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## Nahum 3

(2019)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Nahum 3.

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### Topics.

- Woe to Nineveh the bloody city.
- The crack of the LORD'S whip and the rumble of the LORD'S chariots.
- The LORD will lift the skirts of Nineveh over their face.
- Nineveh will find no comforter.
- The inhabitants of Nineveh will be taken captive.
- Nineveh's fortress will fall.
- Nineveh troops will have no strength in battle.
- The characteristics of the locust.
- Nineveh's treasure and wealth will be taken.
- Nineveh is in extreme pain.

**INTRODUCTION:** to the book of Nahum, when Jonah preached repentance on the streets of Nineveh (the capital of Assyria) the people responded and were spared. A century later (about 650 B.C.), Nahum preached in a time when Nineveh would not repent. Nineveh, which had destroyed Israel's Northern Kingdom (the ten tribes) in 722, would itself fall to Babylon in 612—just a few years after Nahum's warning. The Assyrians were notorious for their brutal treatment of other nations. Nahum declared, however, that God is sovereign and punishes whom he will and that nations are powerless to stop him. Much of Nahum's prophecy was directed to the people of Judah, who could rejoice at the good news (1:15) of Nineveh's impending fall.

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

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### NAHUM 3:1

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#### Woe to Nineveh the Bloody City.

- **Nahum 3:1:** Woe to the bloody city (Nineveh), all full of lies and plunder—no end to the prey!
- Verse seventeen shows the focus is Nineveh.
- Verse eighteen shows the vision concerns Assyria.

Nineveh became rich through lies deceit and destroying other nations.

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### NAHUM 3:2-4

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#### The crack of the LORD'S whip and Rumble of the LORD'S Chariots.

- **Nahum 3:2-4:** The crack of the whip (of the LORD'S army), and rumble of the wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot! <sup>3</sup>Horsemen charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, hosts of slain, heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end—they stumble over the bodies! (In the city of Nineveh) <sup>4</sup>And all for the countless whorings of the prostitute (Nineveh), graceful and of deadly charms, who betrays nations with her whorings, and peoples with her charms.

The crack of the whip, the rumble of the wheel, galloping horses and bounding chariots all refer to the LORD'S army which is at this time is the fierce armies of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. The following are some examples of God using secular nations to achieve His plans and purposes:

- God actually paid Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon wages because he and his armies laboured and worked for God. The land of Egypt was the wages God paid King Nebuchadnezzar (Ezek. 29:18-20).
- God used Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon to Judge Tyre and Egypt (Ezekiel 26:7) (Ezekiel 30:10).
- The LORD says, He will strengthen the King of Babylon by putting God's sword in his hand (Ezek. 30:24-25).
- God calls the armies of a secular nation that He is about to use to execute His word of judgment on His people because of their gross sins, their rebellion, their idols and worship of pagan gods, His army (Joel 2:11).
- The armies of secular nations that destroyed Jerusalem and defeated Israel and Judah throughout history God calls His great army which He sent among them (Joel 2:25).

Nahum in his vision see the future destruction of Nineveh, the city has become so powerful and has so much influence over the nations that her leaders and government is able to deceive by deceptive and charming (seductive and enticing) speeches the surrounding nations and those allied to her.

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### NAHUM 3:5

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#### **The LORD will lift the Skirts of Nineveh over their Face.**

- **Nahum 3:5:** Behold, I am against you (Nineveh), 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 is a really graphic picture of total shame, for someone else to pull a woman's dress above her head is the ultimate embarrassment, and here God says He is going to do it to the nation of Nineveh in public.

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### NAHUM 3:6-7

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#### **Nineveh will find no Comforter.**

- **Nahum 3:6-7:** I (the LORD) will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. <sup>7</sup>And all who look at you will shrink from you and say, Wasted is Nineveh; who will grieve for her? Where shall I seek comforters for you?

When God's army invades Nineveh there will be no nation to help, support or comfort the inhabitants of the city. The reason Nineveh could not find comfort was because of their unceasing evil and oppression they inflicted on the people (see Nahum 3:19 and the footnote).

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### NAHUM 3:8-10

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#### **The inhabitants of Nineveh will be taken Captive.**

- **Nahum 3:8-10:** Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile, with water around her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall? <sup>9</sup>Cush was her strength; Egypt too, and that without limit; Put and the Libyans were her helpers. <sup>10</sup>Yet she (Thebes) became an exile; she went into captivity; her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of every street; for her honored men lots were cast, and all her great men were bound in chains.

**Thebes:** was the capital of Egypt during the imperial splendour of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Jeremiah declared that the LORD is “bringing judgment upon Amon of Thebes”, and Ezekiel stated that the LORD, “Will execute acts of judgment upon Thebes” and will “Cut off the multitude of Thebes.

- Nahum is using the calamity of Thebes as an object lesson for Nineveh.

**Cush, Egypt, Put and Libya:** were all strong nations protecting Thebes, yet the people of Thebes were taken captive by her enemies. Nahum is asking Nineveh what makes them think they are any safer than Thebes? Especially since Thebes had such strong nations supporting her.

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## NAHUM 3:11-12

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### Nineveh's Fortress will Fall.

- **Nahum 3:11-12:** You (Nineveh) also will be drunken (like Thebes) (v8); you will go into hiding; you will seek a refuge from the enemy. <sup>12</sup>All your fortresses are like fig trees with first-ripe figs—if shaken they fall into the mouth of the eater.

All Nineveh's fortresses are like nothing before the LORD'S armies, the people of Nineveh will be in absolute terror of the invading army. Eventually Nineveh was conquered by the Babylonians and later the Medes.

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## NAHUM 3:13-15

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### Nineveh Troops will have no Strength in Battle.

- **Nahum 3:13-15:** Behold, your (Nineveh) troops are women in your midst. The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has devoured your bars. <sup>14</sup>Draw water for the siege; strengthen your forts; go into the clay; tread the mortar; take hold of the brick mold! <sup>15</sup>There will the fire devour you; the sword will cut you off. It will devour you like the locust. Multiply yourselves like the locust; multiply like the grasshopper!

Locusts are a symbol of a vast multitude of destroyers. In (Joel 2:20) they are called a northern army (Joel 2:20) and refer to Babylon, they are also given the following titles:

- A nation powerful and beyond number (Joel 1:6).
- A great and powerful people (Joel 2:2).
- The northern army (Joel 2:20).
- My (God's) great army (Joel 2:25).

All these titles refer to Babylon and its allies. In the book of Jeremiah God calls Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon His servant (Jer. 25:1-2; 9-11) and in Joel God refers to the armies of Babylon as “My great army” (Joel 2:25). The locusts spoken of in Joel's prophetic message are the armies and nations of the following verses:

- The nation that comes against God's land, powerful and beyond number. (Joel 1:6-7).
- A great and powerful people spread on God's Holy Mountain when the Day of the LORD is near. (Joel 2:1-2).
- God's great Army which is powerful and executes God's word. (Joel 2:11).
- My (God's) great army, which He sent among you (Judah). (Joel 2:25).

The LORD punished Judah by using His servant Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon and his great armies (see Jeremiah chapter 49, 50, 51, 52).

**The characteristics of the locust:** the locust is one of over five thousand species of grasshopper specially adapted for long migratory flights. They must flap their wings and jump high to get airborne, because of the weight of their bodies, but once in flight they are able to fly long distances. There are numberless swarms of locust, particularly the species that infests oriental countries. The locust will eat almost anything; they travel in huge numbers capable of destroying entire fields of cultivated plants and any nearby vegetation. Their wings make a clattering sound as they travel and in approaching swarms, they create an ominous hum. There are times when the swarms are so large, they block out the sunlight. Locusts are normally shy, solitary creatures, but in a swarm, they are an unstoppable moving cloud of millions of flying grasshoppers capable of stripping fields of crops in a matter of hours.

For these reasons, the locust is a fitting symbol for the power and destructive might of Babylon's armies and her allies. The Oxford team has found that "hot-spots" on the hind legs of the locusts are stimulated when they group together turning the relatively harmless insects into destructive pests. Even today millions of locusts have swarmed across several countries presenting major problems in the Middle East and many South African Nations. In the town of Eilat (a popular place with British tourists) thousands of dead locusts were found piled up in swimming pools.

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### NAHUM 3:16-18

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#### **Nineveh's Treasure and Wealth will be Taken.**

- **Nahum 3:16-18:** You (Nineveh) increased your merchants more than the stars of the heavens. The locust spreads its wings and flies away. <sup>17</sup>Your princes are like grasshoppers, your scribes like clouds of locusts settling on the fences in a day of cold—when the sun rises, they fly away; no one knows where they are. <sup>18</sup>Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to gather them.

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Nineveh was an abundantly wealthy and rich city, but it does not protect them. Nahum in his vision sees everything Nineveh has achieved and gained is taken from them they are like an extremely rich man who has been robbed of everything he possessed. We can be deceived by a nation's wealth and power over multitudes of other nations, but just because a nation has tremendous power, wealth and awesome weapons of war does not guarantee its inhabitants are safe. When the cup of iniquity is full and God intervenes in the history of mankind to judge, no nation can withstand His plans and purposes or His awesome power.

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### NAHUM 3:19

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#### **Nineveh is in Extreme Pain.**

- **Nahum 3:19:** There is no easing your (Nineveh) 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?

The cruelty of the Assyrians is almost beyond belief. Their policy seems to have been one of brutal cruelty and calculated terror. Their own pictures show captives staked to the ground and being skinned alive! Some modern critics take issue with Nahum's theology, saying that such vengeful expressions are far from the spirit of the Gospel, but if it was wrong for Nahum to rejoice at Nineveh's fall, what shall be said of the heavenly throng of (Rev 19:1-6)?

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### NOTES ON NAHUM

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Nineveh/Assyria has plundered and oppressed Israel so the LORD is going to use Babylon to plunder and destroy Nineveh.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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