

Nahum 2:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back.

Analysis

Nahum's prophecy of Nineveh's fall employs vivid imagery: 'Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back.' The Hebrew 'ke-berekat mayim' (like a pool of waters) may refer to Nineveh's prosperity and population—full like a reservoir. But when judgment comes, the waters drain away (people flee). The desperate cries 'Stand, stand!' (imdu, imdu) go unheeded—'none shall look back' (ma'amid ayin). This echoes Lot's flight from Sodom—no time to look back, only escape (Genesis 19:17, 26). The imagery shows total societal collapse: those who should defend the city fleeing instead, pleas for resistance ignored, panic and chaos. Once proud Nineveh reduced to terrified fugitives. This demonstrates how quickly human power and security collapse when God's judgment arrives.

Historical Context

Nineveh was a massive, fortified city with sophisticated water systems (pools, canals, moats), seemingly impregnable. Yet in 612 BC, combined forces of Babylonians and Medes besieged it. According to historical accounts, flooding weakened walls, enabling conquest. The city was utterly destroyed—palaces burned, population killed or enslaved, Assyrian Empire ended. This fulfilled Nahum's prophecies precisely. The rapidity and totality of Nineveh's fall shocked the ancient world: the superpower that dominated for centuries vanished. Archaeological excavations reveal destruction layers confirming the violent end.

This stands as perpetual testimony that no earthly power can withstand God's judgment when it comes.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What 'impregnable' securities in my life—wealth, power, reputation—could collapse quickly if God withdraws His sustaining hand?
2. How should the reality of civilization's fragility before God's judgment affect my ultimate allegiances?

Interlinear Text

וְהַ מָּה הַ יָּא מִ יְמִי מִ יְמִינְךָ הַ
But Nineveh like a pool of water is of old H1931 H1992
H5210 H1295 H4325 H3117

אָיְלָנָה עַמְּדָה עַמְּדָה תַּסְמֵחַ
yet they shall flee away Stand Stand H369
H5127 H5975 H5975

מִפְתַּח:
shall they cry but none shall look back
H6437

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