

Assembly of Eloah

This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent -- Jesus Christ. Jn. 17:3

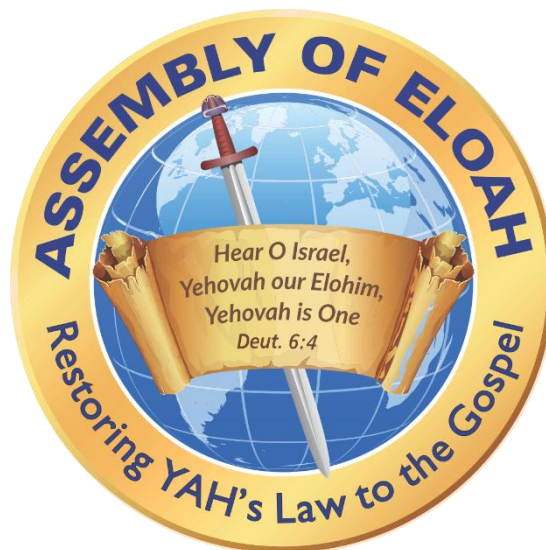
When Nations Forget Y^ehovah

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This study examines the surety and nature of Y^ehovah's promise for correction in the face of an unrepentant planet.



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Y^ehovah sent Jonah into Nineveh to warn them of their impending doom if they didn't repent, and they repented. Y^ehovah demonstrated His great mercy by relenting of the destruction He planned to bring upon them. After a period of time, however, Nineveh forgot Y^ehovah and returned to their evil ways and Nahum was sent to pronounce judgment on them. A similar judgment has been pronounced on the nations of the world and unless they repent, they will suffer similar consequences. This paper stands as a warning to the nations that they must repent.

We're all familiar with the story of Jonah and how he spent three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish. As we know, Jonah was sent to Nineveh to warn them of the impending wrath of Y^ehovah if they didn't repent. We can pick the story up in chapter 3.

Jonah 3:1-10 ESV Then the word of Y^ehovah (the LORD) came to Jonah the second time, saying, (2) "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you." (3) So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of Y^ehovah (the LORD). Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. (4) Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" (5) And the people of Nineveh believed [Elohim] God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. (6) The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. (7) And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, (8) but let man and beast be covered

with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to [Elohim] God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. (9) Who knows? [Elohim] God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish." (10) When [Elohim] God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, [Elohim] God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

The people of Nineveh were warned by Jonah about the soon coming consequences of their wickedness. The people from the greatest to the least fasted and clothed themselves in sackcloth. They repented of their evil ways and Y^ehovah turned from His anger and did not destroy them.

Now, in the book of Nahum, we have a very different picture. Here we see a prophecy regarding the destruction of Nineveh. According to Bullinger, the book of Jonah was written sometime around 690 BCE (Before Current Era). Bullinger also states that Nahum was written somewhere around 603 BCE. In less than 100 years, Nineveh forgot the mercy Y^ehovah had showed them when they repented of the evil ways and as a dog returns to his vomit, they returned to their evil ways.

The prophecy in Nahum is a graphic depiction of the destruction of Nineveh. It serves as a reminder to us that Y^ehovah is not slack concerning His promises; both good and bad.

Nahum gave details of the destruction in the following verses:

Nahum 1:7-10 ESV Y^ehovah (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. (9) What do you plot against Y^ehovah (the LORD)? He will make a complete end; trouble will not rise up a second time. (10) For they are like entangled thorns, like drunkards as they drink; they are consumed like stubble fully dried.

Nahum 3:12-19 ESV All your fortresses are like fig trees with first-ripe figs— if shaken they fall into the mouth of the eater. (13) Behold, your troops are women in your midst. The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has devoured your bars. (14) Draw water for the siege; strengthen your forts; go into the clay; tread the mortar; take hold of the brick mold! (15) There will the fire devour you; the sword will cut you off. It will devour you like the locust. Multiply yourselves like the locust; multiply like the grasshopper! (16) You increased your merchants more than the stars of the heavens. The locust spreads its wings and flies away. (17) Your princes are like grasshoppers, your scribes like clouds of locusts settling on the fences in a day of cold— when the sun rises, they fly away; no one knows where they are. (18) Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to gather them. (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?

Nahum explained the details of Nineveh as follows:

1. An "overflowing flood" would "make an utter end of its place" (Nah. 1:8)
2. It would be destroyed while the inhabitants were "drunken like drunkards" (Nah. 1:10)

3. The city would be unprotected because "fire shall devour the bars of your gates" (Nah. 3:13)
4. The city would never recover, for their "injury has no healing" (Nah. 3:19)
5. The downfall of the city would come with remarkable ease, like figs falling when the tree is shaken (Nah. 3:12)

In 612 BCE, Nabopolassar united the Babylonian army with an army of Medes and Scythians and led a campaign which captured the Assyrian citadels in the North. The Babylonian army laid siege to Nineveh, but the walls of the city were too strong for battering rams, so they decided to try and starve the people out.

A famous oracle had been given that "Nineveh should never be taken until the river became its enemy." After a three month siege, "rain fell in such abundance that the waters of the Tigris inundated part of the city and overturned one of its walls for a distance of twenty stades (approximately 2.5 miles).

Then the King, convinced that the oracle was accomplished and despairing of any means of escape and to avoid falling alive into the enemy's hands, constructed in his palace an immense funeral pyre, placed on it his gold and silver and his royal robes, and then, shutting himself up with his wives and eunuchs in a chamber formed in the midst of the pile, disappeared in the flames. Nineveh opened its gates to the besiegers, but this tardy submission did not save the proud city.

In Sennacherib's day, the wall around Nineveh was 40 to 50 feet high. It extended for roughly 2.5 miles along the Tigris River and for roughly 8 miles around the inner city. The city wall had 15 main gates, 5 of which have been excavated. Each of the gates was guarded by stone bull statues. Both inside and outside the walls, Sennacherib created parks, a botanical garden, and a zoo. He built a water-system containing the oldest aqueduct in history at Jerwan, across the Gomel River.

Nineveh was pillaged and burned, and then razed to the ground so completely as to evidence the implacable hatred enkindled in the minds of subject nations by the fierce and cruel Assyrian government.

Nineveh was laid waste as ruthlessly and completely as her kings had once ravaged Susa and Babylon; the city was put to the torch, the population was slaughtered or enslaved, and the palace so recently built by Ashurbanipal was sacked and destroyed. At one blow, Assyria disappeared from history. Nothing remained of her except certain tactics and weapons of war.

The Near East remembered her for a while as a merciless unifier of a dozen lesser states; and the Jews recalled Nineveh vengefully as 'the bloody city, full of lies and robbery'. In a little while, all but the mightiest of the Great Kings were forgotten, and all their royal palaces were in ruins under the drifting sands.

Two hundred years after its capture, Xenophon's Ten Thousand marched over the mounds that had been Nineveh, and never suspected that these were the site of the ancient metropolis that had ruled half the world. Not a stone remained visible of all the temples with which Assyria's pious warriors had sought to beautify their greatest capital. Even Ashur, the everlasting god, was dead. (Ancient and Lost Civilizations; Article titled <http://www.crystalinks.com/nineveh.html>)

The harshness and graphic nature of this prophecy is troubling to many. But if you'll notice the very beginning of the book of Nahum, he starts out on a positive note. In the very beginning of this prophecy, Nahum affirms some truths about Y^ehovah that we must keep in mind.

Nahum 1:2-3 ESV Y^ehovah (The LORD) is a jealous and avenging [Elohim] God; Y^ehovah (the LORD) is avenging and wrathful; Y^ehovah (the LORD) takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. (3) Y^ehovah (The LORD) is slow to anger and great in power, and Y^ehovah (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.

Nahum tells us three things about Y^ehovah.

1. Y^ehovah cares about His people (Y^ehovah is a jealous and avenging God).

Immediately, this raises negative images in us. It sounds like Y^ehovah is overprotective, possessive and hot-

tempered. But that is not the image we should have. Jealousy is a positive when it means cherishing what we have and wanting to protect it. Y^ehovah is jealous over His glory, His name, and His people.

Think about it this way: If someone were to attack a member of your family, would you rise up and defend that family member? Sure you would. You would fight for that family member to the death, if necessary. Why do we act this way? It's because we are jealous for those we love. We are fervent and single-minded in our devotion to them. When Nahum talks about Y^ehovah being jealous and avenging, he is telling us that Y^ehovah cares passionately about His people and will defend them fully.

The jealousy that one needs to worry about is the kind that is wrapped in envy and covetousness. The jealousy that is driven by selfish motives is a destroyer of peace and happiness and is to be avoided.

2. Y^ehovah will judge those who oppose Him. (He takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. He takes vengeance on his foes and maintains his wrath against his enemies).

Vengeance certainly has a negative connotation. The vengeance that Y^ehovah exercises, however, is not negative. Y^ehovah and His ways are love. If Y^ehovah is love, then all those that oppose Him are not love. Y^ehovah protects His people and that which is good and true. In the end, Y^ehovah's vengeance is an expression of His love for it is only through His

correction that humanity will correct their ways and return to their creator and sustainer.

Deut. 8:5-6 ESV Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, Y^ehovah (the LORD) your God disciplines you. (6) So you shall keep the commandments of Y^ehovah (the LORD) your [Elohim] God by walking in his ways and by fearing him.

Psalms 94:10-13 ESV He who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge— (11) Y^ehovah (the LORD)— knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath. (12) Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O [Yah] LORD, and whom you teach out of your law, (13) to give him rest from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked.

Heb. 12:6-13 ESV For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." (7) It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? (8) If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. (9) Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? (10) For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. (11) For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (12) Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, (13) and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

Is it compassionate to allow that which is good and true to be trodden underfoot or is it compassionate to destroy the wicked to preserve that which is good? We see it

in our own societies. Criminals are locked away to protect society. What if we all had “mercy” on the criminals and turned them all loose? They would indeed be harmful to society. This is not mercy. God won’t allow the wicked to remain in power over the good forever.

The point is that mercy and judgment are not contradictory; they are complimentary. Y^ehovah’s love for truth, goodness, and His people requires that He eliminates those things that threaten them. Sometimes, death is the merciful thing. The wicked will be given their chance in the second resurrection. The end goal is that all creation, the good and the currently wicked, are reconciled to their creator.

3. Y^ehovah never acts in a hasty manner (He is slow to anger and great in power).

When we talk about people who are jealous or filled with wrath or vengeance, we think of someone who acts impulsively. They strike out. They are often out of control. But that’s not the case with Y^ehovah. He is slow to anger. Y^ehovah always gives people time to repent. We saw this demonstrated in the book of Jonah. Y^ehovah desires to extend mercy. But we must never equate Y^ehovah’s patience with any sense of weakness. If Y^ehovah says that He is going to do something, He does it. Y^ehovah is great in power.

If you read Jonah and Nahum back to back, you see both elements of Y^ehovah’s

nature. In Jonah, we see His patience and love. In Nahum, we see that patience exhausted.

The Certainty of Judgement

With this background in mind, let’s look at the prophecy itself. The prophecy of Nahum is very specific. In fact, it’s so specific that some believe it had to be written post destruction, but it wasn’t. In the first couple of chapters, there are many specific details.

In chapter 1 verse 8, we read that Nineveh would be destroyed in an overwhelming flood. Some believe this to be a metaphor meaning that the city (and the empire) will be destroyed suddenly and completely.

To understand this image, all one needs to do is think about the World Trade Center Towers. One minute, the towers were filled with the buzz of commerce and life. And in such a short matter of time, these skyscrapers were erased from the skyline. Who can forget the images of people running from near the trade center as the cloud of dust and rubble overtook those running in terror?

This is the image Nahum gives us. The city that thought of itself as invincible would be destroyed quickly and completely. It’s interesting how accurate these words turned out to be.

Others believe, as we saw above, that during the final siege of Nineveh by a rebel army of Persians, Medes, Arabians, and Babylonians, unusually heavy rains

caused the rivers to flood and undermine the city's walls, which then collapsed over a length of about 2.5 miles. The invading armies entered the city through this breach in its defenses.

Either way the city was destroyed in a very short period of time.

In Nahum 1:10, we read that the city would be burned like dry straw.

Nahum 1:10 ESV For they are like entangled thorns, like drunkards as they drink; they are consumed like stubble fully dried.

Archaeologists have concluded that the city was burned to the ground just as Assyria had done to so many cities.

In 2:8-10, we are told that there would be extensive looting,

Nahum 2:8-10 ESV Nineveh is like a pool whose waters run away. "Halt! Halt!" they cry, but none turns back. (9) Plunder the silver, plunder the gold! There is no end of the treasure or of the wealth of all precious things. (10) Desolate! Desolation and ruin! Hearts melt and knees tremble; anguish is in all loins; all faces grow pale!

This city had great riches because they stole the treasures of every town they captured. Yet, in all the archaeological digging, nothing of all the gold and silver of the great city has been discovered. They were stripped bare by the invading armies, just as Nahum said.

Nahum said that the destruction would be so thorough that Assyria would have no descendants. They would never be able to attack Israel again. They seemed like

preposterous words at the time yet, after the destruction of Nineveh in 612 BCE, these people were lost from history. In fact, the city of Nineveh itself was lost until archaeologists discovered it and began to excavate it in the 1840's!

The point is that these were not merely poetic words that Nahum spoke. They were a glimpse into the future. They were literal not figurative. Their judgment was so certain that God was able to describe it in detail.

The Reasons for Judgement

This leads to an important question, "Why was Y^ehovah so angry at Nineveh?" What took place during those 80-100 years since the time of Jonah? The answer is found in the first ten verses of chapter 3.

They were vicious in their actions:

Nahum 3:1-3 ESV 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!

Nineveh was called the city of blood because of the vicious way the Ninevites went about their conquests. They would make promises to a city and then destroy it. They were cruel and inhumane. The historical records are filled with accounts of the Assyrians massacring people, even killing children in the streets. When they would take captives, they would often tie the captives together fastening them by

hooks through their lips or other body parts. They were barbarians.

It makes one think of the Nazi massacre of the Jews, the disregard for human life shown by terrorists, and the genocide of ruthless dictators. They all walk in the footsteps of Nineveh. Y^ehovah is taking note. When obedience to Y^ehovah leaves, a nation's judgment will soon follow.

Second, The Ninevites were idolaters:

Nahum 3:4 ESV 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.

These people were morally corrupt. They bowed down to that which "felt good". They loved to party and indulge. They bowed to the Goddess Ishtar, the goddess of sexual passion, fertility, and war. And as with the prostitutes of old, Nahum declared that they would be publicly exposed.

But they also engaged in various kinds of sorcery. Sorcery taps into the power of evil spirits. Sorcerers look for spiritual guidance by means of their charms and trinkets. They proclaim that they can communicate with the dead.

It's not as odd as you think. This kind of thing is going on all around us. One of the more popular shows on television is a show called Crossing Over on the Sci-Fi Network. On this show, the "sorcerer" (he isn't called that on the show) is a man by the name of John Edward. He sits down

with people and gives them messages from those who are dead!

There is also an increasing fascination with the occult and a sharp rise in witchcraft and Satanism. Many consult their trinkets such as crystals and other objects. Y^ehovah is slow to anger but He will not tolerate this pandering with evil forever.

Third, the Ninevites were arrogant:

Nahum 3:8-10 ESV Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile, with water around her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall? (9) Cush was her strength; Egypt too, and that without limit; Put and the Libyans were her helpers. (10) Yet she became an exile; she went into captivity; her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of every street; for her honored men lots were cast, and all her great men were bound in chains.

As pointed out earlier, not long before this time, the Assyrians had destroyed the Egyptian city of Thebes. It was a city that many thought was immune from attack. It had a huge wall, great riches and was known for its power. After the Assyrians attacked this city, it seems they would have realized that they too were vulnerable. But they believed it would never happen to them. They were cocky. They were superior. They were invincible. They did not need to live by Y^ehovah's rules. But, they were wrong. They would be destroyed in the same way as they had destroyed others.

Lessons in Judgement for Us

The danger with a book of the Bible, like Nahum, is that we may read it and conclude that it really has little if anything to do with us. I hope we all know better. Everything in the Bible is there for our instruction. There are three important things to be learned from Nahum.

Sin Will Be Dealt With

As we saw with Nineveh, Y^ehovah will not tolerate sin forever. Israel, like Nineveh, has forgotten Y^ehovah. All one needs to do is look at society and it's blatantly obvious. An understanding of Y^ehovah's laws is not to be found. We destroy the unborn. We deny the ground its Sabbaths. We have forgotten Y^ehovah's New Moons, Sabbaths, Feasts and Holy Days. Just as in the days of Noah, we claim that Y^ehovah doesn't even exist!

Y^ehovah is going to judge Israel as He did Nineveh.

Isaiah 2:6-22:

Isaiah 2:6-8 ESV For you have rejected your people, the house of Jacob, because they are full of things from the east and of fortune-tellers like the Philistines, and they strike hands with the children of foreigners. (7) Their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures; their land is filled with horses, and there is no end to their chariots. (8) Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.

Just like Nineveh, Judah and Israel are rich beyond measure but they don't worship Y^ehovah. They are an idolatrous and wicked generation.

Isaiah 2:9-15 ESV So man is humbled, and each one is brought low— do not forgive them! (10) Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror of Y^ehovah (the LORD), and from the splendor of his majesty. (11) The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and Y^ehovah (the LORD) alone will be exalted in that day. (12) For Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low; (13) against all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up; and against all the oaks of Bashan; (14) against all the lofty mountains, and against all the uplifted hills; (15) against every high tower, and against every fortified wall;

We've seen much destruction of human life through wars, catastrophe and terror attacks. This is only a small taste of what's to come unless this nation and all of Israel repents and turns to Y^ehovah.

Isaiah 2:16-22 ESV against all the ships of Tarshish, and against all the beautiful craft. (17) And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and Y^ehovah (the LORD) alone will be exalted in that day. (18) And the idols shall utterly pass away. (19) And people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of Y^ehovah (the LORD), and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth. (20) In that day mankind will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, to the moles and to the bats, (21) to enter the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs, from before the terror of Y^ehovah (the LORD), and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth. (22) Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, for of what account is he?

Mankind will learn to fear Y^ehovah and it appears they're going to do it the hard way!

Isaiah 3:1-12 ESV For behold, Y^ehovah (the LORD) GOD of hosts is taking away from Jerusalem and from Judah support and supply, all support of bread, and all support of water; (2) the mighty man and the soldier, the judge and the prophet, the diviner and the elder, (3) the captain of fifty and the man of rank, the counselor and the skillful magician and the expert in charms. (4) And I will make boys their princes, and infants shall rule over them. (5) And the people will oppress one another, every one his fellow and every one his neighbor; the youth will be insolent to the elder, and the despised to the honorable. (6) For a man will take hold of his brother in the house of his father, saying: "You have a cloak; you shall be our leader, and this heap of ruins shall be under your rule"; (7) in that day he will speak out, saying: "I will not be a healer; in my house there is neither bread nor cloak; you shall not make me leader of the people." (8) For Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah has fallen, because their speech and their deeds are against Y^ehovah (the LORD), defying his glorious presence. (9) For the look on their faces bears witness against them; they proclaim their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them! For they have brought evil on themselves. (10) Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds. (11) Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him, for what his hands have dealt out shall be done to him. (12) My people—infants are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, your guides mislead you and they have swallowed up the course of your paths.

Our leaders are weak and they lead the nations astray. This is not only true in the nations but in Y^ehovah's church as well. The church of God has been all but destroyed by the so-called leaders. They have abused their positions and have not cared for the flock. These passages are a judgment upon them as well as the

nations. They need to repent and turn back to Y^ehovah!

Isaiah 3:13-26 ESV Y^ehovah (The LORD) has taken his place to contend; he stands to judge peoples. (14) Y^ehovah (The LORD) will enter into judgment with the elders and princes of his people: "It is you who have devoured the vineyard, the spoil of the poor is in your houses. (15) What do you mean by crushing my people, by grinding the face of the poor?" declares [Adonai] the Lord [Y^ehovah] GOD of hosts. (16) Y^ehovah (The LORD) said: Because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with outstretched necks, glancing wantonly with their eyes, mincing along as they go, tinkling with their feet, (17) therefore [Adonai] the Lord will strike with a scab the heads of the daughters of Zion, and Y^ehovah (the LORD) will lay bare their secret parts. (18) In that day [Adonai] the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the crescents; (19) the pendants, the bracelets, and the scarves; (20) the headdresses, the armllets, the sashes, the perfume boxes, and the amulets; (21) the signet rings and nose rings; (22) the festal robes, the mantles, the cloaks, and the handbags; (23) the mirrors, the linen garments, the turbans, and the veils. (24) Instead of perfume there will be rottenness; and instead of a belt, a rope; and instead of well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a rich robe, a skirt of sackcloth; and branding instead of beauty. (25) Your men shall fall by the sword and your mighty men in battle. (26) And her gates shall lament and mourn; empty, she shall sit on the ground.

Isaiah 4:1 ESV And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, "We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach."

This happens when men are killed in war. It appears that it will happen in our future as well.

Y^ehovah will not be patient forever. Judgment is coming upon not only Israel but the entire planet.

Isaiah 5:1-16 ESV Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. (2) He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. (3) And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. (4) What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? (5) And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. (6) I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and briars and thorns shall grow up; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. (7) For the vineyard of Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting; and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry! (8) Woe to those who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no more room, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land. (9) Y^ehovah (The LORD) of hosts has sworn in my hearing: "Surely many houses shall be desolate, large and beautiful houses, without inhabitant. (10) For ten acres of vineyard shall yield but one bath, and a homer of seed shall yield but an ephah." (11) Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening as wine inflames them! (12) They have lyre and harp, tambourine and flute and wine at their feasts, but they do not regard the deeds of Y^ehovah (the LORD), or see the work of his hands. (13) Therefore my people go into exile for lack of knowledge; their honored men go hungry, and their multitude is parched with thirst. (14) Therefore Sheol has enlarged its

appetite and opened its mouth beyond measure, and the nobility of Jerusalem and her multitude will go down, her revelers and he who exults in her. (15) Man is humbled, and each one is brought low, and the eyes of the haughty are brought low. (16) But Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy [E] God shows himself holy in righteousness.

Israel and the entire earth will be shown that Y^ehovah is God alone. Our cities that are built house upon house and field upon field will be laid waste. Our land will not yield its fruit. There will be starvation and disease, as we see in Revelation.

Great pain, suffering and destruction are coming upon the nations of this world.

Isaiah 24:1-23 ESV Behold, Y^ehovah (the LORD) will empty the earth and make it desolate, and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants. (2) And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor. (3) The earth shall be utterly empty and utterly plundered; for Y^ehovah (the LORD) has spoken this word. (4) The earth mourns and withers; the world languishes and withers; the highest people of the earth languish. (5) The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. (6) Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left. (7) The wine mourns, the vine languishes, all the merry-hearted sigh. (8) The mirth of the tambourines is stilled, the noise of the jubilant has ceased, the mirth of the lyre is stilled. (9) No more do they drink wine with singing; strong drink is bitter to those who drink it. (10) The wasted city is broken down; every house is shut up so that none can enter. (11) There is an outcry in the streets for lack

of wine; all joy has grown dark; the gladness of the earth is banished. (12) Desolation is left in the city; the gates are battered into ruins. (13) For thus it shall be in the midst of the earth among the nations, as when an olive tree is beaten, as at the gleaning when the grape harvest is done. (14) They lift up their voices, they sing for joy; over the majesty of Y^ehovah (the LORD) they shout from the west. (15) Therefore in the east give glory to Y^ehovah (the LORD); in the coastlands of the sea, give glory to the name of Y^ehovah (the LORD), the [Elohim] God of Israel. (16) From the ends of the earth we hear songs of praise, of glory to the Righteous One. But I say, "I waste away, I waste away. Woe is me! For the traitors have betrayed, with betrayal the traitors have betrayed." (17) Terror and the pit and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth! (18) He who flees at the sound of the terror shall fall into the pit, and he who climbs out of the pit shall be caught in the snare. For the windows of heaven are opened, and the foundations of the earth tremble. (19) The earth is utterly broken, the earth is split apart, the earth is violently shaken. (20) The earth staggers like a drunken man; it sways like a hut; its transgression lies heavy upon it, and it falls, and will not rise again. (21) On that day Y^ehovah (the LORD) will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. (22) They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. (23) Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed, for Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders.

The earth is being purged of the wickedness and evil that is so prevalent in it today. Like Nineveh, the cities of the earth will be cleansed. We can take heart for there is light at the end of the tunnel and Y^ehovah won't allow the entire planet to be destroyed.

Mat. 24:1-22 ESV Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. (2) But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." (3) As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (4) And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. (5) For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray. (6) And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. (7) For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. (8) All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. (9) "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. (10) And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. (11) And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. (12) And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. (13) But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (14) And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (15) "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), (16) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (17) Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, (18) and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. (19) And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! (20) Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. (21) For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. (22) And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for

the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

There will be great calamity on the earth. The coming tribulation will be unlike any tribulation since the beginning of time. But Y^ehovah will stop it short. If Y^ehovah doesn't intervene, mankind will totally destroy the earth and every living thing in it. Mankind would end its own existence rather than conform to Y^ehovah's way.

A Reminder of Y^ehovah's Mercy

Isaiah 11:1-9 ESV There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. (2) And the Spirit of Y^ehovah (the LORD) shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Y^ehovah (the LORD). (3) And his delight shall be in the fear of Y^ehovah (the LORD). He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, (4) but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. (5) Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. (6) The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. (7) The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. (8) The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. (9) They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Y^ehovah (the LORD) as the waters cover the sea.

Zech. 14:16-21 ESV Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts,

and to keep the Feast of Booths. (17) And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts, there will be no rain on them. (18) And if the family of Egypt does not go up and present themselves, then on them there shall be no rain; there shall be the plague with which Y^ehovah (the LORD) afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths. (19) This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths. (20) And on that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "Holy to Y^ehovah (the LORD)." And the pots in the house of Y^ehovah (the LORD) shall be as the bowls before the altar. (21) And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and take of them and boil the meat of the sacrifice in them. And there shall no longer be a trader in the house of Y^ehovah (the LORD) of hosts on that day.

Conclusion

The people of Nineveh had been granted Y^ehovah's mercy in the time of Jonah. They more than likely remembered their deliverance for many years. Even though the people of Nineveh may have remembered the faith of their forefathers, it no longer existed in them.

The faith of our forefathers was great. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were men of great faith. That faith no longer exists in the nations of their descendants. This warning is not only to Israel but to the entire world. The future is not set in stone. The nations can repent. That repentance has to start with our obedience. We live as examples to them. We fast and pray for them on the 7th day of the first month every year. We cry aloud and spare not. We warn the nations so that by the grace

of Y^ehovah, they might repent, as Nineveh did.

We should see the book of Jonah as an encouraging book. The book was written not only to the people of Nineveh, but also to the people of Judah and Israel. These words are a reminder that Y^ehovah doesn't forget His people. The Israelites had gone through tough times. They may have felt abandoned, but they weren't.

Throughout the book, Nahum declares that Y^ehovah is a refuge for those who trust Him (1:7; 12-13; 15; 2:2). He defends those who hide themselves in Him. He does not let the evil committed against them go unpunished. Y^ehovah cares passionately for His people. He defends not only His honor, but also His people.

Maybe we feel beaten up by life. Maybe we feel overrun by the army of difficult circumstances. Maybe we feel abandoned by Y^ehovah at times. The book of Nahum reminds us that Y^ehovah is our shield. We are not forgotten.

Perhaps we've made bad choices. Haven't we all? Maybe we've drifted away from Y^ehovah. Maybe you feel that He would be justified in turning away from you. Nahum reminds us that we still have time to turn to Him and discover his forgiveness and grace. We must work while there is yet time. Time is short so we must be diligent.

Don't presume upon Y^ehovah's mercy. Learn from Nineveh. How long will Y^ehovah endure with our world? How long

will God allow Israel to drift from Him? How long before the Father stands and says, "Enough!"? We know that it won't be long. 2027/28 is not far away. We'll see things heating up more and more over the next few years. Our nations will be brought into the one world system where it appears that the United States and the British Commonwealth are to become the military arm of the beast power, if not the very seat of it! Don't be dismayed at the signs of the times.

We are now living in the last days spoken of in the Bible. The wrath of Y^ehovah is coming upon the disobedient of this planet. He will bring them into a state of repentance but not before they have been warned.

Brethren, our job is to cry aloud and spare not! We have a job to do so let's be about it. Let's get through these times of trouble so that Y^ehovah's grace and mercy can reign in the millennial world tomorrow.

Amen, Y^ehovah