

Nahum 2:11-3:7
The Taunting of Nineveh Begins
October 7, 2007

I. Sanctified Sarcasm

A. Seven taunts → completeness of destruction

B. What is sanctified sarcasm?

1. inspired sarcasm – Holy Spirit
2. city of man – proud in rebellion
3. especially temptation, sin, death, Satan
4. what about human people or nations who exhibit these traits?

II. Lion Taunt (2:11-13)

A. Assyria – the lion’s den (v. 11)

1. sanctuary for conquering kings, proud queens, noble offspring
2. the lion in Assyria
 - a. art and images
 - b. annals of the kings – “lion brave”, “like a lion I raged”
 - c. actions of Nineveh
3. the inhumanity of Nineveh (v. 12)
 - a. strong and powerful – provision for people
 - b. savage and violent
 - c. greed – filled his caves and dens

B. Nineveh – cut off in her strength (v. 13; see 2:9)

1. lion’s den = image of power and strength
2. the LORD of hosts against the lion
 - a. military defeated
 - b. metaphorical lion defeated – no descendants, no prey
 - c. messenger defeated → 1:15

III. Woe Against Nineveh

A. The powerful excesses of Nineveh (v. 1)

1. the bloody city
2. greedy excess
 - a. the whole thing a lie
 - b. incessant plunder
 - c. no end to the prey

B. Destruction of Nineveh (vv. 2-3)

1. sight and sound of battle (v. 2)
2. conflict of battle (v. 3a)
3. result of battle – no where to walk (v. 3b)

C. Why such detail necessary

1. the threat of Assyria
Calvin: “All these things were intended for the purpose of fully convincing the Israelites that Nineveh, however much it was supplied with wealth and power, was yet approaching its ruin, for its enemies would prevail against it.” (482)

Robertson: “But doubting saints need only turn their enlivened imaginations to the description of Nahum and apply them to their own struggles with Satan’s forces.” (106)

2. judgment of God against the city of man

IV. Sorceress-Harlot Taunt

A. The image of the harlot

1. ancient cities – described as female, mistresses of gods
2. positive Scriptural imagery – city of God and bride of Christ
3. negative Scriptural imagery – prostitute or harlot
Revelation 17:5 ⁵ *And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations."*
4. Nineveh = sorcerer and harlot
 - a. seduction and temptation
 - b. spells and charms
 - c. her prey? nations and clans
 - d. reason for the harsh words
Calvin: “and as men so much flatter themselves, and are inebriated with their own delusions, it is necessary that those who are too self-indulgent and delicate should be roughly handled.” (484)

B. God’s Judgment on the Harlot of the Nations

1. the LORD of hosts against the Sorcerer-Harlot
2. exposes her shame (vv. 5-6); outward beauty → inward filth
3. the horror of her devastation (v. 7a)
4. no mourners, no comforters (v. 7b)

V. Application

A. Sanctified sarcasm

1. taunt the bully – Nineveh at her strength
2. taunt God’s enemies (carefully) – temptation, sin, death, Satan
3. what about human people or nations who exhibit these traits?

B. A Call to Nations and Cities

1. God defends the persecuted and oppressed
Psalm 72:1-4 *Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son! ² May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice! ³ Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness! ⁴ May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!*
2. warning to the nations (3:1) – against violence, deceit, greed, pride
3. rule of love – Augustine and the golden rule

C. A Call to the City of God

Augustine, *City of God*: “Two sorts of love have made two sorts of cities; the earthly love of self even to contempt of God; the heavenly love of God even to contempt of self. The one glorieth in itself, the other in the Lord.”