



“The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.” – Nahum 1:7

Over the past few days, I have been reading through the short, three-chapter book in the Old Testament written by the Minor Prophet, Nahum. To give a brief explanation: this book contains an oracle or a vision given to Nahum concerning the Assyrian people and the city of Nineveh. Now many of us may remember the city of Nineveh from the book of Jonah, and your connection would be correct. When Jonah preached repentance on the streets of Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, the people responded and were spared. However, a century later, sometime between 633BC and 612BC, the Prophet Nahum preached to these same people, but this time they did not repent. They rejected God and the preaching of his prophet instead. In this oracle given to Nahum, the prophet writes of Nineveh’s coming downfall. You see, Nineveh, as part of the Assyrian empire, was known for its brutality and evil treatment of other nations, especially the Jews. In fact, in 722BC, Nineveh had destroyed Israel’s northern kingdom. But, as Nahum would declare, these people would themselves fall in defeat at the hands of the Babylonians in 612BC. In this short book, Nahum declares that God is sovereign: he punishes whom he will, and they are powerless to stop him. However, much of Nahum’s prophecy was directed to the people of Judah (Israel’s southern kingdom), who could rejoice at the good news of Nineveh’s impending fall. The reason why Judah could rejoice at the fall of Nineveh, their enemy, is going to be the main focus for this devotion. You see, Judah received God’s grace, unlike the Assyrian’s who received judgment, because: “They took refuge in God.” You see, the southern kingdom of Judah was by no means a perfect people, but what separated them, at least in this particular moment in history, from the Assyrians of Nineveh was their “taking refuge in God.” On the one hand, the Assyrians rejected God’s hand of grace, but on the other hand, Judah took refuge in it.

As **John Piper** states, “The experience of future grace often hangs on whether we will take refuge in God, or whether we doubt his care and run for cover to other shelters.”

As Scripture affirms for those who take shelter in God, the promises of grace are many and rich:

- * **2 Samuel 22:31** — “He is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.”
- * **Psalms 2:12** — “Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”
- * **Psalms 34:22** — “None of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.”
- * **Psalms 31:19** — “How abundant is your goodness, which you have...worked for those who take refuge in you.”

Heavenly Father, by your grace before the face of a myriad of difficulties, hardships, and enemies of life, may myself and your people be characterized as those who abandon self-reliance and strength and run towards you, our place of rescue. May we acknowledge our weakness and trust in your strength, for we know, “If God is for us, who/what can be against us!” We do not demand nor deserve; we only humbly look for grace. Amen!

By: Pastor Joseph Morris