

D-Day

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Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 00] Well if we could, this evening with the Lord's help, and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read. Book of the prophet Nahum, chapter 2.

Nahum chapter 2, and if we take as our text the last verse, verse 13. Nahum chapter 2 at verse 13. Behold, I am against you, declares the Lord of hosts, and 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 no longer be heard. I am sure that we have all heard the familiar term D-Day.

And it is often associated with the Allied invasion of the Normandy beaches in France, that took place on the 6th of June 1944.

And it was that, I'm sure you've seen the pictures of it, the momentous occasion when 7,000 ships and landing crafts, they all came carrying over 150,000 British, Canadian and American soldiers.

[1 : 27] And they all landed on these five different beaches along a 50 mile stretch of Normandy. And D-Day was a massive operation, one which had taken months of planning.

And I'm sure we've seen the photos and all these video clips that they have of it, of how the soldiers landed on the beaches with all this German artillery firing at them.

And how some soldiers, they didn't even make it onto the beach, they just died on the boat. But those who did make it onto the beach, they had to contend with 200 yards of landmines.

And then after 200 yards of landmines, there was another 100 yards of barbed wire stretching across the beach with all the German artillery firing at them.

And it's been described by many as a nightmare. Some have described it as hell on earth. And you know, it must have been terrifying for those on both sides.

[2 : 31] Those on both sides of the war. Because many, many people lost their lives. But the amazing thing about D-Day was that their efforts were successful.

Because within weeks, one million soldiers had landed on the shores of northern France. And then within two months, they had liberated France. And as they moved through Western Europe, it paved the way for winning the war against Nazi Germany.

And without doubt, the events of D-Day were the turning point in the conflict of World War II. But the term D-Day is a military term for the day on which an attack is to be initiated.

Which means that it was not just the Normandy invasion that was often described as D-Day. There were many other operations during the war and at other times when they described that operation as D-Day.

And that's what I want us to describe this chapter this evening. Because when we come to the second chapter in the book of Nahum, it's D-Day. It's the day when the capital city of Assyria, the city of Nineveh, that's the day when they are invaded and destroyed.

[3 : 54] It's the day when the Lord moves in his wrath and his power to destroy the people of Nineveh and overthrow the power of the Assyrian Empire.

And as we saw last week, we're familiar with the city of Nineveh because that was the city which Jonah went to preach to a hundred years before Nahum. The Lord had sent Jonah to preach the good news that the Lord is compassionate and the Lord is willing to forgive people's sins.

And that through Jonah, Jonah the prophet who ended up in the belly of a fish, he went and he proclaimed the good news and they received the good news and they turned to the Lord.

And in Nineveh, there was a great awakening. There was a spiritual revival amongst the people of Nineveh. But in the space of only a couple of generations, everything changed.

The people of Nineveh and the empire of Assyria as a whole, they turned away from the Lord. And they had become the most powerful empire in the ancient world.

[5 : 00] The Assyrians, they had defeated many nations, including the nation of Israel. And the Assyrian Empire was growing at this rapid pace through all their ruthless warriors and their unrestrained violence.

And they had built an empire that was vast. And they had built a power that was unchallenged. They were a nation full of strength. A nation, you could say, in full health, with everything that money could buy.

And you could also say that the Lord had blessed them greatly. But at the same time, they were moving further and further away from the Lord. And because the Lord is, as we saw last week, He's a jealous God who will share His glory with no other and will not allow praise, the praise which is due to Him to be given to graven images.

He will not tolerate idolatry or anything or anyone else that rivals His position and His glory. And so after many years of patience and restraint, the Lord had had enough.

Because as we saw last Lord's Day, Nahum was given the solemn responsibility of preaching to the people of Nineveh that the Lord is going to act in His wrath and judgment.

[6 : 22] And this was, as we saw, as it says in verse 1, this was Nahum's burden. He says, as chapter 1, verse 1, an oracle or a burden concerning Nineveh, the book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.

That was his burden. This was the burden which Nahum had to deliver, a message of impending judgment and imminent destruction.

And now as we come into this chapter, it's D-Day for the city of Nineveh. Where the Lord's solemn words at the end of chapter 1, He said, Thus says the Lord, Though you are at full strength, you will be cut down and pass away.

I will make your grave, for you are vile. This is judgment day for the people of Nineveh. They have been warned. They have been blessed with the good news of salvation being preached to them, but they ignored it.

And D-Day has finally come. And as we look at this chapter, I want us to see that there are four things which we can draw from what happened to the people of Nineveh.

[7 : 34] Four things that happened to the people of Nineveh. Because we see the unsuccessful defense of Nineveh, the unstoppable defeat of Nineveh. We see the untold damage of Nineveh, and the unrelenting destruction of Nineveh.

So we look firstly at the unsuccessful defense of Nineveh. The unsuccessful defense of Nineveh. You look at verse 1.

It says, The scatterer has come up against you. Man the ramparts, watch the road, dress for battle, collect all your strength.

For the Lord is restoring the majesty of Jacob as the majesty of Israel. For plunderers have plundered them and ruined their branches. Nineveh's D-Day took place in the year 612 BC. And by that point in time, Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria. And Assyria was this, as we mentioned, the vast and powerful empire, the most powerful empire in the ancient world.

[8 : 45] And as the largest city of a powerful empire, Nineveh was the source of all their success. And as the capital city of the largest empire in the ancient world, well, you would expect Nineveh to be this well-fortified city.

You would expect it to be protected with large defensive walls and high towers and closed off with its iron gates. In fact, it's said that the city of Nineveh was an impregnable fortress.

There was no way for any army to ever penetrate the thick walls and to combat against the innumerable soldiers of the Assyrian army, as well as the strong defense systems of the city. Many had tried in the past, but many had failed. And it's said that the city of Nineveh was built along the east side of the Tigris River, which is in modern day northern Iraq.

It's near Mosul. And because Nineveh was built on the east bank of the Tigris River, it meant that an attack would only ever come from the eastern side of the city.

[9 : 57] But to add to all the defense systems, Nineveh was surrounded by two defensive walls. The outer defensive wall and the inner defensive wall. And both these walls stood at 30 meters high.

And also there were watchtowers all around the city, situated around the city, and they were 60 meters above the city. And outside the city walls, there was the Tigris River on the west side of the city, and there was a man-made moat that ran around the whole city 45 meters wide.

And that moat was fed by another two rivers, which flowed through the city and out into the Tigris River. And you can try and imagine it.

But even more than that, there were further defensive structures surrounding the city with ramparts all over the place and ditches that had been dug in order to prevent an enemy from coming close. And with all these walls and defensive systems in place, you can imagine that the city of Nineveh, it seemed to be this impregnable fortress. They were well prepared for any attack.

[11 : 11] And that it would be impossible for anyone to get through and try and destroy the greatest city in the ancient world. But when Nahum opens this chapter, he states that the enemy of Nineveh is on its way.

He says, the scatterer has come up against you. And the term scatterer, it's a title given to the enemy of Nineveh, which describes this destruction that is going to take place upon Nineveh. Because the title, it literally highlights that the scatterer is intent on smashing the city of Nineveh into pieces and scattering all the people.

It's going to scatter them. And the Lord's prophet, Nahum, who's bearing this burden of judgment and destruction, and he's relaying it to the people. He's telling the people of Nineveh, Dede has come.

Your enemy is now in the distance. He's approaching the city and his army has come. The scatterer has come up against you. And in response to Nahum's oracle of destruction, you can almost hear the commanding officer of Nineveh's army as he begins to shout to his soldiers.

[12 : 29] Because as it says in verse 1, he's shouting, Man, the fortress. Watch the road. Strengthen all the flanks. Summon all your strength.

Because this enemy that's coming is a fierce enemy. And the enemy who's coming as Nahum is shouting to them is the scatterer. He's coming to crush them. But the scatterer, as Nahum describes, is the Lord.

The Lord is approaching Nineveh. And he's coming to smash the city in pieces and scatter the people. The Lord is coming.

And it's interesting that the Lord is described down in verse 13 as the Lord of hosts. That's a term which means the Lord of the armies.

The Lord of hosts means the Lord of the armies. And that's the description which is being given. He is the Lord of the armies and He's coming upon the people of Nineveh to destroy them.

[13 : 32] But the Lord is coming for one purpose. And that is to rescue His people. And that's what we're told in verse 2. The Lord is restoring the majesty of Jacob as the majesty of Israel.

For plunderers have plundered them and ruined their branches. The reason the Lord is attacking the people of Nineveh is because the people of Nineveh plundered the people of Israel who were the Lord's covenant people.

And here Nahum he affirms that whatever defensive systems the people of Nineveh have in place and regardless the size of their army it would all prove unsuccessful.

Because the Lord was determined to restore the majesty of His people. And it's a beautiful phrase in the midst of an awful scene the Lord will restore the majesty of His people.

Because the people of Israel they had been ransacked by the Assyrian army. They had been emptied of Israel. Israel had been emptied of all its resources. They had taken everything from it.

[14 : 42] They had ransacked their land. They had destroyed their homes. They had oppressed the Lord's people. But the Lord comes to their defense. And the Lord comes to rescue them from their bondage in this mighty act of redemption.

The Lord comes to free His people from their enemies. And this is the good news. The good news that because the destruction of Nineveh is taking place the destruction of Nineveh means freedom for the Lord's people.

And this was the promise given to us in chapter 1. The end of the chapter and verse 15 Behold upon the mountains the feet of Him who brings good news, who publishes peace.

Nahum had prophesied that there would come, there would be the sound of feet coming, coming over the mountains to bring good news and proclaiming peace, proclaiming freedom from the bondage of Nineveh.

God's And that's what we saw last week. The apostle Paul, he quotes these words of verse 15 in the New Testament. And he quotes them in reference to the preacher of the gospel.

[15 : 56] Because the role of the preacher is to preach good news. He's to preach a message of peace. Because like Nineveh, sin has taken away our access to God.

God. Sin has ransacked our relationship with God. Sin has emptied us of our true joy. Sin has taken away our peace. Sin has destroyed our fellowship with God.

Sin has ruined our lives and brought the curse of death upon us. Sin has left us in bondage away from God. And sin has left us under the oppression of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

But my friend, the message of the gospel, the good news which is proclaimed tonight is that the Lord has overcome the powerful enemy of sin.

The Lord has crushed his enemy and he has made peace through the blood of his cross. And by coming to the cross, we're able to experience what the people of Israel experienced when the Lord crushed their enemy.

[17 : 05] The Lord will restore the majesty of his people. He will redeem us from bondage. He will rescue us from slavery. He will bring us to himself.

And he will make us see the wonder and the beauty of salvation. My friend, in order to receive the good news, the good news that is presented to us of freedom from sin, sin, in order to receive it, all you have to do is ask.

All you have to do is ask. So we've considered the unsuccessful defense of Nineveh. But secondly, let's consider the unstoppable defeat of Nineveh.

The unstoppable defeat of Nineveh. Look at verse 3. The shield of his mighty men is red. His soldiers are clothed in scarlet.

The chariots come with flashing metal on the day he musters them. The cypress spears are brandished. The chariots race madly through the streets. They rush to and fro through the squares.

[18 : 17] They gleam like torches. They dart like lightning. He remembers his officers. They stumble as they go. They hasten to the wall. The siege tower is set up.

We began our service this evening singing in Psalm 127. And in the opening words of Psalm 127 we are reminded that without the Lord on our side we are helpless.

The psalmist says, except the Lord to build the house, the builders lose their pain. Except the Lord the city keep, the watchmen watch in vain. And thinking about it, if Nineveh hadn't turned away from the Lord and turned to idols and become proud of themselves and ruthless in their ways, then the Lord would have kept the city of Nineveh.

The Lord would have spared them. But they didn't stay focused upon the Lord. They turned away from the Lord, so the Lord brought his righteous judgment upon them.

And as we've seen, the defense system of Nineveh, regardless of how vast and how strong it was, it was unsuccessful against the Lord. And like the psalmist said, all the efforts of the watchmen and the soldiers manning the fortress would be in vain.

[19 : 40] Because the Lord wasn't watching over the city of Nineveh. The Lord was attacking the city of Nineveh. But what we see in these verses is that the Lord used people and means to accomplish his purposes without them knowing or even realizing.

because the army which approached the city of Nineveh to crush it and destroy it, it wasn't the Israelite army. It was the Babylonian army.

The Lord of hosts, who is the Lord of all the armies, he's the Lord of history, the Lord of redemption, and the Lord of providence. He used the Babylonian army to accomplish his purposes in attacking the people of Nineveh.

Babylonians, because history tells us that in the year 612 BC, the Babylonians, they marched up the east side of the Tigris river, and then they surrounded the city of Nineveh.

The army surrounded the entire city, and we're told that in verses 3 and 4, we're given this vivid imagery of the military uniform, which was worn by the Babylonian army that's now surrounding the city.

[20 : 54] And we're told that in verse 3, the shield of his mighty men is red. Nahum says that the Babylonians are the Lord's mighty men. They are his men, because they're accomplishing the Lord's purposes by destroying the city of Nineveh.

And he says the shields of his mighty men, these shields, they would have been large wooden frames with red leather stretched across it. And it would have been something, I suppose, similar. We've seen pictures of Roman soldiers before, something similar to a Roman shield. But we're also told that the Babylonian soldiers were clothed in scarlet, which refers to the uniform that they're

wearing.

And some of them, they were riding on chariots, chariots with flashing metal. And a chariot, it had one axle and two horses, and each chariot, it could carry up to four soldiers in it.

There would be a driver, there would be an archer, and there would be two shield bearers. And every soldier had a spear that was made, as it says, from the cypress tree. The cypress tree was a strong but light wood, lightweight wood.

[22 : 12] And Nahum goes on to describe the speed at which this mass Babylonian army approached the city and surrounded the city. He says in verse four, the chariots race madly through the streets.

They rush to and fro through the squares. They gleam like torches. They dart like lightning. The Babylonians are coming upon the people of Nineveh quickly.

They're coming upon them without delay. And it's, you know, this picture that's been created for us about the arrival of the Lord and judgment upon the people of Nineveh.

It's an illustration of how the second coming of Jesus Christ will take place. Because the last thing Jesus says to us in the New Testament, in the book of Revelation, he says, behold, I come quickly. He comes rushing upon us. And Jesus says that he'll come upon his enemies like a thief in the night. If we had known what hour the thief would come, he says, you'd be ready.

[23 : 23] He will come suddenly without anyone expecting it. And this is why Jesus warns us in the New Testament. He says, therefore, be ye also ready for at an hour when you think not, the Son of Man comes.

Be watchful. Be ready. Be waiting. That's what Jesus is saying, because he is coming. Behold, I come quickly. I come quickly.

And seeing this mass amount, imagining the appearance of all these thousands of troops surrounding the walls of Nineveh, coming from the outside, all dressed in scarlet and holding their red shields and brandishing their spears.

Some on chariots others on foot. And, you know, in my mind, I can almost hear the noise of the chariots and the foot soldiers, as they're synchronized in their marching, the sound of footsteps coming.

And it's like the roll of thunder. It's getting louder and louder as judgment comes closer and closer. But what's remarkable is that the uniform and all the chariots and all the marching, it's all designed to intimidate the enemy.

[24 : 46] Because you can imagine the soldiers of Nineveh standing on the inside, climbing the walls of the fortress and going to the high towers of their mighty fortress and they're looking at this sea of red soldiers in front of them, marching towards their great city.

But the sea of red soldiers was to be a clear message to those on the inside. That their city would soon be a sea of red, flowing with their blood.

And that's the image which is given to us in verse 5. He says, he remembers his officers. They stumble as they go. They hasten to the wall. The siege tower is set up.

There is panic within the city. Everyone is stumbling over one another and running around trying to prepare for this invasion. But they're not ready.

They're not prepared. They didn't heed the warnings. They didn't listen to the Lord. And now the Lord of hosts is approaching. He's approaching quickly in his wrath and in his judgment.

[25 : 51] He's coming upon them to destroy them. He's coming upon them to destroy them. But what's remarkable about the Lord's ways is that he used the Babylonians to accomplish his great purposes without them knowing and without them even realizing it.

And that's true in many cases where the Lord can use people who don't know the Lord or follow the Lord or worship the Lord. He can use them to accomplish his purposes without them even being aware of it.

And I've seen it in my own home, within my own family. Maybe you have too. You've seen the Lord use people who don't yet know the Lord or follow the Lord.

And yet in his mysterious ways and means the Lord used them, used these Babylonians in order to bring good and extend his kingdom. people. And you know, thinking about all this, my unconverted friend, I know that the Lord has used some of you.

And you've served the Lord and you've accomplished his purposes and helped extend his kingdom. You've helped in different ways. But you know the sad thing about it all?

[27 : 19] is that you're unaware of it. And you don't realize that you've been used by the Lord. And it's such a sad position to be in. To be used by the Lord to accomplish his plans and purposes.

But you don't know the Lord. You don't follow the Lord. You don't seek to worship the Lord from your heart. And you know, the same was true of Calvary.

Because when we come to Calvary, the central moments in the Bible, we know that human hands put Jesus there. We know that.

But if these people who put Jesus upon the cross knew what they were doing, they would never have crucified the Prince of Glory. And we know that their act of putting Jesus upon the cross was a supreme act of defiance and rebellion against the God of the Bible.

people who were doing. But it was a man called Octavius Winslow, who was one of the foremost preachers in the 19th century. When he preached about those who put Jesus on the cross, those men who put Jesus to death, he highlighted the fact that the Lord used every single one of them without them knowing.

[28 : 37] Because he asks, who delivered Jesus up to die? And he says, it wasn't Judas for envy, Judas for money, it wasn't the Jews for envy, it wasn't Pilate for fear, and it wasn't the Romans for the hardness of their heart.

He says, no, it was the Father for love. That's the wonder of it. Who delivered Jesus up to die? God did it. Yes, he used means and he used ways, but Jesus Christ was delivered up to be crucified by God the Father.

God did it. And my friend, he did it out of love for lost sinners like you and me. And you know, thinking about this sea, sea of chariots and warriors and an army approaching, and all the red shields and their scarlet soldiers, and they're all approaching the city of enemy about to accomplish the Lord's purposes.

And I have in my mind that the thought that through the actions of the Babylonians, the Lord was going to bring judgment upon his enemies, yes. But he was also going to bring salvation to his people.

He was going to bring freedom. The enemy was going to be destroyed. And you know, I'm reminded of the words of Isaiah when the prophet pleads with the sinner. the sinner who is under the Lord's judgment and who needs the Lord's salvation.

[30 : 14] And Isaiah says to them, come, now, let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow.

Though they be red like crimson, they shall be made as wool. And my friend, that's the promise to us in the gospel. That's the good news.

That the Lord is willing, the Lord is able to cleanse us from our sin. He's able to destroy sin in our life. To take away our sin. Because the Bible says that if we confess our sin, he is faithful, he is just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Because the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanses us from all sin. All sin. So that is what's on offer to you tonight.

Cleansing from all sin. Will you not come to this Jesus and find cleansing through his precious blood? We've considered the unsuccessful defense of Nineveh.

[31 : 26] The unstoppable defeat of Nineveh. But thirdly, we come to the untold damage of Nineveh. The untold damage of Nineveh. Look at verse six.

The river gates are opened, the palace melts away. Its mistress is stripped, she is carried off, her slave girls lamenting, moaning like doves and beating their breasts.

Nineveh is like a pool whose waters run away. Halt, halt, they cry, but none turns back. Plunder the silver, plunder the gold, there is none end to the treasure or the wealth of all precious things.

Desolate, desolation and ruin. Hearts melt and knees tremble. Anguish is in all loins and all faces grow pale. D-Day for the city of Nineveh.

It took place in the early spring during the rainy season. Because history tells us that in that particular year the rain had fallen very, very heavenly.

[32 : 28] And as you know when rain falls heavily, those living near rivers are greatly affected by the increasing flow of water.

And with heavy rainfall, the Tigris River and the two other nearby rivers that were surrounding the city and flowing through the city, they all burst their backs.

And with such a mass of water flowing around the city of Nineveh, the outer walls couldn't cope. And they began to collapse. Where parts of the wall, where it was just washed away, leaving the once mighty, impregnable fortress, now with gaping holes and easy access for the Babylonians. And we've seen all these images before. We can bring them to mind of buildings collapsing by the power of water. We saw it recently this year in the Lake District, how the floods just washed away bridges and they washed away houses.

But with the mighty structure of Nineveh, history tells us that the Tigris River not only broke down the outer walls so that the Babylonians could enter.

[33 : 44] The way the historians put it is that it wasn't the Babylonians who attacked first. It was actually the Tigris River because it began to flood it. The Tigris River declared war first.

And that's what we're told in verse 6. The river gates are opened. The palace melts away. It's dissolved. Its mistress is stripped. She's carried off. Her slave girls lamenting, moaning like doves and beating their breasts.

The 30 meter high walls are melting away. They're crashing to the ground. And as the protection and safety of the city is removed and Nineveh becomes more like this sinking ship.

The place is in chaos. It's in confusion. And the people of Nineveh, they knew that there's no escape. There's no escape from the wrath and judgment of the Lord.

To the point that it's said that the king of Nineveh took everyone inside the palace. all his family himself went inside the palace with all his eunuchs and his concubines and he set it on fire.

[34 : 54] Couldn't stand the thought of being invaded. And whatever was not burned in the palace, it was destroyed by the invading Babylonian army. Nineveh became a slaughterhouse.

And there was one historian who said, so great was the multitude of the slain that all the rivers, it mingled with their blood and it changed color for miles.

You could see it for miles. And this is the image which Nahum describes to us. He describes the chaos and the confusion of all the people as they run for their lives.

It says in verse eight, Nineveh is like a pool whose waters run away. Halt, halt they cry but none turns back. No one turns back.

They run for their lives but there's no escape. The Babylonians slaughter them all and they strip them of all their possessions because the commander of the Babylonian army shouts, he shouts plunder the silver, plunder the gold.

[36 : 03] There's no end of the treasure or of the wealth of all precious things. For centuries, wealth had poured into Nineveh, building this massive empire which grew stronger and more powerful.

But now the wealth of Nineveh is pouring out. Pouring out to the point that Nahum says about Nineveh, desolate. Desolation and ruin.

Hearts melt and knees tremble. Anguish is in all loins. All faces grow pale. It's an image of terror, of disbelief, of fear because the Lord has moved in his wrath and his judgment and because he's moved they're stripped of everything and then destroyed.

And you know my friend, what happened to Nineveh on their D-Day when wrath and judgment was displayed, it's only a foreshadowing of what will happen on the D-Day which God has appointed for this world.

Because on that day, on the world's D-Day, the Lord will move in judgment where his wrath will be shown, his power will be displayed and his justice will be carried out as he judges sin for what it deserves and nothing will be able to stop him.

[37 : 40] No kingdom or empire will be able to stand against him. No government or party or political power will be able to reason with him because when D-Day comes it's the only day you know I believe it's the only day which God has appointed when he will show no love and no mercy and no forgiveness and no kindness and no compassion and no hope and no second chances no second chances and those who are found to be like Nineveh building empires for themselves worshipping other gods clinging to the things that this world has to offer to them Nineveh is a reminder that it doesn't matter how big you get or how strong you become or how powerful you think you are or how much you think you have it will all be stripped from you it will all be stripped from you and all that will be left is your sin and your sin will be dealt with as it deserves because the only way to deal with sin is either through the cross or in the fires of hell that's the only way to deal with sin either through the cross or the fires of hell

I know which way I would take the only way is through the cross so we've considered the unsuccessful defense of Nineveh the unstoppable defeat of Nineveh the untold damage of Nineveh but the last thing we learn about Nineveh is the unrelenting destruction of Nineveh the unrelenting destruction of Nineveh look at verse 11 where is the lion's den the feeding place of the young lions where the lion and the lioness went where his cubs were with none to disturb the lion tore enough for his cubs and strangled prey for his lionesses he filled his calves with prey and his dens with torn flesh behold him against you declares the lord of hosts and 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 no longer be heard Nahum closes this chapter of the destruction of Nineveh he does it by drawing attention to the description which Nineveh had of itself because the emblem or the crest or the logo of Nineveh it was the logo of the lion and it said that many of the buildings in Nineveh and throughout the Assyrian empire they all displayed the image of a lion and the book of proverbs describes a lion as mighty among beasts who retreats at nothing and the lion was a picture of strength and power and control and as you know the lion is the king in the animal kingdom and this is how the people of Nineveh viewed themselves they considered themselves to be lions who ruled with strength and power and control who prided themselves in their control of all the other nations and all the other kingdoms which were weaker kingdoms which they strangled and tore apart so that they would only further increase their power and like a lion the people of

Nineveh thought they were king in the kingdom of this world and within the expanding Assyrian empire they viewed Nineveh as the lion's den a den which no one dared to come near and no one dared to enter without the prospect of being torn apart But as Nahum now looks at Nineveh the unsuccessful defence of Nineveh and the unstoppable defeat of Nineveh and the untold damage of Nineveh Nahum asks where is the lion's den now where is the lion's den now there's nothing left and the lion's den which had been a place of strength and security for the people of Nineveh is lying in ruins and the Lord reminds the people of Nineveh why he has come in judgment and unrelenting destruction because he says behold I am against you declares the Lord the Lord of hosts and 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 messenger shall no longer be heard what a solemn indictment against Nineveh behold I am against you and who is against them it says the Lord of hosts is against you the Lord of the armies of heaven and the armies of the earth and what solemn is that it wouldn't matter what power you have or what empires you build or what preparations you make to have a trouble free life the Lord of hosts declares himself if he declares himself against you all your efforts of happiness will end in unrelenting destruction so what do you do if you're like Nineveh what do you do if the Bible is describing you like

[44 : 02] Nineveh that D-Day is approaching that judgment is coming that disaster is upon you that your sin is a problem and the Lord of hosts is declaring war against you what do you do what do you do my friend you flee to the only place in which you can find refuge and that place I need not remind you is the cross of Christ that's the only place because it's there that salvation is promised forgiveness is guaranteed and there's nowhere else you can flee to to escape the wrath to come therefore my friend your only option is to do as many others have done to do as those around you have done to do as those you know have already done to flee to

Christ confessing the words we're just going to be singing in Psalm 46 the Lord of hosts upon our side doth constantly remain the God of Jacob is our refuge as safely to maintain my friend please ensure that you're not like Nineveh who experienced the wrath of the Lord of hosts but that you come to find refuge in the Lord of hosts make sure you come to find refuge in the Lord of hosts may the Lord bless these thoughts to us let us pray O Lord our gracious God we give thanks to thee that thou art one who reveals thyself to us and we thank thee Lord for the reminder the reminder that thou art a God who is just a God who is of pure life and to behold iniquity a God who will deal with us as we deserve but Lord help us we pray thee to flee to

Christ because we know that thou art the God who has dealt with him as we deserve and Lord we pray that we would see in Christ the hope of glory we pray that we would see in him the forgiveness of sins we pray O Lord that we would see in Christ O one who is able to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness bless thy truth to us a reminder Lord of the solemnity of thy judgment but yet Lord that we might see through it the riches of thy grace do us good and we pray uphold us and strengthen us bless us in our fellowship this evening one with another that we would

hear O Lord of that wondrous work which thou wert able to perform in the hearts of men and women do us good and we pray for Jesus sake Amen We shall conclude in Psalm 46 the Scottish Psalter page 271 Psalm 46 singing from verse 7 down to the end of the psalm The Lord of hosts upon our side doth constantly remain the God of Jacob is our refuge as safely to maintain come and behold what wondrous works have by the Lord been wrought come see what desolations he on the earth hath brought unto the ends of all the earth wars into peace he turns the bow he breaks the spear he cuts in fire the chariot burns be still and know that I am God among the heathen I will be exalted I on earth will be exalted high our God who is the Lord of hosts is still upon our side the God of Jacob our refuge forever will abide these verses in conclusion to God's praise God the Lord of hosts upon our side God constantly remain the God of Jacob witnesses■■■ are untuk face new promise ■■■ amongppe years And behold what wondrous words have I done or been brought.

[49 : 21] Come see what desolations beyond the earth have brought.

Come to the ends of all the earth, born into peace he turns.

The bow he brings, the spear he cuts, in fire the child your births.

Be still and know that I am God. Among the hidden eyes will be exalted.

I, on earth, will be exalted high.

[50 : 47] Our God, who is the Lord of hosts, is still upon our side.

The God of Jacob, our refuge forever will abide.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.