**Nahum 3:12-19 All your strongholds *are* fig trees with ripened figs: If they are shaken,
They fall into the mouth of the eater. 13Surely, your people in your midst *are* women! The gates of your land are wide open for your enemies; Fire shall devour the bars of your gates*.* 14Draw your water for the siege! Fortify your strongholds! Go into the clay and tread the mortar! Make strong the brick kiln! 15There the fire will devour you, The sword will cut you off; It will eat you up like a locust. Make yourself many—like the locust! Make yourself many—like the *swarming* locusts! 16You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars of heaven. The locust plunders and flies away. 17Your commanders are like swarming locusts, And your generals like great grasshoppers, Which camp in the hedges on a cold day; When the sun rises they flee away, And the place where they *are* is not known. 18Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; Your nobles rest *in the dust.* Your people are scattered on the mountains, And no one gathers them. 19Your injury *has* no healing, Your wound is severe. All who hear news of you Will clap *their* hands over you, For upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?**

 We’ll finish the book of Nahum tonight. As we’ve talked about, Jonah came to Nineveh 125 to 175 years earlier, and Nineveh repented! God had prepared the hearts of the people so that, when Jonah spoke, repentance broke out. We too must be praying for God to prepare the hearts of people to receive His word.

But, the human heart is desperately wicked and repentance doesn’t last forever. Fast forward 125 - 175 years and Nahum is prophesying against this same city. The people had returned to their wicked ways. The city butchered people and celebrated murder. God had relented, but He won’t relent forever. His patience and long suffering has run out and Nineveh is about to receive the Justice they deserve, suffering the Wrath of God.

In 1905, America experienced the beginning of a Great Revival. Britain and Japan were having revival. Every denomination was experiencing conversions and growth. Fast forward 116 years, Britain is largely non-Christian now. Japan’s Christian community has dwindled. The US is seeing wickedness and ungodliness like never before. We’re reminded of Habakkuk 1:2 *O Lord, how long shall I cry and You will not hear? Even cry out to You, “Violence!” and You will not save.* How Long will the Lord be patient with us?

Verse 12 *All your strongholds are fig trees with ripened figs: If they are shaken, They fall into the mouth of the eater.*Nahum is referring here to the strongholds, mountain passes, that surrounded the city as people approached. The Caspian gates, the Gates of Cilicia and Syria were tight passes that the army heavily defended. We all know that, when fruit on a tree is ripened, giving the tree a shake can cause fruit to rain down. Nahum is pointing out that the strongholds will fall as easily at the hands of the approaching enemy as ripened fruit from a shaken tree. The strength in which Nineveh trusts (money, military, commerce) will come to nothing.

Verse 13 *Surely, your people in your midst are women! The gates of your land are wide open for your enemies; Fire shall devour the bars of your gates.* The most valiant of men will be about as effective as untrained women against the foe. We all know that women can fight viciously, but this has the idea of an untrained band of women coming in war against a well- trained band of hardened male soldiers. The gates will be as though unguarded, and the bars of the gates will be ineffective.

Verse 14 *Draw your water for the siege! Fortify your strongholds! Go into the clay and tread the mortar! Make strong the brick kiln!*Nahum is saying – make all the frenzied preparations that you wish, and none will have any effect. Nineveh didn’t have an abundance of natural stone, so they used brick made in kilns. But that will be ineffective as well. The Lord has spoken it and it will be accomplished. We’re reminded in Ezekiel 12:28 - *Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “None of My words will be postponed any more, but the word which I speak will be done,” says the Lord God.’* No amount of human preparation will delay God’s judgement – be it 612 BC or 2021 AD – God’s word will not return void.

Verse 15 *There the fire will devour you, The sword will cut you off; It will eat you up like a locust. Make yourself many—like the locust! Make yourself many—like the swarming locusts!*This brings to mind Joel 1:4 *What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.* God’s wrath is falling like fire. Like a swarm of locusts eats and destroys everything in it’s path, so God will do to Nineveh. The Assyrians may be many, but this will not have any impact against God.

Verse 16 *You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars of heaven. The locust plunders and flies away.*Assyria was known for trade and commerce. Not only were the merchants seen a numerous, but also glorious and rich like the stars of heaven. But, though they plunder and grow rich, they will one day disappear. God is speaking of the transience of life. Many are those who spend life chasing riches, but none are those who will take one red cent to heaven… Matthew 7:*14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

Verse 17 *Your commanders are like swarming locusts, And your generals like great grasshoppers, Which camp in the hedges on a cold day; When the sun rises they flee away, And the place where they are is not known.*There are many princes, nobles – we remember that they stumbled all over themselves as they ran to the wall – Generals, these are the actual military men – both are compared to being as many as a swarm of locusts. They’ve been well known in Nineveh, but they will one day go away and disappear and be remembered no more. This doesn’t hold the idea that they will flee from the enemy, only that they will not be remembered, just as a grasshopper is not remembered as it flies from a hedge on a summer morning.

Verse 18 *Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; Your nobles rest in the dust. Your people are scattered on the mountains, And no one gathers them.*Your mighty men and your nobles are dead. Your people are scattered and there is no one left to gather them. This gives us a sense of the doom of Nineveh. It will rise no more. And it didn’t. It lay buried on the outskirts of what is now Mosul, Iraq.

Verse 19 *Your injury has no healing, Your wound is severe. All who hear news of you Will clap their hands over you, For upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?* Nineveh never rose again and was never rebuilt. It’s injury had no healing and wound was severe. People celebrated the downfall. Assyria was hated for the cruelty it demonstrated. Only those benefitting from the wickedness of Nineveh mourned. The people of the ancient world rejoiced. It brings to mind Isaiah 14:6-7 when the King of Babylon falls in 539 BC *He who struck the people in wrath with a continual stroke, He who ruled the nations in anger, Is persecuted and no one hinders.* ***7****The whole earth is at rest and quiet; They break forth into singing.* Wickedness persecuted the people continually and people rejoiced at it’s fall.

And so ends the fall of Nineveh, the destruction of Assyria, and the rise of Babylon. Nahum, 50 years before it happens, gives prophecy in great detail, all of which came to pass. When the Bible is silent on the United States in end times prophecy, the silence screams. We, as faithful followers, must pray for the soil of hearts to be prepared, seed to be received, the harvest to be bountiful and the workers plentiful, before the judgement and wrath of God falls upon our nation and this world. May the Lord find us praying, beseeching Him on behalf of others. May He find us crying out in love for our neighbor and seeking the whosoevers when Jesus makes His return.