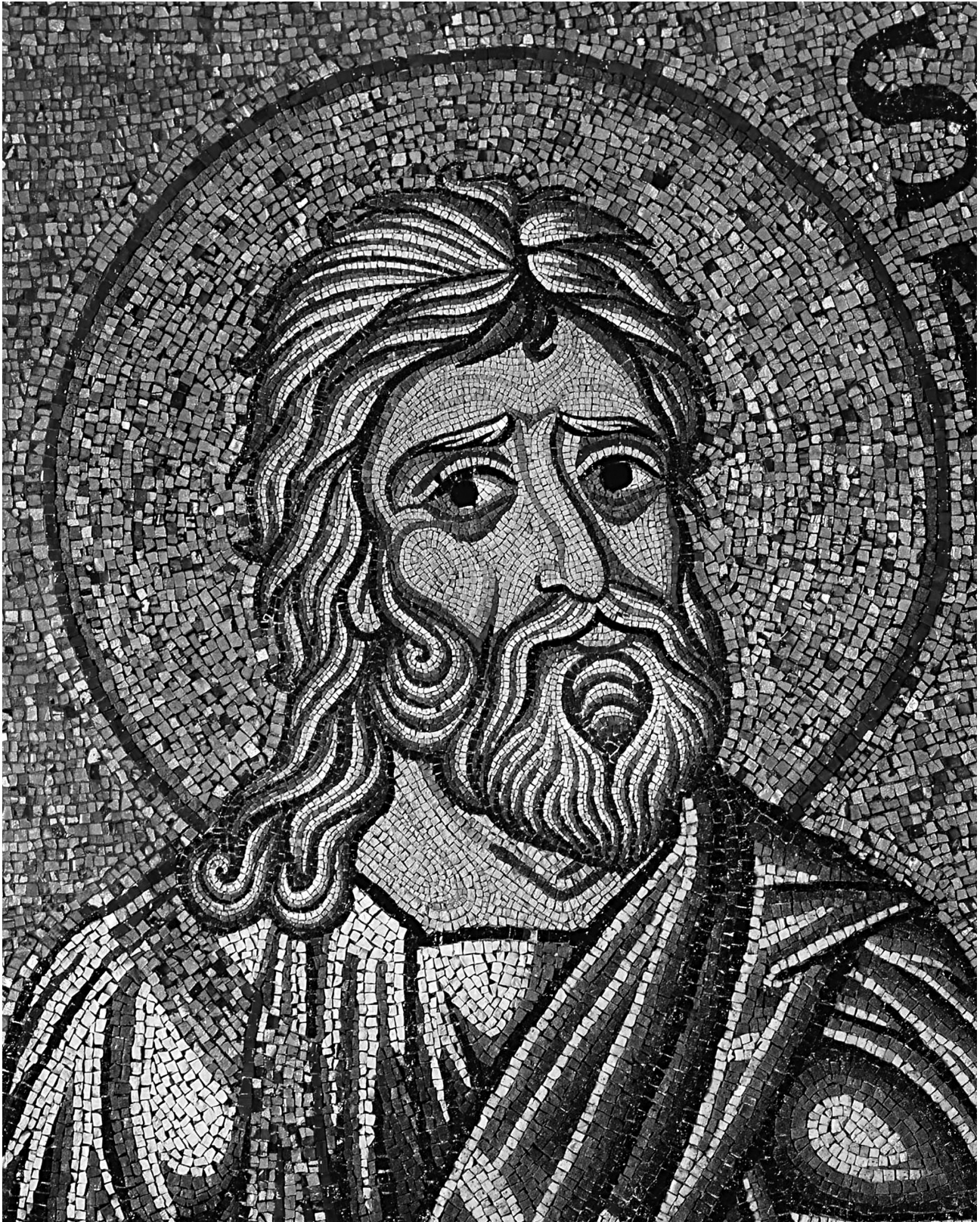


Study Guide





LifeLight

LifeLight Expands

Available NOW!

The Bible: An Overview
 Genesis, Pt. 1
 Genesis, Pt. 2
 Exodus, Pt. 1
 Exodus, Pt. 2
 Wilderness Wanderings
 Joshua
 Judges
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 James/Jude
 1 & 2 Peter
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LifeLight Foundations

Baptism
 Bible Feasts
 Creation, New Creation
 The Christian's Mission

Heaven & Hell
 Law & Gospel
 Ministry

Miracles
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 Worship

LifeLight Release Schedule

2014 RELEASES

LifeLight—Hosea/Joel/Amos	April
LifeLight Foundations—End Times	July
LifeLight—1 & 2 Chronicles	October

2015 RELEASES

LifeLight—Jeremiah/Lamentations	January
LifeLight—Ezekiel	April
LifeLight—Obadiah/Jonah/Micah	July

God, the Divine Warrior

Nahum 1

Distribute before session 1 for use in session 1.
Use enrichment magazine pp. 5–7.

Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study at home and at the week's assembly.

Hymn

Who trusts in God
A strong abode
 In heav'n and earth possesses;
Who looks in love
To Christ above,
 No fear that heart oppresses.
In You alone,
Dear Lord, we own
 Sweet hope and consolation,
Our shield from foes,
Our balm for woes,
 Our great and sure salvation.

In all the strife
Of mortal life
 Our feet will stand securely;
Temptation's hour
Will lose its pow'r,
 For You will guard us surely.
O God, renew
With heav'nly dew
 Our body, soul, and spirit
Until we stand
At Your right hand
 Through Jesus' saving merit.
(LSB 714:1, 3)

Prayer

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Advent; *LSB Altar Book*, pp. 557, 653, 747, 844)

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 1

Day 1 • Read Nahum 1:1

1. We don't know anything more about Nahum than what he writes here about himself in verse 1. Because he describes the fall of Thebes (3:18), which happened around 663 BC, he must have written after that year. He certainly wrote before 612 BC, as the book is a prophecy about the fall of Assyria, which happened in that year. A good estimate of the book places the date of its writing at 630 BC. Nahum entitles the book an *oracle*. Read about these other oracles. What do the oracles foretell—good or bad?

Zechariah 9:1–4

Isaiah 17:1–2

Ezekiel 12:10–14

2. a. Nineveh was the capital of the empire of Assyria, the dominant superpower at the time Nahum was writing. What had the Assyrians already done to Israel (2 Kings 17:6)?

b. What had the Assyrians done to Judah and tried to do to Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:13, 28–29)?

3. The word translated "book" in Nahum 1:1 properly refers here to a "scroll," since books were not invented until the first century. Scrolls were long sheets of material (often papyrus) that were rolled up and so had to be unrolled to be read. Scrolls were the normal way of keeping written content during Old Testament times. How did King Jehoiakim of Judah show contempt for a prophet's scroll that was read to him (Jeremiah 36:20–23)?

4. Nahum calls his prophecy a "vision." God has communicated with His people in the past in various ways, including visions. Can you list some other people (not all of them prophets) who received visions?

5. How does God communicate with us now (Hebrews 1:1-2)?

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Day 2 • Read Nahum 1:2-5

6. God is described as jealous in verse 2. God is also described as jealous throughout the Old Testament. Perhaps the best-known reference of this is Exodus 20:5, which was used by Luther to explain the Close of the Commandments. *Jealous* here means "desiring to keep what is His own, His own people." The Assyrians were attacking Judah. How does knowing that God is jealous comfort the people of Judah?

7. God is also described as wrathful and taking vengeance. What does God say about our own vengeance in Leviticus 19:18? Yet, He Himself can take vengeance (Deuteronomy 32:35): "Vengeance is mine." How can vengeance be wrong for people, yet right for God (see also Nahum 1:3)?

8. On the other hand, Nahum 1:3 describes God as being slow to anger (also in Numbers 14:18). How does God's being slow to anger comfort His people?

9. Bashan and Carmel (Nahum 1:4) were known for the luxuriousness of their vegetation, and Lebanon was known for its trees. According to Nahum, what power does God have over these places?

10. The physical world that God made has to acknowledge Him when He comes in His wrathful, righteous vengeance (v. 5). Even the earth has been corrupted because of sin. Yet, the Christian need never fear. Why not (see Psalm 46:1-3)?

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Day 3 • Read Nahum 1:6-9

11. a. Nahum asks two rhetorical questions in verse 6: "Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the heat of His anger?" What is a rhetorical question?

b. What is the answer to these questions?

12. a. "[God's] wrath is poured out like fire." Here, Nahum returns to the concept of wrath that he used in verse 2. Who is God's enemy who will feel His full wrath?

b. How is that nation *God's* enemy (see question 2)?

13. Nahum is writing his book to *comfort* Judah, yet there have not been many words of comfort. Recognizing that God is slow to anger is a comfort, but most of what Nahum has so far written is about God's wrath. He returns, however, to a word of comfort in verse 7. How does Luther's explanation to the Second Commandment remind us that God and His name are a comfort to us?

The Destruction of Nineveh

Nahum 2

Distribute before session 2 for use in session 2.

Use enrichment magazine pp. 2–4.

Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study at home and at the week's assembly.

Hymn

Rise! To arms! With prayer employ you,
 O Christians, lest the foe destroy you;
 For Satan has designed your fall.
 Wield God's Word, the weapon glorious;
 Against all foes be thus victorious,
 For God protects you from them all.
 Fear not the hordes of hell,
 Here is Emmanuel.
 Hail the Savior!
 The strong foes yield
 To Christ, our shield,
 And we, the victors, hold the field.
 Cast afar this world's vain pleasure
 And boldly strive for heav'nly treasure.
 Be steadfast in the Savior's might.
 Trust the Lord, who stands beside you,
 For Jesus from all harm will hide you.
 By faith you conquer in the fight.
 Take courage, weary soul!
 Look forward to the goal!
 Joy awaits you.
 The race well run,
 Your long war won,
 Your crown shines splendid as the sun.
 Wisely fight, for time is fleeting;
 The hours of grace are fast retreating;
 Short, short is this our earthly way.
 When the Lord the dead will waken
 And sinners all by fear are shaken,
 The saints with joy will greet that day.
 Praise God, our triumph's sure.
 We need not long endure
 Scorn and trial.
 Our Savior King
 His own will bring
 To that great glory which we sing.
 (LSB 668)

Prayer

Almighty God, You know that we live in the midst of so many dangers that in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Grant strength and protection to support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (Collect for the Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany; *LSB Altar Book*, p. 571)

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 2

..... Day 1 • Read Nahum 2:1–2

1. a. Having talked about the destruction of Nineveh in general terms, Nahum returns to the specifics. He addresses the Assyrians directly. God will use the Babylonian army to scatter, disperse, and destroy Nineveh. The scatterer would appear to be Babylon. But, according to 2:13, who is the real scatterer of Nineveh?

b. What is the relationship between the one scattering and the Babylonians?

2. The outcome of the battle against Assyria is certain, since God has decreed it. Yet, Nahum prompts the Ninevites to “man the ramparts” and “watch the road” (v. 1). This is not a position the Assyrians usually found themselves in. They were usually the ones attacking and destroying. Watching was a constant part of warfare at that time. We also man the ramparts and watch—but for what (Matthew 25:1–13)?

3. Nahum continues his taunt of the Assyrians by telling them to “dress for battle.” The shoe is on the other foot now. The Assyrians usually dressed for a battle of

offense, not of defense. Now, the Assyrians will be on the receiving end of the assault. Anywhere there is war; people must be dressed for battle. How and why is the Christian dressed for battle (see Ephesians 6:11–20)?

4. a. God is not destroying the capital of the Assyrian Empire simply because He wants to or because He thinks it's a good idea. What is the purpose of God's action against Assyria (v. 2)?

b. The complete accomplishment of this restoration did not happen during Old Testament times. When and where will this be fully accomplished (Psalm 145:10–13; Ephesians 5:27)?

5. a. Plundering was a common occurrence by conquering armies in the Old Testament. Tell about the plundering recorded in 2 Kings 15:19–20 and 2 Kings 18:14–16.

b. This was not the last plundering of Jerusalem. What plundering is prophesied by Isaiah in 2 Kings 20:12–17?

7. The Babylonians and the Medes, the armies prophesied to invade Nineveh, were no better than Assyria. They were blood-thirsty empires in whose wake death followed. How does God's use of these armies show that He is ultimately in charge even of fallen creation?

8. a. The chariots in Nahum 2:4 are described as darting "like lightning." This description of their appearance could also describe the speed and surprise of the invading army. How does this make the invasion a figure of the Last Day (Matthew 24:27)?

b. What is the connection between the fall of Nineveh and the Last Day?

9. Nahum again refers simply to "he" (2:5). Luther understood this as referring to the Assyrian king: "So great is their loss of hope, so great is their shock, that they do not even dare to go outside the city to face the Chaldeans" (AE 18:302). Based on the verses read, why should the king of Assyria be hopeless?

10. The word translated "siege tower" (2:5) is used only here in the Old Testament. The siege tower is a moveable structure that was used to protect men in the army as they stormed the city. As such, Nahum is referring to the conquering Babylonians and Medes. What was the need for a siege tower in the battles at this time?

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Day 2 • Read Nahum 2:3–5

6. Almost like a real battle, we see soldiers running around, but Nahum doesn't tell us which side they are on. Taking a cue from Ezekiel 23:14–15, which side is Nahum depicting in Nahum 2:3–4?