

Nahum 2:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

This chapter begins dramatically: 'He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face' (alah mephitz al-panayik). The 'dasher' (mephitz) is the destroyer who scatters and shatters. This refers to the Babylonian-Median coalition that would destroy Nineveh. God ironically commands Nineveh to prepare defenses: 'keep the munition, watch the way, make thy loins strong, fortify thy power mightily.' The imperatives pile up—guard the fort, watch the roads, brace yourselves, strengthen your forces—yet all these preparations will prove futile. This is divine irony: do everything possible to defend yourself, yet you will still fall. The verse demonstrates that when God decrees judgment, no human effort can prevent it. Nineveh could mobilize every soldier, reinforce every wall, stockpile every weapon—and still be destroyed. This isn't because God delights in destruction but because persistent, unrepented wickedness demands justice. The verse also contains hope for God's people: verse 2 explains God restores Jacob and Israel, using Nineveh's destruction as the means of delivering Judah from oppression.

Historical Context

This prophecy was fulfilled with remarkable precision. Historical accounts describe Nineveh's desperate last defenses. The Assyrian king Sinsharishkun did exactly what Nahum prophesied—strengthened defenses, mobilized armies, and prepared for siege. Yet in 612 BC, after a three-month siege, Nineveh fell to the Babylonian-Median forces. The Babylonian Chronicle records that the city was

sacked and its king perished in the flames of his burning palace. The empire that had terrorized the ancient world for centuries ended in a single devastating defeat. Nahum's prophecy proved accurate in every detail. This historical vindication demonstrates God's absolute sovereignty over human history and His faithfulness to fulfill His prophetic word.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does the futility of Nineveh's defenses against decreed divine judgment illustrate the impossibility of resisting God's will?
2. What does this passage teach about God using pagan nations (Babylon/ Media) to accomplish His purposes while still holding them accountable?
3. How should the certainty of God's judgment against evil inform Christian responses to injustice and oppression?

Interlinear Text

מִצּוֹךְ הַנִּצְוָר	עַל הַפָּנִים יְרֵא	עַל מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה	עַל מִפְּנֵי הַמְּלָאָכִים	עַל מִפְּנֵי הַמְּלָאָכִים	עַל מִפְּנֵי הַמְּלָאָכִים	עַל מִפְּנֵי הַמְּלָאָכִים
is come up	He that dasheth in pieces	H5921	before thy face	keep	the munition	H4694

צָפָה	דַּרְךָ	כַּרְכָּרָה	מִתְּנַנְּתָרָה	אַפְּזִים	כְּחָזָקָה	מָאֵדָה
watch	the way	strong	make thy loins	fortify	thy power	mighty
H6822	H1870	H2388	H4975	H553	H3581	H3966

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 25:8 (Parallel theme): But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down.

Jeremiah 50:23 (Parallel theme): How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!

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