

Sermon, October 16, 2011
“Big Help”, Nahum 1:12-15
Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy

The Books of Prophecy

- Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
- Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, **Nahum**, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

Overview of Nahum:

- The prophet Nahum is the likely author;
- Nahum means “comfort”.
- The time of the writings is around 650 BC.
- Roughly within 4 generations, 100 years, after Jonah’s preaching and Nineveh’s repentance, they once again fall back into idol worship and violence (3:1-4)
- The prophecy of Nahum is a straightforward judgment, condemnation, and destruction of the Assyrians and their capital city of Nineveh, which eventually occurred in 612BC.
- The prophecy was a comfort to Judah, who feared the cruel Assyrians.
- **Overall Outline of Nahum:**
 - I. God is Awesome in Power (Ch. 1)
 - II. The Downfall of Nineveh (Ch. 2)
 - III. Nineveh’s Complete Destruction (Ch. 3)

Major Themes of Micah:

- God’s patience in exercising His judgment.
- God avenging His people.
- God will ultimately protect His people.

The message of Nahum is that our God is a God of justice, a big help in the face of big problems, and giver of peace.

1. God is big enough to take care of any problem.

Nahum 1:12 - 13

- ¹² Thus says the LORD, "Though they are at full strength and many, they will be cut off and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more. ¹³ And now I will break off his yoke from you and snap the bonds that bind you."
- Assyrian power was at its peak during the time of Nahum. The borders of her power reached all the way to Egypt.
- The capital city of Nineveh was centrally located between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. It was across the river from the modern-day major city of Mosul, Iraq, on the eastern bank of the Tigris in ancient Assyria.
- By all standards, Nineveh was immense. Archeological finds show the walls of the city to be at least eight miles long and some say 60 miles.
- God sent Jonah 100 years prior to preach repentance to the city. They listened and changed their ways, but it did not last. Their ruthless violence and idol worship emerged once again.
- The Assyrians had captured the northern kingdom of Israel and were a constant scourge to Judah. ...Big Problem!
- God exercised patience with Assyria, but now was calling for the destruction of Judah’s enemy which would occur within 40 years.
- Just as Egyptian, Canaanite, Philistine, Hittite power would end, so would Assyria’s. God has a history of delivering His people. **Psalm 30:2, Psalm 33:20, Psalm 46:1**
- There is no adversary big enough to out-big God

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2. **God will not tolerate evil to triumph.**

Nahum 1:14

- ¹⁴ *The LORD has commanded concerning you: “Your name shall be perpetuated no longer; from the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the cast image. I will make your grave, for you are worthless.”*
- Nahum established the fact that the sovereign God (1:2–5) would bring vengeance upon those who violated His law (1:8,14; 3:5–7).
- God hates evil and requires the same of us.
- **Psalm 97:10** ¹⁰ *Hate evil, you who love the LORD, Who preserves the souls of His godly ones; He delivers them from the hand of the wicked.*
- The message of judgment has been throughout Scripture.
- God’s holiness is such that He cannot and will not tolerate evil.

3. **Fear God enough that you fear no one else!**

• **Proverbs 8:13-14**

- The God of the universe is a God of goodness, mercy, kindness, AND justice!
- He is not some bearded grandfather-like figure up in the sky somewhere.
- He is God! He is to be feared in the Biblical sense, revered, respected, honored, as one who indeed holds the balance of not just your life, but all life in His hands.
- Roughly 900 years prior to Nahum God declared His 10 commandments. Consider the first two...
- **Exodus 20:1-6**
- God is ruler of all, but your Father; Creator of Heaven and earth, but your redeemer; awesome King of the universe, but your help and deliverer who loves you and desires a loving relationship with you.
- If you have a healthy “fear” of the Lord, understanding who it is you are in relationship with, you need not fear anyone else!

4. **The people of God will be at peace.**

Nahum 1:15

- ¹⁵ *Look! On the mountains the feet of one who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, O Judah, fulfill your vows, for never again shall the wicked invade you; they are utterly cut off.*
- The same God had a avenging judgment against evil which is also redemptive, bestowing His loving kindnesses upon the faithful. The prophecy brought comfort to Judah and all who feared the cruel Assyrians.¹
- **Nahum 1:7** ⁷ *The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him.*
- Isaiah, 150 prior to Nahum speaks of the same feet who brings good news. **Isaiah 52:7**
- Good news travels fast it is said. The kingdom of God is a kingdom of peace through Christ.
- **John 14:27** ²⁷ *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.*

5. **Conclusion**

- God is big enough to take care of any problem you have in His time and in His way.
- He will always help and will never tolerate evil.
- When you understand the immense power of God and revere Him as truly the Lord of your life...
- You will have peace, now and forever.
- ***The message of Nahum is that our God is a God of justice, a big help in the face of big problems, and giver of peace.***

¹MacArthur, John Jr: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. Na 1:1