Open English Translation
of the Bible

Nahum

Introduction

This document is about the destruction of Nineveh, the capital city of Ashur/Assyria—an ancient enemy of Yisrael/Israel, and was written between 663 and 612 B.C. The prophet Nahum was pleased that Yahweh destroyed Nineveh, because that was a sign that God does indeed punish sinners.
A large portion of the document is poetry, with some narrative portions also included. Unlike English poetry which can often focus on rhyme, Hebrew poetry often includes parallelism where the same thought is repeated or extended using different words. The *OET Readers' Version* tries to assist the reader by starting the second line in a parallel set with the symbol ≈.
It can take a little bit of effort to decipher this message—to see who's being spoken to—because it's often alternating between Yahweh declaring good news to his people, and declaring bad news to Nineveh.

Main components of this document

Yahweh's punishment of Nineveh *1:1-15*
The destruction of Nineveh *2:1–3:19*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

1:1 This document is a declaration about Nineveh city[1] which was given to Nahum from Elkosh as a vision.

Yahweh's anger at Nineveh

2 Yahweh is a jealous[2] God who avenges.
Yahweh avenges and is full of anger.
He takes vengeance on his opponents,
and he continues to be angry with his enemies.
3 Yahweh is slow to get angry, but very powerful.
He certainly won't allow guilty people to go unpunished.
He walks among whirlwinds and storms,
and clouds are like dust stirred up by his feet.
4 He scolds the ocean and makes it sand.
He dries up all the rivers.
Bashan and Karmel wither up.
He makes the flowers wilt in Levanon.
5 The mountains shake when he appears,
and the hills melt.
The ground heaves at his presence—
actually the entire world and all its residents.
6 What can withstand his indignation?
Who can resist his fierce anger?
His anger is poured out like fire,
and rocks shatter in front of him.
7 Yahweh is good at sheltering us when trouble comes.
He recognises those go to him for protection.
8 He'll completely destroy his opponents with a rushing flood.
He will chase his enemies into the darkness.
9 Whatever is plotted against Yahweh,
he'll completely destroy it.
Trouble won't return a second time.
10 They'll get tangled up as if in thorns,
and they'll walk like drunks.
They'll be burnt up completely like dry stubble.
11 Someone in Nineveh made a decision,
to plot evil against Yahweh.
Someone with wicked plans.
12 This is what Yahweh says:
Even though the Assyrians are numerous and well equipped.
they'll be destroyed anyway and will be no more.
Although I've afflicted you my people,
I won't afflict you any more.
13 I'll free your neck from their harness.
I'll snap their chains that are holding you.
14 Yahweh has given instructions about you, Nineveh.
You'll have no more descendants to carry on your name.
I'll destroy your idols and images in your temples.
I'll dig your grave because you're despised.
15 My people, look, a messenger is running across the hills.

Literal Version

1:1 The_oracle_of Nīnəvēh the_document_of the_vision_of Naḥūm the_'Elqoshiy.

2 Is_a_god jealous and_avenging **YHWH** **YHWH** is_avenging and_a_master_of rage **YHWH** is_avenging to_foes_of_his and_ _is_ he _keeping to_enemies_of_his. **3** **YHWH** is_long_of anger(s) and[4] power and_certainly_(leave_unpunished) not **YHWH** he_will_leave_unpunished is_in_storm-wind in_storm its_road/course and_cloud[s] are_the_dust_of his_feet_of_his. **4** He_is_rebuking (in)_sea and_he_made_it_dry and_all the_ _rivers he_dries_up Bāshān and_Karmel/(Carmel) it_ _languishes and_the_blossom_of Ləvānōn it_languishes. **5** Mountains they_quake from_him/it and_the_hills they_ _melt and_ the_earth/land _it_lifted_up from_before_of_him and_the_world and_all those_who_dwell_of in_it. **6** To_(the)_ _face_of/in_front_of/before indignation_of_his who will_he_ _stand and_who will_he_endure at_the_burning_of his_ _anger_of_his rage_of_his it_is_poured_out like_fire and_the_ _rocks they_are_pulled_down from_him. **7** Is_good **YHWH** (into)_a_refuge in/on_day trouble and_he_is_knowing those_ _who_take_refuge_of in_him/it. **8** And_with_a_flood which_ _passes_over complete_destruction he_will_make place_of_its and_enemies_of_his he_will_pursue darkness. **9** Whatever you(pl)_will_plot against **YHWH** complete_destruction he will_be_making not it_will_arise two_times trouble. **10** If/because to thorns entangled and_like_drink_of_their drunkards they_will_be_consumed like_stubble dry full. **11** From_you one_who_plots on **YHWH** evil a_counsellor_of worthlessness he_has_come_out. **12** Thus **YHWH** he_says though complete and_thus/so/as_follows numerous and_ _thus/so/as_follows they_will_be_cut_off and_he_will_pass_ _away and_I_have_afflicted_you not I_will_afflict_you again. **13** And_now I_will_break yoke-bar_of_his from_on_you and_ _fetters_of_your I_will_tear_apart. **14** And_he_has_ _commanded on_you **YHWH** not it_will_be_sown from_ _name_of_your again from_the_house_of your(pl)_gods_of_ _your I_will_cut_off idol and_molten_image I_will_make grave_of_your if/because you_are_insignificant.
2:1 [5] THERE on the_mountains the_feet_of one_who_bears_ _news one_who_proclaims peace celebrate_a_festival Oh_ _Yəhūdāh/(Judah) festivals_of_your pay vows_of_your if/because not he_will_repeat again mmm[6] on/over_you(fs) a_worthless_person of_him_of_all it_will_be_cut_off.

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1 **RV 1:1–3:19 · Cross-ref.** Isa 10:5-34; 14:24-27; Zeph 2:13-15.

2 **RV 1:2 · Note** Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, Yahweh often compares peoples who worship idols (instead of him, the creator) similar to a spouse that has an affair.

4 **LV 1:3 · Note** OSHB variant note: לוּדִנ/וּ: (x-qere) 'לָדִנ/וּ': lemma_c/1419 a morph_HC/Aamsc id_34W26 לָדִנ/וּ

5 **LV 2:1 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.1.15

6 **LV 2:1 · Note** OSHB variant note: רוּבע/ל: (x-qere) 'רָבֶע/ל': lemma_l/5674 a morph_HR/Vqc id_34SHw רָבֶע/ל

Literal Version

2 **9** one_who_scatters he_has_come_up on face_of_your guard the_fortification watch the_road strengthen the_loins make_ _strong strength exceedingly. **3** **10** If/because **YHWH** he_will_ _restore ᴅᴏᴍ the_majesty_of Ya´ₐqov/(Jacob) like_the_ _majesty_of Yisrā'ēl/(Israel) if/because they_have_laid_waste_ _to_them those_who_lay_waste and_their_vine_of_branches they_have_destroyed. **4** **11** The_shield_of his_warriors is_ _dyed_red men_of strength are_clothed_in_scarlet are_in_ _fire_of iron(s) the_chariotry in/on_day prepares_he and_ _the_cypresses they_have_been_made_to_quiver. **5** **12** In_ _streets the_chariotry they_drive_madly they_rush_around in_places appearance_of_their are_like_torches like_(the)_ _flashes they_run_around. **6** **13** He_remembers his_of_nobles they_stumble their[14] they_hurry wall_of_its and_ the_cover _ _it_is_prepared. **7** **15** The_gates_of the_rivers they_have_been_ _opened and_the_palace it_has_melted_away. **8** **16** And_it_has_ _been_fixed it_was_uncovered it_was_taken_away and_ _maidservants_of_its are_moaning like_the_sound_of doves they_are_beating on hearts_of_their. **9** **17** And_Nīnəvēh was_ _like_a_pool_of water from_the_days_of it and_they are_ _fleeing stop stop and_there_is_not one_who_turns_back. **10** **18** Plunder silver plunder gold and_there_is_not an_end to_ _supply abundance from_all article_of preciousness. **11** **19** Emptiness and_emptiness and_devastation and_a_heart melting and_tottering_of knees and_anguish in_all loins and_ _the_faces_of all_of_them_of_their they_have_gathered a_ _glow. **12** **20** Where is_the_dwelling_place_of lions and_is_ _pasture it for_(the)_lions where lion lion it_walked there cub_of lion and_there_was_not one_who_terrified. **13** **21** The_ _lion was_tearing for_the_sufficiency_of its_cubs_of_his and_ _it_was_strangling for_lionesses_of_its and_it_filled prey holes_of_its and_dens_of_its torn_flesh. **14** **22** HERE_I am_ _against_you the_utterance_of **YHWH** soldiers/messengers and_I_will_burn in_smoke chariotry_of_its and_your_young_ _of_lions the_sword it_will_consume and_I_will_cut_off from_ _the_earth prey_of_your and_not it_will_be_heard again the_ _voice_of your(pl)_messengers_of_your.
3:1 Woe_to the_city_of blood(s) of_it_of_all lying plunder is_

Readers' Version

He'll be bringing good news—announcing peace.[3]
So celebrate your festivals Yehudah (Judah), and keep your promises,
because that wicked country won't invade you again—it'll be destroyed.

Nineveh's coming destruction

2:1 The ones who'll scatter you are getting ready to attack you.
Guard the city walls.
Watch the roads.
Be dressed for battle.
Gather your troops together.
2 Yahweh is restoring Ya'akov's (Jacob's) greatness,
like Yisrael's (Israel's) greatness before,
even though the invaders took their valuables and destroyed their vineyards.
3 The enemy's powerful warriors hold red shields,
and his soldiers are dressed in scarlet.
The metal on their chariots gleams
as they get them ready that day,
and their cypress spears are held ready.
4 Their chariots drive madly through the streets,
and rush back and forth across the town squares.
They look like flaming torches,
and dart across like lightning.
5 He calls his officers—
They stumble as they march.
They hurry to attack the city wall,
and to set up the movable roof for protection.
6 The river gates are forced open,
and the palace collapses in the flood.
7 She's[7] stripped ready to be taken away.
Her slave girls moan like doves as they beat their chests.
8 In the good days, Nineveh was like a refreshing pool of water.
but now they're fleeing from it.
"Stop, stop," they say, but no one comes back.
9 "Grab the gold, seize the silver."
There's no end to the treasure.
Plenty of valuable things.

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3 **RV 1:15 · Cross-ref.** Isa 52:7.

7 **RV 2:7 · Note** Possibly referring to the city of Nineveh itself, or possibly to its queen.

9 **LV 2:2 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.1

10 **LV 2:3 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.2

11 **LV 2:4 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.3

12 **LV 2:5 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.4

13 **LV 2:6 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.5

14 **LV 2:6 · Note** OSHB variant note: ב/תוכלה/ם: (x-qere) ב/תָּכְיֶלֶּה/ם': lemma_b/1979 n_1 morph_HR/Ncfsc/Sp3mp id_34dAC ב/תָּכְיֶלֶּה/ם

15 **LV 2:7 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.6

16 **LV 2:8 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.7

17 **LV 2:9 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.8

18 **LV 2:10 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.9

19 **LV 2:11 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.10

20 **LV 2:12 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.11

21 **LV 2:13 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.12

22 **LV 2:14 · Note** Note: KJB: Nah.2.13

Readers' Version

10 Nineveh's all emptiness and desolation,
devastation and hearts melting.
Knees trembling and aching stomachs.
Their faces all gone very pale.
11 What happened to that 'lion's den'—
the place where young cubs were fed?
The place where the lion and lioness walked—
where the cubs were safe with nothing to terrify them.
12 The lion tore apart enough for the cubs,
and strangled prey for his lionesses.
He filled his lairs with prey
and his dens with torn flesh.
13 Commander-in-chief Yahweh declares that he's against you.
He'll burn your chariots up in smoke,
and your young men will be killed with swords.
He'll take your prey away from you,
and the voices of your messengers won't be heard anymore.
3:1 The city of bloodshed will have a bad end.
It's full of lies and stolen property.
Always taking plunder—never letting go.
2 The sound of whips and the rattling of wheels.
Horses galloping and chariots jolting.
3 Charging horsemen, flashing swords, glittering spears.
Many slain—heaps of corpses.
Uncountable bodies—people trip over them.
4 That will happen because the beautiful prostitute had so much business.
She's the mistress of witchcraft.
She attracts other countries with her prostitution.
She attracts other peoples with her sorceries.
5 Commander-in-chief Yahweh declares that he's against you.
He'll lift your skirt up over your head,
and show your nakedness to the other countries.
Show your shame to the various kingdoms.
6 I throw disgusting filth at you
and treat you with contempt.
I'll make a spectacle of you.
7 Everyone who sees you will run away
and say, 'Nineveh is destroyed.'
Who will weep for her?
Where can I find someone who'll comfort her?
8 Are you better than No city[8] was,
where the Nile surrounded and protected her?
Where the water was one of her secure walls.
9 Kush (Ethiopia) and Mitsrayim (Egypt) were her strength,
and her strength had no limit.
Put and Libya were her allies.
10 Yet No was taken as an exile—
taken into captivity.
Her young children were dashed to pieces at the top of every street.

Literal Version

_full not prey it_will_depart. **2** The_sound_of a_whip and_the_
_sound_of the_rattling_of a_wheel and_a_horse galloping
and_a_chariot jolting. **3** A_horseman bringing_up and_the_
_blade_of a_sword and_the_lightning_flash_of a_spear and_
_the_multitude_of the_slain and_the_weight_of corpse[s]
and_there_is_not an_end to_corpse[s] and_people_will_
_stumble[23] over_corpse[s]_of_their. **4** From_the_abundance_
_of the_prostitution(s)_of a_prostitute good_of grace a_
_mistress_of sorceries who_sells nations by_prostitution(s)_
_of_her and_clans by_sorceries_of_her. **5** HERE_I am_against_
_you the_utterance_of **YHWH** soldiers/messengers and_I_
_will_uncover of_your(pl)_robe_of_the_skirts over face_of_
_your and_I_will_show nations nakedness_of_your and_
_kingdoms shame_of_your. **6** And_I_will_throw on_you
detestable_things and_I_will_treat_you_with_contempt and_
_I_will_make_you like_a_spectacle. **7** And_it_was all_of those_
_of_who_see_you he_will_flee from_you and_saying(ms)
Nīnəvēh it_is_devastated who will_he_show_sympathy
to/for_her/it from_where will_I_seek comforters to/for_
_you(fs). **8** Have_you_been_made_good more_than_
_No'/(Thebes) Amon which_was_dwelling among_canals
water was_all_around to/for_her/it which rampart_of was_
_the_sea was_from_sea wall_of_its. **9** Cush might_of_was_its
and_Mitsrayim and_there_was_not an_end Pūṭ and_the_Lūvī
they_were (in)_help_of_your. **10** Also it to_exile it_went in_
_captivity also children_of_its they_were_dashed_in_pieces
at_the_head_of all_of the_streets and_on its_honoured_of_
_people they_throw a_lot and_all its_great_of_people they_
_were_bound with_fetters. **11** Also you you_will_become_
_drunk it_will_be hidden also you you_will_seek a_refuge
from_the_enemy. **12** All_of fortifications_of_your are_fig_
_trees with first-fruits if they_will_be_shaken and_they_will_
_fall on the_mouth_of one_who_eats. **13** THERE people_of_
_your are_women in_midst_of_your to_enemies_of_your
wide_(open) the_gates_of your_land_of_your they_will_be_
_opened fire it_will_consume bars_of_your. **14** Water_of siege
draw to/for_you(fs) strengthen fortifications_of_your go in_
_clay and_trample on_mortar take_hold_of a_brick-mould.
15 There it_will_consume_you fire it_will_cut_you_off the_
_sword it_will_consume_you like_locust[s] make_yourself_
_numerous like_locust[s] make_yourself_numerous like_
_locust. **16** You_have_increased traders_of_your more_than_
_the_stars_of the_heavens a_locust it_strips_off and_it_flew_
_away. **17** Courtiers_of_your are_like_locust and_officials_of_
_your are_like_a_locust_of locust[s] which_encamp in_walls
in/on_day coldness the_sun it_rises and_it_flees and_not
place_of_its where_are_they it_is_known. **18** Shepherds_of_
_your they_are_slumbering Oh_king_of 'Ashshūr your_of_
_nobles they_settle_down people_of_your they_are_scattered
on the_mountains and_there_is_not one_who_gathers.
19 There_is_not relief for_fracture_of_your wound_of_your is_
_severe all_of those_who_hear_of report_of_(of)_your they_
_strike a_palm on_you if/because over whom not evil_of_
_your has_it_passed continually.

8 **RV 3:8 · Note** Ancient No-Amon—modern Luxor in Mitsrayim.

23 **LV 3:3 · Note** OSHB variant note: וּלְשֹׁכֵי: (x-qere) וְלְשָׁכְו֑וּ: lemma_c/3782 n_0.0 morph_HC/Vqp3cp id_34AXb וְלְשָׁכְו֑וּ

Literal Version

Readers' Version

Her captors threw dice for her leading citizens.
All her leading men were bound in chains.
11 You, too, will become drunk.
You'll look for places to hide.
You'll try to find somewhere to be safe from your enemies.
12 All your fortresses will be like fig trees
with the early fruit now ready.
When they're shaken
the fruit falls right into the mouth of the eater.
13 See, your troops are like weak women.
Your city gates will be opened wide to your enemies—
their cross-bars will be destroyed by fire.
14 Get water from the wells to store for the siege.
Strengthen your fortifications.
Fetch clay and start working it.
Get the molds ready to make bricks.
15 Even so, fire will devour you.
The sword will cut you down.
They'll chew you up like locusts.
You need to multiply like locusts and grasshoppers.
16 You have so many merchants—
more than the stars in the sky.
Like locusts, they strip valuables and then fly away.
17 Your many guards are like locusts,
and you have a swarm of officials.
On a cold morning they settle on the walls,
but when the sun rises they fly away
to some place that nobody knows about.
18 You, king of Ashur (Assyria),
your shepherds have fallen asleep.
Your leading citizens have settled down for a break.
Your people will be scattered across the hills,
with no one to gather them again.
19 Your pain will get no relief—
your wound is too severe.
Everyone who hears the news about you will do a high-five,
because there's no one who hasn't experienced your cruelty.

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