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Nahum

The Book of Nahum is a part of the Old Testament of the Christian Bible and is located in the section known as the Minor Prophets. It consists of three chapters and is attributed to the prophet Nahum, who is believed to have lived in the seventh century BCE.

The book of Nahum contains a prophecy concerning the fall of Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrian Empire. The prophecy is a message of judgment against Nineveh for its wickedness, violence, and oppression of other nations. The book portrays God as a jealous and vengeful God who will not allow such evil to go unpunished.

Chapter 1 begins with a powerful description of God's wrath against Nineveh, and the prophet Nahum declares that the Lord is a jealous and avenging God who will not let the guilty go unpunished. Nahum goes on to describe the destruction that will come upon the city, including its gates being destroyed and its people being cut off.

Chapter 2 describes the siege and destruction of Nineveh in vivid detail. It describes the armies that will come against the city and the panic and chaos that will ensue. Nahum declares that the destruction of Nineveh will be complete and final, leaving nothing of value behind.

Chapter 3 continues the prophecy against Nineveh, depicting the city as a harlot who has brought shame upon herself. Nahum predicts that the city's defenses will crumble and that its leaders and officials will flee in terror. The chapter ends with a warning to other nations to take heed of Nineveh's fate and to avoid the same path of destruction.

In summary, the book of Nahum is a prophecy against the city of Nineveh for its wickedness and oppression of other nations. It portrays God as a just and vengeful God who will not let such evil go unpunished. The book is a powerful reminder of the consequences of sin and the importance of turning back to God.

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Nahum 1

New International Version

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

The Lord's Anger Against Nineveh

2 The 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.

3 The 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.

4 He rebukes the sea and dries it up;
he makes all the rivers run dry.

Bashan and Carmel wither
and the blossoms of Lebanon fade.

5 The mountains quake before him
and the hills melt away.

The earth trembles at his presence,
the world and all who live in it.

6 Who can withstand his indignation?
Who can endure his fierce anger?

His wrath is poured out like fire;
the rocks are shattered before him.

7 The Lord is good,
a refuge in times of trouble.
He cares for those who trust in him,
8 but with an overwhelming flood
he will make an end of Nineveh;
he will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness.

9 Whatever they plot against the Lord
he will bring[a] 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.[b]
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.[c]

Footnotes

Nahum 1:9 Or What do you foes plot against the Lord? / He will bring it
Nahum 1:10 The meaning of the Hebrew for this verse is uncertain.
Nahum 1:15 In Hebrew texts this verse (1:15) is numbered 2:1.

Chapter 1 of the book of Nahum begins with a description of God's wrath against Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrian Empire. The prophet Nahum declares that the Lord is a jealous and avenging God who will not let the guilty go unpunished. In verses 2-8, Nahum describes the power and might of God, portraying Him as a God of justice who will not tolerate evil. The passage includes descriptions of earthquakes, storms, and fire, all of which symbolize God's power and judgment. Verse 7 declares that "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him." Here, Nahum acknowledges that although God is a God of wrath, He is also a God of mercy and protection for those who trust in Him. Verses 9-14 describe the impending destruction of Nineveh, emphasizing that the city's fate is sealed and cannot be avoided. Nahum predicts that the city's destruction will be complete and final, leaving nothing of value behind. The chapter ends with Nahum declaring that even though the Assyrians have been a formidable force, they will be destroyed, and their memory will be erased. The passage closes with a warning to other nations to take heed of Nineveh's fate and to avoid the same path of destruction. In summary, Nahum chapter 1 is a powerful description of God's wrath against Nineveh, highlighting the justice and power of God. The chapter also emphasizes the mercy and protection that God provides to those who trust in Him, while warning of the consequences of wickedness and sin.

Here are some important verses from Nahum chapter 1, along with brief explanations and their location in the chapter:

Verse 2: "The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD is avenging and wrathful; the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies." This verse describes the character of God as a just and vengeful God who will punish those who oppose him. (Located in Nahum 1:2)

Verse 3: "The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." This verse reminds the reader that God is patient and slow to anger, but when he does act, he is a powerful force to be reckoned with. (Located in Nahum 1:3)

Verse 7: "The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him." This verse assures the reader that God is a source of strength and protection for those who trust in him. (Located in Nahum 1:7)

Verse 12: "Thus says the LORD, 'Though they are at full strength and many, they will be cut down and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more.'" This verse assures the people of Judah that God will punish their enemies, even if they seem strong and powerful, and that their own afflictions will come to an end. (Located in Nahum 1:12)

Verse 15: "Behold, upon the mountains, the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace! Keep your feasts, O Judah; fulfill your vows, for never again shall the worthless pass through you; he is utterly cut off." This verse brings a message of hope and comfort to the people of Judah, assuring them that their enemies will be defeated and that they can resume their worship and celebrations without fear. (Located in Nahum 1:15)

These verses provide important insights into the character of God, his relationship with his people, and his plans for judgment and redemption.

The book of Nahum is one of the Minor Prophets in the Old Testament of the Bible. It consists of three chapters and focuses primarily on the impending judgment of the city of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire. While Nahum's message contains several theological thoughts and influences, here are some key points to consider:

Theological Thought: The Justice of God:

Nahum emphasizes the righteousness and justice of God. The book opens with a declaration of God's character: "The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD is avenging and wrathful; the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies" (Nahum 1:2, ESV). This verse underscores the belief that God is just and will punish the wicked.

Theological Thought: God's Patience and Wrath:

Nahum also highlights God's patience and long-suffering. The Assyrian Empire had been oppressive and cruel, but God had shown patience in dealing with them. However, there comes a point where God's patience gives way to His righteous wrath. This reflects the theological idea that God's mercy and patience have limits.

Theological Thought: The Fall of Empires:

The book of Nahum serves as a reminder that even the mightiest empires and nations are not beyond the judgment of God. Nineveh, a powerful city, would ultimately face destruction despite its strength. This underscores the theological concept that human kingdoms rise and fall according to God's divine plan.

Theological Influence:

Nahum's message has influenced theological thinking about God's justice, righteousness, and the consequences of human actions. It reinforces the idea that God is a God of justice who will hold people and nations accountable for their deeds.

Nahum's prophetic message also has implications for the understanding of divine judgment and the role of prophets in conveying God's message to both individuals and nations.

In summary, the book of Nahum in the Old Testament contains theological thoughts related to the justice and righteousness of God, His patience and wrath, the fall of powerful empires, and the consequences of human actions. Its theological influence can be seen in discussions about God's character and His dealings with nations and individuals.

Nahum 2

New International Version

Nineveh to Fall

2 [a]An attacker advances against you, Nineveh.

Guard the fortress,
watch the road,
brace yourselves,
marshal all your strength!

2 The Lord will restore the splendor of Jacob
like the splendor of Israel,
though destroyers have laid them waste
and have ruined their vines.

3 The 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.[b]

4 The chariots storm through the streets,
rushing back and forth through the squares.
They look like flaming torches;
they dart about like lightning.

5 Nineveh summons her picked troops,
yet they stumble on their way.
They dash to the city wall;
the protective shield is put in place.

6 The river gates are thrown open
and the palace collapses.

7 It is decreed[c] that Nineveh
be exiled and carried away.
Her female slaves moan like doves
and beat on their breasts.

8 Nineveh is like a pool
whose water is draining away.
“Stop! Stop!” they cry,
but no one turns back.

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.”

Footnotes

Nahum 2:1 In Hebrew texts 2:1-13 is numbered 2:2-14.

Nahum 2:3 Hebrew; Septuagint and Syriac ready; / the horsemen rush to and fro.

Nahum 2:7 The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.

Chapter 2 of the book of Nahum continues the prophecy against Nineveh, describing in vivid detail the destruction that is to come upon the city. The chapter is divided into three sections:

Verses 1-10: The siege of Nineveh

In this section, Nahum describes the armies that will come against Nineveh, using vivid imagery to paint a picture of the chaos and destruction that will ensue. The passage describes the advance of the enemy armies, the sound of trumpets and war cries, and the panic and confusion among the people of Nineveh. The city's gates are breached, and the Assyrian soldiers flee in terror.

Verses 11-13: The plunder of Nineveh

In these verses, Nahum describes the looting and plundering of Nineveh by the invading armies. The passage describes the treasures and riches that will be taken from the city, including silver, gold, and other valuable goods. The passage emphasizes that the invaders will take everything of value and leave nothing behind.

Verses 14-15: The fall of Nineveh

This final section of the chapter describes the fall of Nineveh and the complete destruction of the city. Nahum portrays the city as a place of chaos and destruction, with its streets filled with dead bodies and the sound of weeping and mourning. The chapter ends with Nahum declaring that there is no relief for Nineveh and that the city's fate is sealed.

In summary, Nahum chapter 2 is a vivid description of the siege and destruction of Nineveh, emphasizing the chaos and devastation that will come upon the city. The chapter portrays the invaders as unstoppable and the fate of Nineveh as inevitable, highlighting the consequences of wickedness and oppression.

Here are some important verses from Nahum chapter 2, along with brief explanations and their location in the chapter:

Verse 1: "The scatterer has come up against you. Man the ramparts; watch the road; dress for battle; collect all your strength." This verse describes the impending attack on Nineveh, urging the defenders to prepare for battle. (Located in Nahum 2:1)

Verse 2: "For the LORD is restoring the majesty of Jacob as the majesty of Israel, for plunderers have plundered them and ruined their branches." This verse suggests that God will restore the fortunes of his people, who have been plundered and ruined by their enemies. (Located in Nahum 2:2)

Verse 4: "The chariots race madly through the streets; they rush to and fro through the squares; they gleam like torches; they dart like lightning." This verse vividly describes the chariots of the attacking army as they race through the streets of Nineveh. (Located in Nahum 2:4)

Verse 10: "Desolate! Desolation and ruin! Hearts melt and knees tremble; anguish is in all loins; all faces grow pale!" This verse describes the aftermath of the attack on Nineveh, emphasizing the devastation and horror of the scene. (Located in Nahum 2:10)

Verse 13: "Behold, I am against you, declares the LORD of hosts, and 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 no longer be heard." This verse declares God's judgment against Nineveh, promising to destroy its military might and cut off its sources of wealth and power. (Located in Nahum 2:13)

These verses provide a picture of the impending attack on Nineveh and its devastating consequences. They also suggest that God is at work in the midst of the chaos, both judging the wickedness of Nineveh and restoring the fortunes of his people.

The Book of Nahum Chapter 2 primarily describes the impending fall of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire. It focuses on the military conquest and the destruction of the city. While this chapter doesn't delve as deeply into theological thought as some other parts of the Bible, it does contain elements that can be interpreted in a theological context:

Theological Thought: Divine Judgment:

Chapter 2 of Nahum continues the theme of divine judgment that is prevalent throughout the book. The fall of Nineveh is portrayed as a direct result of God's judgment for the city's wickedness and cruelty. This reflects the theological idea that God holds nations accountable for their actions and can bring about their downfall as a form of punishment.

Theological Thought: God's Sovereignty:

The chapter indirectly highlights God's sovereignty over the affairs of nations. The success of the conquering forces and the downfall of Nineveh are seen as ultimately under God's control. This aligns with the theological concept that God is the ultimate authority and ruler over the world.

Theological Influence:

Chapter 2 of Nahum contributes to the broader theological understanding of God's justice and sovereignty in the context of historical events. It reinforces the idea that even the

most powerful nations can face divine judgment and collapse if they persist in wickedness.

This chapter also serves as a reminder of the consequences of human actions and the idea that God's purposes will ultimately prevail in the course of history.

While Chapter 2 of Nahum may not contain extensive theological discourse, it plays a significant role in the overall message of the book, which is centered on God's judgment and the consequences of human actions in the context of a historical narrative.

Theological influence can be found in how scholars and theologians interpret these themes within the larger context of biblical theology.

Nahum 3

New International Version

Woe to Nineveh

3 Woe to the city of blood,
full of lies,
full of plunder,
never without victims!

2 The crack of whips,
the clatter of wheels,
galloping horses
and jolting chariots!

3 Charging cavalry,
flashing swords
and glittering spears!

Many casualties,
piles of dead,
bodies without number,
people stumbling over the corpses—

4 all because of the wanton lust of a prostitute,
alluring, the mistress of sorceries,
who enslaved nations by her prostitution
and peoples by her witchcraft.

5 “I am against you,” declares the Lord Almighty.

“I will lift your skirts over your face.
I will show the nations your nakedness
and the kingdoms your shame.

6 I will pelt you with filth,
I will treat you with contempt
and make you a spectacle.

7 All who see you will flee from you and say,
‘Nineveh is in ruins—who will mourn for her?’
Where can I find anyone to comfort you?”

8 Are you better than Thebes,
situated on the Nile,

with water around her?
The river was her defense,
the waters her wall.
9 Cush[a] and Egypt were her boundless strength;
Put and Libya were among her allies.
10 Yet she was taken captive
and went into exile.
Her infants were dashed to pieces
at every street corner.
Lots were cast for her nobles,
and all her great men were put in chains.
11 You too will become drunk;
you will go into hiding
and seek refuge from the enemy.

12 All your fortresses are like fig trees
with their first ripe fruit;
when they are shaken,
the figs fall into the mouth of the eater.
13 Look at your troops—
they are all weaklings.
The gates of your land
are wide open to your enemies;
fire has consumed the bars of your gates.

14 Draw water for the siege,
strengthen your defenses!
Work the clay,
tread the mortar,
repair the brickwork!
15 There the fire will consume you;
the sword will cut you down—
they will devour you like a swarm of locusts.
Multiply like grasshoppers,
multiply like locusts!
16 You have increased the number of your merchants
till they are more numerous than the stars in the sky,
but like locusts they strip the land
and then fly away.
17 Your guards are like locusts,
your officials like swarms of locusts
that settle in the walls on a cold day—
but when the sun appears they fly away,
and no one knows where.

18 King of Assyria, your shepherds[b] slumber;

your nobles lie down to rest.
Your people are scattered on the mountains
with no one to gather them.
19 Nothing can heal you;
your wound is fatal.
All who hear the news about you
clap their hands at your fall,
for who has not felt
your endless cruelty?

Footnotes

Nahum 3:9 That is, the upper Nile region

Nahum 3:18 That is, rulers

Chapter 3 of the book of Nahum continues the prophecy against Nineveh, focusing on the city's wickedness and its imminent destruction. The chapter is divided into four sections:

Verses 1-7: The wickedness of Nineveh

In this section, Nahum describes the sins of Nineveh, portraying the city as a place of violence, deceit, and oppression. The passage accuses the city of shedding blood, practicing sorcery, and exploiting its neighbors for gain. Nahum declares that Nineveh's sins have made it ripe for judgment and that its destruction is imminent.

Verses 8-13: The fall of Thebes

In these verses, Nahum compares Nineveh to Thebes, an ancient city that was once great but was destroyed by the Assyrians. The passage suggests that the same fate awaits Nineveh, emphasizing that even powerful cities can fall when they are wicked and disobedient.

Verses 14-17: The siege of Nineveh

This section describes the coming siege of Nineveh, using vivid imagery to portray the city as under attack. The passage describes the sound of chariots, the clanging of swords, and the cries of the wounded, all of which symbolize the chaos and destruction that will come upon the city.

Verses 18-19: The inevitability of Nineveh's destruction

The chapter ends with Nahum declaring that Nineveh's destruction is inevitable, and there is no escape from the judgment that is coming. The passage describes the people of Nineveh as being like locusts, swarming and devouring everything in their path, but ultimately doomed to destruction.

In summary, Nahum chapter 3 is a powerful description of the wickedness of Nineveh and its imminent destruction. The chapter emphasizes that even great cities can fall when they turn away from God and embrace sin and wickedness. The passage warns of the consequences of disobedience and reminds the reader that God's judgment is inevitable.

Here are some important verses from Nahum chapter 3, along with brief explanations and their location in the chapter:

Verse 1: "Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder—no end to the prey!" This verse pronounces a woe upon Nineveh for its violence, deceit, and greed. (Located in Nahum 3:1)

Verse 4: "And all for the countless whorings of the prostitute, graceful and of deadly charms, who betrays nations with her whorings, and peoples with her charms." This verse uses the metaphor of a prostitute to describe Nineveh's unfaithfulness and deceit towards other nations. (Located in Nahum 3:4)

Verse 5: "Behold, I am against you, declares the LORD of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will make nations look at your nakedness and kingdoms at your shame." This verse declares God's judgment against Nineveh and promises to expose its shame and humiliation to the nations. (Located in Nahum 3:5)

Verse 18: "Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to gather them." This verse describes the collapse of Nineveh's leadership and the scattering of its people. (Located in Nahum 3:18)

Verse 19: "There is no easing your hurt; your wound is grievous. All who hear the news about you clap their hands over you. For upon whom has not come your unceasing evil?" This verse laments Nineveh's suffering and suggests that its evil deeds have brought this punishment upon itself. (Located in Nahum 3:19)

These verses continue to describe the judgment against Nineveh and emphasize its wickedness and corruption. They also suggest that God is just in his punishment and that the downfall of Nineveh was ultimately brought about by its own actions.

The Book of Nahum Chapter 3 continues the prophetic message against Nineveh, focusing on the city's impending destruction. This chapter, like the rest of the book, contains theological thoughts and influences that are important to consider:

Theological Thought: Divine Judgment and Retribution:

Chapter 3 of Nahum underscores the theological idea of divine judgment and retribution. The chapter vividly describes the wickedness and moral corruption of Nineveh, which is portrayed as a harlot or prostitute. The city's sins are seen as a provocation to God's wrath and justice. This reflects the belief that God will eventually bring judgment upon those who persist in sin.

Theological Thought: The Fall of Mighty Nations:

This chapter, like the rest of Nahum, serves as a reminder of the theological concept that even the mightiest nations and cities can fall under God's judgment. Nineveh, a powerful and seemingly invincible city, is depicted as being utterly devastated and brought to ruin. This reinforces the idea that no human power can stand against God's will.

Theological Influence:

Chapter 3 of Nahum contributes to the broader theological understanding of God's justice, righteousness, and the consequences of human actions. It serves as a warning against pride, arrogance, and moral corruption, suggesting that these traits can lead to a nation's downfall.

The message of Nahum has influenced theological discussions on the nature of God's judgment and how God deals with nations that engage in oppression, violence, and

immorality. It highlights the belief that God is a just God who intervenes in history to uphold His moral standards.

In summary, Nahum Chapter 3, like the rest of the book, emphasizes theological thoughts related to divine judgment, retribution, the fall of powerful nations, and God's commitment to justice. Its theological influence can be found in discussions about God's response to human wickedness and the ultimate fate of nations that turn away from His moral standards.

Notes:

some questions related to the book of Nahum that scholars and theologians may debate or find challenging to answer. Here are a few examples:

1. Who was Nahum and when did he live? Although the book of Nahum identifies the author as "Nahum of Elkosh" (Nahum 1:1), there is little known about him outside of the book. Scholars debate when he lived, with some placing him in the 7th century BCE and others in the 6th century BCE.
2. What was the historical context for the book of Nahum? The book of Nahum focuses on the destruction of the Assyrian capital city of Nineveh. However, there is debate about the specific historical events that inspired the book, as well as how accurate the book's portrayal of those events may be.
3. How should Christians interpret the violent and vengeful language in the book of Nahum? The book contains graphic descriptions of God's judgment against Nineveh, including references to "flashing swords" and "dead bodies" (Nahum 3:3-4). Some Christians may struggle to reconcile this portrayal of God with their understanding of God as a loving and merciful God.