

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
10-3-18

Nahum 2

Nineveh to Fall - Verses 1-8

¹An attacker advances against you, Nineveh. Guard the fortress, watch the road, brace yourselves, marshal all your strength! ²The LORD will restore the splendor of Jacob like the splendor of Israel, though destroyers have laid them waste and have ruined their vines. ³The shields of the soldiers are red; the warriors are clad in scarlet. The metal on the chariots flashes on the day they are made ready; the spears of juniper are brandished.⁴The chariots storm through the streets, rushing back and forth through the squares. They look like flaming torches; they dart about like lightning. ⁵Nineveh summons her picked troops, yet they stumble on their way. They dash to the city wall; the protective shield is put in place. ⁶The river gates are thrown open and the palace collapses. ⁷It is decreed that Nineveh be exiled and carried away. Her female slaves moan like doves and beat on their breasts. ⁸Nineveh is like a pool whose water is draining away. "Stop! Stop!" they cry, but no one turns back.

2:1 This chapter predicts the events of 612 B.C., when the combined armies of the Babylonians and the Medes sacked seemingly impregnable Nineveh. 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.

2:2 Assyria had plundered and crushed the northern kingdom (Israel) and had deported its people in 722 B.C. (2 Kings 17:3-6; 18:9-11). Assyria had also attacked the southern kingdom (Judah, also called "Jacob") and had forced it to pay tribute. These two separate kingdoms had been formed after Solomon's reign. A civil dispute with Solomon's son had caused 10 of the tribes to set up their own kingdom. They had become the northern kingdom, while the remaining two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) stayed loyal to David's line and became the southern kingdom.

2:3 Nahum describes the attack on Nineveh, as if he were there. He sees blood all over the shields. The battle is so great, that even the fir trees tremble. The red in the soldiers' garment, probably, speaks of the wrath of God upon the people against God. In the following verse, we see that red in battle speaks of taking peace away.

2:6 This reference to the opening of river gates could refer either to the enemy flowing into Nineveh like a flood (1:8) or to an actual flood of water. Some scholars suggest that dam gates, which were found in archaeological excavations, were closed to dam up the river.

When an enormous amount of water had been accumulated, the gates were opened, allowing the water to flood Nineveh.

2:8 We remember from our study in Jonah, that Nineveh was a city of over 120,000 people. Nineveh had been a city that all the nearby cities went to from time to time. They had been a beautiful city with trafficking. The smaller cities came there for trade, and for entertainment. They do not stand. They fall to God's punishment on them. They are so thoroughly destroyed; they will not be a place of gathering again.

God's Determination To Destroy The City - Verses 9-13

9 Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold! The supply is endless, the wealth from all its treasures! **10** She is pillaged, plundered, stripped! Hearts melt, knees give way, bodies tremble, every face grows pale. **11** Where now is the lions' den, the place where they fed their young, where the lion and lioness went, and the cubs, with nothing to fear? **12** The lion killed enough for his cubs and strangled the prey for his mate, filling his lairs with the kill and his dens with the prey. **13** "I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will burn up your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your young lions. I will leave you no prey on the earth. The voices of your messengers will no longer be heard."

2:9 "Spoil": Spoils abounded in Nineveh, but it was her turn to be plundered. There had been so much gold and silver in Nineveh, that some of the furniture was made of these precious metals. They had cruelly taken these precious metals, when they had attacked other surrounding countries.

2:10 "The heart melteth": The great city of Nineveh, lying in ruin, evoked fear and terror in those who observed it (Dan. 5:6). Fear was so great, that it seemed as if their hearts melted. The knees smiting together was another way of showing the overwhelming fear that gripped them. Their pain was from their fear, as well. The face turning black was, probably, with the tremendous grief.

2:11 These Assyrians were so ferocious, they were thought of as lions. When God destroyed Nineveh, it was as if He had killed the lion in his own den. The headquarters of these ferocious people was destroyed.

2:12 The major source of wealth for the Assyrian economy was the plunder taken from other nations. The Assyrians had taken the food of innocent people to maintain their luxurious standard of living, depriving others to supply their excesses. Depriving innocent people to support the luxury of a few is a sin that angers God. As Christians we must stand firm against this common but evil practice.

2:13 God had given the people of Nineveh a chance to repent, which they did after hearing Jonah (see the book of Jonah). But they had returned to their sin, and its consequences were destroying them. There is a point for people, cities, and nations after which there is no turning back; Assyria had passed that point. We must warn others to repent while there is still time.