

The Bloody City

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[0 : 0 0] Nahum chapter 3 and verse 1. Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder, no end to the prey.

But particularly the words, woe to the bloody city. Woe to the bloody city. I'm sure that we're all familiar with the account given in Matthew's Gospel of when Jesus was brought before Pilate.

Where Jesus, he appeared before Pilate, bound and accused of claiming that he is the Messiah, the King of the Jews. But as you know, at the Passover, it was the custom for the Jews to release any prisoner they wanted.

And there was the choice between the notorious criminal who was always in prison, Barabbas, or the miracle worker who was healing people and saving people, the man named Jesus.

And when the crowds gathered together, Pilate said to them, Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?

[1 : 1 7] And they said, Barabbas. And Pilate said to them, What shall I do with Jesus who is called the Christ? And they said, Crucify him.

And it's then that Pilate asks again, Why? What evil has he done? But the crowds shouted all the more. That's the way Matthew describes it. The crowds shout all the more, Crucify him.

Let him be crucified. And when Pilate saw that there was no point arguing with the crowd, we're told that he took water in front of the crowd, and he washed his hands before the crowd.

And he said to them, I am innocent of this man's blood. See to it yourselves. And all the people answered Pilate and said, His blood be on us and on our children.

And then we're told that Pilate released Barabbas, and he scourged Jesus and delivered him over to be crucified. But you know, the actions of Pilate and washing his hands and the statement, I am innocent of this man's blood.

[2 : 3 1] They remind me of what the prophet Nahum was saying to the people of Nineveh. Because if you remember when we looked at chapter 1, Nahum had been given this burden.

The burden of telling the people of Nineveh the bad news. He had to tell them about God's judgment and the wrath of God being revealed upon them.

And it's not easy to preach about God's wrath and God's judgment and the torments of hell. But Nahum was called to preach a solemn message of God's impending judgment and Nineveh's imminent destruction.

And the people of Nineveh, they had been given the opportunity to repent and to turn to the Lord, but they refused. And because they refused to repent, it left Nahum washing his hands off the people of Nineveh.

And in washing his hands off them, Nahum was saying to them, I am innocent of your blood. Your blood is no longer upon my hands.

[3 : 37] On your head be it. And that's what we saw in chapter 2. Dede arrived for the city of Nineveh. Judgment came.

God destroyed the capital city of the vast and powerful Assyrian Empire. The great city of Nineveh was left in ruins. But now as we come into the third and final chapter of this short prophetic book, Nahum's burden is lifted as he again speaks about the destruction of Nineveh.

But what we see in this chapter is that there are three sections in which we can learn lessons from Nineveh's downfall. In the first section that we're going to be looking at in verses 1 to 7, Nahum speaks about a soul-searching indictment.

A soul-searching indictment. Then in the second section in verses 8 to 11, Nahum speaks about a self-confident imitation. A self-confident imitation.

And then the closing section of chapter 3 and the closing section of the entire book in verses 12 to 19, Nahum speaks about a spurning interrogation.

[4 : 52] A spurning interrogation. But what I want us to see from the outset, and what this whole book is as we read it with New Testament glasses on, is that the city of Nineveh is to be an illustration to us of the person who is found to be out of Christ on the day of judgment.

That's what Nineveh is. An illustration of the person who is found to be out of Christ on the day of judgment. Because like Nineveh, they are responsible for their own actions.

Like Nineveh, they have been warned to repent and turn to the Lord. But like Nineveh, they have been found to have their blood upon their own hands.

And my unconverted friend, that is the warning to you. You are responsible for your own actions. You are accountable for your own soul.

You have been warned on many occasions to repent and believe in the gospel. But if you are found to be out of Christ on the day of judgment, then your blood will be upon your own hands.

[6 : 12] And what Nahum is saying to you, and what I am saying to you, is that on your head be it. On your head be it. And so we see in this chapter a soul-searching indictment, a self-confident imitation, and a spurning interrogation.

But firstly, a soul-searching indictment. Look again at verse 1. He says, From the first word in this chapter, we can see that Nahum's final prophecy against Nineveh is one of judgment.

Because he uses the word, woe. Woe. And this word was often used by all of the prophets to warn people about God's coming judgment.

In which the prophets would make a pronouncement of woe to the people. But, of course, this pronouncement of woe, you can contrast it with Isaiah's pronouncement of ho.

In Isaiah 55. You're all familiar with Isaiah chapter 55. Where Isaiah is, he's not presenting a message of condemnation, but a message of commendation.

[7 : 47] In which he's commending to us the free offer of the gospel. A free and full offer through which we're able to experience the blessings of eternal life.

You remember Isaiah 55. It opens with that great statement. Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come. Come ye to the waters. He that hath no money, come, buy and eat.

Yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price. And my friend, that offer still stands. Whilst you're on mercy's ground, the offer, the free offer of the gospel is still being commended to you whilst you have opportunity to respond.

You're still being urged, as Isaiah went on to say, to seek the Lord while he may be found. To call upon him while he is near.

You're still being reminded in the gospel that you need to forsake your ways and your unrighteous thoughts and return to the Lord. Because the promise still stands that the Lord, as Isaiah says, he will have mercy on you and he will abundantly pardon.

[9 : 00] And this is why Isaiah issues the pronouncement, Ho. He's bidding you to come. To come. To come to this gospel table whilst you're on mercy's ground.

But as Nahum has reminded the people of Nineveh, mercy's ground has a cut-off point. Mercy's ground has a cut-off point because there will be a time when the message of Ho and the commendation of the gospel, it will be replaced with the message of Wo and the pronouncement of condemnation.

Because if you reject the good news offer which Nineveh rejected, you'll stand before God like Nineveh. And God will say of you, woe to that bloody city.

Because your blood will be upon your own hands and God will issue his soul-searching indictment upon you. But before we consider this indictment, before we get there, I have to remind you that the remedy is simple.

The way of salvation is straightforward. It's straightforward. All you have to do is close in with Christ, commit your life to him, and actively seek to follow the Lord.

[10 : 33] It's as simple as that. And you might say, well, it's not as simple as that. But it is as simple as that. You give up whatever it is that's holding you back and you commit your life to following the Lord.

Because the logical thing to do, logically, committing your life to Jesus Christ is far better than being condemned by him.

That's the logical thing. Because the condemnation is a soul-searching indictment. Woe to that bloody city.

But this indictment against Nineveh was not only highlighted, it not only highlighted that their blood was on their hands, it also highlighted that the blood of others was on their hands too.

Because the phrase is literally woe to that city of bloods. And the indictment implies bloodshed by violence. And that was one of the methods in which the Assyrians used in order to expand their great empire and increase their power over nations and over kingdoms.

[11 : 43] They would murder people. They had ruthless warriors who acted without conscience and inflicted upon other nations this unrestrained violence.

Just to have an idea of how violent and horrific the Assyrians were, I was reading about it and, you know, I shuddered because they gloried in death and bloodshed. They would take delight and pride in having pictures painted of their victims.

Victims who had either been beheaded or limbs removed or eyes gouged out or impaled upon poles. And there was one account where I read of victims.

They would have their faces pinned down to the ground and their skin removed from them whilst they're still living. And the Assyrians, they would hang pictures in their homes of these victims as trophies of achievement.

And, you know, when you consider the Assyrian regime when it was at its height, it was a brutal force. They were a brutal force which used violence to keep their subjects under control.

[12 : 51] And, you know, there's nothing new under the sun. Nothing at all. Whether it's Nazi Germany or the Taliban or ISIS, they're all the same. They're all doing the same.

But when we compare ourselves to the Assyrians and these extremist groups, we might be tempted to think, well, we're not as bad as them. And to some, to a great extent, that's true.

We've never murdered or committed an act of violence against anyone. But the thing is, we're not to compare ourselves to the Assyrians or to murderers or rapists or pedophiles.

We're not to look at them and conclude, well, I'm actually a good person who does good things. Because when we stand in the mirror of God's Word, God's holy Word, and compare ourselves to God's holy law, which God has set, the standard of God, we see how far short we come.

Because when Jesus speaks in the Sermon on the Mount, He goes straight to the heart of the problem, which is not our actions. It's the problem of the heart. And He says to us, well, you've heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not murder.

[14 : 03] And whoever murders will be liable to the judgment. But Jesus says, I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment. Whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council.

And whoever says, you fool, will be liable to the fires of hell. And Jesus, He doesn't mince His words because He knows that our sin is a major problem and it needs to be dealt with.

That's why He came. He knew the problem and He knew that He's the remedy. That's why He came. He came to deal with our sin. But what we read here is that the sins of Nineveh, they extended even beyond bloodshed.

Because the soul-searching indictment, it continues when Nahum confirms that they're full of lies and robbery. The Assyrians, they were well known for promising peace and blessing with other nations.

They were known for speaking well of the other nations that surrounded them and promising them growth and trade. But as soon as the nations turned their back, they would just stab them in the back and plunder all their goods.

[15 : 16] They would ransack all the nations and the kingdoms and always preying upon their victims. And Nahum describes, he describes the vicious actions of the Assyrians in verses 2 and 3.

He says, The crack of the whip and the rumble of the wheel, galloping horse, bounding chariot, horsemen charging, flashing sword and glittering spear, hosts of slain, heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end, they stumble over the bodies.

And it's a picture of slaughter and carnage which the Assyrians would inflict upon their enemies. But Nahum, he continues, doesn't stop. He continues to describe the behavior of the Assyrians as this seductive harlot which lures its enemies in and then takes everything from them.

We're like the harlot who is only out for personal gain and prepared to use her beauty and her wealth to draw in her victims. Nineveh, he's saying, is displaying her power and might and offering to all these kingdoms and nations the hand of friendship and to be an ally.

But as soon as there is commitment on the part of the ally, the Assyrians would destroy them. And this is what Nahum describes in verse 4. He says, And all for the countless whorings of the prostitute, graceful and of deadly charms who betrays nations with her whorings and peoples with her charms.

[16 : 49] And from Nahum's perspective, it's safe to say that Nineveh was the capital city of an empire which was characterized by ruthless oppression, depravity and the advancement of her own power.

But you know, Nineveh's problem was the same problem as the rest of mankind. It's a heart problem. Because it was Jesus who said, what comes out of a person is what defiles him.

And he says, from within, out of the heart of man come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness.

All these evil things come from within, says Jesus. And they defile a person. Therefore, the heart of the problem is the problem of the heart.

And because of our heart problem, the Lord who is of purer eye than to behold sin. He's so holy, he's of purer eye, purer eye than to behold sin.

[18 : 05] And he speaks to us as he spoke to Nineveh. As he does in verse 5. Behold, I'm against you, declares the Lord of hosts. I will lift up your skirts over your face and I will make nations look at your nakedness and kingdoms at your shame.

I will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. And all who look at you will shrink from you and say, wasted is Nineveh. Who will grieve for you?

Who will grieve for her? Where shall I seek comforters for you? And what the Lord said to Nineveh was that he would reveal their true self to others.

The day of Nineveh's judgment was going to be a day where the Lord would make known to everyone what they are really like. And as I mentioned earlier, Nineveh is an illustration to us of the person who is to be found out of Christ on the day of judgment.

Because on the day of judgment everything will be revealed. And for those who are found to be without Christ and without their sins washed and covered in his blood they will be exposed.

[19 : 23] And they will be exposed before the eyes of others for who they really are. And you know my friend, if other people were to see into our heart and if they were to know what goes on in our minds and what if they were to witness what happens when others aren't looking, you know we would feel nothing but shame and guilt and humiliation.

But that's what will make the day of judgment all the more worse for those who are out of Christ. And that's what will add to the pains of hell.

That all sin has been revealed. And this is what the Apostle Paul, he speaks about it in Romans chapter 2, he says that God will judge the secrets of men and women by Jesus Christ.

The secrets, he'll reveal everything. Everything. And everyone will know what God's verdict is when he executes it. And like Nineveh who brought judgment upon itself, if you're found to be out of Christ on that great day of judgment, you will have no one else to blame but yourself.

My friend, if you have had many opportunities, many opportunities to do something about it, and you still have an opportunity to do something about it tonight, so will you not do something before it is too late?

[21 : 07] Before it is too late. we've seen a soul-searching indictment, but secondly, a self-confident imitation. A self-confident imitation. Look at verse 8.

He says, Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile with water round her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall? Cush was her strength, Egypt too, and that without limit.

Put and the Libyans were her helpers. I'm sure that we've all heard or used the phrase, they're as thick as thieves. They're as thick as thieves, and it's always used in the sense of two people who are always doing something together, and more often than not, they're up to no good.

And I often find myself telling David and Finley that, well, they're as thick as thieves, because they're usually caught throwing stones at something, probably the car, soaking each other with the hose, or they're fighting with one another, or they're pulling something apart, and they're always doing it together, they're as thick as thieves.

And in the second section, we're introduced to this other great city, another great city in the ancient world, which was very similar to Nineveh, always compared to Nineveh, because they were doing the same things as Nineveh, they were seeking the same gains as Nineveh, they were seeking to get their own way, regardless of who they hurt, just like Nineveh.

[22 : 37] And in that sense, this city and Nineveh, they were as thick as thieves. And the name of Nineveh's partner in crime was the city of Thebes.

If you're using the authorised version, verse 8 says, are you better than populace? No. Which unfortunately doesn't make any sense. But some translations, they've called the city Noamon, which means sun city, named after the Egyptian sun god.

But it's commonly known as Thebes. And Thebes was the capital city of Egypt before Cairo. And it was located in southern Egypt on the east bank of the river Nile, which was very similar to Nineveh, because Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria, up north, and it was located on the east bank of the river Tigris.

And like Nineveh, Thebes was a place of great wealth and political power and prominence among all the other nations that surrounded it. But Nahum, he doesn't describe the wealth and political power of Thebes.

Instead, he describes her defence systems and her allied forces. Because he says that Thebes sat by the Nile with water around her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall, which was just like Nineveh.

[23 : 59] Because Nineveh was situated on the river Tigris, and Thebes was situated on the river Nile. And Thebes had all these channels of water surrounding it just like Nineveh had its man-made moat of 45 metres wide, stretching round the entire city.

And like Nineveh's two defensive walls that stretched 30 metres in the air, and all the towering watchtowers that surrounded it 60 metres high.

Thebes also had many structures and many walls and palaces that added to its strength and its power. But Thebes not only had impressive defences, it says that she was also supported by all these military alliances that surrounded her.

That's what we're told in verse 9. It says, Cush was her strength, Egypt too, and that without limit. Put and the Libyans were her helpers. Cush was the ally of Thebes, this Egyptian city.

They were located to the south, to the south of Thebes. Egypt, which was the country that Thebes was located in, Thebes was in the south, but they're talking about northern Egypt.

[25 : 13] The help would come from northern Egypt. Libya, as you know, was to the west of Thebes, or the west of Egypt, and Put was located in the east.

And what Nahum was saying was that the city of Thebes could draw upon resources from north, south, east, and west. Everywhere. And Nahum says, yet she became an exile.

She went into captivity. Her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of every street, for her honoured men lots were cast, and all her great men were bound in chains.

Despite all her defences, all her wealth, all her alliances with other nations, which she could have called upon at any time, he says, Thebes fell.

The city of Thebes fell. Now, what's remarkable about all this, this history, is that Nineveh and Thebes weren't actually allies.

[26 : 16] They were so similar in every way, but they were the greatest of enemies. Nineveh and Thebes, you could say, they were the two powerhouses in the ancient world, and they were always seeking to beat one another.

They always wanted to topple one another. They were the greatest of rivals, and the reason Thebes fell is because Nineveh invaded and destroyed the city.

And it's said that when Nineveh invaded Thebes, it left behind this trail of fire, ruin, and death, like it did with every other place. Because the king of Nineveh, he captured everyone he could, and he killed the rest, and even the children of Thebes, they were massacred in the streets.

And that's what Nahum, he reminds the people in verse 10. Yet she became an exile, she went into captivity, her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of every street.

And Nahum is now asking Nineveh, are you better than Thebes? Are you better than Thebes? Do you think that what happened to them won't happen to you?

[27 : 27] Do you think that you're above and beyond the judgment of God? And what Nahum was highlighting was Nineveh's problem, because Nineveh thought that they were secure.

They thought that if they destroyed the city of Thebes, then no one will be able to rival their power and their strength. No one will be able to invade them and destroy their impregnable fortress.

The people of Nineveh thought that they were secure. But like many people do, Nineveh had placed its security in its strength, its health, its wealth, its status, its intelligence, its allies, and its defense systems.

But they didn't place their security in the one thing that is needful. They didn't place their security in the Lord. And my friend, I need not ask you, are you better than Thebes?

I need not ask you, are you better than Nineveh? Because surely by now, you have come to realize in your life that you can't place your security in anything apart from the Lord.

[28 : 39] Surely by now you can see that you can't place your security in your strength, because that will fail. Surely by now you can see that you can't place your security in your health, because, well, that could deteriorate at a moment's notice.

Surely by now you can't, you can see that you can't place your security even in your wealth, because, well, you can't take it with you. You can't place your security in your status within a community, because that won't last.

You can't place your security in your intelligence, because, well, true wisdom comes from knowing the Lord. you can't place your security in your friends or your family, because they will either let you down or they'll be taken from you.

You can't even place your security in your defence systems, whether that is a healthy lifestyle or insurance policies or doctors, because not one of them will provide the security that you need, because the security that you so desperately need, and you know it, you know it, and you know it can only be found by trusting in Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone.

And, you know, when we consider the words we were singing earlier in Psalm 73, Psalm 73, it's a wonderful psalm, and they were the words of Asaph. Asaph was a Christian man, but he struggled with the fact that the Lord was being so patient with those who aren't Christians, because like Nineveh, Asaph could see that all the unconverted people around him, they were prospering in wealth and health and power and status and intelligence and they lived their life without any thought or care of the Lord.

[30 : 30] They lived their life without even giving thanks to the Lord for all that they had. And yet Asaph was this man who loved the Lord and he lived his life trying to please the Lord and praise the Lord and yet he didn't prosper.

He struggled in poverty, his health deteriorated, his power was minimal, his status was non-existent and his intelligence, well it wasn't above average.

But Asaph struggled with the question as to why the Lord wasn't judging those who don't care about him. And in Psalm 73 Asaph says I thought to understand this and it seemed to me a wearisome task, it burdened him.

But Asaph says everything became clear, everything became clear when I came into God's house. Because when I came into God's house he says it's then I discerned their end.

it's then I discerned their end. When Asaph came into God's house to worship the eternal God, he was reminded that the same God who loved him and saved him was also the God who was the judge of all the earth.

[31 : 53] And Asaph says about those who don't love or follow the Lord, truly you set them in slippery places. You make them fall to ruin.

How they are destroyed in a moment and swept away utterly by terror. My friend, that was the experience of Nineveh. And that will be the experience of everyone who does not place their security in Jesus Christ.

It will be the experience of everyone who is found out of Christ on the day of judgment. you make them fall to ruin. How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terror.

And so we've seen a soul-searching indictment, a self-confident imitation, and lastly, a spurning interrogation. A spurning interrogation.

Look at verse 12. All your fortresses are like fig trees, with first ripe figs, if shaken they fall into the mouth of the eater. Behold, your troops are women in your midst, the gates of your land are wide open to your enemies, fire has devoured your barge.

[33 : 11] In the concluding verses of his prophecy, Nahum describes the internal weaknesses of Nineveh. his message of woe is not just that Nineveh will be overthrown by external forces, but that the strong, cruel, and harsh might of the Assyrians is going to be overcome by their internal sin.

In other words, the collapse and condemnation of Nineveh doesn't just come from the outside, it comes from the inside. And Aham says about Nineveh in verse 12, he says, all your fortresses are like fig trees with first ripe figs.

If shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater. He says, the military power of the Assyrians and the mighty fortress of Nineveh is going to collapse before the enemy.

There's going to be no heroic resistance from Nineveh. The enemy wouldn't even need to invent some new weapon to overcome the Assyrians or devise a master plan to defeat them.

Rather, Nahum says that the fall of Nineveh will be like walking up to a fig tree. A tree with ripe figs on it. The first year of ripe figs and just giving it a little shake.

[34 : 29] A little shake and then down it comes. Down it comes, but not onto the ground, says Nahum. No, he says, the figs will fall into the mouth of the eater.

Straight into the mouth. It's a picture of easy success and quick judgment. And Nahum goes on to explain that there will be no resistance. There will be no defense made against God's judgment.

He says, look, all your troops are women. They're weak. They're afraid. They have no strength to defend themselves against God's judgment. Even the gates are left wide open.

There's nothing that can stop the judgment of God. The preparations that would have been made to protect the city, he says, they're going to be no use. Because usually when an attack was made upon Nineveh, you would hear all the shouts of the commanding officer.

He'd be saying, as it says in verse 14, draw the water for the siege, strengthen your forts, go into the clay, thread the mortar, take hold of the brick mold. He's saying, rebuild the city, keep it secure, keep the defenses up, keep the place tight.

[35 : 40] But the people of Nineveh know that there's nothing they can do to stop the judgment of God coming. Because the great and mighty Nineveh is falling. He says in verse 15, they will devour, their will, the fire devour you, the sword will cut you off, it will devour you like the locust.

Multiply yourselves like the locust, multiply like the grasshopper. Nineveh. And Nahum says that all those who benefited from Nineveh's power, all those who were there when Nineveh was a wealthy city in full health, great strength, great defenses, and ever-growing status.

But when it's all taken away, everyone runs. Everyone flees. Nahum says, you increased your merchants, verse 16, more than the stars of the heavens.

The locusts, that's how he describes those running, the locusts, the swarms of them, they spread their wings, they fly away. Your princes, they're like grasshoppers, your scribes like clouds of locusts, settling on the fences in a day of cold.

When the sun rises, they fly away, no one knows where they are. Your shepherds, they're asleep. O king of Assyria, your noble slumber, your people are scattered on the mountains.

[37 : 04] With none to gather them. And what he's saying is that when God comes in judgment, the people run for their lives. They run because they know that they cannot escape the judgment of God.

And you know, Jesus spoke about this. He spoke about it because, do you remember when Jesus was on the way to Calvary? On the way to Calvary, carrying the cross to be condemned for the sins of his people.

And there were many who followed behind him. All these crowds following and they're all weeping and mourning. And Jesus says to them, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

And he says to them, for the days are coming. The days are coming when they will begin to say to the mountains, follow us. And to the hills, cover us.

And what Jesus was saying was that there will come a day, a day is coming, when many people on the day of judgment will try and run from the wrath and the terror of the Lord.

[38 : 16] But they will not escape. And this is why the apostle Paul, a man burdened with this gospel message, he says in 2 Corinthians 5, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of the things done in the body, whether good or evil.

And Paul, knowing, knowing that such a day was looming for the unconverted, burdened with this glorious gospel message, Paul went on to say, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

Knowing the terror of the Lord, knowing the extent and the awfulness of God's judgment and wrath in hell, we try to persuade people to flee to Christ.

That's what he was saying. And my friend, that has always been my intention when preaching through the book of Nahum. That you would know the terror of the Lord.

That you would be persuaded. And that you would flee to Christ. Christ. Because in order to understand how good the good news is, in order to understand how wonderful, how glorious, how great salvation is, we need to first of all understand how bad the bad news is.

[39 : 42] In order to understand what you're being saved to, you have to understand what you've been saved from. And my friend, for the person who is out of Christ, the judgment of God, it really is bad news.

It really is bad news. And they need to flee to Christ for their salvation. They need to flee to Christ. You need to flee to Christ for your salvation.

How shall we escape, said the writer to the Hebrews, if we neglect so great salvation? How? But this closing verse, it describes how bad it will actually be.

He says in verse 19, there is no easing your heart. Your wound is grievous. All who hear the news about you clap their hands over you.

for upon whom has not come your unceasing evil. Nahum affirms to Nineveh that those who hear about their destruction will clap their hands.

[40 : 52] They will applaud in agreement with God's judgment. And you know, I believe that this version, there are other verses in scripture, that on the day of judgment, those who are out of Christ, they will be, I should put it the other way, those who are found to be in Christ, they will agree with the just judgment of God against those who are out of Christ.

They will agree with the just condemnation of God in sending them to hell. I don't say that lightly.

We all have people in our homes, in our families, but I say it because it's a reality. Those who are in Christ, because they are made like Christ, will agree with the just condemnation of God, and sending those who are out of Christ, than to hell.

It's a solemn thought. It's a solemn thought. But there's one more thing about this closing verse in the book of Nahum. It's a book that closes without hope.

There's no hope in this verse. There's no word of comfort. There's no offer of another opportunity. There's no second chance.

[42 : 34] Nahum closes his book the same way that God will close his book. And when the book is closed, there is no hope. And that's because in hell, there is no hope.

No hope of escape. No hope of the pain going away. No hope of the torments abating. No hope of comfort. There's not even the hope of dying.

Because in hell you are dying but never dead. And my friend, I tell you all this not because I'm trying to scare you.

Trying to manipulate you. And it's not because I don't care. That I don't have a feeling towards you.

I tell you because I want you to know the truth. And you know me by now. And you know that is my desire. I want you to know the truth.

[43 : 36] I tell you because I want you to be saved. I tell you because I want you to commit your life to following Jesus Christ. I tell you because I love you and I do not want you to be lost.

That's why I tell you. But the last thing I will say to you this evening is that just as Pilate washed his hands and claimed, I am innocent of this man's blood.

blood. And just as Nahum presented his burden to the city of Nineveh and said, I am innocent of your blood. My friend, I am saying to you tonight with regards to the day of judgment, I am innocent of your blood.

God, I am innocent of you. I am innocent of you. I am innocent of you. Your blood is no longer on my hands. I have told you what hell will be like. I have warned you of the wrath of God.

I have presented to you the truth. On your head be it. On your head be it. You know what you have to do.

[44 : 50] So seek the Lord while he may be found. May the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray. O Lord, we give thanks to thee that there is an offer of the gospel.

We thank thee and we praise thee, Lord, that there is a way out and there is a way of escape. And help us in that sense to seek the fire exit. To know that there is only one way to go.

And that is to run to Jesus. O Lord, that thou wouldest bless thy word to us. Impress it upon our hearts. Draw us to thyself. For we know, Lord, that thou art the one who will and who is.

But we pray that we would respond. O that we would respond to the call to come. Lord, bless us, we pray thee. For we know that the call to come is often assured to us by he that comes to me.

I will in no wise cast out. O Lord, look upon us, we ask thee. Keep us on mercy's ground until we find thee. And do us good. For Jesus' sake.

[46 : 00] Amen. We shall conclude by singing in Psalm 55. Psalm 55.

The last three verses of the Psalm. It's page 286 in the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 55 from verse 22. Cast thou thy burden on the Lord, and he shall thee sustain.

Yea, he shall cause the righteous man unmoved to remain. But thou, O Lord, my God, those men in justice shalt thou shalt o'erthrow, and in destruction's dungeon dark, at last shalt lay them low.

The bloody and deceitful men shall not live half their days. But upon thee with confidence I will depend always. These verses in conclusion to God's praise.

Amen. Cast thou thy burden on the Lord, and he shall thee sustain.

[47 : 20] Yea, he shall cause the righteous man unmoved to men.

But thou, O Lord, my God, those men in justice shalt o'erthrow, and in destruction's dungeon dark at last shalt thou, let them blow.

The bloody and deceitful men shalt thou.