

NAHUM: DOOM OF NINEVEH
WOE TO THE BLOODY CITY

Friday, July 31

Reading: Nahum 3:1-7

Nahum 3:5 *"I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will lift your skirts over your face. I will show the nations your nakedness and the kingdoms your shame. 6 I will pelt you with filth, I will treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle.*

As the Assyrians taunted their enemies before destroying them, so now Nahum taunts them concerning God's coming judgment. Within his words, we get a glimpse of the character of Assyria's capital city. The prophet calls it a "city of blood" and precedes to describe some of its viler qualities

FULL OF DECEPTION (3:1): The first thing Nahum condemns is the deceitfulness of Nineveh – it is "full of lies." Any society where lying and deception is acceptable is ripe for God's judgment.

HUNGRY FOR WAR (3:1-3): The Assyrians could not get enough of plunder and killing. The prophet describes the horror of chariots and soldiers trampling over the bodies of the dead and dying – "bodies without number."

CONSUMED BY INIQUITY (3:4): Nahum uses two images to describe Nineveh – prostitution and sorcery. These expose the moral decay of the city. Sex and pagan worship often went together. Archaeology has found many artifacts showing the depths of sex and the occult that Nineveh practiced.

Once again God says, "I am against you!" The imagery of lifting up her skirts and exposing her nakedness (3:5-6) was a common punishment for a convicted adulterer in the ancient world. They would be dragged naked through the streets as the crowds taunted and threw filth at them. It was a public shaming spectacle. God declares He will do the same to Nineveh. He will expose them to the world for who they really are! And not surprisingly, no one will mourn for Nineveh (3:7). Instead, the nations will be glad to see her gone!

Our nation today shows many of the same characteristics as Nahum describes here about Nineveh. Sex and violence are condoned and even celebrated. The occult is popular with people looking to witchcraft and "magic" to entertain and guide their lives. Maybe the most dangerous trait for God's people is lying! It's so easy to justify a little "white lie" or cheat a little on our taxes. As Christians, we can easily be sucked into this wicked culture. The Apostle Paul tells us how to guard our hearts from being corrupted by the world.

Philippians 4:6-9 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

What does Paul tell us to do in these verses?

Which of these traits are the most challenging in today's culture? In your life personally?