

When Pride Meets God: Nahum 2:1-13 Explained

Nahum 2:1-13

He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition, watch the way, make thy loins strong, fortify thy power mightily. 2 For the LORD hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel: for the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine branches. 3 The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken. 4 The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings. 5 He shall recount his worthies: they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the defence shall be prepared. 6 The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved. 7 And Huzzab shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead her as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts. 8 But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back. 9 Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture. 10 She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness. 11 Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid? 12 The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin. 13 Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever walked through an abandoned place that used to be full of life? Maybe it was an old shopping mall. The parking lot is empty. The stores are boarded up. The fountain no longer runs. The food court is silent. It's hard to imagine that thousands of people once crowded those halls every day.

Or maybe you've driven past an old factory. We have many of those around here. Broken windows. Rusting equipment. Grass growing through the parking lot. Someone says, "This used to employ five thousand people." And you think... *"What happened?"*

Now imagine someone taking you to one of the greatest cities in the world. Towering walls. Massive palaces. Thousands of soldiers. Gold. Power. Luxury. Everyone says, "This city can never fall." Then, years later... nothing. Ruins. Dust. Silence. That's Nineveh. The city that believed it could never fall... met God. And when pride meets God... **pride always loses.**

I. PRIDE MAKES US FEEL UNTOUCHABLE

Nahum 2:1-2

He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition, watch the way, make thy loins strong, fortify thy power mightily. 2 For the LORD hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel: for the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine branches.

Imagine standing on Nineveh's walls. A lookout suddenly yells, "The enemy is coming!" Instantly the city explodes into activity. Soldiers race to the walls. Archers grab their bows. Officers begin shouting commands. That's exactly what verse 1 describes.

Listen again. "He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face." Nahum is announcing that the destroyer has arrived. The enemy is no longer a rumor. He's standing at the gates. Then listen to the rapid commands: "Keep the munition." Guard your fortress. Protect your defenses.

"Watch the way." Post your watchmen. Look down every road. "Make thy loins strong." In other words, God is saying, "Get ready to fight!" Then comes one last command. "Fortify thy power mightily." Use every weapon. Strengthen every wall. Call every soldier. Do everything you can.

Now stop for a second. Why would God tell Nineveh to prepare? Was He giving them a strategy to win? No. He's showing them that even after doing everything humanly possible... they still won't stop His judgment.

Imagine a man trying to stop a tsunami with a shovel. You can visualize him out there at the edge of the ocean with his little shovel. And this huge tsunami is coming right at him. He's working as hard as he can. Sweating. Digging. Trying. But the wave is far too great. That's Nineveh versus God.

God is almost saying, *"Go ahead. Prepare every defense you have. Call every soldier. Strengthen every wall. It still won't be enough."* Because pride always loses when it meets God.

Now verse 2 explains *why* this judgment is coming. "For the LORD hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel."

At first glance, this verse can seem confusing. Why is Nahum suddenly talking about Jacob and Israel? Because God hasn't forgotten what Assyria has done. Assyria didn't simply become powerful. They used their power to crush God's people. They invaded Israel. They emptied cities. They carried people away captive. They destroyed homes.

Nahum says, "The emptiers have emptied them out." Picture a beautiful vineyard after a swarm of locusts has passed through. The vines are stripped bare. The fruit is gone. The branches are broken. That's the picture behind the words, "marred their vine branches." Assyria had devastated God's people. They thought no one cared. They thought no one would stop them.

But God was watching the whole time. Now the same God who allowed Assyria to discipline Israel has turned His attention toward Assyria itself.

There's an important lesson here. Sometimes people mistake God's patience for God's approval. Assyria probably thought, *"We've conquered nation after nation. We keep winning. Surely no one can stop us."* What they didn't realize was that every victory was bringing them one step closer to the day they would stand before God.

Isn't that how pride works? Success convinces us that we're untouchable. We mistake God's patience for permission. We confuse temporary prosperity with permanent security. But the walls of Nineveh couldn't save them. Their armies couldn't save them. Their wealth couldn't save them.

Because the greatest danger Nineveh faced wasn't the army outside the walls. It was the God who stood against them. And when pride meets God, pride always loses.

II. GOD CAN SHAKE WHAT SEEMS UNSHAKEABLE

Nahum 2:3-8

The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken. 4 The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings. 5 He shall recount his worthies: they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the defence shall be prepared. 6 The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved. 7 And Huzzab shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead her as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts. 8 But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back.

Now Nahum describes the battle itself. The invading army is approaching. Their **red shields and scarlet uniforms** fill the horizon. Their **chariots flash like fire** as they race toward the city. The streets become a blur of soldiers, horses, and chariots moving with incredible speed. Nineveh scrambles to defend itself. Its mighty men rush to the walls, but panic begins to replace confidence.

Then comes the turning point. Verse 6 says, **"The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved."** Whether this refers to floodwaters weakening the city's defenses or another part of the siege, the picture is the same: **the city's greatest defenses begin to fail.** The palace itself—the symbol of Assyria's power—starts to collapse.

Verse 8 completes the scene. People begin to run. Leaders shout, **"Stand! Stand!"** But no one listens. The once-proud city has become a stampede of terrified people trying to save themselves.

Imagine watching a massive oak tree during a violent storm. It has stood for hundreds of years. It seems impossible to move. Then suddenly... you hear the first crack. Moments later the entire tree crashes to the ground. The storm didn't create the weakness. It exposed it.

Nineveh looked unshakable. Its walls. Its armies. Its wealth. Its reputation. But when God decided the time had come, everything people trusted began to crumble. The same principle is true today. A career can disappear. A fortune can vanish. Good health can change overnight. A nation can decline. Anything built on human pride can be shaken.

Only what is built on God will stand. Because... **Pride always loses when it meets God.**

III. PRIDE LEAVES EVERYTHING EMPTY

Nahum 2:9-10

Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture. 10 She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness.

Nineveh had everything. Gold. Silver. Treasure. Luxury. Yet look what happens. It's all left behind. Then comes one of my favorite descriptions.

She is empty, and void, and waste... Three words. Empty. Void. Waste. Imagine spending your whole life filling a bucket. Money. Possessions. Achievements. Recognition. Finally you reach the top. Then someone quietly removes the bottom. Everything pours out. That's Nineveh.

Imagine a balloon filled with air. Bright. Beautiful. Floating high above everyone else. One tiny pin. Everything changes. Pride fills us with ourselves. God has a way of letting the air out.

The Bible says, God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble. Pride always loses when it meets God.

Wait a minute here. Haven't we heard about Nineveh before in a book of the Bible? Do you remember that book? This isn't the first time Nineveh appears in the Bible. Just a few decades earlier, God sent Jonah there. And Jonah didn't want to go there. But Jonah went.

Jonah preached, **"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."** And what happened? The king stepped off his throne. The people put on sackcloth. They fasted. They cried unto God. From the greatest... to the least... the city humbled itself before the Lord. God saw their repentance... and spared the city.

Think about that. The very city that once humbled itself before God... has now become the very city that thinks it doesn't need God. What changed? One generation forgot what the previous generation learned.

Isn't that frightening? Revival doesn't automatically last forever. Many times, it's very short. One generation can fear God while the next generation forgets Him. One generation can build a godly home while the next generation tears it apart. One generation can love the Bible while the next generation leaves it sitting on a shelf. Humility isn't inherited. Every generation has to choose it for themselves.

IV. THE LION MET THE LION OF JUDAH

Nahum 2:11-13

Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid? 12 The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin. 13 Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.

Nineveh had already met one prophet. When Jonah preached, the city humbled itself, and God showed mercy. Now Nineveh meets another prophet. This time, they refuse to humble themselves. The difference isn't God. The difference is Nineveh.

God's mercy should lead us to humility—not pride. Throughout this passage, God describes Assyria as a pride of lions. Their palaces were filled with lion imagery because the lion represented strength, power, and fearless conquest.

Then God asks, **"Where is the dwelling of the lions?"** What a question. The lions that once terrified the nations... are nowhere to be found. Imagine walking into a lion's den expecting to hear roaring... but it's silent. Empty. Abandoned. That's Nineveh now after God was finished with them. "Where are the ferocious lions now?" The city that once made the world tremble now trembles before God.

Then comes one of the most frightening statements in the entire book: **"Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts."** If God is for you, who can stand against you? But if God is against you... no army... no wealth... no walls... no kingdom... and no pride... can save you.

Because... **Pride always loses when it meets God.**

CONCLUSION

Imagine standing outside Nineveh today. No kings. No soldiers. No roaring lions. Only ruins. Children might play among broken stones without realizing they are walking through what was once the greatest city on earth. That's what pride leaves behind. Ruins.

Now ask yourself... Where is pride hiding in my life? Don't think pride only belongs to pagan nations. Nineveh once experienced one of the greatest revivals recorded in the Bible. Yet only a few decades later... they were filled with violence... cruelty... and pride.

If it could happen to Nineveh... it could happen to a church. It could happen to a family. It could happen to me. That's why humility isn't something we decide once. It's something we choose every single day.

Do I think I don't need God? Do I trust my own strength? Do I depend more on my abilities than His grace? Remember the abandoned city from the beginning. Once it was full of life. Now it's silent. Not because God wasn't powerful enough to save it... but because the people were too proud to humble themselves before Him.

One day every proud kingdom will fall. Every proud nation. Every proud heart. The only people who stand forever... are those who humble themselves before the Lord. Because... **Pride always loses when it meets God.**

Let's pray.