

## 6. Nahum - Cosmic Fate

Do you believe in “fate”? What do people mean when they use that word “fate”? (In Greek Mythology...) Can we properly understand God’s Sovereign Providence, Judgement, and Grace as “Cosmic Fate”?

Setting and Purpose of Nahum:

- Setting: 660-630 B.C. - The Assyrian Empire has near total dominance of the world as Israel knew it. The height of Assyrian power conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and scattered their inhabitants into exiles.
- Under Jonah’s preaching, the city of Nineveh repented. Under Nahum, it is the opposite.
- Purpose: 1:1 - Nahum is given a vision - message against Nineveh.

### Ch. 1 - The Fates of God

#### God’s Character

How is God described in 1:2-6?

What does it mean that God is “slow to anger”?

What other famous Scripture reference first establishes the same terminology of v.3 to describe God and what is the story/setting of that first passage? (See Cross References in Your Bible)

How does 1:7 and 1:8 define the Two Fates of God’s character and what makes the difference between these two outcomes for us?

#### Judgment and Salvation

A1 Words of Judgment (1:9-11) -

A2 Words of Salvation (1:12-13) -

B1 Words of Judgment (1:14) -

B2 Words of Salvation (1:15) -

## Chapter 2 & 3 - Nineveh's Doom

These chapters lay out the oracle of doom against Nineveh. It references another historical plunder and destruction of the Egyptian city of Thebes (3:8). "Are you better than Thebes?" – Can you think of how we might need to hear the same message today and why?

Peterson (*The Invitation*) references how "Larger-than-life figures" appear on the stage of history from time to time. (Read quote on p.136). Do you find yourself getting distracted by such looming national/global figures today? How does the daily news and social media contribute to this problem?

How does a prophet like Nahum help us to deal with these distraction?

The message of Nahum is filled with violence and ends in gloom. Some people would look at the Old Testament and say that the Bible promotes a God of violence and killing. However, that is a short sighted reading of the context and message. What was Assyria like at this time? (Read ESV Study Bible, p.1709)

In chapter 1, there is no reference to Nineveh. The only words used there are "enemies" and "adversaries." The Lord is described in this chapter as the Divine Warrior and Hero who cannot abide the corruption, oppression, and evil that is arrogantly being paraded about the world. "Nineveh" is a symbol for any power or agency or religion in history that fit into this category. Can you think of any other historical figures / powers that you could substitute into Nahum's message?

In 1:15, Nahum tells the people of Judah to celebrate and proclaim peace and good news. Why do you think Nahum is saying this?

This verse (1:15) is a direct quote from another prophet. Look up the cross reference. What is the context of this verse in Isaiah and what should this be indicating for the people of Israel? What does this also teach us as believers today?

Nahum means "comfort" – Is there comfort in Nahum's message?