

# 119

## GROUP STUDY GUIDE

### Minor Prophets, Major Messages | Nahum: God Will Not Clear the Guilty

Use with the full teaching and a Bible. Read or watch first, complete the questions, then discuss and apply. For family study, an adult can select suitable portions and accept spoken answers.

Test the teaching's explanations against the cited passages. Keep the answer key and facilitator notes separate when distributing learner pages.

[Open the full teaching](#)

#### Teaching summary

This teaching examines how Nahum's announcement of judgment brings comfort to the oppressed. Nahum's name means 'comfort,' and his message concerns Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. Assyria's cruelty and violence had harmed Judah and its neighbors. The promised downfall of that oppressor therefore meant relief rather than merely the defeat of a rival nation. Nahum reveals God's concern for those suffering under persistent evil.

The book opens by declaring that YHWH is slow to anger and great in power, yet will not clear the guilty. His patience does not mean that wrongdoing can continue forever without consequence. At the same time, Nahum 1:7 describes him as good and as a stronghold for those who take refuge in him. Judgment against his enemies is paired with security for those seeking him. The announcement of peace calls Judah to keep its feasts and fulfill its vows.

Nahum describes Nineveh's destruction and the collapse of Assyrian power. The book closes with a question about the reach of Assyria's unceasing evil and portrays others rejoicing at its fall. The teaching treats Assyria as an example of the end awaiting those who persist in wickedness. God's wrath expresses his refusal to remain indifferent while the innocent are harmed. His love and goodness include opposition to injustice.

The warning also turns back toward the reader. All have sinned and caused harm, so judgment cannot be treated only as something deserved by distant enemies. Nahum's final question invites reflection on the damage caused by pursuing personal interests without concern for others. Yet refuge remains available in YHWH. The proper response is repentance and an appeal to his mercy, rather than confidence that a religious identity places someone beyond accountability.

Nahum 1:3 closely echoes God's description of himself in Exodus 34:6-7. Both passages join patience with the refusal to clear the guilty. Exodus applies that warning to Israel, while Nahum applies it to Assyria, showing that God's people are also accountable. The teaching connects this with 2 Peter 2:20-21, which warns against returning to defilement after knowing the way of righteousness. God's delay in judgment is an opportunity to repent, not permission to continue sinning.

Yeshua's teaching includes both forgiveness and coming judgment. Matthew 13:40-42 speaks of removing lawbreakers at the end of the age, while 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 describes Yeshua returning to grant relief to the afflicted and judge those who afflict them. As Nineveh's fall brought

good news to the oppressed, final judgment brings peace to God's people. Nahum therefore offers comfort and a sober warning together: seek refuge in YHWH and turn from sin while there is time.

## Summary points

- Nahum's message brings comfort by announcing the downfall of a violent oppressor.
- Nineveh's cruelty makes its judgment good news for those it harmed.
- YHWH is patient, but he does not leave persistent evil unpunished.
- God is a stronghold for those who take refuge in him.
- Divine opposition to injustice is consistent with God's love and goodness.
- Nahum's closing question invites readers to consider the harm caused by their own sins.
- God's people face accountability as surely as the nations do.
- Religious labels do not excuse refusal to repent.
- Yeshua's return includes judgment of oppressors and relief for the afflicted.
- God's patience should lead to repentance and reliance on his mercy.

## Fill in the blank

Use the teaching and the cited Bible passages. Equivalent wording is welcome when it expresses the same meaning.

### Basic

1. Nahum's name means '\_\_\_\_\_.'
2. Nahum announces the downfall of Assyria's capital, \_\_\_\_\_.
3. YHWH is slow to \_\_\_\_\_, yet will not clear the guilty.
4. YHWH knows those who take \_\_\_\_\_ in him.
5. The downfall of the oppressor is good news because it brings \_\_\_\_\_.
6. God's patience gives people an opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_.

### Challenging

1. Nahum identifies his place of origin as \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Nahum's description of God echoes Exodus chapter \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Nahum 1:15 calls Judah to keep its feasts and fulfill its \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The teaching identifies \_\_\_\_\_ as a power that defeated Assyria.
5. Matthew 13 compares the end-of-age judgment with weeds burned in \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The teaching's passage about Yeshua granting relief to the afflicted is 2 Thessalonians \_\_\_\_\_.

## Group discussion

Discuss respectfully and support answers from the passages. Use these lines for brief notes or a notebook for longer responses.

1. Why would Nahum's announcement of judgment be comforting to Judah and its neighbors?

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2. How does the teaching connect God's wrath with his love and goodness?

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3. What does Nahum's final question ask readers to consider about their own behavior?

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4. Why is a religious label insufficient protection against the consequences of persistent sin?

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5. How does the connection with Exodus clarify the relationship between God's patience and justice?

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6. How should the promise of refuge and Yeshua's future judgment shape repentance and hope today?

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## Answer key

For the leader or parent. Answers follow the teaching and the passages. Accept equivalent wording that expresses the same meaning.

### Basic

#### **1. comfort (also: comforter, consolation)**

Teaching overview: Nahum's name

#### **2. Nineveh**

Nahum 1:1; teaching overview

#### **3. anger**

Nahum 1:3

#### **4. refuge**

Nahum 1:7

#### **5. peace (also: relief)**

Nahum 1:15

#### **6. repent**

Nahum 1:3; teaching application

### Challenging

#### **1. Elkosh (also: Elkoshite)**

Nahum 1:1; teaching overview

#### **2. 34**

Exodus 34:6-7; Nahum 1:3

#### **3. vows**

Nahum 1:15

#### **4. Babylon (also: Babylonia, the Babylonians)**

Teaching overview

#### **5. fire**

Matthew 13:40-42

#### **6. 1:5-10 (also: 1:5-10)**

2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

## Facilitator notes

These responses give direction for discussion. They are not a test of identical wording. Invite participants to explain the passages and consider a faithful practical response.

1. Nineveh's downfall meant relief from an empire known for violence and oppression. Nahum announces peace to Judah and calls the people to resume their feasts and vows. The comfort comes from evil being stopped and people protected, rather than from delight in suffering for its own sake.

Nahum 1:7-8, 15; 3:19

2. The teaching argues that love for those being harmed is incompatible with indifference to their oppressors. Nahum presents YHWH as both patient and opposed to persistent evil. His goodness includes refuge for those who seek him and judgment against the harm done to them.

Nahum 1:2-8

3. The final question directly addresses Assyria's king and the wide reach of his evil. The teaching applies it to our own conduct: whose welfare have we disregarded? Keep that application distinct from the original addressee, and let it prompt repentance and appropriate repair.

Nahum 3:19; teaching major message

4. A label cannot excuse returning to deliberate wrongdoing or rejecting mercy. Exodus addresses God's own people, and Peter warns those who turn back after knowing righteousness. The purpose is honest repentance and reliance on grace, not declaring someone eternally lost because of one failure.

Exodus 34:6-7; 2 Peter 2:20-21

5. Both passages describe YHWH as slow to anger while refusing to leave guilt unaddressed. Exodus also explicitly speaks of forgiveness. Patience gives opportunity for return; it does not mean judgment is unreal. We should receive mercy rather than use delay as permission to continue harming others.

Exodus 34:6-7; Nahum 1:3, 7

6. We can seek refuge in YHWH, turn from known wrong, and entrust final judgment to him. Yeshua's return promises relief to the afflicted and accountability for oppressors. This encourages hope and faithful conduct without authorizing revenge or promising freedom from all present suffering.

Nahum 1:7; Matthew 13:40-42; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

## Facilitator reminders

Divine judgment is not permission for private vengeance. Keep the comfort of protection from oppression together with repentance and mercy.

Nahum's closing question addresses Assyria's king before the teaching applies it to us. Refuge in YHWH does not promise that faithful people avoid every present trial.

## Put it into practice

Choose one response to the passages. What will we do, and when will we revisit it? Share only what you are comfortable sharing.