

## Nahum

An oracle concerning Nin'evéh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.

The LORD is a jealous God and avenging, the LORD is avenging and  
wrathful; the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for  
his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger and of great might, 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, he  
dries up all the rivers; Bashan and Carmel wither, the bloom of Lebanon  
fades. The mountains quake before him, the hills melt; the earth is laid waste  
before him, the world and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his  
10 indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out  
like fire, and the rocks are broken asunder by him. The LORD is good, a  
stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.  
But with an overflowing flood he will make a full end of his adversaries,  
and will pursue his enemies into darkness. What do you plot against the  
15 LORD? He will make a full end; he will not take vengeance twice on his  
foes. Like entangled thorns they are consumed, like dry stubble. Did one not  
come out from you, who plotted evil against the LORD, and counseled  
villainy? Thus says the LORD, "Though they be strong and many, they will  
be cut off and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no  
20 more. And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your

bonds asunder." The LORD has given commandment about you: "No more shall your name be perpetuated; from the house of your gods I will cut off the graven image and the molten image. I will make your grave, for you are vile." Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace! Keep your feasts, O Judah, fulfil your vows, for never again shall the wicked come against you, he is utterly cut off. The shatterer has come up against you. Man the ramparts; watch the road; gird your loins; collect all your strength. (For the LORD is restoring the majesty of Jacob as the majesty of Israel, for plunderers have stripped them and ruined their branches.) The shield of his mighty men is red, his soldiers are clothed in scarlet. The chariots flash like flame when mustered in array; the chargers prance. The chariots rage in the streets, they rush to and fro through the squares; they gleam like torches, they dart like lightning. The officers are summoned, they stumble as they go, they hasten to the wall, the mantelet is set up. The river gates are opened, the palace is in dismay; its mistress is stripped, she is carried off, her maidens lamenting, moaning like doves, and beating their breasts. Nin'evah is like a pool whose waters run away. "Halt! Halt!" they cry; but none turns back. Plunder the silver, plunder the gold! There is no end of treasure, or wealth of every precious thing. Desolate! Desolation and ruin! Hearts faint and knees tremble, anguish is on all loins,

all faces grow pale! Where is the lions' den, the cave of the young lions,  
where the lion brought his prey, where his cubs were, with none to disturb?  
The lion tore enough for his whelps and strangled prey for his lionesses; he  
filled his caves with prey and his dens with torn flesh. Behold, I am against  
5 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 no more be heard. Woe to the  
bloody city, all full of lies and booty--no end to the plunder! The crack of  
whip, and rumble of wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot! Horsemen  
10 charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, hosts of slain, heaps of corpses,  
dead bodies without end--they stumble over the bodies! And all for the  
countless harlotries of the harlot, graceful and of deadly charms, who betrays  
nations with her harlotries, and peoples with her charms. Behold, I am  
against you, says the LORD of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your  
15 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 gazingstock. And all who look on you will shrink from you and say,  
Wasted is Nin'evah; who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters  
for her? Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile, with water around  
20 her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall? Ethiopia was her strength, Egypt

too, and that without limit; Put and the Libyans were her helpers. Yet she  
was carried away, she went into captivity; her little ones 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. You also will be drunken, you will  
5 be dazed; 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. Behold, your troops are women in your midst. The gates of your land  
are wide open to your foes; fire has devoured your bars. Draw water for the  
siege, strengthen your forts; go into the clay, tread the mortar, take hold of  
10 the brick mold! 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! You increased your merchants more than the  
stars of the heavens. The locust spreads its wings and flies away. Your  
princes are like grasshoppers, your scribes like clouds of locusts settling on  
15 the fences in a day of cold--when the sun rises, they fly away; no one  
knows where they are. Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your  
nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to  
gather them. There is no assuaging your hurt, your wound is grievous. All

who hear the news of you clap their hands over you. For upon whom has  
not come your unceasing evil? \*

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