

The Mountains Quake

Nahum 1:2-9

- We approach a text from the Old Testament that is somewhat unfamiliar today
- It requires we examine a few details from other books of the Bible before proceeding
- But it reminds us of some things about God that we would do well not to forget

- It brings to mind a name we find in 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, and Isaiah
- One Sennacherib, king of Assyria, who assaulted Judah and tried to conquer Jerusalem
- Isaiah 37 tells us what happened when he did that...

"Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh."

- God defended His people and their capital city against these wicked invaders
- Leaving 145,000 Assyrians dead
- And their king defeated, in retreat to Nineveh

- Even their terrible army could not stand against the God before whom "The Mountains Quake"
- Which is our theme from Nahum 1:2-9

- Nahum was a prophet of God
- He prophesied during the time of the Assyrian kingdom
- Before Sennacherib's army was destroyed

- Nahum's name means "the comforter"
- He comforted the people of God in that he assured them God would take action against His adversaries
- And continue to show His goodness to Israel

- Those may be the two key features of our passage of the day
- Which we are going to read in its entirety now...

Nahum 1:2-9

2 God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.

3 The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

4 He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.

5 The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

6 Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.

7 The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

8 But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.

9 What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.

- We see that God is good and slow to anger in this passage
- But we also see that reacts with fierce anger toward His enemies
- His character is consistent
- He is longsuffering, but decisive in His judgement

- Now, a more detailed look at each verse...

Nahum 1:2

2 God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.

- We discover that God is jealous in many Old Testament passages of scripture
- He is the One True God who deserves all honor, glory, and worship
- And He is furious with those who set themselves against Him
- Against those who are His enemies
- Against those, like Sennacherib and his armies, that seek to destroy His work and His people

- But this is only part of the story
- We find a very important detail in the next verse...

Nahum 1:3

3 The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

- God does not take revenge quickly
- He does not become furious and take vengeance hastily
- He is not easily angered
- In fact, He is described as "slow to anger" here
- That means He is patient

- He refrains from action against the wicked
- No doubt providing them with opportunity to turn from wickedness to Him

- But He is also great in power
- All power on earth cannot be compared to His power
- Those earthly powers are only allowed to exist thanks to His mercy

- It says the Lord "will by no means clear the guilty"
- He is a God of justice
- We see this in the crucifixion of Christ
- When Jesus pays the penalty for sin
- It was a penalty that had to be paid
- But Jesus took that penalty because God loved us
- He will use whirlwinds and storms to show his power
- And as people walk on dusty ground, He walks on the clouds
- We see more about His mastery of the natural world as we continue...

Nahum 1:4

4 He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.

- All of the oceans on earth can be dried up at His command
- The rivers are the same
- He is master over them
- Even the beautiful and fertile places of the earth will be made barren at His command
- He has control over everything on land and in the sea
- What's more...

Nahum 1:5

5 The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

- The very mountains quake at His presence
- The hills melt away
- The earth heaves before Him
- Both the world itself, and everyone that dwells within it
- They are subject to the One True God alone
- And at the mercy of His power
- No one can stand before Him...

Nahum 1:6

6 Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.

- We know the answer to the question in the verse before it is asked

- No king or group of kings
- No general and no army
- No counsel of generals or assembly of armies can stand before His indignation
- His fury pours out like fire
- Rocks are broken in pieces by Him
- He can overcome all that raise up against Him
- But there is more to be known about His character...

Nahum 1:7

7 The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

- God is good
- He is a safe place in times of trouble
- His people take refuge in Him
- His power and strength represent safety and security
- When assaults are launched against His people, He is their Protector
- He has a relationship with those who trust in Him
- He cares for and protects them
- His adversaries face something else altogether...

Nahum 1:8

8 But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.

- He will make a complete end of His adversaries
- He will pursue His enemies into darkness
- This means several things
- For His people, it means protection from evil
- It means He will fight on their behalf
- And it means evil will not win
- For those who set themselves against Him it means consequences
- He has been slow to anger
- He has been longsuffering
- He has shown mercy
- But evil intentions have given way to evil actions and violence against those He loves
- And God will not let it stand
- He is just
- Jehovah will end their rebellion against Him

- And pursue them as far as necessary to thwart their wicked schemes
- And that's exactly what He does...

Nahum 1:9

9 What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.

- Sennacherib and his armies planned to assault and conquer Jerusalem
- But God made an end of their plot
- Killing 145,000 Assyrians
- Sending the Syrian king back to Nineveh

- One commentary says it this way...

"God will not have occasion to send affliction on Nineveh a second time, i.e., this visitation will be so exhaustive that there will be no need to repeat it."

- This is the destiny of God's enemies
- They will not stand

- Any victory obtained by the wicked today will be temporary
- He is in total control

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