

June 4th 2006: Old Testament Review: Book of Nahum: Chapter 1.

This is the saddest book.....simply entitled.....”and GOD CRIED
The holocaust Remembered

We can't imagine what...would have been like...for a Jew living in another country
Say England.....while this atrocity was happening

They would have heard something of what Nazi Germany was doing
..seen there growing world influence.....and how close they were to invading

How fearful they would have been !!!!

They may have accepted in their heart that the Jewish Nation was not absolutely pure..
But Hitler and his troops are surely Satan Incarnate....while they are God's own people
So when will God act.....
When would freedom come.....and punishment for the monster destroying them....

- **I believe that what they may have thought then**.....quite similar.....
thoughts nation jews
Living some 3.000 years early.....time of Nahum

They too were facing a fearsome monster.....A nation as brutal as Nazi germany
And in terms of the world at that time.....**even more powerful**.....more unstopable

That Nation was Assyria

In an age of brutality it stood alone.....**Rape** and pillage were its weapons of war
Leaders were boiled alive in oil.....Whole villages were burned.....
They skinned people alive.....,split pregnant.....killed the kids 1st..then

Those they did not slaughter.....they relocated after terrorising them into submission

- **In the time when Nahum wrote**.....there were many in Judah.....who were
waiting for Assyria to turn its power against them
They expected to suffer the same as Israel.....They believed their days were limited
They knew that when the Assyrians came...they too would be wiped out...unless God

In your notes you will find a brief timeline...recounts Judah's walk of fear with Assyria

NOTES

854 BC	Under Shalmaneser Assyria becomes a threat to Israel & Judah
760	Jonah preaches in Ninevah.....A short time of repentance and change.
722	Under Sargon Assyria destroys Nation of Israel scatters the ten tribes.
701	Under Sennacherib Assyrians close to capturing Jerusalem(Hezekiah)
669—633	Assyria under Ashurbanipal reaches peak of its power & prosperity Builds up Ninevah as mightiest city on earth. Seems impregnable and able to withstand a twenty-year siege.
663	Assyria defeats Thebes the great capital of Upper Egypt (Nahum 3:8)
660 (about)	Nahum prophesizes Assyria's overthrow with specific details.

- **It is this prophecy**.....that fills the book of Nahum

Spoken in an age when Assyria was the world power.....When Ninevah seemed
When the Jews were part of a tiny nation.....with a **King that** was evil
And a God that they were...in the main....disregarding and disobeying

God's prophet Nahum....stands and declares →Not God's displeasure with His people
But God's programme of judgment.....for His people's enemy

- **Turn with me to Nahum chapter one:**
Unlike **Jonah** who spoke to the Assyrians *in* Ninevah....Nahum speaks from Judah

When Jonah spoke....repentance was still an option.....**Now it is not**
Although Nahum's words are spoken to Assyria.....It is God's people who need to hear
...about their great God....and what He intends to do in future days

So Nahum begins by talking about God
..verses 2—3..... That is how God is to His enemies

But to those who love and follow Him....He is so different ...v7.....
Yet Ninevah is against God.....so in v8.....judgment against Ninevah begins

And that's how it continues through into chapters 2 and 3

Look at 1:9.... 1: 14.....

Chapter 2 is a description of the coming battle against Ninevah.....
It tells the story of a desperate and hurried defence.....yet of an army that bursts into the city.....looting and plundering and carrying away into captivity

2:11—13.....Ninevah....famous for its lion statues.....

Erected to convey a message of its power.....ability to hunt and destroy others

Yet God declares He is against them

Then into chapter 3....

where God's description of what will happen....even more graphic

In v8....he refers to Thebes.....A mighty, fortified city.....destroyed by the Assyrians

Your end Ninevah....will be worst than that of Thebes....declares God

And finally in 3:18—19.....

- **When Nahum declared these words..... only the most devoted believer....**
would have believed that they would ever come to pass

When Nahum declared about Judah in 1:12.....

And then in v15.....And again in 2:2.....

The Assyrians would have rolled over laughing

- **You see the evil Assyrians were at the Zenith of their power**

Ninevah.....the mightiest city on earth

The circumference of its walls was 100 kilometres

Those walls were 30 metres high....and wide enough.....3 chariots

Dotted along the walls...1200 towers...each reaching a further 30 metres....

In addition the walls were surrounded by a moat 45 metres wide and 20 metres deep
They boasted....withstand a siege for 20 years

They were safe in their evil.....No God could touch them.....OR SO THEY Thought

Yet history tells us that in 612 AD, Nabopolassar, King of the Babylonian invasion forces, had besieged the city for three years, leading three massive attacks against it, and failing each time. Because of this, the Assyrians inside Ninevah rejoiced and began holding drunken parties.

But suddenly the Tigris River overflowed its banks and sent its widely churning waters against the walls of the city. Soon it had washed a hole, into which rushed Babylonians, and the proud city was destroyed.

Now look at Nahum 3:11.....2: 5-6..... 1:8.....

Ninevah not only was completely destroyed.....It ceased to exist as a city
When Alexander marched over the site.....He did not know.....

Look again at 1:12.....14..... end of 15.....
End of 2:13.....3:18-19.....

NOW
The name Nahum means....COMFORT

And that's what this prophecy was all about.....

GOD giving comfort
To His bruised ...battered..... threatened people.

• At this period the wickedness of God's people was great...
And other prophets at this time....call them to repent

But in Nahum there is no mention of their wickednessjust of God's goodness
His care for those who trust in Him

Nahum's words did not change the situation for those Jews

It would be 40 years....before Ninevah would be destroyed

40 years of wondering.....whether Assyria would turn its power against them

But these words did remind them....children who followed...of their powerful God...

who had promised to keep

It portrayed a comfort that many clung to...down through the centuries

And God does the same for us.....in such a book....Revelation

He assures us that the Day is coming.....

That though we may battle evil.....as we see it in the world

As we struggle with it.....As it expresses itself in sickness.....death...brutality

All around us

That He is the final victor.....and that for all who seek it

There is the ultimate comfort in Him....through Christ Jesus

Have you found that comfort.....Is your life firmly linked with Jesus

For if so

Then the promise of Scripture is: Revelation 22:12—14.....