

A Devotion...

**'The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.'**  
(Nahum 1:7 NIV)

**Three positive statements** used as encouragement for many Christian today when we experience various struggles, but these words contain more depth than simply a helpful platitude.

This scripture is rooted in the pain and rejection experienced both by the Lord God and His people.

**God was hurt...** The Israelites had rejected the creator God of their ancestors (as revealed through Adam, Noah and Abraham) and God had sadly accepted their choice after many attempts of calling them back to Him. It is not a loving relationship if one of the parties to that relationship is authoritarian and controlling. Here we are reminded that God's character is one of love. God withdrew his protection from them, leaving them to the ways of the world that they thought better.

**His people were hurt...** they thought they knew better where they took control into their own hands, for governance and culture, relying on their own strengths and resources. It was a slap in the face to God, effectively saying, 'we know you, but we are taking control of our destiny.' There were many little decisions of following the 'way of the world' resulting in their resources being insufficient. Their country was conquered and the people forced out with the brightest and best exiled to Babylon where they underwent training in Babylonian culture. They were refugees forced to make new homes and live under the taunts, racism even, of the conquering nation. Maybe you've heard the famous scripture turned into song? 'By the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept.' (Psalm 137:1 NIV)

### **For us today**

When we read the encouragement from Nahum, remember this is not a 'one-way' text speaking only about a hurting people, but also of a hurting God.

Know that in times of trouble, our Creator God knows and has experienced rejection, pain and trouble to a greater extent than we have, 'For God gave His one and only Son.' (John 3:16 NIV).

He knows what you are going through and desires for you to have close relationship with Him, making his resources available to you. So, submit fully to Him giving Him the right to reign in your heart and mind, and ask Him to strengthen you, encourage you and bring you through this. As biblical David said, 'Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.' (Psalm 23:4 NIV)

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amen