

Nahum 3:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile,
and will set thee as a gazingstock.

Analysis

And I will cast abominable filth upon thee (vehishlakalti aleyka shiqqutim, שִׁקְּצִים עָלֶיךָ) —God threatens to hurl (shalak, שָׁלַךְ) disgusting things (shiqqutim, שִׁקְּצִים) upon Nineveh. The term shiqqutim often refers to idols or abominations but here likely means literal filth, excrement, or refuse. This was ancient punishment for prostitutes—pelting them with dung and garbage to humiliate publicly.

And make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazingstock (venibbaltikha vesamtik kero'i) —God will treat Nineveh as vile/contemptible (nabal, נָבַל) and make it a spectacle (ro'i, רֹאִי), something people stare at in shock and disgust. The city that commanded fear and respect will become an object of contempt and morbid curiosity. This complete reversal—from terror-inspiring empire to despised spectacle—demonstrates the totality of divine judgment. Nineveh's humiliation would be as complete as its former pride was great.

Historical Context

Ancient honor-shame cultures considered public humiliation worse than death. The imagery of casting filth resonated powerfully—it was actual punishment for sexual immorality and a metaphor for utter disgrace. Nineveh, which had humiliated conquered peoples by parading captives, desecrating temples, and destroying national symbols, would itself be utterly humiliated. When the city fell in 612 BC, it became exactly what Nahum prophesied—a spectacle of destruction that shocked

the ancient world. Nations came to gawk at the ruins of the once-mighty empire. For over 2,000 years, Nineveh's buried ruins were a 'gazingstock' testifying to divine judgment, until archaeological excavations in the 1800s revealed the city's former glory and catastrophic end.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the image of casting filth illustrate the depth of dishonor that unrepented sin brings?
2. What does Nineveh becoming a 'gazingstock' teach about God's purposes in judgment—not just punishing but demonstrating His justice to all?
3. How should the certainty of public exposure of hidden sins affect our pursuit of holiness?

Interlinear Text

וְהִשְׁלַכְתִּי י	עַל יְיָ	שִׁקָּץ יִם	וְנִבְלַת יְיָ	וְשִׁמְתִי יְיָ
And I will cast	H5921	abominable filth	upon thee and make thee vile	and will set
H7993		H8251	H5034	H7760
כְּרֹאֵי:				
thee as a gazingstock				
H7210				

Additional Cross-References

Malachi 2:9 (Parallel theme): Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.

Job 9:31 (Parallel theme): Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

Jeremiah 51:37 (Parallel theme): And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwellingplace for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.

Hebrews 10:33 (Parallel theme): Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

Job 30:8 (Parallel theme): They were children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth.

1 Corinthians 4:9 (Parallel theme): For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

Nahum 1:14 (Parallel theme): And the LORD hath given a commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy name be sown: out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image: I will make thy grave; for thou art vile.