

## Study Prophecy – Become Prophetic (7)

### Nahum: “The Lord Is...”

*Nahum 1:2–3, 7*

There was a man who died and entered heaven.

At the gate, someone came out and greeted him with a big smile.

“Welcome! Nice to meet you. I’m Nahum.”

The newcomer said, “I’m sorry... who did you say?”

Nahum replied, “The prophet, you know—the Book of Nahum in the Bible? I wrote that.”

The man scratched his head.

“There’s a book of Nahum in the Bible?”

### **And that, my friends, is exactly our problem with Nahum.**

Of all the minor prophets, Nahum might be the least visited, least quoted, least understood.

If you open your Bible, the pages around Nahum are probably clean, with no highlights, and still smell new—but let me “comfort” you: you are not alone.

But today, we’re going to change that.

We’re going to pull this forgotten scroll out of the dusty corner, because Nahum has a powerful and timely word for us:

**God sees. God judges. God will bring His victory of justice. And God will comfort His people.**

Even his name, *Nahum*, means “comfort.”

(Let’s pray.)

To understand Nahum, we need to step into one of the most dramatic moments in ancient history.

So everyone here—use your imagination with me for the next few minutes.

For more than 300 years, the **Assyrian Empire** was the superpower of the world.

Think of the most powerful country you can imagine today... (probably USA). Then imagine everyone being *terrified* of them.

Because Assyria ruled not with **peace**, but with **horror**.

- They burned cities.

- They skinned leaders alive.
- They cut off hands, noses, and ears.
- They piled skulls at city gates.
- They deported entire populations.

If you lived in that time and wanted to tell your children a nighttime scary story, you didn't need monsters or ghosts. You just needed to say, "The Assyrians are coming," and kids would hide under the blankets.

Israelites were not free from this horror and suffering.

Last Sunday, we heard from **Micah** that the Assyrians destroyed the **Northern Kingdom of Israel. Samaria fell in 722 BC**, and the northern kingdom disappeared.

**Judah** in the south barely survived.

In 701 BC, the Assyrians destroyed 46 cities in Judah and deported about 200,000 people.

Micah's hometown, Moresheth, was one of them.

That's why I told you Micah was a weeping and grieving prophet.

The point is: During this era, **Assyria felt invincible**.

And its capital, **Nineveh**, was the beating heart of that power—huge walls, massive population, strong armies.

So, humanly speaking, Nineveh looked **untouchable**.

But in 612 BC, something unthinkable happened.

**Nineveh fell.**

A combined force of Babylonians, Medes, and Scythians surrounded this "unbreakable" city and brought it down. Nineveh was gone.

Now, do you think people around the world were happy or sad?

Of course, they were thrilled. To most of the people, this was not a tragedy—it was justice.

They probably thought, "**At last, they're getting a taste of their own medicine.**"

But remember—that's **612 BC**.

Here's the question:

When do think Nahum wrote this book?

Before or after the fall of Nineveh?

Look at chapter 1:1:

**“A prophecy concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.”**

So, it's a “prophecy”; it's a vision – meaning, it's not a report of what *already* happened; it's a book about what is going to happen.

Most scholars think Nahum wrote this book somewhere between 660 and 630 BC.

It means, when Nahum wrote this book:

- Nineveh is still dominating.
- The Assyrians are still ruling with horror and terror.
- The empire looks untouchable and unshakeable.
- And Judah was still a minor, harassed and suffered from them.

And yet, Nahum stands up—and says:

**“This empire is going to fall. God is going to judge them.”**

**People**, this is a **courageous voice**.

It reminds me of another courageous voice—**William Tyndale**.

Fast-forward to the early 1500s.

During that era, the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church controlled access to Scripture. It was illegal—a capital crime—to translate the Bible into English.

Only Latin Bibles were allowed—and most people don't even understand Latin. So, only the very few can read the Bible.

The authorities thought ordinary people were too unlearned to read God's Word for themselves.

To challenge that system was like challenging Nineveh. Unthinkable. Dangerous.

But William Tyndale saw another reality. He believed God wanted everyone - even a farm boy - to know Scripture better than the priests.

He famously said:

**“If God spares my life, I will cause a boy who drives the plow to know more of the Scriptures than the pope.”**

...

He was alone, hunted, exiled, betrayed—and yet, he pressed on and translated the New Testament into English.

The authorities were furious. They not only burned his books but they burned people who were caught reading them.

Eventually, they captured Tyndale.

In 1536, they strangled him and burned his body.

His last prayer was:

**“Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.”**

And here’s something striking.

Within three years, his translation became the foundation of the first authorized English Bible - the King James Bible.

This “invincible” system fell.

And that voice became one of the bedrocks of the Reformation.

Just like Tyndale, Nahum spoke against a dominating empire. He declared its fall and God’s judgment while it still looked undefeatable.

The question is then:

**Where did Nahum get that courage?**

**How could he stand with a message against the power of his day?**

We find the clue in his message.

**Before Nahum says anything about Nineveh, he talks about God first.**

**Before his eyes were looking at the world, his eyes were fixed onto the Lord.**

**Before he hears the rumors of this world, he gave his heart and ears to the Word of God.**

Look at Nahum 1:2–3: He is keep saying, the Lord is...

**“The Lord is a jealous and avenging God;  
the Lord takes vengeance and is filled with wrath.  
The Lord takes vengeance on his foes  
and vents his wrath against his enemies.  
The Lord is slow to anger but great in power;  
the Lord will not leave the guilty unpunished.”**

And verses 7–8:

**“The Lord is good,  
a refuge in times of trouble.  
He cares for those who trust in him,  
but with an overwhelming flood  
he will make an end of Nineveh;  
he will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness.”**

So, who is the Lord? Let’s say it together:

- The Lord is **slow to anger**.
- The Lord is **great in power**.
- The Lord is **good**.
- The Lord is a **refuge**.
- The Lord will **not leave the guilty unpunished**.

Nahum’s understanding of God is this:

God is not distant.

God is not passive.

He is not a silent spectator.

God is the **Divine Warrior**—in His *kairos* time, He will step into our *chronos* time to confront evil and redeem His people.

Nahum is proclaiming:

**The God who once humbled Egypt—that God will rise again.**

**Because He will not let evil take the final say. God Himself will. And He will share that victory with His people.**

Nahum went further.

The God he worshipped is not only great in power, but **slow to anger**.

Our God is patient and merciful.

That's why God gave Assyria chance after chance—including the revival through Jonah about 100 years before Nahum.

But guess what? Their cruelty, idolatry, and pride came back, filled their cup, until God said, "Enough."

So Nineveh's fall is not a random accident in international relations. It is the consequence of their sin and evil.

Listen to what God says:

"Doom to Murder City— full of lies, bursting with loot, addicted to violence! Horns blaring, wheels clattering, horses rearing, chariots lurching, Horsemen galloping, brandishing swords and spears, Dead bodies rotting in the street, corpses stacked like cordwood, Bodies in every gutter and alley, clogging every intersection! And whores! Whores without end! Whore City, Fatally seductive, you're the Witch of Seduction, luring nations to their ruin with your evil spells." (3:1–4, MSG)

Here, God explains Nineveh as a city soaked in violence, lies, greed, and evil—so, God announces doom because their wickedness cannot stand forever.

And here is the point.

When evil reaches its fullness, God—who is just—steps in to stop it, and bring His justice.

This book ends in this way.

Now, it almost sounds like a **funeral song** over the city:

"King of Assyria, your shepherds slumber;  
your nobles lie down to rest (referring to their death).

Your people are scattered on the mountains  
with no one to gather them.

Nothing can heal you;

your wound is fatal.  
 All who hear the news about you  
 clap their hands at your fall,  
 for who has not felt  
 your endless cruelty?” (3:18-19)

**So, what a tragic ending of once a great empire?**

And I want you to note how this book ends. It ends with a question mark.  
 So, we don't hear anything about rebuilding of Nineveh.  
 Or, a story like “and somehow things dramatically changed and they all lived happily ever after.”

**No, just ruins... and a question mark.**

So, just like Jonah, this book ends open; **do you know why?** Because God now turns the question toward **us**.

**This is important.**

What we need to catch from this book is **Nineveh is not just *them*. It's *us*.**

You may say, “Wait a minute, I never conquered nations!” True. But you *have* judged people.  
 You may not have piled up skulls, but you've probably held grudge, or often, killed someone in your heart, if not with your lips.

You may not bow to idols of stone or a golden calf, but you may bow to **idols of pleasure, power, and control.**

If we're honest, we all have the **Ninevite issue** – the issue of **pride, greed, cruelty, and idolatry.**

That's why Paul says:

**“There is no one righteous, not even one.”** (Rom. 3:10)

**“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”** (Rom. 3:23)

What's the consequence of our sins?

We carry: shame, guilt, wounds, fear, and dishonesty.

How many times we live behind our masks - pretending I'm okay, or I'm a good person, but inside we know I have some serious problems - problems of lust, problems of anger, problems of joylessness, thanklessness, restlessness.

Nineveh's story is, in many ways, the story of what every human heart may experience as we live in our sins and fleeing from God and His holiness.

So when Nahum says,  
 "Your people are scattered... with no one to gather them.  
 Nothing can heal you; your wound is fatal,"  
 we should *tremble*.

**Because God has not changed.**

**God is still just.**

**God stills sees everything.**

**And God really "will not leave the guilty unpunished."**

**And my friends, that's a serious truth if you really think about that.  
 That God will not leave the guilty unpunished.**

**God is the same yesterday, today and forever.**

The God of Nahum—the jealous, avenging, divine warrior God—is the same God today that we are worshipping right now.

He still hates sin.

He still opposes the prideful.

He still will not let evil have the last word.

And He will punish that evil.

Can anyone here say, "That's great. I'm ready for that day. Come O Lord, because I'm not one of them."?

**My friends, here's something striking.**

**Because about 700 years after Nahum preached, this same God does something utterly shocking.**



He comes to us in the person of **Jesus Christ**.

Now this Divine Warrior becomes the **Suffering Servant** of Calvary.

It means before He comes again as the final **Judge**, He first came as the **Savior**.

Before He comes again with a sword to **crush** His enemies, He first **died** on a cross *for* His enemies.

**At the cross, Jesus is dealing with all the “Nineveh issues” that we all have.**

- **He takes our pride.**
- **He carries our guilt.**
- **He bears our shame.**
- **He touches our wounds.**

My friends, God’s justice did not disappear—it fell on **Jesus**.

The cup you and I must drink—the cup of death and eternal punishment—Jesus took it and drank it for us.

So where Nahum says, “There is no healing for your wound,”

we now have the gospel, “**By His wounds we are healed.**” (Isaiah 53:5)

Where Nahum leaves us that Nineveh’s ending was ruins and no restoration,

we now hear the different ending that “**if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!**” (2 Cor. 5:17).

Hallelujah!

Now, today is Thanksgiving Sunday—and honestly, before I began working on this sermon, I wondered,

‘**How in the world does the book of Nahum connect to Thanksgiving?**’ I had no clue.

But guess what. God is so faithfulness and amazing.

**Because Nahum gives us a pivotal message about thanksgiving.**

And that is:

**We Give Thanks – Not Because Our Circumstance Is Perfect but Because our God is Perfect.**

**When Nahum preached, you heard that Judah’s situation did not look good:  
Assyria was still in power.  
Judah was still small and vulnerable.  
The world was still violent and unstable.**

**And yet God says through Nahum:**

**“Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, Judah...” (Nahum 1:15)**

In other words, God speaking: **Keep worshiping, Judah. Keep thanking Me, Judah. Keep trusting Me, Judah.**

Hear me on this.  
Their thanksgiving was not based on everything being easy.

**It was based on the character and promises of God.**

**In the same way, our thanksgiving today is not rooted in a perfect world or a perfect year, or perfect self, but in a perfect Savior.**

My friends, we don’t give thanks because life is simple and easy.

**We give thanks because our God is faithful.**

**Indeed, Nahum is a “comforter.”**

Because his message **comforts** us not because he reminds who our enemies are, but who our God is:

**God is not a distant.**

**God is not a silent spectator watching you from far away.**

**God sees you.**

**God knows you.**

**God understands you.**

**And our God is Divine Warrior.  
He is just and punishes evil.  
In the meantime,  
God is patient and slow to anger.  
God loves us — that's why God sent His Son,  
we call Him Jesus,  
He came to love, heal and forgive  
He lived and died to buy my pardon  
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives.**

**Because He lives I can face tomorrow  
Because He lives, all fear is gone  
Because I know He holds the future  
And life is worth the living just because He lives.**

Beloved, Christ has promised that He will come again.  
Evil will end.  
Every Nineveh will fall.  
Every tear will be wiped away.

So even if today, we hear about wars and rumors of wars...  
even when we still see injustice in our communities or feel the weight of suffering in our own families...or, in our own bodies and minds,  
even when life feels in a rush, uncertain, or overwhelming...

**we can still say:**

**“Lord, You are not done yet. You will bring perfect justice. You will bring perfect peace.  
And in Christ, I am safe in Your hands.” So, thanks be to God!**

**Before we close, let me leave you with two simple takeaways.**

**First**, as you will enjoy your Thanksgiving meal today, turn to two people near you—on your left and your right—and share *one thing* God has been faithful in this year. Even if it was a hard year. Especially if it was a hard year.

**Thanksgiving begins with remembering God.**

**Second**, in a moment, I will invite you to the Holy Communion.

If the Holy Spirit reveals any part of the “Nineveh heart” in you—pride, greed, grudges, idols you love more than Jesus... and therefore, if you’re still carrying shame, guilt, wounds, or fear—bring them to Jesus as you come forward to the Holy Communion.

Lay them at His feet.

Believe that He truly loves you,

He longs to forgive you,

He is able to heal you,

and He delights to make you new.

**“The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.”**

(Nahum 1:7)

Let’s pray.

**Heavenly Father,**

We thank You for speaking to us today through this often-forgotten prophet Nahum.

Thank You for reminding us that You are holy, just, patient, powerful, and good.

Thank You that You see every injustice, every wound, every fear—and that You act in Your perfect time.

Lord, we tremble at the thought of standing before You on our own.

But we rejoice that through Jesus Christ, the Divine Warrior became our Suffering Savior.

Thank You that on the Cross, He carried our pride, our guilt, our shame, and our sin.

Thank You that by His wounds, we are healed.

So, on this Thanksgiving Sunday, help us give thanks not because everything around us is perfect,

but because **You** are perfect and faithful.

Holy Spirit, continue to form us into a prophetic people—people who see the world through Your eyes,

who speak truth with courage,

who walk in humility,

and who trust You alone when empires rise and fall.

In the name of Jesus Christ—our refuge, our healer, and our coming King—we pray.

**Amen.**