**Nahum 3:1-11 Woe to the bloody city! It *is* all full of lies *and* robbery. *Its* victim never departs. 2The noise of a whip And the noise of rattling wheels, Of galloping horses, Of clattering chariots! 3Horsemen charge with bright sword and glittering spear. *There is* a multitude of slain, A great number of bodies, Countless corpses— They stumble over the corpses— 4Because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, The mistress of sorceries, Who sells nations through her harlotries, And families through her sorceries.**

**5“Behold, I *am* against you,” says the Lord of hosts; “I will lift your skirts over your face,  
I will show the nations your nakedness, And the kingdoms your shame. 6I will cast abominable filth upon you, Make you vile, And make you a spectacle. 7It shall come to pass that all who look upon you Will flee from you, and say, ‘Nineveh is laid waste! Who will bemoan her?’ Where shall I seek comforters for you?” 8Are you better than No Amon that was situated by the River, That had the waters around her, Whose rampart *was* the sea, Whose wall *was* the sea? 9Ethiopia and Egypt *were* her strength, And *it was* boundless; Put and Lubim were your helpers. 10Yet she *was* carried away, She went into captivity; Her young children also were dashed to pieces At the head of every street; They cast lots for her honorable men, And all her great men were bound in chains. 11You also will be drunk; You will be hidden; You also will seek refuge from the enemy.**

We’re back in Nineveh tonight. In chapter 3, we see the continuation of the prophecy of the destruction that is to come on that city. I’ve divided Chapter 3 because it’s a very long chapter with a lot in it. We’ll do about half tonight and, God willing, we’ll do the rest April 11th.

Remember 2 weeks ago the scripture highlighted how the city would prepare for war, the nobles would rush to the walls, and chariots would rush through the streets. Like so many times before, Nineveh would go to war expecting victory, but we see that all the preparations are doomed because God has spoken. Recall the words of Gamaliel in Acts 5:38-39 *And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—lest you even be found to fight against God.”* The plans of man without God come to nothing. The plans of God are assured the moment they are spoken.

Christian’s need to believe this with all their hearts right now. God speaks it and we can believe it. God has said that wickedness will be punished, and we need to believe it. God says we are dearly loved and will be protected no matter what, and we need to believe it. God says He has a plan for our lives, a plan to do us good and not harm, to give us hope, and we need to believe it. Too many Christians are wringing their hands instead of working for the Kingdom.

Verse 1 of our scripture says - *Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and robbery. Its victim never departs.*Woe – meaning that disaster is upon the city. The bloody city – the Assyrians were known as the cruelest people of the ancient world. They were bloodthirsty. Monuments were carved showing them beheading, flaying, and impaling their enemies. They celebrated killing! This is an abomination before God. But, not only is the city full of murder, but it is full of lies and robbery. We can see the Ten Commandments being violated one by one. Nineveh didn’t hold God as God, robbed, killed, bore false witness. Victims of this wickedness seemed endless. The sin has come to the attention of God and He is about to punish.

Verse 2 & 3 *The noise of a whip And the noise of rattling wheels, Of galloping horses, Of clattering chariots! 3Horsemen charge with bright sword and glittering spear. There is a multitude of slain, A great number of bodies, Countless corpses- They stumble over the corpses.* These verses give a vision of the conquerors entering the city. Horses passing close enough to the inhabitants that the whip swishing through the air can be heard as the horse is whipped for speed. The wheels of chariots rattle over the cobblestone streets, clattering as horses gallop by. Such a horrible sight as horsemen charge forward with spears and sword, killing countless, so much so that people are stumbling over the dead in the street. These two verses are meant to draw us in and help us envision the swiftness of the destruction and the total annihilation of the city.

Verse 4 & 5 *Because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, The mistress of sorceries, Who sells nations through her harlotries, And families through her sorceries. 5“Behold, I am against you,” says the Lord of hosts; “I will lift your skirts over your face, I will show the nations your nakedness, And the kingdoms your shame.*Harlotries, sorceries – abominations before God. Because of these things, God says – I am against you. God makes it clear where this destruction is coming from. Uncovering nakedness was a method the Assyrians used on females they captured to humiliate, to show that they have been conquered by making them hold their skirts up. Monuments have been found with this carved on them. God will not turn this on Assyria.

Verses 6 & 7 *I will cast abominable filth upon you, Make you vile, And make you a spectacle. 7It shall come to pass that all who look upon you Will flee from you, and say, ‘Nineveh is laid waste! Who will bemoan her?’ Where shall I seek comforters for you?”*God has already pronounced Sennacherib vile. Now He sets Nineveh, a proud, haughty city as a spectacle. Literally, this means a gazing stock. In ancient times, women and children were placed in cages and the conquering people walked by and picked up mud and animal droppings and cast this onto the conquered people. God is turning this on Assyria. Those who come by will bemoan the once great city. There will be no comforters.

Verses 8 & 9 *Are you better than No Amon that was situated by the River, That had the waters around her, Whose rampart was the sea, Whose wall was the sea? 9Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, And it was boundless; Put and Lubim were your helpers.*Are you better than the great city of Thebes, in upper Egypt. This city was the city of the god Amon. This false god could not protect Thebes, Ethiopia and Egypt couldn’t protect her, her natural ramparts couldn’t protect her. She fell to the Assyrians under King Sargon. God is saying – like you conquered Thebes, I will conquer you.

Verses 10 *Yet she was carried away, She went into captivity; Her young children also were dashed to pieces At the head of every street; They cast lots for her honorable men, And all her great men were bound in chains.* Thebes was carried away, even with all the powerful armies that supported her. She went into captivity despite powerful Egypt and Ethiopia fighting for her. Thebes, of course, fell in 663 BC, which allows us to properly date this book of the Bible. Assyria was known for killing the children of conquered people – infants that could not work – by slamming them on stones and against the sides of houses. Taking nobles and enslaving them to show their dominance over the people. God says – as you did to others, so it will be done to you Assyria. Galatians 6:7 says - *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.* Nineveh has sown… and Nineveh will reap. We are sowing. We will one day reap. God is not mocked.

Verse 11 *You also will be drunk; You will be hidden; You also will seek refuge from the enemy.* Nineveh will be drunk from drinking of the Wrath of God. Recall that Nahum 1:10 said - *For while tangled like thorns,* ***And while drunken like drunkards****, They shall be devoured like stubble fully dried.* The rulers of Nineveh were drunk as the invasion started. People will look for Nineveh and no longer find it. Nineveh will seek helpers, but the enemies will overthrow them because God has spoken it. If God be for us, who can be against us… but, if God be against us, who can be for us?

Nahum has so many lessons for us. The one thought to leave here tonight with is – when God speaks it, we can believe it. It may take longer than we are alive, but it will come to pass. It’s our role to stand fast, pray earnestly for God to prepare the soil of hearts, witness faithfully so the seed might be sown, and trust that God will one day give the increase. We’re not called to wring our hands – we are called to work for the Kingdom.