

Message #4

Nahum 2:1-7

As we come to Nahum 2, I want to observe a couple of things:

- 1) Nahum actually saw this in a prophetic vision given to him by God. 1:1-
This is the only explanation for the remarkable predictions he makes in this chapter, including the clothing that the enemy would wear (2:3).
- 2) In the Hebrew Bible the last verse of chapter 1 (1:15) is the first verse of chapter 2.

So what this means is that Nahum wanted God's people to know that someone would eventually come who would bring peace to Judah and enable her to restore her worship and bring complete righteousness to Israel and the world.

So even though at the time things weren't looking too good for God's people, He wanted them to know that He would take care of all their enemies and raise them up to a state of glory and splendor.

That is a wonderful thing to know because there are nations and there are political leaders who have gained their power and authority by promoting wicked and evil things and by oppressing those who stand against them. These people who seem to have this power hate God's word and hate God's truth. When you see them you can lose sight of the fact that God is in control of these powers.

One reason why God permits these kinds of people to be in power temporarily is that He uses them as a disciplinary tool against His people who have wandered far away from Him and His word.

What Nahum does is tell the rest of the story as to what God will do to those who were those powers and leaders who did things against His people. After He is done using them, God makes it very clear, I will destroy them.

That is exactly what is described here:

AFTER GOD IS DONE USING WICKED POLITICAL LEADERS AND POWERS WHO HAVE BEEN AGAINST HIM AND HIS OWN PEOPLE, HE WILL TARGET THEM AND ATTACK THEM AND DESTROY THEM.

In chapter 1, God informs His people that He sovereignly determines Nineveh's destruction.

In chapter 2, God gives His people a sovereign description of Nineveh's destruction.

In chapter 3, God gives His people His sovereign defense for Nineveh's destruction.

I would not want to be a President, Vice President, Senator, Congressman, Governor, or Mayor over anyone if I didn't care about God and His word. Here is why.

God makes it clear in this book that He has given them their power, not because they love Him and His word, but because He is using them for His sovereign purposes. **This book says God puts people in power that don't love Him and His word and once He is has accomplished what He wants with them, He is going to target them, attack them and destroy them.**

Nineveh was the capital city of the Assyrian Empire. They dominated the world. For over 100 years Assyria had waged war against the world. Their political leaders were the powerful leaders of the world. God permitted them to be in power and do the negative things they were doing for a time and Nahum comes and says time's just about up. Here is what God is going to do to you.

The book of Nahum is a warning book to all those whom God has permitted to be in power who do not care about Him or His word. He actually permits these people to be in power to do negative things against His people. After God has accomplished what He intends to accomplish with that power or individual, He will specifically come after them and destroy them.

Now there are some key observations we want to make about what God will do to those who have used their power against His word and His people. This is a remarkable chapter and there are four observations we want to make:

OBSERVATION #1 – God will specifically send an attacker against Nineveh. **2:1**

What God says in this verse is that I am going to send a specific person and power to come up against you. **The word “scatter” is a word that not only means scatter, but also shatter. It was a term used by the prophets to describe a devastating judgment (Isaiah 24:1; Jer. 52:8).**

This is a very specific judgment. God says I am going to target Nineveh and the Assyrians and destroy it. This is very specific and very individual. This is not some abstract promise of judgment.

God says to the leader, you will see it coming. You can watch the road and you can summon all your strength to watch your back and you will not stop it.

In 614 BC, Cyaxerxes, king of the Medes, came up against Nineveh and conquered the suburbs. Then two years later in 612 BC, the Babylonians and Medes merged together to attack Nineveh and destroyed it. All the Assyrians could do was to watch it happen. They could not stop it.

When as God's people we see godless and ruthless leaders in power over us, stay faithful to the Lord and watch what will happen to them. We need to be the faithful remnant that stays focused on God and His word. As we do that and as we wait and watch, we will see God target those who were godless and wicked and He will track them down and destroy them.

They may have their shining moment in the sun, but the sun will set and the lights will go out.

OBSERVATION #2 – God will specifically restore His people to a splendor level. **2:2**

The truth is when Israel was being dominated by the Assyrians, they were anything but a nation of splendor. Nahum makes a remarkable prediction and promise to God's people here. No matter who is in power or what that power does to the people of God, God will always raise up His people and restore them.

These Assyrians were hurting God's people economically, politically and militarily. There was no way they could stand up to this corrupt world power and win.

God says to His people, you stay focused on Me and I will see to it you do win. I will restore you to a splendor level. The way to understand splendor is to understand it as majestic and glorious splendor. This is an amazing promise God is making to His people.

God says as I am tracking down and destroying the evil leaders and powers, I will also elevate and prosper My faithful people.

Notice the double proper nouns God uses for His people “Jacob” and “Israel.” This refers to the nation as a whole, both the north and the south. Two images that God often uses for His people is the image of the vine and the branches.

This is a specific promise that God will eventually completely restore the Nation Israel to a splendor level. There will come a day when Israel will be seen as the glorious nation of God.

Even though I have permitted them to go through some devastating things, God says I will raise them up to a level of splendor.

So as God is in the process of bringing destruction on those against Him and His people, He is also in the process of restoration and exaltation to His people.

Now this will not be completely fulfilled until Israel is in the Millennium after the Tribulation. Jesus Christ will return and will bring splendor back to His nation.

OBSERVATION #3 – God will bring a thorough, specific judgment against Nineveh. **2:3-4**

Nahum remarkably and specifically predicts the exact data concerning the judgment of Nineveh. This is precise, this is scary and ferocious. Nahum actually saw the specific judgment that God would bring against Nineveh and those leaders, who were responsible for the wicked things.

Nahum is making these predictions in 650-645 BC and by 612 BC, everything Nahum predicts had completely come true.

Nineveh was a city that covered about 1,800 acres, which is about three miles. The population of the city and suburbia area was about 600,000 plus people.

Prediction #1 - The intimidating dressed soldiers will come to destroy you. **2:3a**

What is very clear from this prediction is that God sovereignly controls who He uses and He even knows what they will wear when He uses them. Talk about sovereign foreknowledge; here it is.

The shields will be red and the warriors will be wearing scarlet. What is amazing is that this is exactly the color code of the Median army. They carried red dyed leather shields and they wore scarlet uniforms.

By referring to the red shields and scarlet uniforms, it certainly is consistent with the thought that also indicates they would shed much blood.

Prediction #2 - The intimidating armed soldiers will come to destroy you. **2:3b-4**

They would come with chariots that looked like flashing steel and they would have cypress spears brandished. Cypress wood is strong wood that was the best for spears. Just the sight of this army would scare you.

Charles Feinberg said that the Assyrians would extend blades out from the wheels of a chariot and as they would charge forward, those blades would glisten in the sun and also cut anything they hit to shred (*The Minor Prophets*, p. 194).

Nahum says the enemy will come fast and furious. They will race the streets and attack with lightning fast speed. It is predicted that this will be, as one commentator said, a “wild frenzy.”

By the way, there have been those who have said that this prophecy describes and predicts the existence of automobiles. Some had said it describes many automobiles driving and causing traffic congestion. As Dr. Feinberg said such an interpretation “is ridiculous and does more harm than good” (*Ibid.*, p. 194).

Actually during the Great Tribulation, travel by automobile will become rare because as God destroys the earth, things will become very primitive to a survival mode. Roads will be destroyed. Power will be completely gone. There will be no electricity or ability to produce or get gas. So during the Tribulation, people will be traveling by foot or horse.

Prediction #3 - The nobles are remembered and they do not escape. **2:5**

The nobles refer to the leaders. People will turn to the leaders for help when God sends His judgment but they will not be able to help. They will look to their best commandos, but they won't be able to help. They will try to come up with a plan, but will stumble in everything they do.

It is sad to see a leader stumble. At this point, they will all stumble. The point is they think they can come up with a way of escape and they will all stumble.

They truly believe they have come up with a plan to get away. God says, no way. You can try to get to your place of safety, but it will not work.

Prediction #4 - The gates of destruction are opened and they are destroyed. **2:6**

By bringing up the rivers, one is bringing up the sovereignty of God who controls the rivers. The Tigris River flowed very near Nineveh's walls. In fact, two of the tributaries, the Khosr and the Tebiltu, passed through the city proper. The gates of the river that they had constructed controlled the flow of it.

It would appear that what the enemy would do would be to open the gates and flood the city to the point that the palace would be destroyed. God permitted the water level to rise and it literally caused the bricks and mud of the gates and palace to dissolve.

The point to see here is God is sovereignly predicting and controlling exactly what the enemy would do to destroy the enemy of His people. There was not one thing they could do to stop it.

OBSERVATION #4 – God has fixed this judgment. **2:7**

The judgment had been decreed by God. Understand this point, when God decrees something, it is done. He does not change His mind. There is no chance to reverse a decree. God can come up with a new decree but He cannot change an old decree. God had decreed a judgment against Nineveh. It would not be pleasant for one who at one time had been a dominant leader of the world.

Truth is powerful people surround themselves with others who think they are safe and important and impressive because they are connected to the dominant power. What they don't realize is that they are targets. Targets God will shoot down:

Prediction #1 - The power would be stripped. She would be stripped of her prominence, power.

Prediction #2 - The power would be carried away.

Prediction #3 - The power would end up moaning.

Prediction #4 - The power would end up humiliated.

The idea of beating breasts is the idea of being in humiliating distress.

If God permits a leader to be in power, he had better think very seriously about doing what is right before God, because if he doesn't, God will target him and destroy him.

God has made a decree that we are sinful in Adam and are heading to condemnation. He cannot reverse it. But He has also made a new decree that we may be declared righteous in Jesus Christ and He cannot reverse that either. Believe on Jesus Christ and you will be forever saved and you have a promise that God will eventually destroy your enemies.