

## Nahum

An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.

A jealous and avenging God is the LORD, the LORD is avenging and wrathful; the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and rages against his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger but great in power, and the LORD

5 will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, and he dries up all the rivers; Bashan and Carmel wither, and the bloom of Lebanon fades. The mountains quake before him, and the hills melt; the earth heaves before him, the world and all who live in it. Who can stand before

10 his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and by him the rocks are broken in pieces. The LORD is good, a stronghold in a day of trouble; he protects those who take refuge in him, even in a rushing flood. He will make a full end of his adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness. Why do you plot against the LORD? He

15 will make an end; no adversary will rise up twice. Like thorns they are entangled, like drunkards they are drunk; they are consumed like dry straw.

From you one has gone out who plots evil against the LORD, who counsels wickedness. 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

20 will afflict you no more. And now I will break off his yoke from you and

snap the bonds that bind you." 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." Look! On the mountains the feet of one who brings

5 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. A shatterer has come up against you. Guard the ramparts; watch the road; gird your loins; collect all your strength. (For the LORD is restoring the majesty of Jacob, as well as the majesty of Israel, though ravagers have

10 ravaged them and ruined their branches.) The shields of his warriors are red; his soldiers are clothed in crimson. The metal on the chariots flashes on the day when he musters them; the chargers prance. The chariots race madly through the streets, they rush to and fro through the squares; their appearance is like torches, they dart like lightning. He calls his officers; they stumble as

15 they come forward; they hasten to the wall, and the mantelet is set up. The river gates are opened, the palace trembles. It is decreed that the city be exiled, its slave women led away, moaning like doves and beating their breasts. Nineveh is like a pool whose waters run away. "Halt! Halt!"-- but no one turns back. "Plunder the silver, plunder the gold! There is no end of

20 treasure! An abundance of every precious thing!" Devastation, desolation, and

destruction! Hearts faint and knees tremble, all loins quake, all faces grow  
pale! What became of the lions' den, the cave of the young lions, where the  
lion goes, and the lion's cubs, with no one to disturb them? The lion has  
torn enough for his whelps and strangled prey for his lionesses; he has filled  
5 his caves with prey and his dens with torn flesh. See, I am against you, says  
the LORD of hosts, and I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword  
shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and  
the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more. Ah! City of bloodshed,  
utterly deceitful, full of booty-- no end to the plunder! The crack of whip  
10 and rumble of wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot! Horsemen  
charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, piles of dead, heaps of corpses,  
dead bodies without end-- they stumble over the bodies! Because of the  
countless debaucheries of the prostitute, gracefully alluring, mistress of  
sorcery, who enslaves nations through her debaucheries, and peoples through  
15 her sorcery, I am against you, says the LORD of hosts, and will lift up your  
skirts over your face; and I will let nations look on your nakedness and  
kingdoms on your shame. I will throw filth at you and treat you with  
contempt, and make you a spectacle. Then all who see you will shrink from  
you and say, "Nineveh is devastated; who will bemoan her?" Where shall I  
20 seek comforters for you? Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile,

with water around her, her rampart a sea, water her wall? Ethiopia was her strength, Egypt too, and that without limit; Put and the Libyans were her helpers. Yet she became an exile, she went into captivity; even her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of every street; lots were cast for her nobles, all her dignitaries were bound in fetters. You also will be drunken, you will go into hiding; you will seek a refuge from the enemy. All your fortresses are like fig trees with first-ripe figs-- if shaken they fall into the mouth of the eater. Look at your troops: they are women in your midst. The gates of your land are wide open to your foes; fire has devoured the bars of your gates. Draw water for the siege, strengthen your forts; trample the clay, tread the mortar, take hold of the brick mold! There the fire will devour you, the sword will cut you off. It will devour you like the locust. Multiply yourselves like the locust, multiply like the grasshopper! You increased your merchants more than the stars of the heavens. The locust sheds its skin and flies away. Your guards are like grasshoppers, your scribes like swarms of locusts settling on the fences on a cold day-- when the sun rises, they fly away; no one knows where they have gone. Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with no one to gather them. There is no assuaging your hurt, your

wound is mortal. All who hear the news about you clap their hands over  
you. For who has ever escaped your endless cruelty? \*

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