

Lessons from the Book of Nahum

“Nahum” means “consolation” or “comfort.” Being dated between 663-612 BC, the prophet was contemporary with Isaiah and Micah. The prophet probably lived in Judah. Nahum prophesied against Nineveh. Just a few generation earlier, Nineveh had repented as a result of Jonah’s preaching. But now, Nineveh was being prepared for destructions. While Nahum preached against Nineveh, he taught several important lessons.

Nahum taught that the Lord is a jealous and avenging God (1:2). Nahum teaches that God does have enemies. Yahweh is not a God solely of love and mercy, but he is also a God of justice and anger. Many today want us to accept the notion that God couldn’t condemn anyone, because he is totally love. Nahum says quite the opposite: God does have enemies. God can condemn someone. He is a jealous and avenging God.

Nahum taught, however, that the Lord doesn’t anger quickly (1:3). Although the Lord does become angry, he does not do so easily or quickly. God does not just decide to become angry; he only does so when he is provoked. God is not a God who wants to be angry, but he does demand justice.

The book of Jonah demonstrates this. God sent Jonah to preach to Nineveh. When Jonah arrived in Nineveh, he preached a simply message and the people repented. God gave Nineveh another chance. But now, Nineveh had angered God again. This time Nineveh would be destroyed.

Nahum teaches that the Lord’s anger is fierce. Nahum described God’s anger. it can be found in the whirlwind and storm. God dries up bodies of water. Flowers fade. Mountains and hills fall before his anger. The whole earth lies in terror. Nahum even says, “Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger?” (1:6, ESV). God may not become angry often, but his anger is fierce and terrifying.

Nahum also teaches that the Lord protects his remnant (1:7). While God executes judgment on wrongdoers, he protects those who do right and fear him. If any in Nineveh were

righteous, they could take comfort in the fact that God would protect them. Just like God protected them, God has promised to defend and protect us at the Judgment.

Nahum further teaches that the Lord completely destroys his enemies (1:9). None of God's adversaries can rise up against him twice; he completely destroys them. God is sovereign. He is above all people. No one can compete with him.

This is a message our world needs to hear. God is sovereign. No one can compete with him. We have no right to plot against him. And if we do plot against him, he will utterly destroy us.

Nahum shows that God keeps his promises, for he promised to destroy Nineveh (2:10, 13). God kept his promise to destroy Nineveh. In 612 BC, Nebuchadnezzar with the assistance of the Medes took Nineveh. God had promised this destruction and it came to pass. The destruction was so total that Nineveh was not found by archeologists until 1842. God kept his promise to destroy Nineveh.

God keeps his promises today. The promises in Scripture will be fulfilled. Those who follow Scripture will be saved. Jesus will come again. The dead will be judged. God keeps his promises.

Nahum is a wonderful, small book that teaches us about God's judgment. God is a jealous God. He avenges himself. He keeps his promises.