

AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, OF

THE PROPHECY OF

NAHUM

This prophet denounces the certain and approaching destruction of the Assyrian empire, particularly of Nineveh, which is described very minutely. Together with this is consolation for his countrymen, encouraging them to trust in God.

CHAPTER 1

The justice and power of the Lord. (1-8) The overthrow of the Assyrians. (9-15)

Nahum 1:1

Vs. 1-8: About a hundred years before, at Jonah's preaching, the Ninevites repented, and were spared, yet, soon after, they became worse than ever. Nineveh knows not that God who contends with her, but is told what a God he is. It is good for all to mix faith with what is here said concerning Him, which speaks great terror to the wicked, and comfort to believers. Let each take his portion from it: let sinners read it and tremble; and let saints read it and triumph. The anger of the Lord is contrasted with his goodness to his people. Perhaps they are obscure and little regarded in the world, but the Lord knows them. The Scripture character of Jehovah agrees not with the views of proud reasoners. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is slow to wrath and ready to forgive, but he will by no means acquit the wicked; and there is tribulation and anguish for every soul that doeth evil: but who duly regards the power of his wrath?

Nahum 1:9

Vs. 9-15: There is a great deal plotted against the Lord by the gates of hell, and against his kingdom in the world; but it will prove in vain. With some sinners God makes quick dispatch; and one way or other, he will make an utter end of all his enemies. Though they are quiet, and many very secure, and not in fear, they shall be cut down as grass and corn, when the destroying angel passes through. God would hereby work great deliverance for his own people. But those who make themselves vile by scandalous sins, God will make vile by shameful punishments. The tidings of this great deliverance shall be welcomed with abundant joy. These words are applied to the great redemption wrought out by our Lord Jesus and the everlasting gospel, **Romans 10:15**. Christ's ministers are messengers of good tidings, that preach peace by Jesus Christ. How welcome to those who see their misery and danger by sin! And the promise they made in the day of trouble must be made good. Let us be thankful for God's ordinances, and gladly attend them. Let us look forward with cheerful hope to a world where the wicked never can enter, and sin and temptation will no more be known.

CHAPTER 2

Nineveh's destruction foretold. (1-10) The true cause, their sinning against God, and his appearing against them. (11-13)

Nahum 2:1

Vs. 1-10: Nineveh shall not put aside this judgment; there is no counsel or strength against the Lord. God looks upon proud cities, and brings them down. Particular account is given of the terrors wherein the invading enemy shall appear against Nineveh. The empire of Assyria is represented as a queen, about to be led captive to Babylon. Guilt in the conscience fills men with terror in an evil day; and what will treasures or glory do for us in times of distress, or in the day of wrath? Yet for such things how many lose their souls!

Nahum 2:11

Vs. 11-13: The kings of Assyria had long been terrible and cruel to their neighbors, but the Lord would destroy their power. Many plead as an excuse for rapine and fraud, that they have families to provide for; but what is thus obtained will never do them any good. Those that fear the Lord, and get honestly what they have, shall not want for themselves and theirs. It is just with God to deprive those of children, or of comfort in them, who take sinful courses to enrich them. Those are not worthy to be heard again, that have spoken reproachfully of God. Let us then come to God upon his mercy-seat, that having peace with him through our Lord Jesus Christ, we may know that he is for us, and that all things shall work together for our everlasting good.

CHAPTER 3

The sins and judgments of Nineveh. (1-7) Its utter destruction. (8-19)

Nahum 3:1

Vs. 1-7: When proud sinners are brought down, others should learn not to lift themselves up. The fall of this great city should be a lesson to private persons, who increase wealth by fraud and oppression. They are preparing enemies for themselves; and if the Lord sees good to punish them in this world, they will have none to pity them. Every man who seeks his own prosperity, safety, and peace, should not only act in an upright, honorable manner, but with kindness to all.

Nahum 3:8

Vs. 8-19: Strong-holds, even the strongest, are no defense against the judgments of God. They shall be unable to do any thing for themselves. The Chaldeans and Medes would devour the land like canker-worms. The Assyrians also would be eaten up by their own numerous hired troops, which seem to be meant by the word rendered “merchants.” Those that have done evil to their neighbors, will find it come home to them. Nineveh, and many other cities, states, and empires, have been ruined, and should be a warning to us. Are we better, except as there are some true Christians amongst us, who are a greater security, and a stronger defense, than all the advantages of situation or strength? When the Lord shows himself against a people, every thing they trust in must fail, or prove a disadvantage; but he continues good to Israel. He is a strong-hold for every believer in time of trouble, that cannot be stormed or taken; and he knoweth those that trust in Him.