

NAHUM 3

REVIEW...

▪ THE BOOK OF NAHUM

- o Nahum was written as a judgment against the city of Nineveh – **Nahum 1:1**
 - Nineveh (*Mosul in Iraq*) was the capitol of the then superpower – Assyrian Empire...
 - The book of Nahum is broken up into 3 sections – each contained in one of 3 chapters...
 - Chapter 1 – The certainty of the judgment of the Lord
 - Chapter 2 – The description of the judgment of the Lord
 - Chapter 3 – The reason for the judgment of the Lord
- o The Certainty of Judgment
 - Nahum began with 5 powerful descriptions of God...
 - God is Jealous / the LORD avenges - He is the Lord of fury / but the LORD is slow to anger...
 - The LORD has great power – the earthquakes in His presence – who can stand before Him!
 - The LORD is either: A strong tower / OR the LORD is an overflowing flood – our choice!
 - The Assyrians thought - they could conspire against the LORD...
 - But Nahum had good news for Judah – Assyria was doomed!
- o The Description of Judgment...
 - Man the fort! Watch the road! Nahum warned Assyria to mount their defenses...
 - He (*Babylon*) that scatters has come before your face...
 - Beginning in June of 612 B.C. the Babylonians and Medes began a 3-month siege of Nineveh!
 - Nahum describes in detail the military might of Assyria – soldiers / chariot – but all in vain...
 - The end had already been determined – Nineveh / Assyria would be conquered!
 - Nahum was given these details some 50 years before they actually occurred!
- o The fall of Nineveh...
 - The gates of the river are opened – speaking of the flood that destroyed the walls...
 - Nineveh is like a leaking water reservoir (*sinking ship*) - the people are fleeing...
 - The same people who had caused so many to run in panic and fear – were running!
 - In the end the great city of Nineveh was left decimated – a shell of its former glory!

THE REASON FOR THE JUDGMENT... (3 REASONS)

▪ 1ST –NINEVEH SEDUCED THE NATIONS... VS. 1-7

- o 1st – Just like their father... vs. 1
 - Woe to a blood city (*murders*) – full of lies and robbers – its victims never leave...
 - Nahum gives an ominous accusation of the people of Nineveh...
 - One that showed their true color – they followed in the footsteps of their father!
 - **John 8:44** - “You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.”
 - The devil is a murderer – and was from the very beginning...
 - It was through the temptation in the garden - the devil brought death into the world!
 - Those who like to tempt others to sin - are acting like the devil...
 - Because sin separates us from God – hardens our heart to Him – leads to death!
 - That is why God does not play around when it comes to stumbling His children...
 - He is a VERY protective Father - and will deal with anyone who threatens His kids!

- **Luke 17:2** – “It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”
- The devil is a thief – he tries to steal our hope...
 - In **Genesis 3:1** – satan asked the first question in the Bible – ‘Did God say?’
 - He did so in a successful attempt to steal Adam and Eve from God!
 - The tactic of satan have not changed – he still tries to get us to doubt the Word...
 - Satan subtly tries to get us to look elsewhere for answers - not to Jesus...
 - He tries to keep us from church from the Bible – from listening to the Word!
 - The reality is satan has only one desire - to steal / kill and destroy us!
 - **John 10:10** – “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...”
- The devil is a liar - he is the father of lies...
 - Nothing that the devil says is true - everything that comes from him is a lie!
 - He lies and tells us sin is fun - just give it a try - and sin can seem to be enjoyable...
 - But it gets us hooked like a drug dealer - it sucks us in and we are trapped!
 - He lies and tells us once you have sinned - we cannot go back to God...
 - Our enemy would love to try and make us think we are worthless – ruined...
 - But the truth is we are never more than a step away from restoration – **I John 1:9!**
- o 2nd – Playing the harlot... vs. 2-4
 - The armies of Babylon were raging through the streets...
 - The sounds of chariots – cracking whips / galloping horses / rattling wheels...
 - Calvary rushed in with swords and spears – killing multitudes of people...
 - There were so many slain – people were stumbling over the corpses!
 - A morbid picture of the devastation / annihilation of the people of Nineveh – because...
 - Nineveh had played the seductive / irresistible harlot to the nations...
 - She was the Ba-alah (*female lord*) of witchcraft – leading nations into spiritual adultery...
 - Assyria was the biggest kid on the block – a true super power...
 - It made it easy for people to be seduced into thinking they had the answers...
 - But in the end they only destroyed families that followed their pagan practices!
 - The United States is a modern day super power – we are number one with...
 - The most powerful military – the largest economy ever seen on earth...
 - But also lead the world in other ways: debt / prison population / drugs...
 - 89% of all pornography is produced in the US – with which we seduce the nations!
 - We live in country that would love try to and change our character...
 - Try to seduce with the things of this world – rather than keep our eyes on Jesus...
 - Ultimately trying to make us servants of satan – rather than children of God!
 - All the more reason to stand up – though it will most definitely mean trials and tribulation!
 - **Hebrews 11:25** - “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin...”
- o 3rd – Lift the skirt... vs. 5-7
 - The Lord was against Nineveh – and He was going to expose her for what she was...
 - God was going to ‘lift her skirt’ – show the nation her nakedness and shame...
 - Cast down her abominations (*idols*) – and let the nations see it – so they fade away!
 - Show the world how powerless the idols were to help – then the world would reject them!
 - Everyone who saw would flee from the example of Nineveh – not even care they were gone!
 - I am amazed at how people blindly follow after whoever is ‘on top’...
 - People buy the books of the guys who ‘made millions in the stock market’...
 - We idolize the lives of those who have ‘made it in Hollywood’ – Johnny Depp...
 - They follow the fad – and often bizarre ideas – of those who have the most ‘success’...

- Assuming that the person who is on top – has all the answers – so we should follow them!
- And what people rarely stop to ask - is what they are doing right / does it honor God...
- They foolishly follow the world – then wonder why the Lord does not bless them...
- But then God 'lifts the skirt' – exposes the truth about our idols...
- The heroes that people look up to – are revealed for the fools that they really are...
- To show us if we do not put the Lord first – everything we try in life will ultimately fail!

▪ **2ND –NINEVEH THOUGHT THEY WERE BETTER... vs. 8-13**

o **1st – The example of Thebes... vs. 8-10**

- No-ammon (*portion of Ammon*) - the Egyptian name for Thebes in Upper Egypt...
 - The Greeks called it Diospolis (*city of god*) – where the the god *Amon-Ra* was worshiped...
 - Egyptians referred to Amon-Ra as 'one one' be cause they considered him the supreme god!
- The city of Thebes was surrounded by water – it covered both sides of the Nile River...
 - It was famed in ancient times for its hundred gates [*Homer's Iliad*]...
 - Even today circumference of the ruins stretch twenty-seven miles...
 - Included in those ruins are the famous temples of Luxor and Karnack!
- Thebes had powerful allies – Ethiopia (*Cush*) / Put (*Algeria*) / Lubim (*Libya*)...
 - Representing most of northern Africa – giving Thebes boundless strength!
 - Yet Thebes was taken into captivity – her children killed in the streets...
 - Her nobles were auctioned off as slaves – her leaders bound in chains!
 - In 667 B.C. Thebes was conquered by the Assyrians – never to regain its former glory...
 - PROUD Thebes though they were untouchable – but ultimately fell to Assyria!
- Pride is the first sin – the sin of satan...
 - One day Satan decided he was as good as / equal to God - **Isaiah 14:14**
 - The result was he was kicked out of heaven – separated from God...
 - Pride already knows it all / Pride does not say sorry / Pride is never wrong...
 - And if we allow ourselves to be prideful – we will also be separated from God!
 - **James 4:6** – “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”
 - But pride can be tricky – it is not always easy to see – but it always sets us up for a fall...
 - Pride can be – I think I know it all / I am never wrong / I do not need correction...
 - Pride can also be – thinking I am nothing / being shy / pride means its all about me...
 - Whether it is arrogance / or 'false' humility – if I am the focus it is pride...
 - If I am the focus – then I am not looking to Jesus – and I am destruction is sure to follow!
 - **Proverbs 16:18** – “Pride goes before destruction, an arrogant spirit before a fall.”

o **2nd – History repeats... vs. 11-13**

- Just as Thebes was conquered by Assyria – so Nineveh would be conquered by Babylon...
 - When that day came - the people would be so bewildered they would stagger like drunks...
 - They would hide in fear because of the Babylonians - their fortresses would fall...
 - Like overripe figs – just a little shaking and they would fall into the mouth of their enemies!
 - Their warriors would fight like little girls – as their gates burned to the ground!
- PROUD Nineveh did not learn the lesson of Thebes – and would ultimately fall to Babylon!
 - A fool learns from his own mistakes - a wise man learns from the mistakes of others...
 - Other peoples sins always seem so much more obvious than our own...
 - We tend to think God will be gracious to us – even though He judges the sin of others...
 - But why would we think that we are the exception to the rule!
 - We have to be so careful not to turn the grace of God into an excuse - **Jude 1:4**
 - Instead see consequences others face – and learn not to walk in their footsteps!

▪ **3RD – NINEVEH WAS CRUEL AND CAUSED SUFFERING... vs. 14-19**

o **1st – Get ready for the siege... vs. 14-15**

- Ancient cities would have high / thick walls that protected them from attack...
 - But their one flaw was their fields / food – were often outside the city walls...
 - So a siege – that could last years – would slowly starved the city to surrender!
 - **In II Kings 6 - Syria completely surrounded the Samaria – cutting off their access to food...**
 - **Even the head donkey – a forbidden unclean animal – sold for over \$750...**
 - **And 2 ounces of the dung of a dove – cost almost \$50!**
 - **The siege caused a GREAT famine in the city – there was NOTHING to eat!**
- God sarcastically tells Nineveh to prepare for their siege...
 - Gather water into the city – go make up spare bricks – make them strong in the kiln...
 - The idea being you had spare materials to reinforce the walls if they were breached...
 - But even as they were baking bricks – the fire – sword of Babylon would consume them!
 - **People tend to focus too much on storing away for a rainy day...**
 - **Not that I am saying we should not be wise – live within our means...**
 - **But there is no wall we can build – no amount of resources we can compile...**
 - **That will be able to help us in the day of trouble - if we are not living for the Lord!**
 - **In Luke 12:20 there was a rich man whose fields had a bumper crop...**
 - **He had so much he did not even have enough room to store all he had harvested...**
 - **So he decided to tear down his barns - so he could build bigger and better barns...**
 - **He would have enough room to be able to store all he had harvested...**
 - **Then he could sit back and enjoy the easy life - eat / drink / and be merry!**
 - **God said to him – Fool – tonight you die - then who will get the things you have stored up!**
- At the same time we are given the promise – God will provide all we need – **Luke 12:32-34**
 - Jesus goes on to say ‘fear not’ – our Father want to give us His whole kingdom!
 - **The only reason He would not give us something is He knows its not good for us...**
 - **Since He desires to give us EVERYTHING - what do we have to worry about anything!**
 - **Instead He says lay up treasures in Heaven - where our treasure is there our heart is also!**
 - **We tend to think we invest in the things that are important to us – on our heart...**
 - **The truth is our heart follows our investments – our choices dictate what our heart wants!**
 - **That is why we should never follow our heart – it is deceptive – Jeremiah 17:9**
 - **Instead we need to be wise were we choose to invest our time and treasures!**
 - **If we are spending all of our time focused on the things of this world – heart for the world...**
 - **In contrast if we are investing in the things of God – we will find we have a heart for God!**

o **2nd – The example of insects... vs. 15-17**

- Nahum uses three different insects to describe Nineveh – and their fate...
 - ‘Young’ Locusts – *yekeq* – the beginning caterpillar stage of the locust life cycle...
 - Swarming locusts – *arbeh* – the adult stage in the locust life cycle...
 - Grasshoppers – *gowb* – speaking of the most mature locust – end of the life cycle
- The *young Locusts* would devour Nineveh...
 - Speaking of the fledgling state of Babylon – that would swarm in and devour the city...
 - Nineveh had once been *young locusts* – and grown to become *swarming locusts*...
 - They many merchants - more numerous than the stars – had accumulated great wealth...
 - But the *young locusts* – Babylon - would swoop in carry it all away...
 - The Assyrian princes were like *swarming locusts* – their generals like *grasshoppers*...
 - But just like locusts that cower together in the cold – but fly away when the sun comes out...
 - These leaders of Assyria would tremble – and disappear with the fall of Nineveh!

- I realize that is a LOT of locusts – and perhaps a bit too much entomology...
 - But I think the point is – there was no difference – both Assyria and Babylon were locusts...
 - Just as Assyria devoured everything in its path – so Babylon would now devour them!
 - Because men / nations apart from God – are just ravaging insects bent on destruction!
 - I downloaded an app that allows me to see what bills our government is working on...
 - It is depressing – at times infuriating – to see the legislation they are trying to pass...
 - Making it against the law to not address transgender people with the proper pronoun...
 - But it should not be surprising – nations apart from God are bent on destruction!
 - Which is why we should never put our hope in government – instead pray for them...
 - Pray for our leaders – those entrusted with power – pray for their salvation...
 - Pray they will be righteous God fearing rulers – who listen to and obey God!
 - **I Timothy 2:1** – “I exhort first of all that prayers be... for all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”
- o 3rd – Everyone rejoiced at the fall of Nineveh... vs. 18-19
 - Nahum gives a final address to the king of Assyria...
 - The shepherds are dead (*slumber*) – the nobles are buried (*in the dust*)...
 - All the leaders are gone – and the people are scattered like sheep on the mountains...
 - There was no healing the mortal wound given to Nineveh – it was fatal...
 - And that was great news for the nations – they clapped in joy when they heard...
 - Because all of them had suffered under the wicked cruelty of Assyrian Empire!
 - The fall of a great city / empire...
 - Nineveh was sixty miles in across – with a population of 2.5 million inhabitants...
 - With walls 100 feet high - so thick three chariots could race side by side on top of them...
 - It had 1500 towers – each 200 feet in height – a seemingly impregnable fortress!
 - And yet so totally was it destroyed the location of the ruins was hidden for centuries!
 - Because they seduced the nations / because of their pride...
 - Because of the cruelty and suffering they caused – because they lived for this world...
 - All of their great accomplishments – wiped away as if they had never existed!
 - Unfortunately most people today strive after the things of this world...
 - They seek to be rewarded for their efforts here on earth – with fleeting gifts...
 - 10,000 years from now in heaven - no one will care how much money we made...
 - No one will be impressed by where we worked – what care we drove...
 - But the thanks of a friend who you introduced to Jesus - will never fade away!
 - It is the things we do for the Lord that last forever – **Matthew 6:20**