



**Archdiocese of St. Louis
Office of Sacred Worship
Lectio Divina Bible
The Book of Nahum**

The book is divided as follows:

- I. God's Terrifying Appearance (1:2–8)
- II. Nineveh's Judgment and Judah's Restoration (1:9–2:1)
- III. The Attack on Nineveh (2:2–3:7)
- IV. Nineveh's Inescapable Fate (3:8–19)

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Lectio Divina

Read the following passage four times.

- The first reading, simply read the scripture and pause for a minute. Listen to the passage with the ear of the heart. Don't get distracted by intellectual types of questions about the passage. Just listen to what the passage is saying to you, right now.
- The second reading, look for a key word or phrase that draws your attention. Notice if any phrase, sentence or word stands out and gently begin to repeat it to yourself, allowing it to touch you deeply. No elaboration. In a group setting, you can share that word/phrase or simply pass.
- The third reading, pause for 2-3 minutes reflecting on "*Where does the content of this reading touch my life today?*" Notice what thoughts, feelings, and reflections arise within you. Let the words resound in your heart. What might God be asking of you through the scripture? In a group setting, you can share your reflection or simply pass.
- The fourth reading, pause for 2-3 minutes reflecting on "*I believe that God wants me to today/this week.*" Notice any prayerful response that arises within you, for example a small prayer of gratitude or praise. In a group setting, you can share your reflection or simply pass.

**I. God's Terrifying Appearance
Nahum, chapter 1**

Oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.

God's Terrifying Appearance

A jealous and avenging God is the LORD, an avenger is the LORD, full of wrath; The LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries, and rages against his enemies; The LORD is slow to anger, yet great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished. In stormwind and tempest he comes, and clouds are the dust at his feet; He roars at the sea and leaves it dry, and all the rivers he dries up. Laid low are Bashan and Carmel, and the bloom of Lebanon withers; The mountains quake before him, and the hills dissolve; The earth is laid waste before him, the world and all who dwell in it. Before his wrath, who can stand firm, and who can face his blazing anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and boulders break apart before him. The LORD is good to those who wait for him, a refuge on the day of distress, taking care of those who look to him for protection, when the flood rages; He makes an end of his opponents, and pursues his enemies into darkness.

II. Nineveh's Judgment and Judah's Restoration

Nineveh's Judgment and Judah's Restoration



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What do you plot against the LORD, the one about to bring total destruction? No opponent rises a second time! Like a thorny thicket, they are tangled, and like drunkards, they are drunk; like dry stubble, they are utterly consumed. From you has come one plotting evil against the LORD, one giving sinister counsel. Thus says the LORD: though fully intact and so numerous, they shall be mown down and disappear. Though I have humbled you, I will humble you no more. Now I will break his yoke off of you, and tear off your bonds. The LORD has commanded regarding you: no descendant will again bear your name; From the house of your gods I will abolish the carved and the molten image; I will make your grave a dung heap.

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Nahum, chapter 2

At this moment on the mountains the footsteps of one bearing good news, of one announcing peace! Celebrate your feasts, Judah, fulfill your vows! For never again will destroyers invade you; they are completely cut off.

III. The Attack on Nineveh

The Attack on Nineveh

One who scatters has come up against you; guard the rampart, Watch the road, brace yourselves, marshal all your strength! The LORD will restore the vine of Jacob, the honor of Israel, because ravagers have ravaged them and ruined their branches. The shields of his warriors are crimsoned, the soldiers clad in scarlet; Like fire are the trappings of the chariots on the day he prepares for war; the cavalry is agitated! The chariots dash madly through the streets and wheel in the squares, looking like torches, bolting like lightning. His picked troops are called, ranks break at their charge; To the wall they rush, their screen is set up. The river gates are opened; the palace is washed away. The mistress is led forth captive, and her maidservants led away, moaning like doves, beating their breasts. Nineveh is like a pool whose waters escape; "Stop! Stop!" but none turns back. "Plunder the silver, plunder the gold!" There is no end to the



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treasure, to wealth in every precious thing! Emptiness, desolation, waste; melting hearts and trembling knees, churning in every stomach, every face turning pale! Where is the lionesses' den, the young lions' cave, Where the lion went in and out, and the cub, with no one to disturb them?

The lion tore apart enough for his cubs, and strangled for his lionesses; He filled his lairs with prey, and his dens with torn flesh. I now come against you—oracle of the LORD of hosts—I will consume your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your young lions; Your preying on the land I will bring to an end, the cry of your lionesses will be heard no more.

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Nahum, chapter 3

Ah! The bloody city, all lies, Full of plunder, whose looting never stops! The crack of the whip, the rumbling of wheels; Horses galloping, chariots bounding, Cavalry charging, the flash of the sword, the gleam of the spear; A multitude of slain, a mass of corpses, Endless bodies to stumble upon!

For the many debaucheries of the prostitute, a charming mistress of witchcraft, who enslaved nations with her prostitution, and peoples by her witchcraft: I now come against you—oracle of the LORD of hosts—and I will lift your skirt above your face; I will show your nakedness to the nations, to the kingdoms your shame! I will cast filth upon you, disgrace you and make you a spectacle; Until everyone who sees you runs from you saying, "Nineveh is destroyed; who can pity her? Where can I find any to console you?"

IV. Nineveh's Inescapable Fate

Nineveh's Inescapable Fate

Are you better than No-amon that was set among the Nile's canals, Surrounded by waters, with the river for her rampart and water for her wall? Ethiopia was her strength, and Egypt without end; Put and the Libyans were her allies. Yet even she became an exile, and went into captivity; Even her little ones were



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dashed to pieces at the corner of every street; For her nobles they cast lots, and all her great ones were put into chains. You, too, will drink of this; you will be overcome; You, too, will seek a refuge from the foe. But all your fortresses are fig trees, bearing early figs; When shaken, they fall into the devourer's mouth. Indeed, your troops are women in your midst; To your foes are open wide the gates of your land, fire has consumed their bars.

Draw water for the siege, strengthen your fortresses; Go down into the mud and tread the clay, take hold of the brick mold! There the fire will consume you, the sword will cut you down; it will consume you like the grasshoppers. Multiply like the grasshoppers, multiply like the locusts! You have made your traders more numerous than the stars of the heavens; like grasshoppers that shed their skins and fly away.

Your sentries are like locusts, and your scribes like locust swarms Gathered on the rubble fences on a cold day! Yet when the sun rises, they vanish, and no one knows where they have gone. Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria, your nobles have gone to rest; Your people are scattered upon the mountains, with none to gather them. There is no healing for your hurt, your wound is fatal. All who hear this news of you clap their hands over you; For who has not suffered under your endless malice?