

Nahum

Author

The book contains “...*the vision of Nahum...*” (1:1), whose name means “consolation” or “comfort” and is related to the name Nehemiah, meaning “the Lord comforts” or “comfort of the Lord.” (Ninevah’s fall, which is Nahum’s theme, would bring comfort to Judah.) Nothing is known for certain about him except his hometown (Elkosh), and even its general location is uncertain.

Date

In chapter 3:8-10 the author speaks of the fall of Thebes, which happened in 663 BC, as already past. In all three chapters Nahum prophesied Ninevah’s fall, which was fulfilled in 612. Therefore, Nahum uttered this oracle between 663 and 612 BC, perhaps near the end of this period since he represents the fall of Ninevah as imminent (2:1; 3:14; 3:19). This would place him during the reign of Josiah and make him a contemporary of Zephaniah and the young Jeremiah.

Background

Assyria (represented by Ninevah, 1:1) had already destroyed Samaria (722 – 672 BC), resulting in the captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel, and posed a present to Judah. The Assyrians were brutally cruel, their kings often being depicted as gloating over the gruesome punishments inflicted on conquered peoples. They conducted their wars with shocking ferocity, uprooted whole populations as state policy and deported them to other parts of their empire. The leaders of conquered cities were tortured and horribly mutilated before being executed. No wonder the dread of Assyria fell on all her neighbors!

About 700 BC King Sennacherib made Ninevah the capital of the Assyrian empire, and it remained the capital until it was destroyed in 612 BC. Jonah had announced its destruction earlier in Jonah 3:4, but the people repented at that time and the destruction was temporarily averted. Not long after that, however, Ninevah reverted to its extreme wickedness, brutality and pride. The brutality reached its peak under Ashurbanipal (669 BC – 627 BC), the last great ruler of the Assyrian empire. After his death, Assyria’s influence and power waned rapidly until 612 BC, when Ninevah was overthrown.

Recipients

Some words are addressed to Judah (see 1:12-13; 1:15), but most are addressed to Ninevah (see 1:1; 1:14; 2:1; 2:13; 3:5-17; 3:19) or its king (3:18). The book, however, was meant for Judahite readers.

Literary Style

The contents are primarily judicial (judgment oracles), with appropriate descriptions and vocabulary, as well as intense moods, sights and sounds. The language is poetic, with frequent use of metaphors and similes, vivid word pictures, repetition and many short – often staccato – phrases (see 3:2-3). Rhetorical questions punctuate the flow of thought, which has a marked stress on moral indignation toward injustice.

Theological Themes

The focal point of the entire book is the Lord's judgment on Ninevah for her oppression, cruelty, idolatry and wickedness. The book ends with the destruction of the city.

According to Romans 11:22, God is not only kind but also stern. In Nahum, God is not only “...**slow to anger...**” (1:3) and “...**a strong hold...and He knows them that trust in Him...**” (1:7), but also one who “...**will not acquit the wicked...**” (1:3). God's righteous and just kingdom will triumph ultimately, for kingdoms built on wickedness and tyranny must fall eventually, as Assyria did.

In addition, Nahum declares the universal sovereignty of God. God is Lord of history and of all nations; as such He controls their destinies.

Shortly before the fall of Nineveh in 612 BC, Nahum uttered his prophecy against the hated city. To understand the prophet's exultant outburst of joy over the impending destruction it is necessary to recall the savage cruelty of Assyria, which had made it the scourge of the ancient Near East for almost three centuries. The royal inscriptions of Assyria afford the best commentary on the burning denunciation of “...the bloody city.” In the wake of their conquests, mounds of heads, impaled bodies, enslaved citizens, and avaricious looters testified to the ruthlessness of the Assyrians. Little wonder that Judah joined in the general outburst of joy over the destruction of Nineveh!

But Nahum is not a prophet of unrestrained revenge. God's moral government of the world is asserted. Yahweh is the avenger but He is also merciful, a citadel in the day of distress. Nineveh's doom was a judgment on the wicked city. Before many years passed, Jerusalem, too, was to learn the meaning of such a judgment.

The Book of Nahum is divided as follows: The Lord's Coming in Judgment (Nahum 1:2 – 2:1; 3) and The Fall of Nineveh (Nahum 2:2 – 3:19).

Chapter 1

1. **The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.**
2. **Jehovah is a jealous God and avenges; Jehovah avenges and is full of wrath; Jehovah takes vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies.**
3. **Jehovah is slow to anger, and great in power, and will by no means clear the guilty: Jehovah has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet.**
4. **He rebukes the sea, and makes it dry, and dries up all the rivers: Bashan languishes, and Carmel; and the flower of Lebanon languishes.**
5. **The mountains quake at Him, and the hills melt; and the Earth is upheaved at His presence, yes, the world, and all that dwell therein.**
6. **Who can stand before His indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken asunder by Him.**
7. **Jehovah is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows them that take refuge in Him.**
8. **But with an over-running flood He will make a full end of her place, and will pursue His enemies into darkness.**
9. **What do you devise against Jehovah? He will make a full end; affliction shall not rise up the second time.**
10. **For entangled like thorns, and drunken as with their drink, they are consumed utterly as dry stubble.**
11. **There is one gone forth out of you, that devises evil against Jehovah, that counsels wickedness.**
12. **Thus says Jehovah: "Though they be in full strength, and likewise many, even so shall they be cut down, and he shall pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more.**
13. **"And now will I break his yoke from off you, and will burst your bonds in sunder.**
14. **"And Jehovah has given commandment concerning you, that no more of your name be sown: out of the house of your gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image; I will make your grave; for you are vile."**
15. **Behold, upon the mountains the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace! Keep your feasts, O Judah, perform your vows; for the wicked one shall no more pass through you; he is utterly cut off.**

Verse 1. ***"The burden of Ninevah."*** This not only signifies a burden, but also a thing lifted up, pronounced, or proclaimed; also a message. It is used by the prophets to signify the revelation which they have received from God to deliver to any particular people.

"...the vision..." or sometimes translated ***"the oracle"*** or ***"the prophecy."*** Here it signifies the declaration from God relative to the overthrow of Ninevah, and the commission of the prophet to deliver it.

As the Assyrians under Shallum, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser, three of their kinds, had been employed by a just God for the chastisement of His disobedient people; the end being now accomplished by them, God is about to burn the rod wherewith He corrected Israel; and Ninevah, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, is to be destroyed. This prediction appears to have been accomplished a short time after this by Nebuchadnezzar and Cyaxares, the Ahasuerus of Scripture.

Nahum, נחום Nachum, signifies comforter. The name was very suitable, as he was sent to comfort the people, by showing them that God was about to destroy their adversaries.

Verse 2. **“Jehovah is a jealous God....”** This means He guards His own Deity and Sovereignty closely for His own glory.

“...and avenges....” This is accomplished through His justice by the destruction of His enemies.

“...and is full of wrath for His enemies.” The Lord is so powerful in the manifestations of His judgments that nothing can stand before Him. Though they seem to prosper for a time, and God appears to have passed by their crimes without notice, yet He reserves and treasurers up wrath for them, which shall burst forth in due time.

Verse 3. **“Jehovah is slow to anger....”** He exercises much longsuffering towards His enemies, that this may lead them to repentance. And it is because of this longsuffering that vengeance is not speedily executed on every evil work.

“...and great in power” The Lord is able at all times to save or to destroy.

“...Jehovah has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm....” These are the effects of His power; and when they appear unusual, they may be considered as the immediate effects of His power: and although He is in them to punish and destroy, He is in them to direct their course, to determine their operations, and to defend His followers from being injured by their violence. There is recorded the story of the pestilential wind, (figuratively speaking, for it was the Angel of the Lord), which slew one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians but it did not injure one Israelite in 2 Kings 19:35.

“...clouds are the dust of His feet.” This is spoken in allusion to a chariot and horses going on with extreme rapidity: they are all enveloped in a cloud of dust. So Jehovah is represented as coming through the circuit of the heavens as rapidly as lightning; the clouds surrounding Him as the dust does the chariot and horses.

Verse 4. **“He rebukes the sea....”** The Red Sea and the Rivers: probably an allusion to the passage of the Red Sea and the Jordan River. It could also be a prophecy in reference to Jesus calming the waters in Mark 4:39.

The description of the coming of Jehovah, from the third to the sixth verse, is dreadfully majestic. He is represented as controlling universal nature, once again something that Jesus demonstrated in His ministry which proves His Divinity. The sea and the rivers are dried up, the mountains tremble, the hills melt, and the Earth is burnt at His presence. Bashan, Carmel and Lebanon are withered and languish: streams of fire are poured out, and the rocks are cast down to make Him a passage. If then the seas, the rivers, the mountains, the hills, the rocks, and the Earth itself fail before Jehovah, or flee from His presence, how shall Ninevah and the Assyrian Empire stand before Him?

Verse 7. ***“Jehovah is good...”*** In the midst of judgment He remembers mercy; and among the most dreadful denunciations of wrath He mingles promises of mercy. None that trust in Him need be alarmed at these dreadful threatenings; they shall be discriminated in the day of wrath, for the Lord knows them that trust in Him.

Verse 8. ***“But with an over-running flood...”*** Some commentators believe this may refer to the manner in which Ninevah was taken. The Euphrates overflowed its banks, deluged a part of the city, and overturned twenty stadia of the wall; in consequence of which the desponding king burnt himself, and his palace, with his treasures.

“...and will pursue His enemies into darkness.” All kinds of calamity shall pursue them until they are destroyed.

Verse 9. ***“...affliction shall not rise up the second time.”*** There shall be no need to repeat the judgment; with one blow God will make a full end of the business.

Verse 10. ***“For entangled like thorns, and drunken as with their drink....”*** However united their counsels may be, they shall be as drunken men, perplexed and unsteady in all their resolutions.

“...they are consumed utterly as dry stubble.” Before God’s judgments they shall be as dry thorns before a devouring fire.

Verse 11. ***“...one...that devises evil against Jehovah....”*** Such were Shallum in 2 Kings 15:10, Tiglath-pileser in 2 Kings 15:29, King Hoshea in 2 Kings 17:6; and Sennacherib in 2 Kings 18:17 and 2 Kings 18:23.

“...that counsels wickedness.” Sennacherib and Rabshakeh.

Verse 12. ***“Though they be in full strength....”*** Sennacherib invaded Judea with an army of nearly two hundred thousand men.

“...even so shall they be cut down....” The Angel of the Lord (a suffocating wind) slew of them in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand in 2 Kings 19:35.

Verse 13. ***“And now will I break his yoke from off you....”*** This refers to the tribute which the Jews were obliged to pay to the Assyrians in 2 Kings 17.

Verse 14. **“...that no more of your name be sown....”** This means that no more of the Israelites be carried away into captivity by this nation.

“...I will make your grave; for you are vile.” I think this is an address to the Assyrians, and especially to Sennacherib. The text is no obscure intimation of the fact. The house of his gods is to be his grave: and we know that while he was worshipping in the house of his god Nisroch, his two sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, smote him there with a sword that he died, according to 2 Kings 19:37.

Verse 15. **“Behold, upon the mountains....”** Borrowed probably from Isaiah 52:7, which says, **“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace, that brings good tidings of good, that publishes salvation, that says unto Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”** It is applied here, however, to the messengers who brought the good tidings of the destruction of Ninevah. Judah might then keep her solemn feasts, for the wicked Assyrian should pass through the land no more; being entirely cut off, and the imperial city razed to its foundations.

Chapter 2

1. He that dashes in pieces is come up against you: keep the fortress, watch the way, make your loins strong, fortify your power mightily.
2. For Jehovah restores the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel; for the emptiers have emptied them out, and destroyed their vine-branches.
3. The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots flash with steel in the day of his preparation, and the cypress spears are brandished.
4. The chariots rage in the streets; they rush to and fro in the broad ways: the appearance of them is like torches; they run like the lightnings.
5. He remembers his nobles: they stumble in their march; they make haste to the wall thereof, and the mantelet is prepared.
6. The gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace is dissolved.
7. And it is decreed: she is uncovered, she is carried away; and her handmaids moan as with the voice of doves, beating upon their breasts.
8. But Nineveh has been from of old like a pool of water: yet they flee away. Stand, stand, they cry; but none looks back.
9. Take the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold; for there is no end of the store, the glory of all goodly furniture.
10. She is empty, and void, and waste; and the heart melts, and the knees smite together, and anguish is in all loins, and the faces of them all are waxed pale.
11. Where is the den of the lions, and the feeding-place of the young lions, where the lion and the lioness walked, the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?
12. The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his caves with prey, and his dens with flesh.
13. “Behold, I am against you,” says Jehovah of hosts, “and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions; and I will cut

off your prey from the Earth, and the voice of your messengers shall no more be heard.”

Nineveh's Doom Described – The How (2:1-13)

The Coming of Nineveh's Enemies (2:1-2)

- 1. He that dashes in pieces is come up against you: keep the fortress, watch the way, make your loins strong, fortify your power mightily.**
- 2. For Jehovah restores the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel; for the emptiers have emptied them out, and destroyed their vine-branches.**

Nahum assumes the role of the watchman in the tower and he announces the coming of Nineveh's enemies and the reason why. The reason is to restore Jacob. Then he describes the battle.

The Attack on Nineveh's Defenses (2:3-7)

- 3. The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots flash with steel in the day of his preparation, and the cypress spears are brandished.**
- 4. The chariots rage in the streets; they rush to and fro in the broad ways: the appearance of them is like torches; they run like the lightnings.**
- 5. He remembers his nobles: they stumble in their march; they make haste to the wall thereof, and the mantelet is prepared.**
- 6. The gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace is dissolved.**
- 7. And it is decreed: she is uncovered, she is carried away; and her handmaids moan as with the voice of doves, beating upon their breasts.**

Verses 2:3-5 describe the enemy army approaching with their red (copper) shields and and red uniforms. This was a picture of the bloodshed that was coming. The reference to the torches and lightning flashes probably refer to the light flashing off the enemy chariots, the soldiers' armor and their swords. The “streets“ that they are driving in are possibly the suburb streets as they approach the main city’s walls. Some suggest that the “stumbling“ in verse 5 is stumbling over the dead bodies of the people in the suburbs.

So, everyone is posed for battle, but it is to no avail, because Nineveh can not stand before God's wrath. The Babylonians, Medes and Scythians are God's instrument and God opens the way for them. In verse 6 we see that the river floods, the walls cave in and the enemy enters the city. The Assyrian army flees the city.

The Plundering of the City (2:8-10)

- 8. But Nineveh has been from of old like a pool of water: yet they flee away. Stand, stand, they cry; but none looks back.**

9. Take the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold; for there is no end of the store, the glory of all goodly furniture.

10. She is empty, and void, and waste; and the heart melts, and the knees smite together, and anguish is in all loins, and the faces of them all are waxed pale.

The wealth taken in all her conquests is now taken from her. According to the historian Diodorus Siculus, there was so much loot that the enemy did not pursue the fleeing army. The soldiers started grabbing everything they could.

The Destruction of Nineveh's "Lair" (2:11-13)

11. Where is the den of the lions, and the feeding-place of the young lions, where the lion and the lioness walked, the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?

12. The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his caves with prey, and his dens with flesh.

13. "Behold, I am against you," says Jehovah of hosts, "and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions; and I will cut off your prey from the Earth, and the voice of your messengers shall no more be heard."

The Assyrians had a fascination with lions. There are several reliefs that have been found which show the kings hunting lions. It was important that a king demonstrate his prowess as a hunter because if he could rule the animal kingdom, then he would be a better ruler over the people. We might laugh at that, but we elect military leaders and athletes to congress.

On an Assyrian relief of Ashurbanapal on a lion hunt and offering the lions to his god, the lion is depicted as climbing into the chariot and the king kills the lion with a knife. It looks like he has been tamed a bit with an arrow through the head.

What's a king to do after a hard day of hunting lions? Ashurbanapal offers them to his god. The Assyrians prided themselves on being better than the king of beasts.

Assyria is compared to a lion because of this lion fetish and because of her fierce conquests. Because Nineveh was the capitol of Assyria it is called the lion's den. And thus it now makes sense why Nahum would ask "***where is the lion's den.***"

Chapter 3

1. Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and rapine; the prey departeth not.

2. The noise of the whip, and the noise of the rattling of wheels, and prancing horses, and bounding chariots,

3. the horseman mounting, and the flashing sword, and the glittering spear, and a multitude of slain, and a great heap of corpses, and there is no end of the bodies; they stumble upon their bodies;--

4. because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favored harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that sells nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.
5. “Behold, I am against you,” says Jehovah of hosts, “and I will uncover your skirts upon your face; and I will show the nations your nakedness, and the kingdoms your shame.
6. “And I will cast abominable filth upon you, and make you vile, and will set you as a gazing-stock.
7. “And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon you shall flee from you, and say, ‘Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her?’ Whence shall I seek comforters for you?
8. “Art you better than Noamon, that was situated among the rivers, that had the waters round about her; whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was of the sea?
9. “Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite; Put and Lubim were your helpers.
10. “Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity; her young children also were dashed in pieces at the head of all the streets; and they cast lots for her honorable men, and all her great men were bound in chains.
11. “You also shall be drunken; you shall be hid; you also shall seek a stronghold because of the enemy.
12. “All your fortresses shall be like fig-trees with the first-ripe figs: if they be shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.
13. “Behold, your people in the midst of you are women; the gates of your land are set wide open unto your enemies: the fire has devoured your bars.
14. “Draw water for the siege; strengthen your fortresses; go into the clay, and tread the mortar; make strong the brickkiln.
15. “There shall the fire devour you; the sword shall cut you off; it shall devour you like the canker-worm: make yourself many as the canker-worm; make yourself many as the locust.
16. You have multiplied your merchants above the stars of heaven: the canker-worm ravages, and flees away.
17. “Your princes are as the locusts, and your marshals as the swarms of grasshoppers, which encamp in the hedges in the cold day, but when the sun arises they flee away, and their place is not known where they are.
18. “Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; your nobles are at rest; your people are scattered upon the mountains, and there is none to gather them.
19. “There is no assuaging of your hurt: your wound is grievous: all that hear the report of you clap their hands over you; for upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?”

Nineveh's Doom Deserved – The Why (3:1-19)

Because of Her Brutal Conquests and Slave Trade (3:1-7)

1. Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and rapine; the prey departeth not.

2. **The noise of the whip, and the noise of the rattling of wheels, and prancing horses, and bounding chariots,**
3. **the horseman mounting, and the flashing sword, and the glittering spear, and a multitude of slain, and a great heap of corpses, and there is no end of the bodies; they stumble upon their bodies;--**
4. **because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favored harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that sells nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.**
5. **“Behold, I am against you,” says Jehovah of hosts, “and I will uncover your skirts upon your face; and I will show the nations your nakedness, and the kingdoms your shame.**
6. **“And I will cast abominable filth upon you, and make you vile, and will set you as a gazing-stock.**
7. **“And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon you shall flee from you, and say, ‘Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her?’ Whence shall I seek comforters for you?**

Assyria's conquests were bloody and brutal. Her philosophy was that you got rich by plundering others. They exacted tribute from other nations for “protection.” You've seen this in movies where the mafia goon comes into the place of business and asks the owner if he wants protection so people don't throw firebombs through the window.

The reference to her prey never leaving in verse 1 may be a reference to the fact that Assyria didn't let captives return to their homeland. Her cruelty made them so hated that no one would grieve for her when she was gone (verse 7).

Assyria was like a harlot because she had prostituted her values in order to gain wealth and power. It sounds like our nation and especially our government, does it not?

Her judgment is deserved because of her character. In the Ancient Near East, they would make a spectacle of the prostitute by exposing her and then kill her.

The Example of Thebes (3:8-10)

8. **“Art you better than Thebes, that was situated among the rivers, that had the waters round about her; whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was of the sea?**
9. **“Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite; Put and Lubim were your helpers.**
10. **“Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity; her young children also were dashed in pieces at the head of all the streets; and they cast lots for her honorable men, and all her great men were bound in chains.**

Nahum reminds them of their former conquest and destruction of Thebes or No-amon for two reasons. The first reason is to point out their cruelty and further justification for their coming judgment. The main reason is to point out that just as Thebes was unable to repel the attackers, Nineveh would be unable to repel their attackers.

Thebes was supposedly undefeatable because it was surrounded on all sides by the Nile River and a canal. The Ninevites would have thought, "So are we."

Thebes had great defenses. So did Nineveh.

Egypt had vassal nations as allies. So did Assyria.

Ninevah would have known all this – because Assyria was the one who defeated Thebes.

The Inevitable Destruction (3:11-18)

11. "You also shall be drunken; you shall be hid; you also shall seek a stronghold because of the enemy.

12. "All your fortresses shall be like fig-trees with the first-ripe figs: if they be shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.

13. "Behold, your people in the midst of you are women; the gates of your land are set wide open unto your enemies: the fire has devoured your bars.

14. "Draw water for the siege; strengthen your fortresses; go into the clay, and tread the mortar; make strong the brickkiln.

15. "There shall the fire devour you; the sword shall cut you off; it shall devour you like the canker-worm: make yourself many as the canker-worm; make yourself many as the locust.

16. You have multiplied your merchants above the stars of heaven: the canker-worm ravages, and flees away.

17. "Your princes are as the locusts, and your marshals as the swarms of grasshoppers, which encamp in the hedges in the cold day, but when the sun arises they flee away, and their place is not known where they are.

18. "Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; your nobles are at rest; your people are scattered upon the mountains, and there is none to gather them.

Verse 11 says they will be hidden. Remember we discussed in the introduction that the site of Nineveh was hidden until its discovery in 1842.

Verse 12 refers to ripe figs. When you shake a ripe fig tree, the fruit falls off very easily. Ninevah's fortifications would fall easily.

Verse 13 says their troops were women. An army of women would be defeated by an army of men. That's not a politically correct statement to make in our day, but it was the truth. The gates were opened wide to the enemies by the flooding river.

Verse 14 makes reference to the siege which we already discussed.

Verse 17 says as the locusts flee, the Assyrians fled when the attackers came through the walls.

The Response of the Nations (3:19)

19. “There is no assuaging of your hurt: your wound is grievous: all that hear the report of you clap their hands over you; for upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?”

Not only would they not be able to defend themselves, they could not depend on other nations for help, because every other nation hated them for their cruelty and would rejoice at their destruction 3:19.

Application:

This judgment is coming because of the character of God. This means we need to look at circumstances in the light of Who God is. The book reveals quite a lot about the character of God:

(1) **God is Sovereign** – He is in control of both nature and the nations. He used the Babylonians to bring His judgment on the Assyrians. He also used a flood to help the Babylonians.

(2) **God is Just** – Assyria's judgment was well deserved. Although God used them to destroy Israel, it went to their heads and they attributed their success to their own power and God did not appreciate that. God also dealt with the Assyrians appropriate to the way in which they had dealt with other nations. Many of the same atrocities they committed on others were committed on them.

(3) **God protects His people** – Although God used Assyria to discipline Israel, He would take notice of those who were faithful.

Why is God judging?

Because God cares for those who trust in Him.

Because God will judge those who violate His law.

This is a message of condemnation for those who disobey God and a message of consolation for those who trust and obey Him.

Ninevah exalted herself but she was humbled by God. This is what I call the Pharisee and Publican principle. In the parable of the Pharisee and the tax gatherer, the Pharisee compared himself to the tax gatherer and exalted himself before God. The tax gatherer was humble and asked for mercy. Jesus said it was the tax gatherer who went away justified. If you exalt yourself, God will humble you.

Assyria compromised her values to gain wealth and power, so God took her down. That is something we struggle with today. Has there been any opportunity lately to do

something that was not quite right, but would have helped “close a deal” or advance your career or make more money, etc.?