

Nahum 1:1-8
A Hymn to the Divine Warrior
September 2, 2007

I. The Prophetic Office or Institution (Deut. 18:15-22)

A. Notice context – three primary institutions in Israel

1. Priesthood and monarchy – formal institution, formal structure
2. Prophet – formal institution, informal structure

B. Necessary institution – response to Deut. 18:9-14

1. the law and the prophets
Ezra 6:14 ¹⁴ *And the elders of the Jews built and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. They finished their building by decree of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia;*
2. E. J. Young: “The Mosaic law and institutions . . . were not sufficient to enable the nation to meet the new conditions which would appear when it was settled in Canaan. Consequently, the Lord announced His purpose of raising up the prophets in order that the nation might hearken to them, and might thus be guided by the Word of God rather than by superstitious abominations.”¹

C. The Role of the Prophet

1. receive the Word of God (seer – I Sam. 9:9; Isa. 30:9-10; Amos 7:12)
2. speak the Word of God (spokesman – Ex. 7:1)
3. whose authority? God’s authority (v. 19)
4. often predictive prophecy (vv. 20-22)

II. The Prophecy of Nahum

A. Nahum = comforting, full of comfort

B. Written prophecy

1. prophetic oracle concerning Ninevah
2. book of the vision of Nahum

C. Date of this prophecy concerning Ninevah

1. Jonah’s prophecy – during a time of relative weakness (800-750 B.C.)
2. Nahum’s prophecy – during a time of relative strength (see 1:12)
 - a. after the fall of Thebes – 664 B. C.
 - b. before the fall of Ninevah – 612 B. C.

III. A Hymn to the Divine Warrior

A. The Character of the Divine Warrior (vv. 2-3a)

1. Jonah 4:2-3 and Nahum 1:2-3
Exodus 34:6-7 ⁶ *The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."*

¹ Edward J. Young, *My Servants the Prophets* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1952), 38.

2. Jealous God – word play with Elkosh
3. Avenging God – word play with Nahum
4. Long suffering God (literally long nosed)
5. Just God
6. Jonah and Nahum together → clear picture of God

B. The Judgment of the Divine Warrior

1. rides on the clouds – “like” Baal
2. he controls the whole earth – striking imagery
 - a. Red Sea and Jordan River; Elijah’s drought
 - b. Fertility → desolation
 - c. Images of Sinai
3. Rhetorical questions → none can stand before His wrath

C. The Compassion of His Judgment (v. 7-8)

1. The Lord is –
 - a. Good – *For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations. (Ps. 100:5)*
 - b. a stronghold and refuge – *He who dwells in the shadow of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” (Ps. 91:1-2)*
2. The Lord is just – he will not clear the guilty (vv. 3, 8)
3. Why is his justice good and compassionate?
 - a. a message of judgment and justice to Ninevah
 - b. a message of comfort and compassion to those who trust in the Lord

IV. Application

A. The sin of presumption

1. the Lord is slow to anger and great in power
2. God’s kindness → repentance (see Acts 17:30-31)
Romans 2:4-5 ⁴*Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?* ⁵*But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.*
3. Jonah needs Nahum

B. Christ, our Divine Warrior

1. His triumph over rulers and authorities (Col. 2:13-15)
2. His reign over all things to the church (Eph. 1:19-23; already . . .)
3. His triumph consummated (. . . not yet)
Romans 16:20 ²⁰*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*
4. His battle, our battle
Ephesians 6:12 ¹²*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers*

over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.