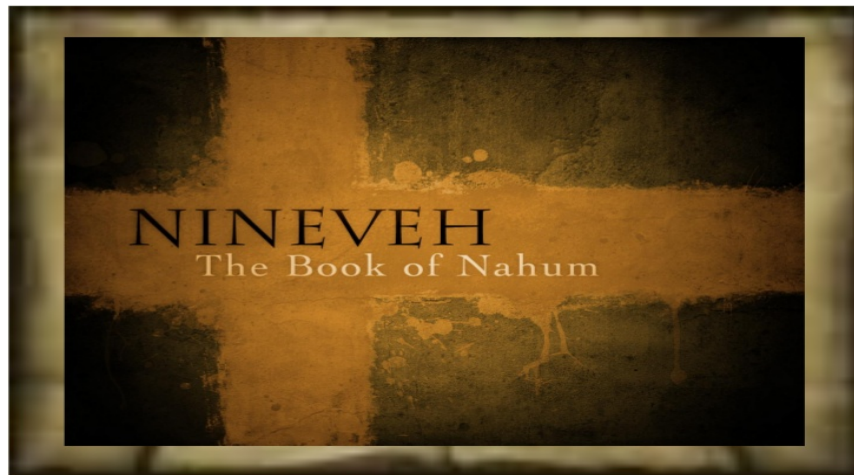


*(84) Adult Sunday School Class*

*Nahum, chpts. 1-3*

*Prophets, pp. 185-191*



To fully appreciate the Book of Nahum, we need a refresher on the Book of Jonah. Recall that God had sent the reluctant prophet Jonah to the Assyrian capital of Nineveh (present day Iraq) to warn that God was about to bring destruction. Much to the dismay of Jonah, the citizens of Nineveh repent, and God is moved by their actions and spares the city from destruction.

The Book of Nahum is kind of “part 2” to the Book of Jonah. Between 663 BC and 612 BC, about a century after Jonah, God calls Nahum to deliver a similar message; Nineveh is about to fall. Nineveh had previously avoided God’s judgment by taking Jonah’s preaching to heart, but their repentance was short-lived. This time they will experience the full consequence of their sins.

The Assyrian Empire now dominated most of the Middle East, from Iran to Egypt, including northern Israel, and forcing these nations to pay heavy taxes. Assyria was known for its heavy-handed brutality and terror, perhaps the most vicious empire in ancient times. They took pride in their savage tactics and would proudly public display the grisly scenes of their torture and the impaling of captives for all to see and fear.

Although God had used Assyria in the past to bring judgment onto other nations, including Israel and Judah, it was now time to bring judgment onto Assyria for their sins of idolatry and cruelty. In 612 BC, a coalition of Babylonians and Medes destroy Nineveh so thoroughly that it was never rebuilt, fulfilling Nahum’s prophecy, “Never again will you plunder conquered nation” (2:13).

Nahum is a reminder that God does ultimately bring judgment and punishment on those who oppose Him and oppress His people. So, if even the most powerful nation on earth was no match for God, neither is the biggest problem in our individual lives, wouldn’t you agree?