

Nahum — Diyn

What do we do with our anger?

When the world seems hopeless, lacking in truth and peace and justice, where do we turn? Do we turn to ourselves? Let our seething anger bubble over until all that is left is unholy (or is it holy) rage? Do we bottle it up, leaving it on simmer until we either boil over or it destroys us from within?

It is books like Nahum that remind me I am not God. I am not in charge of his wrath and timing and responsibilities. Would I dish out judgment in place of justice? Revenge instead of restoration? How would I handle the the fate of my so-called enemies?

I can fully admit to the fact that my grace-to-anger ratio is nowhere near 1000:3. If I were to balance *mishpat* with *diyn*, I am sure that my judgment would be fueled by selfish vengeance more often than a desire for rightness and restoration. How confounding and frustrating is the patience of God.

How confounding and frustrating is the grace of God.

Yet, there is an end to His patience. A time when God does say enough is enough.

When is this point? When the cries of the weak and innocent have been heard for far too long?

How long can He wait? How long did He wait? How long *will* He wait?

Because, most days, my patience for the world is lost, and I wonder how God can still be waiting for the Kingdom to come. My patience for those who wrong me is often even shorter.

It's easy to align myself with the intended audience of books such as this. When people oppress or hurt or overpower me, my family, my people—THIS is what God will do! Finally use the type of justice that forces the other to see the error of their ways, feel pain equal to that which they have caused, and lead them to either repentance or punishment. Yet, my life today, and many of yours, are not at all like the people Nahum is writing to.

I am not the oppressed. I fully recognize that I am of the privileged. It might even be said that the role I play in the larger world is closer to that of Nineveh, or some empire. I am in the role of power—or at least closer to it than the other. My back is not breaking under the yoke of slavery. My family is not separated for labor, thrown into military ranks, or placed on fearful display as a message of compliance and control.

The justice of God, *diyn*, is retributive and displays God's righteous anger. Often this comes to rescue the oppressed and the marginalized who were living in fear of torture, trauma, and tragedy. In the book of Nahum, we have the prophet speaking to Nineveh, telling the nation that God had had enough. He had given them patience. He had extended grace and mercy in light of the potential he saw in their hearts, but God had finally had enough.

He had extended grace and mercy in light of the potential He saw in their hearts, but God had finally had enough.

Enough of the cries of the marginalized echoing in His heart. Enough of the pain brought upon His people by those He had also sought to save.

Perhaps God is sitting here, watching me, and thinking something similar.

Yes, there is pain and injustice and unimaginable tragedy. When have / had enough? Great question.

Have you had enough? What can you do? How can you be a peacemaker, an upstander, and a Kingdom bringer? How can you untangle and dismantle cords of oppression and hatred?

I do want God to act. But when He does, where will I be standing? Which side of his anger will I be standing on? Complicit in chaos for my own comfort or pursuing peace for His Kingdom? I am not God. The judgment and the justice is not up to me, but my actions in the world God seeks to restore and shows such patience in is one I can impact.

Holding up a mirror to my own life, I see so many ways my actions, or lack of them, condone or even lead to the things of this world that break God's heart. Unknowingly or not, how might I bring a little more Kingdom and a lot less chaos? How can I even begin to understand God's timing and patience when my own actions lack anything of the sort?

How do I respond to the heart of God through *mishpat*? How do I ignore the truth behind God's timely use of *diyn*?

PRAYER

*May I seek restoration,
lifting up and holding close the weak and the strong.
Checking that my comfort and power
are not built on the backs of others.
I know You are slow to anger, but not never to anger.
So when the souls of the oppressed
cry out for Your justice and rescue—
I know Your heart breaks too.
How long will you wait?
To declare “enough is enough”?
For we trust Your timing
But the watching, and the waiting—
it hurts.*

Amen

THE FOUR PILLARS

BEMA Discipleship is built on four pillars; a **Four-Pillared Perspective** to help us remember **to elevate the words of God** (not ours) and help us identify the principles that we see recurring in the story of God's people.

Here are some applications for this episode echoing the ideas of the four pillars:



TEXT

What stands out to you from the Text that you want to carry with you as you read the prophets? What could you meditate over or memorize from the book of Nahum that stands out?



COMMUNITY

How does your community see the message of Nahum within the Nineveh context? Where have you seen or felt this sort of justice?



DISCIPLESHIP

Who are you bringing alongside you in trusting God's timing of justice? What challenges stand in your way? How might you more effectively invite such conversation in study and in your life?



WRESTLING

What are your thoughts on the destructive, retributive justice in this book? What are you most curious about or struggling with? What remaining questions are lingering?



Are you a music listener?

Listen along to our BEMA Music Playlists on Spotify.

Song suggestions? Send them to bemabesorah@gmail.com.



BEMA SESSION 2



MEDITATION & PRAYER

REFLECTION, APPLICATION & IMPACT

There are three emphases that we are always thinking about in terms of application at BEMA. These may be stated explicitly at times, but often we will want you to do the work of finding ways to connect the dots to the things we are learning. Much of this is what makes the work of BEMA distinct as a ministry of Impact Campus Ministries.

CREATING A SPACE SPIRITUAL FORMATION

*True success is developing intimacy with God. In Session 1, we encountered the idea of “Creating Space for God” in our lives. We believe that **if we do our part of creating that space, God will fill it** as He desires. You’re already doing this as you dive into the Text and jump into a place to discuss. God will meet you in these places! Look for places the Holy Spirit can do work in and through you as you go about your everyday life.*

CONSIDERING CAMPUS YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS

*We believe that young adults are shaping the **future of this world**. Jesus modeled a ministry of discipling young adults, and that approach has and will work. If you are a college student who is listening, we want this material to be directly helpful to your pursuits. If you are not a college student, we want to challenge you to come alongside one and work together.*

SACRED STATION THEOLOGY OF WORK

*This isn’t only for church or Bible study; this is about what we do every day. How we do our job and how it may take advantage of or bring life to others is something God says is central to our presence in the world. Justice is very much something God cares about. Does our physical work (our 9–5 job) bring shalom or chaos? Does it exploit creation? The way we manage our employees, interact with customers or coworkers, care for our children, or create products can provide relief to others. **The work we do every day is sacred and matters!***