him. ⁷The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him, ⁸but with an overwhelming flood he will make an end of Nineveh; he will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness.

1:1 Nahum, like Jonah, was a prophet to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, and he prophesied between 663 and 612 B.C. Jonah had seen Nineveh repent a century earlier (see the book of Jonah), but the city had fallen back into wickedness. Assyria, the world power controlling the Fertile Crescent, seemed unstoppable. Its ruthless and savage warriors had already conquered Israel, the northern kingdom, and were causing great suffering in Judah. So Nahum proclaimed God's anger against Assyria's evil. Within a few decades, the mighty Assyrian Empire would be toppled by Babylon.

1:1 This message from God came in the form of a vision. Elkosh was a village thought by some to be in southwest Judah.

1:2 God alone has the right to be jealous and to carry out vengeance. Jealousy and vengeance may be surprising terms to associate with God. When humans are jealous and take vengeance, they are usually acting in a spirit of selfishness. But it is appropriate for God to insist on our complete allegiance, and it is just for him to punish unrepentant evildoers. His jealousy and vengeance are unmixed with selfishness. Their purpose is to remove sin and restore peace to the world

1:3 God is slow to get angry, but when he is ready to punish, even the earth trembles. Often people avoid God because they see evildoers in the world and hypocrites in the church. They don't realize that because God is slow to anger, he gives his true followers time to share his

love and truth with evildoers. But judgment will come; God will not allow sin to go unchecked forever. When people wonder why God doesn't punish evil immediately, help them remember that if he did, none of us would be here. We can all be thankful that God gives people time to turn to him.

1:6 No person on earth can safely defy God, the Almighty, the Creator of all the universe. God, who controls the sun, the galaxies, and the vast stretches beyond, also controls the rise and fall of nations. How could a small temporal kingdom like Assyria, no matter how powerful, challenge God's awesome power? If only Assyria could have looked ahead to see the desolate mound of rubble that it would become—yet God would still be alive and well! Don't defy God; he will be here forever with greater power than that of all armies and nations combined.

1:6-8 To people who refuse to believe, God's punishment is like an angry fire. To those who love him, his mercy is a refuge and stronghold, supplying all their needs without diminishing his supply. But to God's enemies he is an overwhelming flood that will sweep them away. The kind of relationship we have with God is up to us. What kind of relationship will you choose?

The LORD's Anger Against Nineveh - Verses 9-15

⁹ Whatever they plot against the LORD he will bring to an end; trouble will not come a second time. ¹⁰ They will be entangled among thorns and drunk from their wine; they will be consumed like dry stubble. ¹¹ From you, Nineveh, has one come forth who plots evil against the LORD and devises wicked plans. ¹² This is what the LORD says: "Although they have allies and are numerous, they will be destroyed and pass away. Although I have afflicted you, Judah, I will afflict you no more. ¹³ Now I will break their yoke from your neck and tear your shackles away." ¹⁴ The LORD has given a command concerning you, Nineveh: "You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the images and idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are vile." ¹⁵ Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, Judah, and fulfill your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed.

1:11 The one "who plots evil against the LORD" could have been (1) Ashurbanipal (669-627 B.C.), king of Assyria during much of Nahum's life and the one who brought Assyria to the zenith of its power; (2) Sennacherib (705-681), who openly defied God (2 Kings 18:13-35), epitomizing rebellion against God; (3) no one king in particular but the entire Assyrian monarchy. The point is that Nineveh would be destroyed for rebelling against God.

1:12-15 The good news for Judah, whom Assyria afflicted, was that its conquerors and tormentors would be destroyed and would never rise to torment it again. Nineveh was so completely wiped out that its ruins were not identified by archaeologists until 1845.