

Nahum & Zephaniah

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St. Rose Community Church EQUIP

Nahum & Zephaniah

Four things to remember about God as you go through Nahum and Zephaniah:

- 1) God is Creator over all.
- 2) God has control over all His creation.
- 3) God has authority over all He controls.
- 4) God is present with all His creation.

Nahum = Comforter

Where: Nineveh, (where Jonah was sent). Nineveh was rebellious and full of sin, which is why God sent Jonah there. Nineveh is the capital of Assyria and the Assyrian's are threatening to attack God's people in Judah.

Nahum = Comforter

When: It's been 125 years since Jonah came to prophesy and they repented, which puts Nahum taking place in 7th century BC. Since then Nineveh has returned to being full of sin including causing oppression and brutality to God's people. This is about 100 years before the Southern Kingdom was taken into exile, and during the height of the Assyrians' power. The Assyrians continue to threaten God's people, as there are rumors of another great power rising in the east, Babylon.

Nahum 1:1-8 ESV

1 An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh. **2** The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. **3** The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. **4** He rebukes the sea and makes it dry he dries up all the rivers; Bashan and Carmel wither; the bloom of Lebanon withers.

Nahum 1:1-8 ESV

5 The mountains quake before him; the hills melt; the earth heaves before him, the world and all who dwell in it. **6** Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him. **7** The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him. **8** But with an overflowing flood he will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness.

Major Theme

what: God's people in Judah are surrounded by enemies. The people are full of fear.

-God Protects His People

-The book of Nahum is about God's wrath towards His enemies and His love towards His people.

-God righteously, enthusiastically, demonstrably destroys his enemies, who have abused his cherished people.

Outline

Part 1: Yahweh will Protect His People (Nahum 1:2-11)

-The imagery in Nahum can be compared to God's rescue of His people in Exodus.

-Establishes God's control and authority over all nature unlike the false gods of nature the Assyrians worshipped.

Outline

Part 2: God's Threatened Judgement (Nahum 1:12- 2:12)

-God's grace towards His people is intertwined with His judgement towards His enemies.

Nahum 1:12-14 ESV

¹² Thus says the LORD, “Though they are at full strength and many, they will be cut down and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more. ¹³ And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds apart.” ¹⁴ The LORD has given commandment about you: “No more shall your name be perpetuated; from the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the metal image. I will make your grave, for you are vile.”

Nahum 1:15 ESV

¹⁵ Behold, upon the mountains, the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace! Keep your feasts, O Judah; fulfill your vows, or never again shall the worthless pass through you; he is utterly cut off.

Nahum 2:1-2 ESV

¹ The scatterer has come up against you. Man the ramparts; watch the road; dress for battle; collect all your strength. ² For the LORD is restoring the majesty of Jacob as the majesty of Israel, for plunderers have plundered them and ruined their branches.

Outline

Part 3: God's Judgement Enacted (Nahum 2:13-3)

-God not bringing judgement to His enemies would go against His character.

Nahum 2:13 ESV

13 Behold, I am against you, declares the Lord of hosts, and I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions. I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall no longer be heard

Nahum 3:1-7 ESV

1 Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder—no end to the prey! 2 The crack of the whip, and rumble of the wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot! 3 Horsemen charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, hosts of slain, heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end—they stumble over the bodies! 4 And all for the countless whorings of the prostitute, graceful and of deadly charms, who betrays nations with her whorings, and peoples with her charms. 5 Behold, I am against you, declares the Lord of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will make nations look at your nakedness and kingdoms at your shame. 6 I will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. 7 And all who look at you will shrink from you and say, Wasted is Nineveh; who will grieve for her? Where shall I seek comforters for you?

Nahum 2:19 ESV

19 There is no easing your hurt; your wound is grievous. All who hear the news about you clap their hands over you. For upon whom has not come your unceasing evil?

Zephaniah = Yahweh Hides/Protects

Where/When: Zephaniah is prophesying to Judah in late 7th century BC, a few years before Habakkuk.

What: Assyria is no longer a threat, Judah's greatest threat is their own sins. God's patience has run out for Judah, judgement is coming, but God will give a final mercy.

Zephaniah 1:1-6 ESV

1 The word of the Lord that came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

The Coming Judgment on Judah

2 “I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth,” declares the Lord. 3 “I will sweep away man and beast; I will sweep away the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, and the rubble with the wicked. I will cut off mankind from the face of the earth,” declares the Lord. 4 “I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal and the name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests, 5 those who bow down on the roofs to the host of the heavens, those who bow down and swear to the Lord and yet swear by Milcom, 6 those who have turned back from following the Lord, who do not seek the Lord or inquire of him.”

Major Theme

-The Day of the Lord.

-God has the authority to control His creation.

-God has always had a plan for salvation.

Outline

-Part 1: God's destruction on Judah (Zephaniah 1)

-God is active and powerful.

Zephaniah 1:2-3 ESV

“I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth,” declares the LORD. ³“I will sweep away man and beast; I will sweep away the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, and the rubble with the wicked. I will cut off mankind from the face of the earth,” declares the LORD.

Zephaniah 1:12 ESV

12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, ‘The Lord will not do good, nor will he do ill.’

Outline

-Part 2: God's destruction on the nations (Zephaniah 2-3:7)

-God's judgement on His enemies means hope for His people.

Zephaniah 2:5 ESV

Woe to you inhabitants of the seacoast, you nation of the Cherethites! The word of the Lord is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines; and I will destroy you until no inhabitant is left.

Zephaniah 3:5-7 ESV

The Lord within her is righteous; he does no injustice; every morning he shows forth his justice; each dawn he does not fail; but the unjust knows no shame. **6** “I have cut off nations; their battlements are in ruins; I have laid waste their streets so that no one walks in them; their cities have been made desolate, without a man, without an inhabitant. **7** I said, ‘Surely you will fear me; you will accept correction. Then your dwelling would not be cut off according to all that I have appointed against you.’ But all the more they were eager to make all their deeds corrupt

Zephaniah 2:3 ESV

3 Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord.

Zephaniah 2:6-7 ESV

6 And you, O seacoast, shall be pastures, with meadows for shepherds and folds for flocks. 7 The seacoast shall become the possession of the remnant of the house of Judah, on which they shall graze, and in the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down at evening. For the Lord their God will be mindful of them and restore their fortunes.

Outline

-Part 3: God's salvation for His remnant (Zephaniah 3:8-3:20)

-God's judgement brings change.

Zephaniah 3:8 ESV

“Therefore wait for me,” declares the Lord, “for the day when I rise up to seize the prey. For my decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out upon them my indignation, all my burning anger; for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth shall be consumed.

Zephaniah 3:9-13 ESV

“For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of the Lord and serve him with one accord.**10** From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshipers, the daughter of my dispersed ones, shall bring my offering **11** “On that day you shall not be put to shame because of the deeds by which you have rebelled against me; for then I will remove from your midst your proudly exultant ones, and you shall no longer be haughty in my holy mountain.**12** But I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly.They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord, **13** those who are left in Israel; they shall do no injustice and speak no lies, nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue. For they shall graze and lie down,and none shall make them afraid.”

Zephaniah 3: 15 ESV

15 The Lord has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil.

Zephaniah 3:17-20 ESV

“He will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.” 18 I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach. 19 Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. 20 At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,” says the Lord.

Takeaways

- Nahum and Zephaniah display God's control and authority over all His creation.
- Because of God's presence with His creation He is able to protect and judge His people.
- God's judgement displays His goodness, which should call us to repentance.

Prayer Groups

1. Read Zephaniah 3:15-20 with your group and pray a prayer of worship to God for His mercy and protection.
2. Read Zephaniah 1:12 as a group then pray to God for forgiveness for any way that you show complacency.
3. Read Zephaniah 2:3 as a group then pray for anyone you know that does not know Christ to seek repentance. Then pray for the nations that do not know Christ to seek repentance.

To Do

Watch the Bible Project Overview of Jeremiah and Lamentations

Memorize Jeremiah 31:33 and Lamentations 3:22-23