



# Links Players

## UNHAPPY SUBJECTS

*“All who see you will flee from you and say, ‘Nineveh is in ruins—who will mourn for her? Where can I find anyone to comfort you?’” (Nahum 3:7, NIV)*

**Y**OU DON’T READ NAHUM EVERY DAY. The “minor prophet” is tucked away at the end of the Old Testament, and his words were chiefly aimed at the unrighteous ancient city-state of Nineveh. Who can blame you for moving on to something more relevant?

But if there is one thing we should know about Scripture is that its ultimate author didn’t waste words. Nahum is in your Bible for a reason. Maybe it’s to scare the hell out of you.

Recently I heard the story of a pastor who was barked at by a golfer from across the driving range one day. “Hey Preacher, you still preaching about hell?” “Sure am,” the big-voiced man of God replied. “You still going there?” It’s one of those stories that’s funny—except that it isn’t.

Like the judgments of an Old Testament prophet, the idea of hell will make you sit up in your seat. Most people want nothing to do with it. This is the way of most bad news, you know. Who wants to consider what a novel virus might do to us all? Let’s just play the games!

Two things can cause us to avoid tough topics. The first is that we are flippant with our faith. This may fit the old saying that one is “too heavenly minded to be earthly good.” Holding to the hope of eternity doesn’t mean we should deny the realities of this life. Often, such behavior is irresponsible. To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, house the stranger, and visit the sick and imprisoned is, by implication, to recognize that these hard conditions exist around us. Denying them is to deny the love of God to those who need it from us.

The second reason people avoid unhappy subjects is that they have no faith. Without God, they see nothing good to hold up against the bad. So they avoid funerals, blur their vision with dependencies, and hope only to die painlessly.

Nahum’s words provided no such escape. Nineveh was to face severe judgment, just as Jesus warned we would if we didn’t own up to this reality: We can’t live without God and get away with it. “The LORD is good,” Nahum wrote—but not if we ignore him, for then we will face the “great power” of his wrath.

**Opening questions** What is one of your least favorite things to talk about? How do you typically respond to bad news in your world or the world at large?

**READING** Nahum 1:1-8; Luke 16:19-31; Jude 1:20-23

### The love and wrath of God (Nahum 1)

What stark contrasts do we see in the character of God in Nahum’s words? What responses to his full character should inhabit our relationship with him?

---

---

---

---

### The place of torment (Luke 16)

How does Jesus’ parable emphasize the seriousness with which we should consider hell? What would put us in the eternal place of Lazarus rather than the place of the rich man?

---

---

---

### Against the unholy tide (Jude 1)

Jude wrote of the ways of wicked men, then encouraged his readers to respond in faith. What were some of the ways of thinking and living he encouraged in them? How can these be a greater part of your life?

---

---

---