

Nahum 3:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?

Analysis

This prophetic judgment against Nineveh opens with the prophetic formula "**it shall come to pass**" (wehayah), emphasizing the certainty of God's word. The reaction described is universal: "**all they that look upon thee shall flee**" (kol-ro'ayik yiddod)—those who see Nineveh's destruction will recoil in horror and distance themselves from her fate.

The pronouncement "**Nineveh is laid waste**" (shadedah Ninveh) uses a passive form indicating divine action. The question "**who will bemoan her?**" (mi yanuwld lah) expects a negative answer—no one will mourn. The Hebrew nuwd suggests the ritual movements of mourning, but none will perform them for Nineveh.

The final question, "**whence shall I seek comforters for thee?**" (me'ayin avakesh menachamim lak), is rhetorical and ironic. God Himself asks where comfort might be found for Nineveh, knowing the answer is 'nowhere.' This reflects the principle that those who show no mercy receive none—Nineveh had been merciless in its conquests, and now finds itself without comforters.

Historical Context

Nahum prophesied between 663-612 BC, after Assyria's conquest of Thebes (No-Amon) but before Nineveh's fall in 612 BC. Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire, known for unprecedented cruelty in warfare. The Assyrians pioneered

psychological warfare through terror, impaling victims, flaying prisoners alive, and creating pyramids of human skulls. They had conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC and made Judah a vassal state.

The prophecy's fulfillment in 612 BC was dramatic—a coalition of Babylonians and Medes destroyed Nineveh so thoroughly that its location was lost for centuries. Ancient sources describe how the Tigris River flooded, weakening the city walls, exactly as Nahum prophesied (Nahum 2:6). The city's destruction was so complete that when Xenophon passed by 200 years later, he didn't recognize the ruins. No nation mourned Nineveh's fall; instead, her victims rejoiced at her downfall (Nahum 3:19).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Why does God describe the universal flight and lack of mourners for Nineveh?
2. What does Nineveh's isolation in judgment teach about the consequences of cruelty?
3. How does this prophecy demonstrate that God judges nations, not just individuals?
4. What is the significance of God Himself asking where comforters might be found?
5. How should this prophecy shape our understanding of divine justice and mercy?

Interlinear Text

כְּלֹא יִפְנִי הָ

H1961

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רָא יְהָ

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And it shall come to pass that all they that look upon thee shall flee

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Nineveh

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comforters

לְהָ

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H370

H1245

H5162

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 51:19 (Parallel theme): These two things are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee?

Jeremiah 15:5 (Parallel theme): For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest?

Revelation 18:10 (Parallel theme): Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

Jeremiah 51:9 (Parallel theme): We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.

Lamentations 2:13 (Parallel theme): What thing shall I take to witness for thee? what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? what shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion? for thy breach is great like the sea: who can heal thee?

Numbers 16:34 (Parallel theme): And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.

