

NAHUM: DOOM OF NINEVEH
THE GOODNESS OF GOD

Thursday, July 23

Reading: Nahum 1:7-14

Nahum 1:7 *The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in Him*

When we speak of God's goodness, two things come to mind. First is God's intrinsic moral goodness. It is part of His nature to be good and the Source of goodness. Second, the Bible describes how God shows His goodness to all people. "The Lord is good too all; He has compassion on all He has made" (Psalm 145:9). Jesus spoke of God sending the sun and rain on the righteous and unrighteous (Matthew 5:45). In Nahum 1:7-8, God displays His goodness in two ways.

GOD OUR REFUGE – A refuge is a stronghold or fortress. It is a place of safety and protection. In this sinful world, God's people are always in the midst of trouble. But we can take comfort in God's presence. The NIV translation of "He cares for" is the Hebrew word *yāda* ' . It literally means to know and often to know in a personal and intimate way. God knows His people personally. God's goodness toward His people flows from His intimate knowledge and love for them.

GOD'S WARNING – God warns the wicked that judgment is coming. It is because of God's goodness that He warns His enemies of what awaits them. The implication (as it was with Jonah) is that they need to repent before the "overwhelming flood" wipes them away. Before they are consumed by "the realm of darkness."

The following verses give God's reasons for His judgment and gives hope for His people.

(1) He will frustrate His enemy's PLANS (1:9-10): God's judgment is just because His enemies plot against Him (see Psalm 2). But God scoffs at their plots and His destruction will be so complete that they will not get a second chance. We can be confident that God will win in the end! His enemies will be tangled up like thorns in the consequences of their sins. They will be drunk from their own pride and arrogance. And God will destroy them as quickly as dried chaff in a fire.

(2) He will defeat His enemy's POWER (1:11): The one who has come forth to plot evil has been taken to mean the kings of Assyria and their counselors. But it goes deeper than that! It hints at the true power behind their wickedness. The "wicked plans" in the NIV reads 'counselor of Belial' in Hebrew. Belial meant worthless or good for nothing. But it would later become another name for Satan himself. Satan's power behind this evil will not succeed.

(3) He will destroy His enemy's CULTURE (1:12-14): Culture has been described as the shared philosophy, beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and institutions that unite a society and determine their 'way of life.' The wicked culture of God's enemies would be utterly destroyed. Their allies, heritage (descendants), and evil religious practices will be buried. God calls them vile!

Today we live in society that is just as vile as those ancient empires that opposed God! But we can see the goodness of God in His care for His people and His warning to the wicked. As Christians, it is our duty (like Nahum) to stand and call out the wickedness in our society and world. We should be influencing our culture for the Lord through the way we live and the things we say.

How can you be an influence for God on those around you?