“God of Justice: His Passion for His People”

**Nahum 2:1-13**

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 8/15/21)

 Satan is relentlessly attacking the people of God through his lies and deception. He tempts us every day to put our trust in things other than our Father’s hands. (Q1) **BUT**… our great enemy has been defeated (though his demise is incomplete at this point). Here is our charge: don’t live as a victim; live in victory through Christ!

 The name “Nahum” means “comfort.” God’s message through the prophet Nahum is one of comfort to Judah, even though it was written a generation before that comfort was to come. It’s a reminder for us to keep our eyes on the promised, certain victory. The God of justice fights for His people, **AND HE ALWAYS WINS!**

In Nahum 2, Yahweh taunts the world’s superpower, Assyria. 2:1 says that “He who scatters has come before your face.” It’s a reminder that God scattered the people of that area once before: Nimrod, the founder of Nineveh, led the people in building a great tower so that the people could glorify themselves (Gen. 11:1-9). God destroyed the Tower of Babel and scattered those self-preoccupied people. Nahum the prophet was proclaiming, “Justice is coming.” God’s justice is real. He will judge all nations and all people for their offenses against Him. It makes one stop and think: Has our nation offended God? Have you offended God? (Q2)

God tells Judah, “Take comfort. I will liberate you as I obliterate the Assyrians.” God’s justice is **REDEMPTIVE**. God’s justice is also **RESTORATIVE**. All that the enemy takes from God’s people will be restored to them. (Q3) Even when God’s mercy takes the shape of discipline, His goal is redemption and restoration.

God’s justice is **RETRIBUTIVE** to His enemies. God metes out punishment for offenses against Him. All will be repaid for the sin they’ve committed. Lest you think, “Well, I’m a pretty good person,” remember that God is HOLY. Any sin against Him is consequential.

Let’s talk about lions for a minute. The lions mentioned in 2:11 refer to the Assyrians. The lion was their national emblem. They thought that they were so powerful that they didn’t need God. Gen. 49:8-11 talks about another Lion: The Lion of the tribe of Judah… Jesus! When you declare your dependence on Him (repent, believe, follow), Christ’s blood is applied to you. His complete victory is applied to you! The third lion in scripture (Isa. 14:12-16 and 1Peter 5:8) is Satan. Always remember that he is our enemy, not other people.

The Book of Nahum was written for the people of Judah **and** for us. We are a people suffering under the curse of Satan and his dominion. We need Nahum’s vision: all sin will be punished, either with 1) Christ taking our deserved punishment, or 2) our taking our deserved punishment in Hell. We find mercy when we trust in Christ to take our judgment for sin. He is our substitute, our perfect sacrifice. Those who run to His mercy are liberated from the curse. God’s people gladly surrender their lives to Him.

Have you stopped to think what Christ is **RECLAIMING** for you? Satan gives you Hell. Christ gives you eternal life. Satan gives you indifference to God. Christ gives you a love for God. Satan gives you strife. Christ gives you fellowship with God and with His people. Satan gives you spiritual poverty. Christ gives you an eternal inheritance as children of the King. Satan gives you guilt and shame. Christ gives you innocence and righteousness. (Q4)

Don’t live life as defeated people, even if the world is disintegrating around us. Live by faith, not by sight. What Satan has taken from us, Christ has won back for us. Run to Jesus for His redemption and restoration. Amen.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In 2021 America, what do men put their trust in (besides God)?
2. How has our nation offended God? Have you offended God?
3. Here’s an easy one: Nahum prophesied how Judah would be redeemed and restored. This is a foreshadowing of what New Testament act?
4. This paragraph about what Christ has reclaimed for you is a KEEPER! Cut it out, stick it on your refrigerator, and meditate on these wonderful mercies.
5. Another gift of God’s restorative plan is the Holy Spirit. How does He help us today?

“Leaning on the Everlasting Arms” (Hoffman)

1 What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain:
Leaning, leaning,
safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning,
leaning on the everlasting arms.

2 O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day,
leaning on the everlasting arms. [Refrain]

3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
leaning on the everlasting arms. [Refrain]