

The Goodness and Severity of God

The Burden of Ninevah

- The relationship of the book of Jonah to Nahum
- Both Jonah and Nahum prophesied the destruction of Ninevah (Jonah prophesied more than 100 years before Nahum prophesied). Jonah's message of warning was favorably received and Ninevah was spared. Nahum's message of coming judgment was spurned or ignored and Ninevah was destroyed.
- - 2 Kings 14:25 He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hepher.
- Jonah 1:1-3 (NKJV)
- 1 Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,
- 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me."
- 3 But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.
- It's clear Jonah was called of God and was not a false prophet. He could not escape the presence or the commission of God, as much as he desired to.
- Jonah 1:4-9 (NKJV)
- 4 But the Lord sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.
- 5 Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep.
- 6 So the captain came to him, and said to him, "What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish."
- 7 And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.
- 8 Then they said to him, "Please tell us! For whose cause is this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?"
- 9 So he said to them, "I am a Hebrew; and I fear **the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.**"
- Notice the distinction the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land, none of their gods had any distinction
- The central theme is the coming destruction of the city of Ninevah, the capital city of the great Assyrian empire (Ninevah was a city 60 miles in circumference, Jonah 3:3, surrounded by mighty walls with fifteen hundred towers, each of which was two hundred feet high). Nahum's prophecy of Ninevah's destruction, given around 701 b.c. was fulfilled in 612 b.c., when Ninevah was destroyed by the Babylonians and the Medes (the Babylonians being led by Nabopolassar, the founder of the Neo-Babylonian Empire and the father of Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest of the rulers of the Neo-Babylonian empire) and the Medes being led by Cyaxeres [the founder of the Median Empire].

Nahum 1:9–11 (NKJV)

9 What do you conspire against the Lord? He will make an utter end of it. Affliction will not rise up a second time.

10 For while tangled like thorns, And while drunken like drunkards, They shall be devoured like stubble fully dried.

11 From you comes forth one Who plots evil against the Lord, A wicked counselor.

Nahum 2:8–13 (NKJV)

8 Though Nineveh of old was like a pool of water, Now they flee away. “Halt! Halt!” they cry; But no one turns back. 9 Take spoil of silver! Take spoil of gold! There is no end of treasure, Or wealth of every desirable prize. 10 She is empty, desolate, and waste! The heart melts, and the knees shake; Much pain is in every side, And all their faces are drained of color. 11 Where is the dwelling of the lions, And the feeding place of the young lions, Where the lion walked, the lioness and lion’s cub, And no one made them afraid? 12 The lion tore in pieces enough for his cubs, Killed for his lionesses, Filled his caves with prey, And his dens with flesh. 13 “Behold, I am against you,” says the Lord of hosts, “I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more.”

Isaiah 37:21–35 (NKJV)

21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the Lord God of Israel, ‘Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, 22 this is the word which the Lord has spoken concerning him: “The virgin, the daughter of Zion, Has despised you, laughed you to scorn; The daughter of Jerusalem Has shaken her head behind your back! 23 “Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice, And lifted up your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel. 24 By your servants you have reproached the Lord, And said, ‘By the multitude of my chariots I have come up to the height of the mountains, To the limits of Lebanon; I will cut down its tall cedars And its choice cypress trees; I will enter its farthest height, To its fruitful forest. 25 I have dug and drunk water, And with the soles of my feet I have dried up All the brooks of defense.’ 26 “Did you not hear long ago How I made it, From ancient times that I formed it? Now I have brought it to pass, That you should be For crushing fortified cities into heaps of ruins. 27 Therefore their inhabitants had little power; They were dismayed and confounded; They were as the grass of the field And the green herb, As the grass on the housetops And grain blighted before it is grown. 28 “But I know your dwelling place, Your going out and your coming in, And your rage against Me.

29 Because your rage against Me and your tumult Have come up to My ears, Therefore I will put My hook in your nose And My bridle in your lips, And I will turn you back By the way which you came.” ’

30 “This shall be a sign to you: You shall eat this year such as grows of itself, And the second year what springs from the same; Also in the third year sow and reap, Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. 31 And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah Shall again take root downward, And bear fruit upward. 32 For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, And those who escape from Mount Zion. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. 33 “Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: ‘He shall not come into this city, Nor shoot an arrow there, Nor come before it with shield, Nor build a siege mound against it. 34 By the way that he came, By the same shall he return; And he shall not come into this city,’ Says the Lord. 35 ‘For I will defend this city, to save it For My own sake and for My servant David’s sake.’ ”

Isaiah 37:37–38 (NKJV)

37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home, and remained at Nineveh. 38 Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Luke 11:29–32 (NKJV)

29 And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. 30 For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. 31 The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here. 32 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

Matthew 12:38–41 (NKJV)

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.” 39 But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

Matthew 5:13–16 (NKJV)

13 **“You are the salt of the earth;** but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. 14 **“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.** 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Isaiah 60:1–5 (NKJV)

1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. 4 “Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side. 5 Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.