

**THE BOOK OF NAHUM**  
**Lesson 4, Chapters 1 and 2**

We left off with Nahum chapter 1, verse 11. To momentarily review, the writer of this small book intended for us to take the opening 10 verses as a unit. This unit was to be understood as a psalm or a hymn. Therefore, it was constructed in that form and so, the author's concentration was on the Hebrew poetic structure and less so on the precision of each word. Therefore, it is more important than ever to know the context behind those words; and to discern that requires a knowledge of historical and current circumstances for the prophet. In this case, the context was that Assyria (represented by its capital city, Nineveh), was a cruel and brutal taskmaster over Israel, as well as over virtually all of its conquered territories and peoples. For this reason, God was going to pour out His vengeance of wrath upon Assyria, and they would never exist (at least in this form) ever again.

Let's re-read a few of the verses.

**RE-READ NAHUM 1:11 to end**

**CJB Nahum 1:11-12 *Out of you, [Ninveh,] he came, one who plots evil against Yehoveh, who counsels wickedness<sup>12</sup> Here is what Yehoveh says: "Though they be many and strong, they will be cut down, they will pass; and though I have made you suffer, I will make you suffer no more.***

These 2 verses work together, so they are better read together. We have to begin our understanding of verse 11 by going to its final words, which in English are often "who counsels wickedness", or a "worthless counselor", or a "wicked counselor". So, now knowing this, the "he" who came out of Nineveh is that worthless counselor.

In truth, the word "Nineveh" is not there in the Hebrew; in fact, assuming that the "out of you" means a place, not even the place is positively identified. Or is it? Remembering that we are dealing with the structure of Hebrew poetry in Nahum, and that we can only identify that structure in the original Hebrew;

then adding in that the typical way that a verse starts and stops our Bibles, we find that does not line up with Hebrew poetic structure. Rather, we need to see this passage in the form of the line lengths of poetry that Nahum is using. So, using English words, here is how the poem is structured:

**Line 1:** From you he has departed

**Line 2:** a plotter of evil against YHWH

**Line 3:** Counselor of Belial

**Line 4:** (begins vs. 12) Thus says YHWH

**Line 5:** (next words in vs. 12) Are they not strong and ever so numerous

We'll stop there. But here's the point: in poem line 5, it consists of 4 Hebrew words. And when we take the first letter of each of these 4 words, we get the word (in Hebrew) Assyria (technically, we get the word Asshur). Very cleverly done. So, any doubt about where this wicked counselor (**Belial**) is coming out of is erased: it is Assyria. So, who or what is this **Belial**? What does it mean? Scholars have taken a number of approaches. Some assume this must be the leader... the king... of Assyria, who nearly certainly at this time was Sennacherib. So, the thought is that he is departing from Judah, and this verse could read "out of you, Judah, Sennacherib came". But that makes little sense because this entire book is about Assyria, and Judah is off-stage because while what happens to Assyria is very bad for the Assyrians, it works out really good for Judah. I have no problem just dismissing this as meaning Sennacherib leaving Judah.

Another view is that it is a Hebrew expression because **beliyal** seems to be formed from 2 Hebrew words; the first indicating something negative, and the second word as relating to "to be of value". So, "bad value" or worthless. In time it was used by Rabbis and Sages to mean (after a vowel change), a generally wicked or corrupted person, that when read was literally "yokeless". It was even used at times as a substitute for **sheol** (the grave, the place of the dead). Here's the thing: it can also mean a kind of abstract, hazy concept of wickedness in general, or it can be referring to a person. In the Jewish work called The Testimony of the 12 Patriarchs, **belial** was just another name for Satan. Whichever it is, it is highly negative and derogatory. And whether it is

referring to a spiritual force or a human being, we need to understand this word as meaning the personification of evil or immorality in all its many forms.

So, if I were to re-word verse 11 to express what it means to modern Westerners, I would put it this way: "Out of you, Assyria, he came, the One who plots evil against Yehoveh, the counselor of Belial." In other words, I'd make Belial into a proper noun... a name... and just leave it as we find it in the Scriptures and not bother to translate it to another language. At the same time, no one was actually named Belial (any more than a person would be named Satan); it was mostly a nasty epithet of the human person they were talking about. It can also expand to include the enemy forces led by this person, whether human or demonic.

Here's the thing we have to always factor in: these prophets tended to blend the cosmic or spiritual with the material. That's how they saw things at that time. At the same time, they are perhaps using words to describe material people and objects and behaviors, that can overlap into the spiritual aspect of it. I coined a term many years ago that is meant to convey this mysterious phenomenon: I called it The Reality of Duality. That what goes on upon the earth, can and usually is a mirror of what is going on, or has gone on, in Heaven. But it is a one-way street. What goes on, on earth, happens first in Heaven and can then transfer to earth, but it doesn't work the other way around.

So, in response to this accusation and calling out of verse 11, in verse 12 we get Yehoveh saying that He is going to cause bad things to happen to Assyria, but He is going to relieve the suffering of His people by doing so. That is, we have opposite effects both occurring from the same divine actions, including a reversal of position and condition. By crushing Assyria, God removes their heavy yoke off the necks of Israel. Clearly this scenario is so very important to Yehoveh, and so we find other prophets... particularly Isaiah... writing about it and using the same tone and thoughts. Isaiah chapter 10 has much to say about Assyria, and we will look a just a few verses to see how parallel these thoughts are to what we have just read in Nahum.

**CJB Isaiah 10:5-13** <sup>5</sup> *"Oh Ashur, the rod expressing my anger! The club in their hands is my fury!* <sup>6</sup> *I am sending him against a hypocritical nation, ordering him to march against a people who enrage me, to take the spoil and the plunder and trample them down like mud in the street.* <sup>7</sup> *That is not what Ashur intends, that is not what they think; rather, they mean to destroy, to cut down nation after nation.* <sup>8</sup> *For [their king] says, 'Aren't all my commanders kings? <sup>9</sup> Hasn't Kalno [suffered] like Kark'mish, Hamat like Arpad, Shomron like Dammesek? <sup>10</sup> Just as my hand reached the kingdoms of non-gods, with more images than in Yerushalayim and Shomron; <sup>11</sup> so won't I do to Yerushalayim and her non-gods what I did to Shomron and her idols?'" <sup>12</sup> Therefore when Yehoveh has done everything he intends to do to Mount Tziyon and Yerushalayim, "I will punish the king of Ashur for the boasting that comes from his proud heart and from reveling in his arrogant looks. <sup>13</sup> For he says, "'With my own strong arm I have done this, and with my wisdom, because I'm so clever! I erased the boundaries between peoples, I plundered their stores for the future; as a mighty man, I subjugated the inhabitants.*

In Nahum 1:12, the first words are more typically translated to "Thus says the Lord". Actually, what it says is "Thus says Yehoveh". This is called the messenger formula, and it is pretty standard with nearly all biblical prophets. I want to point out that nearly all biblical language scholars look at verse 12 and say that it is nearly impossible to translate because the way it is written defies grammar rules so severely. Some don't even think it ought to follow verse 11 and was only clumsily added a long time later by a redactor. But, with the newer knowledge of Hebrew poetic structure, the mystery of it gets solved. Recall that the 4 Hebrew words that follows the "Thus said Yehoveh" (the 5<sup>th</sup> line of a poem) were chosen in order to make an acrostic that says "Assyria". So, setting grammar issues aside, and taking it for how it is given, then the next words that speak of Assyria being so many and so powerful make sense for how they were used... that is, this line of poetry was constructed with not much concern over precision of meaning for its words but rather for getting the word count correct and making an acrostic that was appropriate for the subject (Assyria).

In any case, the many and the strong, or the complete and thus many, (depending on your Bible version) refers to the Assyrian army that is vast in scale and superior to all others in the known world. There remain some interpretation issues, but we won't pause to examine them other than to say this: the reason for Assyria's strength is due to some hidden nuances in a couple of those Hebrew words that scholars find out of place. What the nuances add up to is that all this talk of numerical superiority and strength, points to the many allies of Assyria who fight along with the native Assyrian soldiers. Assyria, being an empire, regards the many nations they conquered as now being allies. And when an Empire is formed, one of the advantages for the empire builder is the addition of each nations' soldiers to its army. That is what is being referred to here.

Yet, despite the combining of all those armies, the next part of verse 12 says, they will be cut down and they shall pass. This means not just defeated in battle but destroyed and not able to fight again. Everything that defines strength for a military is as nothing before God. Numbers matter not at all. The weapons used matter not at all, and neither does any strategy they could devise to defeat God's plan.

To demonstrate how much the words of these various prophets are interweaved and connected with one another, and that God is a God of patterns, I will read to you a short section of the Minor Prophet that precedes Nahum... the Prophet Micah, and let's see if you can catch it.

**CJB Micah 5:5-14** ***<sup>5</sup> They will shepherd the land of Ashur with the sword, the land of Nimrod at its gates; and he will rescue us from Ashur when he invades our land, when he overruns our borders.***

***<sup>6</sup> Then the remnant of Ya'akov, surrounded by many peoples, will be like dew from ADONAI, like showers on the grass, which doesn't wait for a man or expect anything from mortals. <sup>7</sup> The remnant of Ya'akov among the nations, surrounded by many peoples, will be like a lion among forest animals, like a young lion among flocks of sheep- if it passes through, tramples and tears to pieces, there is no one to rescue them. <sup>8</sup> Your hand will be raised over your enemies; all your adversaries will be destroyed. <sup>9</sup> "When that day comes," says***

***Yehoveh, "I will cut off your horses from among you and destroy your chariots. <sup>10</sup> I will cut off the cities of your land and lay waste your strongholds. <sup>11</sup> I will cut off sorceries from your land; you will no longer have soothsayers. <sup>12</sup> I will cut off your carved images and standing-stones from among you; no longer will you worship what your own hands have made. <sup>13</sup> I will pull up your sacred poles from among you and destroy your enemies. <sup>14</sup> I will wreak vengeance in anger and fury on the nations, because they would not listen."***

I'll only briefly speak about this important Micah passage; you can go to the Torah Class lessons on Micah to get a more detailed explanation. Here's the point as it concerns what we have just heard in Nahum 1:12. Just as the Assyrians were militarily superior; God still demonstrated His omnipotence by doing the unthinkable... the otherwise impossible. He, personally, cut them down without using a human army. This happened and it was recorded in the Book of Kings.

***CJB 2 Kings 19:30-36 <sup>30</sup> "'Meanwhile, the remnant of the house of Y'hudah that has escaped will again take root downward and bear fruit upward; <sup>31</sup> for a remnant will go out from Yerushalayim, those escaping will go out from Mount Tziyon. The zeal of Yehoveh-Tzva'ot will accomplish this.' <sup>32</sup> "Therefore this is what Yehoveh says concerning the king of Ashur: 'He will not come to this city or even shoot an arrow there; he will not confront it with a shield or erect earthworks against it. <sup>33</sup> By the way he came he will return; he will not come to this city,' says Yehoveh. <sup>34</sup> 'For I will defend this city and save it, both for my own sake and for my servant David's sake.'" <sup>35</sup> That night the angel of Yehoveh went out and struck down 185,000 men in the camp of Ashur. Early the next morning, there they were, all of them, corpses- dead. <sup>36</sup> So Sancheriv king of Ashur left, went and returned to live in Ninveh.***

Israel never had to lift a finger to defeat the vast Assyrian alliance of armies; God did it in an instant just as He said He would do according to Nahum. But, now let's advance the calendar to the End Times... our day. Micah chapter 5 reveals a condition in which Israel will be back in the land and have

tremendous military superiority. The superiority won't be in the number of troops they have, but rather in the amazing arsenal of weaponry that they have. And during this time, the nations of the earth will gather together to come and attack Israel in the End Times battle we call Armageddon. But God is going to use that same pattern He used against Assyria, similarly to Israel, and for a similar reason.

In what is going to seem the most irrational, almost paradoxical, thing to do, God is going to destroy all of Israel's superior weaponry just as they are attacked, and so suddenly their lack of military advantage opens the door to a rather easy victory of the nations. The nations will see this, be joyful and assured that Israel will be quickly defeated, but suddenly the Lord defeats those vast forces of the nations, supernaturally... while Israel stands more or less on the sidelines. How strange! But, why? Because God is omnipotent and the strength, or weakness, of anyone's military will matter for nothing in the End Times war to end all wars. As a result of what happens, God will be recognized for who He is; He shall claim the victory and there will be no denying it, thereby Yehoveh receives the glory. Ironic is much too small of a word to apply here. The only explanation for Yehoveh doing things this way is that He has decided it, and it is His pattern from the ancient times to operate in this way.

The final words of Nahum 1:12 are: ***and though I have made you suffer, I will make you suffer no more.*** So, here (mid-verse) God turns from addressing Assyria, to addressing Judah. This prophecy of course proved to be true, when Babylon and the Medes teamed up to destroy Nineveh and to essentially take-over the Assyrian Empire. Yet, this end of foreign oppression for Israel was to be rather short-lived... about 130 years. Shortly after 600 B.C., Babylon would come to invade Judah and exile the bulk of the population to Babylon proper (rather than scattering the Judeans all over the continent as Assyria had done to Ephraim/Israel).

This prophecy, like almost all others, will have a minimum of 2 fulfillments over historical time. Indeed, after 70 years of exile in Babylon, the Judeans were freed and given permission to return to Judah. But not even 10% of those exiles elected to return. Nonetheless, just as God made His people suffer

for their rebellion against Him, He then turned on their oppressors for a time. The effect of God turning His wrath towards Israel's oppressors is also an end to Israel's affliction. This pattern would happen again at the hands of the Romans, but the length of time of the affliction of the Jews by God was 19 centuries.

Still, in each occasion of this fulfillment, it grew in scope and in completeness. That is, the part that says "you will suffer ***no more***" had an unspoken asterisk. It was that their suffering would come to an end, but the "no more" part would not happen except for a relatively short time. And this is because Israel (after a few decades) would again fall back into their apostacies and unfaithfulness that demanded that God act justly and punish them. As it stands today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this prophecy is going to be fulfilled one more time... the final time. Just as Nahum speaks of the complete and permanently final nature of the destruction of the Assyrian Empire, so will it be for Israel that the end of their affliction by God will come to a complete and permanently final nature in the End Times. This is what lies ahead of us, and it is likely some of us to whom I'm speaking will witness and experience it.

**CJB Nahum 1:13** *Now I will break his yoke from your necks and snap the chains that bind you.*

This verse has been variously translated, although all versions speak of essentially the same thing.

**YLT Nahum 1:13** *And now I break his rod from off thee, And thy bands I do draw away.*

**RSV Nahum 1:13** *And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds asunder."*

And there are a few other wordings in other Bible versions, but the core message remains intact.

The verse begins with “and now”, which is **ve’attah** in Hebrew. The sense of this word is to make a contrast with the past. What was, no longer is. Nahum continues with “I will break his yoke from off of you”. Yet, other Bible versions say rod, instead of yoke. The reason is rather simple; in Hebrew yoke is **motehu**, while rod is **mattehu**. That is, the spelling of those 2 words is the same. It is only which vowels are chosen to make it something that can be spoken that are different. There are decent arguments for either case. Rod probably gets my nod, because the rod speaks of an iron authority. That is, it is an authority that is unbending and unbreakable. Either way, it works because the Bible will speak of “breaking the yoke”, which means escaping political oppression. And, certainly, that is what happened for Israel.

This is an excellent example to highlight how Hebrew is a root-word language. That is, notice how both yoke and rod are spelled the same, and although their meaning is a little different, the two meanings are also related. Both have to do with authority and an imposed obligation. Interestingly, in the ancient Assyrian annals, King Sennacherib talks about his conquering of Judah by writing, “I laid waste to the large district of Judah and put the straps of my yoke upon Hezekiah, its king”.

**CJB Nahum 1:14** ***Yehoveh gave this order concerning you: you will have no descendants to bear your name; from the house of your god I will cut off carved image and cast metal image; I will prepare your grave, because you are worthless.***

Verse 14 has Nahum switching back to addressing Assyria, from addressing Judah in verse 13. The first question about this verse is, to whom, exactly, is this speaking? Is it meant to confront the King of Assyria or its god, Asshur? Or is it referring to the totality of Assyrian power being personified as though it was a single person? Essentially, the “you” that Yehoveh is addressing means the army, the people, and the King of Assyria as a single unit... as them having a unified corporate personality and accountability. This brings up a tough subject, but only because of certain attitudes in the West that have arisen in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. In modern times in the West, there is a viewpoint that seeks to separate the responsibility and accountability of a nation’s leaders, from that of their army, and from that of the nation’s civilian population. Yet,

that is not how God approaches it. While leaders are usually held more accountable than either their armies or their citizens, it is only a matter of proportion, and not a black and white matter of one or the other. God will judge the earth in 2 ways: corporately and individually. It is individually judged when it comes to salvation, personal obedience to Him, and our behavior. But corporately it is mostly based on a person's political affiliation. That is, your association, allegiance and membership to your nation.

Thus, while from a spiritual judgment standpoint, God's determination is person by person, from an earthly physical standpoint, God's determination is corporate. Your corporate affiliation with your chosen congregation, to your chosen political party, and to your nation as a whole. We see this throughout the Bible. We should not assume, for instance, that every last Assyrian was evil and barbarian in God's eyes. Nor should we assume that every last Israelite was wicked and unfaithful just because the nation as a whole was punished and exiled. Yet even the righteous suffered as collateral damage in a corporate national judgment. So, in matters of war, for instance, the entire nation... leaders, soldiers, and civilians are all lumped together to suffer a corporate outcome. God is not going to punish some Assyrians but not others for the acts of their nation. Partly because in such a judgment as is about to happen to Assyria, there is no reasonable way to protect a few but to allow the others to suffer.

In the ancient world there was no greater horror than to not have descendants. A man who married and found his wife barren would, with the fewest of exceptions, marry again (sometimes in the form of another legal wife, or perhaps in a pseudo-marriage with a concubine) for the entire purpose of that woman bearing him children (and hopefully sons) to carry on that bloodline. The Torah commands the levirate marriage system if a man dies before his wife can bear him a child (and often, before that deceased man's wife has given him a son) for the sole purpose to continue on that man's bloodline. This wasn't especially unique for ancient Hebrews.

Therefore, when next in verse 14 God says He is going to cause Assyrians to have no descendants to bear their name, the threat is chilling. Families will have no future. Certainly, this message is directed both to the King and to

everyone else in Assyria. Any hope of a dynasty, which is what every king hoped for, was erased. This is describing the completeness of the end of the Assyrians as a people group. But also, the end of the Assyrians as a malevolent earthly power. Their period of world domination is over.

The continuation, or the discontinuation, of name and seed mean approximately the same thing. Your name is representative of your identity and your attributes. Your seed are your offspring. Now, let's discuss something that was understood by the ancients, but is totally obscured in the modern era, and especially for modern Westerners. I'll show you this rather briefly so as not to get bogged down.

The ancient kings had obelisks, memorial stones, even entire buildings created so that their literal names could be chiseled upon them. Nearly always, mention of their god would be included as an essential part of their royal identity and so sacrifices would even be offered to those stones and obelisks and buildings. Thus, when a nation was conquered it was standard for that conquered nation's kings to have their names erased. Sometimes the new foreign king would replace the former name with his own, which of course included allegiance to whatever god that new king worshipped.

So, Yehoveh in name and in attributes takes over the nations He has conquered. Yehoveh would literally take the throne away from Assyria's gods. Here's where our understanding of the Mesopotamian base-60 math system as I explained in the Introduction to Nahum lesson comes into play. Assyria's gods not only had names, but they were also assigned numbers (because numbers and math were seen as cosmically significant to them). Marduk was 10, Ishtar was 15, Shamash was 20, Nanna 30, Ea 40, Enlil 50, and finally Anu was 60. 60 was the supreme number because that was the greatest fundamental number of the base-60 math system.

The 3 greatest gods, then, were those with the numbers 40, 50, and 60. This generates a musical ratio of 4:5:6, which has to do with cosmic vibrations that form an inaudible sound to which the Universe operates in rhythm. Of course this is mostly mythical, but it is how the Assyrians and most ancients of the Middle East understood the order of the world and the skies above. Clearly the

book of Nahum incorporates a similar structure, and this structure spoke to the people of his era... even though it has been mostly lost to us. Enough; let's move on.

The point is that the threats from God that we see from verse 14 meant much more to the people of yesteryear than to us, and those threats represent the worst of the worst. This would have made Israel deliriously happy and made Assyria fearful.

Knowing this, then, we can see how the next words of this passage are but extensions of the previous few words:

**CJB Nahum 1:14** *...from the house of your god I will cut off carved image and cast metal image;*

Kings and their gods were organically connected in those ancient days. The Bible connects Israel's kings with Yehoveh. Assyria connects their kings with their national god Asshur. And so on. When we see the words "house of your god" it means their god or gods' temples. And the pairing of the words graven image (*pesel* in Hebrew) with cast idol (*massekah* in Hebrew) is a kind of merism. That is, it is like saying "this, that, and every kind". So, it is all inclusive of every kind of idol and image representing their god or gods. The idea is to wipe out every memory of those gods; gods whom the Assyrians counted on. This is just another element of Assyria to be permanently deleted.

Finally, verse 14 (and chapter 1) ends with this:

**CJB Nahum 1:14** *...I will prepare your grave, because you are worthless.*

Whose grave is being prepared? It is not entirely clear. That said, the preponderance of evidence says that it must be the King of Assyria. When covenant treaties were made... especially among kings of the ancient world... a common curse included in them was that if one party or the other violated it, the issue of the violators grave became front and center. Not being buried properly, or having one's gravesite desecrated, was an enormous thing. Look

at the pains the Egyptian kings went through to have grand burial sites built (such as the Pyramids). The afterlife was incredibly important to them.

Thus, God implies that He'll determine their afterlife. God will determine their grave. And it sure won't be good for those who hate Him, His people, and His laws and commands. Let's move on to chapter 2.

### **READ NAHUM CHAPTER 2 all**

What we witnessed leading up to this second chapter is that evil will not reign forever. It will be confronted by God, and it will eventually not only be defeated, but fully wiped out. Evil comes in so many hideous forms that it is nearly possible to list them all. But God has a plan. And it is advancing and took an enormous step forward with the advent of Yeshua of Nazareth.

Sometimes, due to circumstances, getting free from our political circumstances... such as what the Iranians, North Koreans, and Cubans face... is nearly impossible and out of our hands. But to be spiritually free in the name of Yeshua can be had with but a sincere commitment made in privacy. And depending on your Bible version, we read of this good news either as the 15<sup>th</sup> verse of chapter 1, or the 1<sup>st</sup> verse of chapter 2. Since we use the Complete Jewish Bible to read from, then that good news is found to open this new chapter. No one is quite sure how it happened, or based upon what literary format, that some Bibles are one way and some are another. That said, it doesn't matter that much because the information is identical.

So, verse 1 speaks of Judah not only being rescued out from under the control and oppression of Assyria; but also, of having restoration and God's blessing bestowed upon them in marvelous ways. Verse 1 says:

***CJB Nahum 2:1 Look! On the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, proclaiming shalom. Keep your festivals, Y'hudah, fulfill your vows; for B'liya'al will never pass through you again; he has been completely destroyed.***

Our familiar Hebrew word *hinneh* opens this verse. It serves to open a new section, even to a new prophetic vision, and it also serves to say to listen up because there is an immediacy to what is about to be said that requires decision and action on your part. I want to draw your attention to the near exact words, but entirely same thought, we find in Isaiah.

**CJB Isaiah 52:7** *How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, proclaiming shalom, bringing good news of good things, announcing salvation and saying to Tziyon, "Your God is King!"*

While Isaiah is speaking about deliverance from Babylon, Nahum is speaking about deliverance from Assyria. Yet, because our God of patterns is as He is, then the way these deliverances happen, and what happens to their enemy tormentors, is the same.

The mountains spoken of by both Nahum and Isaiah are the hills that surround Jerusalem. The "feet of Him" who stands on those hills can only be, ultimately, none other than God. Yet, that depends on the era to which this statement applies (as it does with many prophecies). To avoid confusion, it is probably better to render what many Bible versions (like the CJB) says is "him who brings good news", to "him who brings good tidings." This isn't directly changing the subject from the Father to the Son, even though when looking to the past, we can see how both manifestations of God are in play, here, depending on which era of prophetic fulfillment in Redemption History is being addressed. Even so, in the earlier eras, much more literally this should read: "Behold! On the mountains are the feet of the sentinel who brings good news". The picture here is meant to be one of Holy War. Therefore, in a military context, and in Nahum's immediate and closely following era, which is what is intended, the person whose feet are standing on the mountains surrounding Jerusalem is a messenger running from the battle to announce the good news of Israel's deliverance from an enemy. We could just as easily say "the good news of Israel's salvation," because depending on the era, both the idea of deliverance and the idea of salvation apply.

This is because in the eras before Yeshua, the English term salvation would have been inappropriate because salvation is a matter of the heart and has to do with sins, and of He who supplies that forgiveness. Rather, prior to Yeshua, the interest was always in Israel being delivered from an enemy invading force. A long time later when this prophecy was again fulfilled, then the word salvation becomes more appropriate, because Yeshua died on the hills of Jerusalem to bring spiritual salvation of eternal souls to His people. And, from the perspective of our current era, the better word must once again revert to deliverance and not salvation upon Yeshua's future return, because Yeshua is coming back is meant to bring rescue and validation upon those who are His and His Father's, and wrath upon those who are not. His return, when Zechariah tells us that indeed His feet will stand on Jerusalem's mountains, is about delivering Israel from annihilation, and also Believers who have already been saved, from God's wrath. The reality is that the moment of Yeshua's return marks the end of when people can make a decision to trust in Him. Salvation is put on pause for those who were not already saved.

We'll wrap it up here and resume next time with chapter 2, verse 1.