

NAHUM: GOD'S JUDGMENT OF NINEVEH
III: The Justification For God's Judgment On Nineveh
(Nahum 2:11-3:7)

I. Introduction

- A. Nineveh of Assyria had repented under Jonah's preaching over one hundred years before Nahum was written, but their devotion to God had not been transmitted to their children, so the people of Nineveh had reverted back their past sins. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, "Introduction to the Book of Nahum: Theme," p. 1292)
- B. Meanwhile, the Assyrians had destroyed Samaria of the Northern Kingdom in 722 B. C. and nearly captured Jerusalem in Hezekiah's day in 701 B. C., so Assyria and its capitol of Nineveh were ripe for divine judgment.
- C. Nahum 2:11-3:7 presents the justification for God's judgment of Nineveh, so we view it for our insight:

II. The Justification For God's Judgment On Nineveh, Nahum 2:11-3:7.

- A. God would punish Nineveh for its great violation of the Noahic Covenant, Nahum 2:11-13:
 - 1. The Genesis 9:5-6 Noahic Covenant ordered Noah's descendants not to murder, that murder was to be punished by capital punishment. However, the Assyrians of Nineveh like lions they admired had fiercely destroyed many human lives of other nations, so in God's judgment, the "lion den" of Assyria, its city of Nineveh with its inhabitants, "lions, young lions, and lion cubs," would no longer exist, Nahum 2:11-12.
 - 2. God said that He was against Nineveh, that He would burn its chariots and the sword would devour its "young lions," its warriors, ending Nineveh's rampage of preying on other nations, and the voice of its messengers who exacted tribute from other nations and blasphemed God's name as Rabshakeh had done before Judah's king Hezekiah, Nahum 2:13 with Isaiah 37:4, 6. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1501-1502)
- B. God would also punish Nineveh for its lies and plunder that were coupled with much murder, Nahum 3:1-3:
 - 1. God's prophet pronounced a "Woe" of judgment on Nineveh as a city of bloodshed full of lies and plunder, never without victims, Nahum 3:1. The Assyrians were known for deceiving their victims as seen in 2 Kings 18:31 when the Assyrian official Rabshakeh falsely promised the people of Jerusalem that if they surrendered to him, they would eat of their own vine and his own fig tree in peace when in reality the Assyrians would subjugate and torture many of them to death. (Ibid., p. 1502)
 - 2. Accordingly, Nineveh would hear the crack of whips, the clatter of chariot wheels, the galloping of horses with jolting chariots with a charging cavalry with flashing swords and glittering spears producing many casualties and piles of corpses without number, and people stumbling over the corpses as the enemy Babylonians and Medes invaded the city, Nahum 3:2-3.
- C. God would punish Nineveh for her use of witchcraft and sorcery to enslave and defeat nations, Nahum 3:4-7:
 - 1. The men of Nineveh had lusted for power like the lusting of a harlot, so they would lure other nations to come under their control, using witchcraft and sorcery to try to influence other nations and predict the future so as to dominate and subjugate other nations, Nahum 3:4; Ibid.
 - 2. Witchcraft and sorcery, often associated with the practice of trafficking with demons, was the ultimate form of spiritual adultery in God's eyes, so for such sins, God said that He was against Nineveh, that He would figuratively lift up the figurative harlot's skirts over her face to expose her nakedness to the nations she had afflicted to her shame, Nahum 3:5. God would then pelt her with filth, treating her with contempt, making her a spectacle so that all who saw her would flee from her and say, "Nineveh is in ruins – who will mourn for her?" There would be no one left to comfort the utterly destroyed city, Nahum 3:6-7.

Lesson: God was completely justified in allowing the Babylonians and Medes to devastate Nineveh, for (1) its inhabitants had proudly, viciously murdered many people of the surrounding nations in violation of the Noahic Covenant, (2) it had deceived other people groups to entrap them for plunder and murder and (3) it had resorted to the most heinous form of spiritual adultery by trafficking with demons to enslave and defeat other nations.

Application: (1) God's great grace was seen in His desire to evangelize Nineveh in Jonah's day when it was a city of great, cruel murder, deception, plunder, and trafficking with demons. (2) Yet, God's great righteousness was also seen in His willingness utterly to destroy Nineveh to its shame before other onlooking nations when she turned from Him back to her sins. (3) Since we relate to a God who has INFINITE attributes, may we REVERE Him and depart from sin! (4) May we especially avoid (a) hatred, a form of murder (1 John 3:15), (b) lying and deceiving others, (c) coveting what belongs to others, (d) and resorting to any form of idolatry where we rely on some entity besides God for fulfillment, for these sins practiced to the extreme led to Nineveh's great fall!