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Translation Notes (unfoldingWord)

Nahum - Introduction

General Introduction

Outline of the book of Nahum

1. Nahum introduces this book (1:1)
2. Yahweh will destroy his enemies (1:2–6)
3. Yahweh cares for his people and will destroy Nineveh (1:7–15)
4. Nahum describes how Nineveh will fall (2:1–3:19)

What is the book of Nahum about?

The book of Nahum contains prophecies about how Yahweh would judge and punish Nineveh.

Nineveh was the capital city of the Assyrian Empire. The Assyrian Empire was very powerful and cruel. It was conquering and absorbing the kingdoms all around it. The Assyrians had already conquered the northern kingdom of Israel. They were threatening the southern kingdom of Judah. The audience of the book is the people of Judah. This book was to encourage their faith in God and to give them confidence that the Assyrians would be defeated.

How should the title of this book be translated?

“The Book of Nahum” or just “Nahum” is the traditional title of this book. Translators may choose to call it “The Prophecies of Nahum.” (See: How to Translate Names)

Who wrote the book of Nahum?

The prophet Nahum spoke these prophecies, and either he or one of his disciples wrote them down. Nahum was a prophet from Elkosh, an unknown city, probably in Judah.

Nahum mentions the destruction of Thebes, a city in Egypt, as a past event, which happened about 663 B.C. He prophesied about the destruction of Nineveh, which happened in 612 B.C. Therefore,

the book of Nahum was written sometime between 663 and 612 B.C. (See: Prophet)

Translation Issues

Personification

In this prophecy, Yahweh often addresses the people of Judah and the people of Nineveh as simply “Judah” and “Nineveh,” using the names of the nation and city to represent the people. He also uses verbs in the singular that describe the nation or city doing things that people do, such as Judah wearing a yoke and shackles [1:13](#) or celebrating festivals and fulfilling vows [1:15](#). He describes Nineveh as a soldier who guards walls, watches a road, and strengthens his loins [2:1](#), and also as a prostitute whom Yahweh will strip naked and cover with filth [3:4–6](#), and as a drunkard who hides himself [3:11](#). If it is not clear that these things describe the people as a whole, you could explain this in a footnote or use one of the ideas in Personification.

Short, unconnected statements

In the descriptions of the battle for Nineveh, Nahum uses short statements that are not connected to the rest of the prophecy. For example, it is difficult to tell who “He” and “they” are in 2:5 or who is saying “Stop, stop” in 2:8. There is no explanation of who the statements of 2:10 apply to, “Empty and desolate and ruined! And the heart is melted, and a shaking of knees, and anguish {is} in all loins, and all of their faces gather beauty.” The statements of 3:1–3 are similar. The reason seems to be that Nahum is reproducing in his description the confusion and anguish and the overwhelming of the senses that occurs in battle. Try to reproduce this effect in your translation in a way that makes sense in your language.

Nahum - Chapter 1 Introduction

Structure and Formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers and songs. The ULT and many other English translations set the lines of the entire book (except for verse 1 of this chapter) farther to

the right on the page than regular text to show that they are poetic prophecy. (See: Prophet)

Despite being divided into three chapters, this book consists of one long prophecy.

Outline of chapter 1

5. Nahum introduces this book (1:1)
6. Yahweh will destroy his enemies (1:2–6)
7. Yahweh cares for his people and will destroy Nineveh (1:7–15)

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Yahweh's anger against Nineveh

This prophecy should be read in reference to the book of Jonah. That book described how the people of Nineveh, Assyria's capital city, repented when Jonah warned them that Yahweh was angry with them. The book of Nahum, written a little over one hundred years later than the book of Jonah, indicates that the Ninevites had returned to their evil ways and would soon be punished by God. Reading the two books together shows God's mercy and patience and also his anger and judgment for cruelty, evil, and sin.

Complete destruction

At the time of Nahum's prophecy, Assyria controlled almost the entire Near East. The Assyrians were terribly violent and cruel to the peoples that they conquered, including Israel. Because of this, Nahum prophesied that the Assyrians would be completely destroyed as a nation and as a people (1:14). This prophecy came true very suddenly in 612 B.C.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Direct Address

The audience for this book is the people of Judah. They are in danger of attack by the cruel and powerful nation of Assyria, represented in this book by its capital, Nineveh. This chapter begins by describing Yahweh's anger at his enemies and his love for his people. Then Yahweh begins to address Nineveh directly in verse 9 and continues to do so in various places throughout the book. The people of Nineveh are not part of the audience of this book, however. The address to Nineveh is intended to

show the people of Judah Yahweh's attitude toward the people of Nineveh and their evil actions. This direct address is also to let the people of Judah know that Yahweh will destroy Nineveh. Yahweh also addresses Judah directly in verses 12, 13, and 15.

Nahum 1:1 (#1)

"The burden of"

The author is speaking of a message as though it were a **burden**, that is, a heavy load to carry. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The pronouncement about]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 1:1 (#2)

"the Elkoshite"

An **Elkoshite** is someone from a place called Elkosh. If your readers would not be familiar with this place, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [who lived at Elkosh]

See: Translate Unknowns

Nahum 1:2 (#1)

"takes vengeance on his adversaries"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **vengeance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [avenges himself on his adversaries]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 1:2 (#2)

"Yahweh {is} a jealous and avenging God; Yahweh {is} an avenger and master of wrath"

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However,

if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is a jealous and avenging God; yes, Yahweh is an avenger and master of wrath]

See: Parallelism

Nahum 1:2 (#3)

"and master of wrath"

Here, **master of wrath** is an expression that means that Yahweh is extremely angry. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and wrathful beyond human ability] or [and is supremely angry]

See: Idiom

Nahum 1:2 (#4)

"Yahweh takes vengeance on his adversaries, and he maintains against his enemies"

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Yahweh takes vengeance on his adversaries, indeed, he maintains against his enemies]

See: Parallelism

Nahum 1:2 (#5)

"and he maintains against his enemies"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply **wrath** from earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your

language. Alternate translation: [and he maintains wrath against his enemies]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 1:3 (#1)

"is} long of nostrils"

Here, **long of nostrils** is an idiom that means "slow to become angry." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is patient] or [is slow to anger]

See: Idiom

Nahum 1:3 (#2)

"and great in power"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and very strong] or [and very mighty]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 1:3 (#3)

"and to acquit he will not acquit"

The author is repeating the verb **acquit** in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: [he will certainly not leave the guilty unpunished] or [he surely does not clear the guilty]

See: Reduplication

Nahum 1:4 (#1)

"He rebukes"

The author says that Yahweh **rebukes** the sea as if Yahweh were scolding the sea as one might scold a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He controls]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 1:4 (#2)

"Bashan withers"

Nahum assumes that his readers will understand that **Bashan** refers to a region with which they would be familiar, and more specifically, refers to the plant life growing there. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [The plants growing at Bashan wither]

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nahum 1:4 (#3)

"also Carmel"

Carmel is the name of a mountain with many plants. If your readers would not be familiar with this place, you could include an explanation. Alternate translation: [also the plants of Mount Carmel]

See: How to Translate Names

Nahum 1:4 (#4)

"also Carmel"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply "wither" from other parts of the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [the plants growing on Mount Carmel wither]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 1:5 (#1)

"and the hills melt"

The author is using extreme language of physical events to emphasize how powerful Yahweh is. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: [and the hills crumble]

See: Hyperbole

Nahum 1:5 (#2)

"the dwellers in it"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply **shake** from earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [the dwellers in it shake before his face]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 1:6 (#1)

"To the face of his indignation, who can stand? And who can arise against the burning of his nose"

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may choose to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **And** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [To the face of his indignation, who can stand? I say again, who can arise against the burning of his nose]

See: Parallelism

Nahum 1:6 (#2)

"To the face of"

Here, **To the face of** is an idiom that means "In the presence of." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In the presence of] or [Confronted with] or [Before]

See: Idiom

Nahum 1:6 (#3)

"against the burning of his nose"

Here, **the burning of his nose** is an idiom meaning that someone is angry. If this phrase does not have

that meaning in your language, use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [against his fierce anger]

See: Idiom

Nahum 1:6 (#4)

"To the face of his indignation" - "His wrath is poured out like fire"

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **indignation** and **wrath**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [When he is furious at someone ... When he is wrathful, it is as though fire pours out from him]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 1:6 (#5)

"To the face of his indignation, who can stand"

The author is using the question form to emphasize that no one can endure when Yahweh is angry. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [No one can endure when he is angry!]

See: Rhetorical Question

Nahum 1:6 (#6)

"And who can arise against the burning of his nose"

The author is using the question form to emphasize that no one can resist when Yahweh is angry. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [No one can resist his fierce anger!]

See: Rhetorical Question

Nahum 1:7 (#1)

"for a stronghold"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply "he is" from earlier

in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [for he is a stronghold]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 1:7 (#2)

"in a day of trouble"

The author is using the possessive form to describe a **day** that is characterized by **trouble**. If your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this as a time when trouble happens. Alternate translation: [in a time when there is trouble]

See: Possession

Nahum 1:7 (#3)

"those taking refuge in him"

The author is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **refuge**, that is, a safe place to hide. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who come to him for protection]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 1:8 (#1)

"to its place"

The pronoun **its** refers to Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the city's name here. Alternate translation: [to Nineveh's place]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:8 (#2)

"darkness will pursue his enemies"

Here, **darkness** represents all kinds of bad things, and Nahum speaks of it as if it were a person pursuing his enemies. It means that Yahweh will not allow his enemies to escape their punishment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his enemies will not escape their punishment]

See: Personification

Nahum 1:9 (#1)

"What are you plotting against Yahweh"

Nahum is using the question form to strongly communicate that it is useless to plot against Yahweh. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Whatever you are plotting against Yahweh, it does not matter]

See: Rhetorical Question

Nahum 1:9 (#2)

"are you plotting"

The pronoun **you** refers to the Ninevites. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the people's name here. Alternate translation: [are you Ninevites plotting]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:9 (#3)

"are you plotting"

Here, **you** is plural. It refers to the Ninevites, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

See: Forms of 'You' — Singular

Nahum 1:9 (#4)

"trouble"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trouble**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [troubling events]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 1:9 (#5)

"will not rise up"

The author is speaking of **trouble** as if it were a person who could **rise up**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will not happen] or [will not come upon you]

See: Personification

Nahum 1:10 (#1)

"like tangled thorn-bushes and like their drink being drunk, they are devoured"

The author is saying that the Ninevites are like tangled thorn bushes and dried stubble in a fire and like the drink in their own hands, because all of these things are quickly consumed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [as tangled thorn bushes are in a fire and as a drink is in the hands of a Ninevite, they are quickly consumed]

See: Simile

Nahum 1:10 (#2)

"and like their drink" - "they are devoured"

The pronouns **their** and **they** refer to the Ninevites. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the people's name here. Alternate translation: [and the Ninevites' drink ... the Ninevites are devoured]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:10 (#3)

"they are devoured"

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who did the action, it is clear from the context that it was God. Alternate translation: [God will destroy them]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 1:11 (#1)

"From you"

The pronoun **you** refers to Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could add the city's

name here. Alternate translation: [From you, Nineveh]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:11 (#2)

"From you"

Here, **you** is singular. It refers to Nineveh, so use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

See: Forms of 'You' — Singular

Nahum 1:11 (#3)

"From you came out"

Nahum has been referring to Nineveh in the third person, but now he addresses the city directly in the second person. He does this even though he knows that the people of Nineveh cannot hear him. He does this in order to more powerfully express his prophecy against the people of Nineveh to his audience, the people of Judah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the transition here more clearly or add the name of the city. Alternate translation: [This is what I say to Nineveh: From you came out] or [From you, Nineveh, came out]

See: Apostrophe

Nahum 1:11 (#4)

"a plotter of evil" - "an advisor of wickedness"

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. The second clause emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the clauses or connect them with a word that shows that the second clause is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [a plotter of evil ... indeed, an advisor of wickedness]

See: Parallelism

Nahum 1:11 (#5)

"a plotter of evil" - "an advisor of wickedness"

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil** and **wickedness**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [an evil plotter ... a wicked advisor]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 1:12 (#1)

"they are full"

The pronoun **they** refers to the Ninevites. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the people's name here. Alternate translation: [the Ninevites are full]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:12 (#2)

"they are full"

The implication is that **they are full** in strength. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [they are at full strength]

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nahum 1:12 (#3)

"they have been sheared, and he has passed away"

The author uses the past tense here in order to refer to something that will certainly happen in the future. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you could use the future tense. Alternate translation: [they will be sheared, and he will pass away]

See: Irregular Use of Tenses

Nahum 1:12 (#4)

"they have been sheared"

The implication is that they are **sheared** like sheep. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [they have been sheared like sheep]

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nahum 1:12 (#5)**"they have been sheared"**

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who did the action, it is clear from the context that it was God. Alternate translation: [God has sheared them]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 1:12 (#6)**"and he has passed away"**

In this verse, the word **he** refers to the "plotter of evil" in verse 10. It is probable, however, that this person represents the many plotters of evil in Nineveh, and so **he** here refers to all of them as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: [and those plotters have passed away]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:12 (#7)**"Though I have afflicted you"**

The pronoun **you** refers to the people of Judah. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the nation's name here. Alternate translation: [Though I have afflicted you, Judah]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:13 (#1)**"his yoke"**

In this verse, the word **his** continues to refer to the "plotter of evil" in verse 10, who represents the many plotters of evil in Nineveh, and so, as in verse 12, **his** here refers to all of them as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a plural pronoun. Alternate translation: [their yoke]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:13 (#2)**"his yoke"**

The author is speaking of oppression as if it were a **yoke** that weighs down a work animal. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their control over you]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 1:13 (#3)**"from upon you, and your shackles"**

The pronouns **you** and **your** refer to the people of Judah. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the nation's name here. Alternate translation: [from upon you, Judah, and your shackles] or [off of you, people of Judah, and your shackles]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:13 (#4)**"and your shackles I will tear off"**

The author is speaking of oppression as if it were **shackles** that bind a prisoner. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I will relieve your oppression]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 1:14 (#1)**"concerning you"**

The pronoun **you** here refers to the people of Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the city's name here. Alternate translation: [concerning you, Nineveh] or [concerning you, people of Nineveh]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 1:14 (#2)**"One will not be sown from your name"**

Here, **sown from your name** is an idiom that means "descendants who will carry on your name." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation:

[There will not be descendants to carry on your name]

See: Idiom

Nahum 1:14 (#3)

"I will cut off"

The author is speaking of destroying something as if it were **cut off**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will eliminate]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 1:15 (#1)

"Behold"

The author is using the term **Behold** to: (1) tell his readers to actually look toward the mountains, from which a messenger will come. (2) focus his readers' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen] or [See]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 1:15 (#2)

"the feet of a herald"

Here, **feet** represents the action that the herald does with his feet, that is, he is coming. Alternate translation: [a herald is coming]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 1:15 (#3)

"Celebrate your celebrations"

Here, **Celebrate your celebrations** is an emphatic construction that uses a verb and its object that come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of showing the emphasis.

See: Poetry

Nahum 1:15 (#4)

"O Judah"

Here, **Judah** represents the people who live in Judah. Alternate translation: [people of Judah]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 1:15 (#5)

"the wicked"

The word **wicked** represents evil people in general, not one particular person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a more natural expression. Alternate translation: [wicked people]

See: Generic Noun Phrases

Nahum 1:15 (#6)

"he is completely cut off"

The author is speaking of destroying someone as if they were **cut off**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he is completely eliminated]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 1:15 (#7)

"he is completely cut off"

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who did the action, it is clear from the context that it was God. Alternate translation: [God has completely eliminated him]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 1:15 (#8)

"he is completely cut off"

The pronoun **he** refers to the wicked. If you have decided to use a plural form for **wicked**, you could use a plural pronoun here, or repeat your form for **wicked**. Alternate translation: [they are

completely cut off] or [those wicked people are completely cut off]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum - Chapter 2 Introduction

Structure and Formatting

If you have decided to set the text of this book into short lines of poetry, you will want to continue to do so in this chapter.

Despite being divided into three chapters, this book contains one long prophecy.

Outline of chapter 2

8. Description of the battle that destroys Nineveh (2:1–10)
9. Comparison of Nineveh to a lion's den (2:11–13)

Translation Issues

Past and present for future

In this chapter, Nahum describes a battle for Nineveh in which the city is destroyed. He describes the battle and the resulting devastation of the city as though he is watching it happen, probably because God showed it to him in a vision (1:1). However, the actual battle and destruction did not happen until many years after Nahum spoke this prophecy. If it would be helpful in your translation, you could explain this in a footnote, or you could change the verbs to future so that your readers will know that Nahum was predicting something that would happen later; it was not happening at that time.

Extended metaphor

There is an extended metaphor in 2:11–13. In this metaphor, Yahweh compares Nineveh to a lion's den and its inhabitants to lions who kill and devour their enemies. If this is unclear for your readers, you may want to provide an explanation in a footnote. (See: extended metaphor).

Nahum 2:1 (#1)

"A scatterer has come up against your face"

Nahum turns from addressing Judah to addressing Nineveh. He does this even though he knows that the people of Nineveh cannot hear him. His purpose is to more powerfully express his prophecy against the people of Nineveh to his audience, the people of Judah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the transition here more clearly or add the name of the city. Alternate translation: [To Nineveh, I say: A scatterer has come up against your face] or [A scatterer has come up against your face, Nineveh]

See: Apostrophe

Nahum 2:1 (#2)

"has come up"

The author uses the past tense here in order to refer to something that will certainly happen in the future. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you could use the future tense. Alternate translation: [will come up]

See: Irregular Use of Tenses

Nahum 2:1 (#3)

"your face"

The pronoun **your** refers to the Ninevites. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the people's name here. Alternate translation: [your face, Ninevites]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 2:1 (#4)

"your face"

Here, **face** represents the whole person. Alternate translation: [you]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 2:1 (#5)

"greatly fortify {your} power"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [make yourself much more powerful]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 2:1 (#6)

"strengthen {your} loins"

Here, **strengthen {your} loins** is a common expression that means to prepare yourself to do something that is physically demanding, in this case, to fight. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [summon your strength] or [prepare yourself for battle]

See: Idiom

Nahum 2:2 (#1)

"has restored"

The author uses the past tense here in order to refer to something that will certainly happen in the future. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you could use the future tense. Alternate translation: [will restore]

See: Irregular Use of Tenses

Nahum 2:2 (#2)

"Yahweh has restored the majesty of Jacob, indeed, the majesty of Israel"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **majesty**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Yahweh has made Jacob great again; he has made Israel great as well]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 2:2 (#3)

"the plunderers plundered them"

Here, **plunderers plundered** is an emphatic construction that uses a verb and its object that come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of showing the emphasis.

See: Poetry

Nahum 2:3 (#1)

"his mighty men"

The pronoun **his** refers to Yahweh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [Yahweh's mighty men]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 2:3 (#2)

"are clothed in scarlet"

The author is leaving out a word that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply a word for the clothing if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [are clothed in scarlet uniforms]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:3 (#3)

"the chariot {flashes} with fire of"

In this verse, the word **chariot** is singular in form, but it refers to all of the chariots as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: [the chariots flash with fire of]

See: Collective Nouns

Nahum 2:3 (#4)

"flashes} with fire of metal"

The author is speaking of **metal** as if it were **fire** because of how it gleams in the sunlight. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [has metal that flashes like fire in the sunlight]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 2:3 (#5)

"and the cypresses"

Here, the word **cypresses** represents spears made from shafts of cypress wood. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the spears made with cypress shafts]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 2:4 (#1)

"race madly"

The implication is that the chariots are rushing wildly and without control. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [rush wildly and uncontrollably]

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nahum 2:4 (#2)

"like torches"

The author is saying that the chariots are like torches because they shine brightly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [bright, like blazing torches]

See: Simile

Nahum 2:4 (#3)

"they run like lightning"

The author is saying that the chariots are like lightning because they move with great speed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [they flash quickly from one place to another like lightning]

See: Simile

Nahum 2:5 (#1)

"He calls"

The pronoun **He** could refer to: (1) Yahweh or Yahweh's chosen commander, the "scatterer" from verse 1. Alternate translation: [The attacker calls] (2) The commander of Nineveh's army. Alternate translation: [Nineveh's commander calls]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 2:5 (#2)

"to her city wall"

The pronoun **her** refers to Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [to Nineveh's wall]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 2:5 (#3)

"The siege-shelter is prepared"

If your language does not use a passive form like **is prepared**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [They prepare the siege shelter]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 2:6 (#1)

"The gates of the rivers have been opened, and the palace has melted away"

The author uses the past tense here in order to refer to something that will certainly happen in the future. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you could use the future tense. Alternate translation: [The gates of the rivers will open, and the palace will melt away]

See: Irregular Use of Tenses

Nahum 2:6 (#2)

"The gates of the rivers"

This refers to the gates that controlled the flow and direction of the river.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nahum 2:6 (#3)

"have been opened"

If your language does not use a passive form like **have been opened**, you could express the idea in

active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [have opened] or [stand open]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 2:6 (#4)

"and the palace has melted away"

The author is speaking of **the palace** as if it could melt to express how the flood of water will destroy the palace. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the floodwaters have destroyed the palace]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 2:7 (#1)

"It is established"

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who did the action, it is clear from the context that it was God. Alternate translation: [God has established it]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 2:7 (#2)

"she is taken into exile"

If your language does not use a passive form like **she is taken**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [her enemies take her into exile]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 2:7 (#3)

"she is led away"

If your language does not use a passive form like **she is led away**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they lead her away]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 2:7 (#4)

"she is taken into exile; she is led away, and her female servants"

The pronouns **she** and **her** refer to Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [Nineveh is taken into exile; Nineveh is led away, and Nineveh's female servants]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 2:7 (#5)

"she is taken into exile; she is led away, and her female servants"

Nahum speaks of Nineveh as if the city were a woman who had female servants and who could be led away into exile. He also speaks of the female inhabitants of the city as if they served this woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the inhabitants of Nineveh are taken into exile; they are led away, and the women of Nineveh]

See: Personification

Nahum 2:7 (#6)

"their hearts"

Here, **hearts** represents chests. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their chests]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 2:7 (#7)

"beating on their hearts"

When people beat on their hearts or chests it was a symbolic action to show that they were sad. If this would not be clear to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [beating on their hearts in sadness]

See: Symbolic Action

Nahum 2:8 (#1)

"was} like a pool of water"

The author is saying that Nineveh was like a pool of water because it was calm and undisturbed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [was undisturbed, like a smooth pool of water]

See: Simile

Nahum 2:8 (#2)

"throughout her days"

Here, **her days** represents the time when Nineveh was a city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [during the time when Nineveh was a city]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 2:8 (#3)

"now they"

The pronoun **they** refers to the people of Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [now the people of Nineveh]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 2:8 (#4)

"Stop, stop"

The implication is that the officials are the ones calling out to the people. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [The officials call out, "Stop, stop"]

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nahum 2:9 (#1)

"Plunder silver, plunder gold, for there is no end to the supply; a wealth of all things of delight"

The implication is that these are the words of the attackers. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [The attackers say, "Plunder silver, plunder gold, for there is no end to the supply; a wealth of all things of delight"]

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nahum 2:9 (#2)

"for there is no end to the supply"

The author is using an exaggeration to emphasize how much wealth Nineveh had. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for there is an abundance available]

See: Hyperbole

Nahum 2:9 (#3)

"things of delight"

The author is using the possessive form to describe **things** that are characterized by **delight**. If your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could use an adjective. Alternate translation: [delightful things]

See: Possession

Nahum 2:10 (#1)

"Empty and desolate and ruined"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [Nineveh is empty and desolate and ruined]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:10 (#2)**"And the heart"**

In this verse, the word **heart** is singular in form, but it refers to each person's heart as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: [And everyone's heart]

See: Collective Nouns

Nahum 2:10 (#3)**"And the heart is melted"**

Nahum is speaking of a **heart** as if it could melt, using this expression to communicate how people have lost their courage. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The people experience a loss of courage]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 2:10 (#4)**"and anguish {is} in all loins"**

Here, **loins** represents the abdomen area where people feel strong emotions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everyone feels anguish inside them]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 2:10 (#5)**"gather beauty"**

Nahum is using the term **beauty** to mean paleness by association with the way pale skin was considered beautiful in that culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [become pale]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 2:11 (#1)

"Where {now} {is} the lions' den and that feeding place for the young lions, where the lion walked, the lioness there, the cubs of the lion, and nothing made {them} afraid"

The author is using the question form to emphasize that this place is gone. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [That lions' den, that feeding place for the young lions, where the lion walked, the lioness there, and the cubs of the lion, where nothing made them afraid—that place is gone!]

See: Rhetorical Question

Nahum 2:11 (#2)**"is} the lions' den"**

Here through verse 13 Nahum uses an extended metaphor in which he speaks of the people of Nineveh as though they were lions, and of their victims as though they were the lion's prey. See the discussion in the chapter introduction.

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Nahum 2:11 (#3)**"the lioness there"**

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words from earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [the lioness also walked there]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:11 (#4)**"the cubs of the lion"**

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words from earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [the cubs of the lion also walked there]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:12 (#1)

"tearing enough"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [tearing enough prey]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:12 (#2)

"and strangling"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and strangling victims]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:12 (#3)

"he filled his caves with prey, his dens with torn carcasses"

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. The second clause emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the clauses with a word that shows that the second clause is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [he filled his caves with prey, that is, his dens with torn carcasses]

See: Parallelism

Nahum 2:12 (#4)

"his dens"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words from earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [he filled his dens]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:13 (#1)

"Behold me, against you"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [Behold, I am against you]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:13 (#2)

"Behold me, against you"

Yahweh is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen carefully—I am against you]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 2:13 (#3)

"the declaration of"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [this is the declaration of]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 2:13 (#4)

"her chariot"

The pronoun **her** refers to the city of Nineveh. Since Yahweh is speaking directly to the city of Nineveh in the rest of the verse, it may be more natural in your language to continue using direct address here. Alternate translation: [your chariot]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 2:13 (#5)

"her chariot"

In this verse, the word **chariot** is singular in form, but it refers to all of the chariots as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: [her chariots] or [your chariots]

See: Collective Nouns

Nahum 2:13 (#6)

"the sword will devour"

Yahweh is speaking of **the sword** as if it could **devour** like an animal. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [soldiers will kill]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 2:13 (#7)

"I will cut off"

The phrase **I will cut off** is an expression that means that Yahweh will take it away. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: [I will take away]

See: Idiom

Nahum - Chapter 3 Introduction

Structure and Formatting

If you have decided to set the text of this book into short lines of poetry, you will want to continue to do so in this chapter.

Despite being divided into three chapters, the book contains one long prophecy.

Outline of chapter 3

10. Woe to Nineveh (3:1-3)
11. Nineveh the prostitute (3:4-7)
12. The example of Thebes (3:8-11)
13. The destruction of Nineveh is sure (3:12-19)

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

The Locusts in 3:15-17

Locust attacks occurred often in the ancient Near East. A locust is a kind of grasshopper that would come in countless numbers. There would be so many that they would darken the sky like a black cloud that blocked the sunlight. They often came after a long period of no rain. They came down on whatever crops were surviving in the fields and stripped them bare. The locusts could not be stopped, and they caused terrible damage. For this reason, locust invasions served as a powerful image of overwhelming military attacks in the Old Testament.

Translation Issue

There is an extended metaphor in 3:4-7. In this metaphor, Yahweh compares Nineveh to a prostitute who brings men under her control by charm and witchcraft. Both prostitution and witchcraft were associated with idol worship, and in the Bible, prostitution is used as a metaphor for idol worship. Just as a prostitute is not faithful to a husband, people who worship idols are not faithful to the only true God, the one who deserves worship. Nineveh was a very powerful and prosperous city, and thus, it was attractive to others to adopt Nineveh's ways and to worship Nineveh's gods. If this is unclear for your readers, you may want to provide an explanation in a footnote. (See: extended metaphor).

Nahum 3:1 (#1)

"to the city of bloodshed"

The phrase **the city of bloodshed** represents the murderous people in Nineveh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to the murderous people in Nineveh]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 3:1 (#2)

"All of it {is} lies"

Here, **lies** represents lying people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an

equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [It is full of lying people]

See: Metonymy

Nahum 3:2 (#1)

"a whip" - "a rattling wheel and a galloping horse and a bounding chariot"

In this verse, the words **whip**, **wheel**, **horse**, and **chariot** are singular in form, but each refers to multiple items as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: [whips ... rattling wheels and galloping horses and bounding chariots]

See: Collective Nouns

Nahum 3:3 (#1)

"A charging horseman and a flash of a sword and a gleam of a spear"

In this verse, the words **horseman**, **sword**, and **spear** are singular in form, but each refers to multiple items as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: [The charging horsemen and flashing swords and gleaming spears]

See: Collective Nouns

Nahum 3:3 (#2)

"A charging horseman and a flash of a sword and a gleam of a spear"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [There are charging horsemen and flashing swords and gleaming spears]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:3 (#3)

"There is no end to the dead bodies"

The author is using an exaggeration to emphasize how many bodies there are. If it would be helpful in

your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The dead bodies are endless] or [The dead bodies never stop]

See: Hyperbole

Nahum 3:3 (#4)

"they stumble over"

The pronoun **they** refers to the attackers. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [the attackers stumble over]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:3 (#5)

"their dead bodies"

The pronoun **their** refers to the Ninevites. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [the Ninevites' dead bodies]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:4 (#1)

"harlotries of the prostitute"

From here through verse 7, Nahum uses an extended metaphor in which he speaks of the people of Nineveh as though they were a prostitute who is also a witch. See the discussion in the chapter introduction.

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Nahum 3:4 (#2)

"From the many"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [This is happening from the many]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:4 (#3)

"and peoples"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words from earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and she sells peoples]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:5 (#1)

"Behold me, against you"

Yahweh is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. See how you translated this in [2:13](#). Alternate translation: [Listen carefully—I am against you]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:5 (#2)

"against you"

The pronoun **you** refers to Nineveh, which Yahweh has been describing as a prostitute. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [against you, Nineveh the prostitute]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:5 (#3)

"the declaration of"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [this is the declaration of]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:5 (#4)

"and the kingdoms your shame"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words from earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your

language. Alternate translation: [and I will show the kingdoms your shame]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:5 (#5)

"your shame"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how shameful you are]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 3:6 (#1)

"on you"

The pronoun **you** refers to Nineveh, which Yahweh described as a prostitute in [3:4](#). If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [on you, Nineveh the prostitute]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:6 (#2)

"I will throw filth on you"

The word translated as **filth** refers to all kinds of garbage. Throwing garbage on a person was a sign of strong contempt. Alternate translation: [I will show utter contempt for you]

See: Symbolic Action

Nahum 3:7 (#1)

"Nineveh is destroyed"

If your language does not use a passive form like **is destroyed**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Attackers have destroyed Nineveh]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 3:7 (#2)

"Nineveh is destroyed"

The author uses the past tense here in order to refer to something that will certainly happen in the future. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you could use the future tense. Alternate translation: [Nineveh will be destroyed]

See: Irregular Use of Tenses

Nahum 3:7 (#3)

"who will sympathize with her"

The author is using the question form to emphasize that no one will sympathize with Nineveh. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [no one will sympathize with her!]

See: Rhetorical Question

Nahum 3:7 (#4)

"From where can I find a comforter for you"

The author is using the question form to emphasize that no one will comfort Nineveh. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [I cannot find anyone to comfort you!]

See: Rhetorical Question

Nahum 3:8 (#1)

"Are you better than Thebes, situated on the Nile River, water all around her, whose defense {was} the sea, water her wall"

The author is using the question form to emphasize that Nineveh is not better than Thebes. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You are not better than Thebes, which was situated on the Nile River, with water all around her, whose defense was the sea, with water as her wall!]

See: Rhetorical Question

Nahum 3:8 (#2)

"than Thebes"

Thebes refers to the powerful capital city of ancient Egypt in North Africa. It was conquered by Assyria in 663 B.C. If your readers would not be familiar with this place, you could describe it in a footnote.

See: Translate Unknowns

Nahum 3:8 (#3)

"whose defense {was} the sea, water her wall"

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [whose defense was the sea, that is, water was her wall]

See: Parallelism

Nahum 3:8 (#4)

"water her wall"

The author is speaking of **water** as if it were a **wall** because it protected the city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [protected by water like a wall]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:8 (#5)

"water her wall"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [whose wall was water]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:9 (#1)**"were} her strength"**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [made her strong]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 3:9 (#2)**"and there was no end"**

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and there was no end to that strength]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:9 (#3)**"and there was no end"**

The author is using an exaggeration to emphasize how much strength Egypt and Cush provided to Thebes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and their strength seemed limitless]

See: Hyperbole

Nahum 3:9 (#4)**"Put"**

Put was a region in North Africa, probably bordering the Mediterranean Sea west of Egypt. If your readers would not be familiar with this place, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [the region of Put]

See: Translate Unknowns

Nahum 3:9 (#5)**"and Libya"**

Libya refers to a region in North Africa west of Egypt that contained several related kingdoms. If your readers would not be familiar with this place,

you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [and the kingdoms of Libya]

See: Translate Unknowns

Nahum 3:9 (#6)**"among your allies"**

The pronoun **your** refers to Thebes. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name or continue with a third-person pronoun. Alternate translation: [among Thebes' allies] or [among her allies]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:10 (#1)**"she as an exile"**

The pronoun **she** refers to the people of Thebes. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [Thebes as an exile] or [the people of Thebes as exiles]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:10 (#2)**"her great ones"**

The author is using the adjective **great** as a noun to mean important people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [her important people]

See: Nominal Adjectives

Nahum 3:10 (#3)**"her young children were dashed in pieces"**

If your language does not use a passive form like **were dashed in pieces**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [her enemies dashed her young children in pieces]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 3:10 (#4)**"at the head of every street"**

Here, **head of every street** is an idiom that means "every intersection of streets." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [at every intersection]

See: Idiom

Nahum 3:10 (#5)**"they cast"**

The pronoun **they** refers to the enemies of Thebes. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [the enemies of Thebes cast]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:10 (#6)**"and all her great ones were bound"**

If your language does not use a passive form like **were bound**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and her enemies bound all her great ones]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 3:11 (#1)**"You"**

The pronoun **You** refers to the people of the city of Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [You, Nineveh]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:11 (#2)**"will become drunk"**

The author is speaking of the people being **drunk** to express how they will stagger and be confused when their enemies attack them. If it would be

helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [stagger around in confusion]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:11 (#3)**"you will be hidden"**

If your language does not use a passive form like **be hidden**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you will hide yourself]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 3:12 (#1)**"All of your fortresses {are} fig trees with first fruits"**

The author is speaking of **fortresses** as if they were **fig trees with first fruits** because they will be easy to capture, just as ripe figs are easy to pick. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All of your fortresses will be as easy to capture as ripe figs are to pick]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:13 (#1)**"Behold"**

The author is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen carefully]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:13 (#2)**"your people"**

The pronoun **your** refers to Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [your people, Nineveh]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:13 (#3)**"are} women"**

The author is speaking of **people** as if they were **women** because women did not have the physical strength or training to be a soldier and so, would not be able to defend the city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are weak and unable to fight] or [are ineffective] or [are powerless]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:13 (#4)**"opening have been opened"**

Nahum is repeating forms of the verb **open** here in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: [have been opened wide]

See: Reduplication

Nahum 3:13 (#5)**"have been opened" - "has devoured"**

The author uses the past tense here in order to refer to something that will certainly happen in the future. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you could use the future tense. Alternate translation: [will be opened ... will devour]

See: Irregular Use of Tenses

Nahum 3:13 (#6)**"your bars"**

The implication is that these **bars** are the wooden beams that secure the gates. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the wooden beams that secure your gates]

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nahum 3:14 (#1)**"Draw siege water for yourself"**

The phrase **siege water** refers to water that is stored to last through a time when enemies surround a city, separating the people in the city from their normal source of water. If your readers would not be familiar with this concept, you could explain the idea. Alternate translation: [Draw water to store for when enemies surround the city]

See: Translate Unknowns

Nahum 3:14 (#2)**"for yourself"**

The pronoun **yourself** refers to Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use the name. Alternate translation: [for yourself, Nineveh]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:14 (#3)**"the brick mold"**

The phrase **brick mold** represents brick molds in general, not one particular mold. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a more natural expression. Alternate translation: [the brick molds]

See: Generic Noun Phrases

Nahum 3:15 (#1)**"Fire will devour you there"**

The pronoun **you** in this verse refers to Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could add the name. Alternate translation: [Fire will devour you there, Nineveh]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:15 (#2)**"will cut you off"**

The author is using the phrase **the sword will cut you off** to mean "the sword will end your life." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state

the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will end your life]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:15 (#3)

"as the creeping locust"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [as completely as the creeping locust devours plants]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:15 (#4)

"as the creeping locust"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [as the creeping locust multiplies itself]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:15 (#5)

"as the swarming locust"

The author is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [as the swarming locust multiplies itself]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:16 (#1)

"You have multiplied"

The pronoun **You** refers to Nineveh. If this is not clear for your readers, you could add the name. Alternate translation: [You, Nineveh, have multiplied]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:16 (#2)

"more than the stars of the heavens"

The author is using an extreme comparison to emphasize how many merchants Nineveh has. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: [to a very great number]

See: Hyperbole

Nahum 3:16 (#3)

"a locust stripped and flew away"

The author is saying that the merchants will be like locusts because they will take everything valuable and leave, as locusts do, and they will do this suddenly, as locusts strip off their skin and fly away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [they will be like locusts that strip the land and themselves and then fly away]

See: Simile

Nahum 3:16 (#4)

"stripped"

Here, **stripped** seems to have a double meaning. It can refer to the locust stripping itself of its outer skin, which releases its wings so that it can fly, but it also can refer to stripping a land or city of its valuable things. If possible, use a term that could have either meaning.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nahum 3:17 (#1)

"Your guards {are} like the locust, and your generals, like a swarm of locusts"

The author is saying that the guards and generals are like locusts because they are unreliable and disloyal, just as locusts fly away when conditions change. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Your guards and generals are as unreliable and disloyal as locusts]

See: Simile

Nahum 3:17 (#2)

"Your guards {are} like the locust, and your generals, like a swarm of locusts"

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases as in the UST, or connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Your guards {are} like the locust, indeed, your generals, like a swarm of locusts]

See: Parallelism

Nahum 3:17 (#3)

"and your generals, like a swarm of locusts"

The author is leaving out a word that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply this word if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and your generals are like a swarm of locusts]

See: Ellipsis

Nahum 3:17 (#4)

"and it flies away" - "its place"

The pronouns **it** and **its** here refer to the locust swarm. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use plural forms to refer to the locusts. Alternate translation: [and they fly away and their place]

See: Pronouns — When to Use Them

Nahum 3:18 (#1)

"King of Assyria, your shepherds are asleep"

Nahum has been addressing the people of Nineveh, which is the capital city of the nation of Assyria, but now he addresses the king who rules in Nineveh. He does this even though he knows that the king

cannot hear him, in order to more powerfully express his prophecy against the people of Assyria and its leaders. If it would be helpful in your language, you could introduce this more clearly and put the rest of this address (through verse 19) in quote marks. Alternate translation: [This is what I would say to the king of Assyria: "Your shepherds are asleep"]

See: Apostrophe

Nahum 3:18 (#2)

"your shepherds are asleep; your nobles are lying down"

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [your shepherds are asleep; that is, your nobles are lying down]

See: Parallelism

Nahum 3:18 (#3)

"your shepherds"

The author is speaking of **shepherds** as if they were leaders because they guide and protect people as shepherds guide and protect sheep. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your leaders]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:18 (#4)

"are asleep" - "are lying down"

The author is referring to death in a polite way by using the phrases **asleep** and **lying down**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a more normal polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [have died ... are dead]

See: Euphemism

Nahum 3:18 (#5)**"Your people are scattered"**

If your language does not use a passive form like **are scattered**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Enemies have scattered your people]

See: Active or Passive

Nahum 3:19 (#1)**"There is no relief for your destruction"**

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **relief** and **destruction**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [No one can help you when you are destroyed]

See: Abstract Nouns

Nahum 3:19 (#2)**"Your wound is severe"**

The author is speaking of Nineveh as though it were a person with a deadly **wound**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The end of your kingdom is very soon]

See: Metaphor

Nahum 3:19 (#3)**"hearing the news of you"**

Here, **hearing the news** is an emphatic construction that uses a verb and its object, both of which come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of showing the emphasis.

See: Poetry

Nahum 3:19 (#4)**"will clap {their} hands"**

People clap their hands as a symbolic action to show that they are joyful. If this would not be clear to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [will clap their hands with joy]

See: Symbolic Action

Nahum 3:19 (#5)**"For upon whom has not come your endless evil"**

The author is using the question form to emphasize that Nineveh has done evil to everyone. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [For you have done endless evil to everyone!]

See: Rhetorical Question

Nahum 3:19 (#6)**"your endless evil"**

Nahum is using an exaggeration to emphasize how much evil Nineveh and her king did to people of other nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your great abundance of evil deeds]

See: Hyperbole