

Nahum's Monologue

My name, Nahum, means "comfort" or "encourage." But you couldn't convince the Assyrians of that. I prophesied against them in the Seventh Century B.C. My prophecies were little comfort to them as I foretold their pending destruction.

Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, was the focus of my prophecy. I called it "the city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims." Because Nineveh had been so ruthless in its conquest of neighboring nations, she was now going to have to pay the price.

An interesting side effect of the destruction of Assyria: it would mean relief for Judah who was currently a prime target of the Assyrians. God promised to take the Assyrian yoke off Judah's neck. So my message was one of comfort and encouragement for Judah.

It would be short-lived relief, however, because Judah would fall a few years later to Assyria's conqueror: Babylon.

The thing to remember in all of this is that these international events did not just "happen." They were not just the result of human initiative. God used battles and wars and defeats and exiles to carry out His judgment upon the nations that refused to repent and turn to Him.

Kind of makes you wonder if things like that are still going on today, doesn't it? And, if so, then how do we fit in?



Faith at Home

Is your family aware of what is going on in the world? Sometimes we try to shield our family - especially children -- from news because we don't want to scare them. How can you help your family see that even when bad things happen around the world that God is still in control?

Teacher's Toolbox

*Getting your class into God's Word
and God's Word into your class*

ExcitingBibleStudy.com

Bible Series

Nahum

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HOW TO USE TEACHER'S TOOLBOX: Make a four-page folded teacher's leaflet from the first two sheets by printing two-sided (or by putting the blank sides together). The other two sheets are for duplicating, displaying, distributing, or otherwise using as called for in the lesson plan.



Faith at Home - A specific application of today's Bible passage to family life, to be used for individual reflection, family discussion, or class activity.



Getting Started

Remembering

- **Do you remember a bully from your childhood days? Tell us about that person and what he or she did.** Let two or three respond. Help them share fully by asking questions like this: How did you feel about it? Did the bully finally face some consequences? What were they?
- **The prophet Nahum delivered God's message concerning a bully of the Middle East in the Seventh Century B.C. The Kingdom of Assyria, with its capital in Nineveh, was running over the neighboring nations. Nahum announced that all that power and glory was about to come to an abrupt conclusion.**



Exploring God's Word

Monologue

- Enlist someone to prepare and

present the Nahum monologue on page 4.

Instant reports

- Hand three members copies of these instant reports to read aloud to the class (cut apart Item 2).

Nineveh

Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire in northeastern Mesopotamia, what is now Iraq. The city and kingdom were worldly and ungodly.

Assyria was an aggressive nation, intent upon expanding its boundaries by conquering neighboring nations.

One of the nations taken over by Assyria was Israel, the Northern Kingdom. Its capital city of Samaria was destroyed by Assyrian forces in 721 B.C. More than 27,000 inhabitants of the city were deported into exile.

When Babylon rose to power, that empire and Assyria were in a constant struggle for control of the Middle East. By 612 B.C., Nineveh fell. Before long Assyria was defeated, saving Judah from Assyrian conquest. Judah's destruction came a few years later at the hands of the Babylonians.

Jonah

Jonah was another minor prophet who is important to today's lesson because he prophesied in Nineveh in 750 B.C., more than a century before Nahum prophesied the end of the city.

The difference was that Jonah's warning to Nineveh was heeded. The people of the city repented and turned to God. God then spared them. Jonah, who as a Jew resented the Assyrians

anyway, was not very happy about God's mercy being shown to the people of Nineveh.

Nahum

Nahum prophesied in Judah but against Nineveh, warning that the city would soon be destroyed because of its aggressive and violent actions toward Israel, Judah and other nations.

Nahum's name means "comfort" or "encourage." His prophecies, while no comfort to Nineveh, did encourage the people of Judah. The promised destruction of Assyria would be a blessing to Judah who was busy resisting Assyria's aggressive moves.

Study guide

- Give each person a pencil and a copy of the following study guide, but without the suggested answers in parentheses (duplicate Item 1). Have members work in groups of two, three, or four to complete the study guide.

Study Guide

Nahum, whose name means "comfort," lived in Elkosh in Judah. He prophesied sometime between the fall of Thebes (663 B.C.) referred to in Nahum 3:8, and the fall of Nineveh (612 B.C.) which is prophesied in this book. Although the prophecies were delivered to the people of Judah, they dealt mostly with God's coming judgment on Nineveh, the capital of As-

syria. Assyria had already destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel and was threatening the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

Nahum 1:1-15.

1. List some characteristics of God found in this passage. (jealous, avenging, filled with wrath, slow to anger, great in power, good, cares for those who trust in Him)
2. Why was God angry with Nineveh? (they plotted against the Lord)
3. How would Nineveh's destruction affect Judah? (Assyria's yoke of oppression would be lifted from Judah)

Nahum 2:1-13.

4. What future event related to Assyria does this passage picture? (a fierce battle, with the city of Nineveh being destroyed and the people exiled)
5. What does this chapter say about the future of Judah? (would be restored)

Nahum 3:1-19.

6. According to this chapter, what had Nineveh done wrong? (lied, plundered, enslaved nations)
7. How did God plan to punish Nineveh? (expose and shame her, send her into hiding seeking refuge)

Wrapping It Up

- God will punish evil and provide lasting protection for His people.
- Call on someone to lead the class in prayer.

from enemies, open her gates to the enemy, devour with fire)

8. How would observers react to Nineveh's fate? (clap their hands)

- Allow 10-15 minutes for members to complete the study guide. Then lead them to share their findings with the rest of the class.

Making It Personal

News review

- Lead members to recall recent acts of aggression by nations upon surrounding peoples. (OPTION: If available, have members look through Sunday's paper or recent news magazines for information on such acts of aggression.)
- **How do you think God views what is going on today? Could He be using some of these aggressors as instruments of judgment upon other nations? Could He be preparing future judgment for some of these aggressive nations?** Allow for discussion.
- **What stance in the world political arena do you think the United States should take, based on God's Word?** Allow for discussion.

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