

Jealous

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Nahum 1:2

I. The Text Stated

A. Nahum

1. Little is known about the life of Nahum.
 - a) His name occurs once in the Old Testament (in the superscription to his book), and once in the New Testament in Luke 3:25 in a genealogy.
 - b) The name means “consolation,” or “comforter.”
 - c) Nahum is not called a prophet but the book is classified as a burden, or translated, “oracle” מִשָּׁא and as a חֲזוֹן “vision,” which visions or oracles are like Habakkuk, Obadiah, Malachi, etc.
2. Nahum is called an Elkoshite, from Elkosh.
 - a) The location of the city of Elkosh is not known.
 - b) Some guess that that it is identified with tribe of Simeon somewhere in Judah.
3. The time of his oracle.
 - a) Nahum lived during the reign of the Assyrian Empire.
 - (1) *Nineveh was the capital.*
 - (2) *There are no specific dates are given in the book*
 - (3) *No king's names are mentioned*
 - (4) *There are clues that are given as to when Nahum preached.*
 - (a) *One was the sack of Thebes, the capital of Egypt by Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria in 663 B.C.*
 - (b) *The other was the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C.*
4. The content of Nahum
 - a) Chapter 1 begins with a hymn about the nature of God.
 - b) Chapters 2 and 3 are songs about the siege and fall of Nineveh.
5. The first two verses
 - a) Verse 1
 - (1) *“The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.” (Nah. 1:1).*
 - (2) *The vision was not something Nahum fabricated.*
 - (3) *It came to him in a vision.*
 - (a) *The message delivered was from God.*
 - b) Verse 2-3a
 - (1) *“God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked,” (Nah. 1:2-3).*
 - (2) *The verses demonstrate and praise God for being zealous, or jealous, for engagement against his enemies.*
 - (3) *There is a threefold repetition of his name here.*
 - (a) *This is not surprising.*
 - (b) *Not only is it by way of trinity in its explanation, that the Father, Son and Spirit are God, and Lord, and jealous, and take vengeance, and are furious against their adversaries, but also that the repetition is an emphasis.*

- (4) *He is a husband of fury.*
 (5) *After this, 1:3b–8 praise him for his judgments on them in the world.*
6. Nahum's preaching of a Jealous God
- a) As a covenantal God, Yahweh is proclaimed to be a jealous God.
 - b) The word "jealous" here (קנוא) occurs also in Joshua 24:19.
 - (1) *"And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins."* (Jos. 24:19).
 - c) אֵל (El) is used only here in Nahum in the Old Testament.
 - (1) *God is presented as a jealous God all through the Old Testament*
 - (a) *Num. 25:11; Deut. 6:15; Isa. 59:17; Ezek. 5:13; 38:18–19.*
 - (b) *Jealousy is a result of small-mindedness of the adversaries against God's character and covenant.*
 - (c) *God is covenantally bound to his church, and will protect his bride against all enemies who challenge his character.*
 - d) When jealousy is considered, wrath and righteousness also are part of considering this.
 - (1) *And in God's jealousy, he takes vengeance on his adversaries.*
 - (2) *God is a jealous God who pours out his wrath and brings vengeance and judgment and justice against all his enemies.*
 - (3) *He will certainly not clear the guilty being so righteous.*

II. The Doctrine of the Text

A. DOCTRINE: God is jealous and avenging on the wicked, provoked in his covenant against them.

1. God's jealousy is a necessary outflow from his righteousness.
 - a) God is jealous for his own glory, and he will not allow any rival to man's worship of him in the way he has prescribed.
 - (1) *God's jealousy is his sensitivity and zeal that he has for his own glory, where he is forced by necessity to be angry in wrath, and take vengeance on anyone who does not honor his being and character as he so prescribes.*
 - (2) *Jealousy is an affection or passion of the mind, what one understands and experiences as true, where there is a provoking against whatever hinders the enjoyment of what should be loved and desired.*
 - (a) *The cause is love; and the effect of this is revenge.*
 - (b) *Love to it, and revenge against, all those who oppose it.*
 - (c) *Jealousy is an affection which flows from love. Brinsley, J. (n.d.). The Saint's Joint Membership as One Body in Jesus Christ.*
 - (i) *This is as in a husband jealous for his wife's purity and honor.*
 - (ii) *God is often likened as the master of fury, the jealous husband, as in Nahum.*
 - b) Since God loves his holiness and righteousness, he sets down his commandments, his instructions, that he is jealous for any other worship other than what he prescribes because of its due course in honoring his character.

(1) *Exod. 20:4-6, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."*

(2) *Set in the distribution of the commandments.*

(3) *Set in the revelation of his character in the manner in which he is to be served.*

(4) *His covenant law to his covenant people demonstrate him as a covenant-keeping God, that all the stipulations and sanctions on his law are upheld in jealous for his character in worship.*

(5) *Jonathan Edwards said, "God's jealousy is exercised towards any of the children of men that give the honor of or respect to any other than that which is to be done to him alone." Edwards, J., et. al. (n.d.). *Vain Imagination in the Worship of God.**

e) "I am a jealous God," that is, "I cannot bear with it, that you should serve me in any other way than I have commanded you in my word because I love my attributes, I love myself so intensely, that any violation of it must be answered with wrath."

d) This is the means and exercise which God has, out of his word, commanded men to be completely occupied in is proper worship.

e) God promised a blessing if his people would use his instructions to glorify his attributes, to demonstrate his character in themselves and to the world.

f) He denounces a curse on them for not doing this in the way they should.

(1) *It is law.*

(2) *It is part of the covenant.*

(3) *Nahum is a great hammer to this in his verses.*

(4) *God is avenging on his character, jealous against all enemies of his covenant and people.*

(5) *If his law, a demonstration of his character, is neglected, God is necessarily going to avenge that.*

(6) *If his law, a demonstration of his character is changed, twisted, misused, God is avenging on that; furiously jealous against it.*

(7) *The believer's union with the one and only God (commandment 1) is for their happiness.*

(8) *Such a happiness is seen in the manner (commandment #2) that they worship and stand in the covenant.*

(9) *God is to be worshipped, and God is jealous of the manner of that worship.*

(a) *It is not merely in the corporate assembly.*

(b) *His character is not merely seen there.*

(c) *It is his presence always about the Christian, always about the covenanted believer to his nearness.*

(d) *How may they gain a true nearness to God?*

(e) *God is jealous in forbidding the manner of worship to be any other than what he has laid down.*

(i) *They are not to make images in the commandment, but it is much more than that, and annexed to God's jealousy of it.*

(10) *"I am the Lord thy God, I am a jealous God,"*

(a) *“God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked,” (Nah. 1:2-3).*

(b) *The wicked are those who do not uphold the righteous character of God, regardless of where they are at – in a church or not.*

(i) *Don’t set anything up in your heart other than me.*

(ii) *Don’t draw near to me except in the holiness that I have set down.*

(11) *You will not serve God as enemies, for God is jealous against them.*

(12) *There is no other means or manner of drawing near to God, to serve God at his pleasure, than the way he has commanded.*

(a) *To change it is to become an enemy.*

(b) *Those outside of the graciousness of the covenant God as the husband, are in fact enemies.*

(c) *And if the people that claim the covenant, break it by going in some other way, they break the bond of marriage they have with God, they do things other than what God has commanded, and so God says he is jealous about that.*

(i) *They are impinging on his truth, on his word, on his Son.*

g) God threatens those professing his covenant, (remember Nahum was preached to the people of God) where if people want to be enemies, if they want to use other means of worship to God than God has laid out, then comes judgment.

h) He will visit the iniquity to his enemies, who are wrong worshippers, and bless those who use his lawful means of worship.

(1) *He does not care who they are.*

(2) *He cares about his character, and how his character is both considered and extoled.*

(3) *What shall be said of Nadab and Abihu who offered strange fire in Leviticus 10, or Uzzah when he steadied the ark with his hand where the mud that the ark was to fall into was cleaner than he was in God’s sight?*

(a) *If people serve God without the understanding his commands, it is a breach of the covenant between God and those people, and he is very jealous against it.*

(4) *They cannot invent a means of their own to serve the Lord.*

(a) *He is a jealous God of his character, means, manner and time of worship.*

i) God is jealous of this because his law and instructions set down the duties that God as a husband requires of his covenanted people because they show them his nature.

(1) *It is a trial of love towards him.*

(a) *Do they love his nature or not?*

(2) *If people love God, then they will be very careful to use all the means by which the jealous God has laid out to worship him.*

(a) *“For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God,” (Deut. 4:24).*

(3) *He is also jealous for his people, necessarily, because his people are to remain protected for the purpose of his worship.*

(a) *Is this not what the Father seeks?*

(b) *He will also show this jealousy against all that despise his people, which is like despising him.*

- (4) *Nahum shows God's jealous fury against Nineveh, for the oppression of the people of God.*
- (5) *God is a vengeful God for his glory and majesty, necessarily, because he must have his worship; and when his worship is pushed out or pressed down, or changed, or exchanged, he must necessarily act.*
- (6) *For his own people he is impelled to take vengeance on their adversaries who suppress the truth, and his people.*
- (7) *All those opposed to God's true worship are his adversaries.*

2. God's jealousy is necessary because God is righteous and good.
- a) God is righteous in his character, that application of what which is good.
- b) God's "rightness," extends from his goodness.
- c) And all those who fail to worship him as he so desires, show that they in turn hate both his goodness and his righteousness by worshipping something different, or worshipping him wrongly; both which he is very jealous of.
- d) They dishonor his holy character, they dishonor his holy law through being disobedient and unrighteous themselves in an erroneous apprehension of him, or wrong application of what he requires of them.
- (1) *Would God at any time leave worship, or any service due to him or his Son, to sinful men?*
- (2) *The Regulative Principle guards against this.*
- e) He will not only come forth in vengeance for himself in this way, but as he did against Nineveh and the Assyrians who oppressed true worship by the oppression of God covenant people, but he will do so in fury.
- (1) *I only make mention of this here because we have already thought about God's righteousness at length before.*
- (2) *Fury in action is wrath.*
- (3) *Wrath is justice burning against sin.*
- (4) *Jealousy upholds this exercise and requires God to do good in accordance with his being.*
3. God is a jealous God for his own glory and majesty.
- a) Death, both physical and spiritual, is seen as a consequence of not upholding God's righteousness, holiness and protecting his majestic character.
- (1) *It's never about making people feel good in church, its about saving grace applied in such a manner that it makes worshippers who are as much jealous for God's character as God is.*
- (2) *God stipulates death as a result of not abiding in this.*
- (a) *Not only are men subject to death, but they are also subject to the terrors of an evil conscience because the death they received at God's hand is eternal death.*
- (b) *Revelation 14:11, "And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night."*
- (3) *Those opposed to God's character, law, worship, righteousness, holiness, etc., in hell, they will be settled under an everlasting destruction of the wrath of God on them for their rebellion and wickedness because God is a jealous God for his glory and is furious against them; infinitely and eternally so.*
- (a) *This is called "eternal punishment". Matthew 25:46 says, "And these will go away into everlasting punishment."*
- (b) *Mark 9:44 is graphic on this, "where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'"*

(c) *Eternal death, or eternal torment is the result of sin that is committed here on earth – both the sin Adam committed that is imputed to all men, and the sins that men do in their earthly life, and its direct relation to God's character.*

(d) *This is why God acts in justice against all the actions of every person, tried in the righteous judgment and light of his countenance which is described as “a consuming fire.”*

(i) *A consuming fire may be regarded, as Nahum said as furiosus and fiery jealousy.*

b) There is a great necessity of the penal sanction for sin.

(1) *It would impugn on the character of God if sin was never brought to justice if God is actually jealous for His own glory and majesty.*

(2) *He cannot allow sin to pass by without justice.*

(a) *Exodus 34:14, “for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”*

(i) *Jealous in this light is only used of God; and it is directly attached to his name, and anyone on which that name resides.*

(ii) *He tells the covenant people that his name, or one of his names, “is a jealous God.”*

(b) *So it may be defined as: that perfection of his nature by which he will not endure a rival in the honor and regard of his creatures as God, as it is attributed to him in essence, and joined to some prohibition of idolatry as giving divine worship to any other god but him.*

(c) *God cannot deny Himself, or His supreme majesty.*

(d) *2 Timothy 2:13, “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”*

(e) *It's the manifestation of the jealousy of God that is seen against sin.*

(f) *He must punish wickedness.*

(i) *The reason he must is because he is holy.*

(ii) *A holy God cannot be joined with a sinner without satisfaction made to His justice.*

(a) *2 Corinthians 6:14, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”*

(b) *In verse 17, whoever touches sin cannot commune with that which is holy.*

(i) *God cannot cultivate a loving and holy relationship with a sinner if that sinner continues as an unrepentant sinner.*

(g) *A holy God cannot look upon sin in this way.*

(h) *Habakkuk 1:13 says, “You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness.”*

(i) *It is not just that God hates sin, but a holy God hates sin and the sinner who is sinning because he has a holy jealousy for his being and essence.*

(j) *Deuteronomy 25:16, “For all who do such things, all who behave unrighteously, are an abomination to the LORD your God.”*

(k) *Psalms 5:4–6 is pretty clear, “For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You. The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity. You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; The LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.”*

(i) *That is why sinners shall not go unpunished; not the abstract idea of sin; sin is not sent to hell, sinners are sent there.*

c) A holy God cannot be like the sinner by not punishing sin.

(1) *God would be like pliable men who often glance over sin and further prove their injustice.*

(2) *Unless God punishes the sinner, he becomes like the sinner in denying himself.*

(3) *Instead, God must manifest his jealousy because he is holy, and he does so when he punishes the wicked.*

(4) *Leviticus 10:3, "And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.'"*

d) God's justice demands that sin is punished with death.

(1) *Romans 1:32, "who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them."*

(a) *For the wages of sin is death; death is earned, and what follows the pale rider of death is hell, which that which makes death terrible.*

(2) *It must be done for God to stay consistent with His character.*

(3) *A righteous judge would be seen as crooked and wicked if he suddenly allowed a murderer off though the murder was guilty; the world would be in an uproar to allow a guilty shooting murderer off the "hook just because."*

(a) *And yet people think they are going to get off the hook by merely dying, and standing before God as a "pretty good person" in their own eyes.*

(4) *God cannot allow men to continue to defy His character and break the law without punitive justice.*

(a) *He will be infinitely jealous for himself and exercise it in his actions.*

e) Side note: it should be noted that God does not delight in the death of the wicked.

(1) *He is not a sadist in this regard; comparatively speaking he does not like when the wicked go to their doom.*

(a) *A sadist is a twisted person who derives pleasure from inflicting pain or humiliation on others in the act itself.*

(2) *In one sense he does rejoice in the death of the wicked because it displays his justice, which in turn glorifies himself.*

(3) *God is always satisfied when his attributes are eternally glorified.*

(a) *Deuteronomy 28:63, "The LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you."*

(b) *Hosea 10:10, "When it is My desire, I will chasten them."*

(i) *The Hebrew here [awah] means "desire or will".*

(c) *But God does not act as a torturer for the sake of receiving some giddy pleasure like human sadists do, but his delight to do his will in whatever fashion his eternal decree may be set, is something that does give him pleasure because he is jealous for his glory.*

(d) *And he is always content in himself.*

(e) *All people should rejoice in justice, and God does so perfectly.*

(i) *He is jealous for it.*

f) The penal sanction of death is based upon the just nature of God in this light.

(1) *Everything associated with justice derives from God's nature.*

(2) *Eternal death is not simply an arbitrary sanction that God "came up with."*

(3) *It is a result of his jealousy for holiness.*

(4) The reason it is a just act to damn those who sin unrepentantly is that sin is infinite in relation to its attack upon God who is infinitely jealous of his holiness, so the punishment against covenant breakers is that such punishment must be infinite as well.

(a) It is committed against an infinite God, so sin must be of infinite duration to its exact proportion to the crime.

(b) That is why hell is hell for everyone there just in varying degrees to the crimes committed.

4. God's jealousy is furious in its operation.

a) Jealousy in fury is known as the wrath of God.

(1) And this is no trivial matter.

(2) Nahum speaks of it as something that has fury in it (verse 2, 6).

(a) The translation could be God as a "master of fury," a "husbandmen of fury."

(3) Scripture represents it as terrible in its coming against sin and sinners (Deut. 29:28; 2 Chron. 28:13; Isa. 13:9; Jer. 21:5; Zeph. 1:18; Zech. 7:12), and it is.

(4) Christ saw it in relation to unbelief, not worshipping God as God lays out in his word, "but the wrath of God abideth on him," (John 3:36).

(a) The unmitigated anger of an infinite God against sin in a righteous judgment... who can stand?

(5) We have already considered the wrath of God, so I merely note that here.

5. Consider, God is zealous for his glory and majesty, which is the same thing as jealous.

a) How does one join jealousy with being zealous?

(1) There are many examples of "zeal without knowledge."

(2) False zeal is seen in king Saul (1 Sam. 14:38ff), and Judas Iscariot, (John 12:4-6).

(3) There is a zeal for evil, (Isa. 5:18), and a zeal for good.

b) Zeal means being arduous in the work accomplished, as in the Hebrew word קִנְיָה (qinah), meaning to have jealousy.

c) It is joined with the idea of God's jealousy for his holiness.

(1) When God is jealous it is to be understood as a metaphor; as is the other emotional descriptions of him as we have studied.

(2) God is always content (holy and happy), unchangeably so.

(3) But he desires his people to understand that in relationship to holy action in worship of his attributes and essence, such an action of worship and understanding must be constant, and zealous.

(4) God is in constant zeal, remaining consistent with his nature at all times.

(5) He is fiercely protective of his nature, his rights over creation and all that he possesses, especially in relation to his covenant work, and so must the covenanted people of God.

d) Why is God jealous and zealous for his glory?

(1) In his perfection, he desires to see himself imitated perfectly by his covenant people.

(2) A perfect God desires to see and enjoy that which is perfect.

(a) He desires that they enjoy that which is perfect.

(3) God sees this in himself and desires his people to see this as well.

(4) But because human beings are fallen, all they do in relation to drawing near to this perfect God is polluted by sin.

(a) Christ says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48).

(b) This is impossible on their own.

(c) *And so what is the consequence of them try to do it on their own?*
 (d) *God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.*

(i) *These are not zealous for God.*

(ii) *These are not zealous for his character.*

(e) *This is covenantally seen as upheld perfectly in the zeal of Jesus Christ.*

B. The Zeal and Jealousy of Jesus Christ

1. There is no better instance of holy zeal found in all of Scripture than that of Jesus Christ.

a) The atonement of Christ is the greatest illustration of God's jealousy for his glory.

b) It may even be called a virtuous anger.

(1) *To be moved with indignation for the character of God, when his glory is hidden, or his name dishonored, his ordinances profaned, his sanctuary polluted, his people vilified is a virtuous anger; jealous, zeal.*

(2) *Holy anger, moves to the idea of zeal in this way.*

2. Zeal about Christ is mentioned in Psalm 69:9, "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," where Christ was all consumed for the purity of God's worship, (John 2:17).

a) Which is merely an extension of saying that Christ was and is very zealous and jealous of God's character; of his character.

b) Angered by sin for the hardness of heart of the people there who did not worship him as was required.

c) This is the case of most people in most churches today.

(1) *They do not care about God.*

(2) *They do not care about Christ.*

(3) *They do not care about the Spirit.*

(4) *They do not care about worshipping the triune God as revealed.*

(5) *They do not care about his worship.*

(6) *They do not, in essence, care about their own soul.*

3. The idea of Christ's zeal also attaches to it the connotation of excitement of mind, and fervor of spirit.

a) The word in John 2:17, ζήλος, (zaylos), of Christ being zealous for God's house, also holds in it the fierceness of a holy indignation, and a desire to see a corrective demonstration accomplished.

b) Christ had an unmitigated zeal for the truth of the word and a desire to see God's true worship followed to the letter with the Spirit.

(1) *Isaiah 59:17 speaks of Christ being, "clad with zeal as a cloke."*

(2) *Even from a young age Christ must be, "about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49).*

c) His ministry was characterized by zealous work for the kingdom, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people," (Matt. 4:23, 9:35; Mark 3:20-21, 6:6; Acts 10:38).

d) He said of his covenant obligations to the Father, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent," (Luke 4:43, cf. Mark 1:38; Luke 8:1, 9:51; John 4:32-34, 9:4).

e) He was intimately aware of his mission to come and die for the sins of his people, in which he remained zealous, (Luke 12:50; Luke 13:32-33; John 2:17; Rom. 15:3), offering the kingdom of God through repentance which was merely at grasping distance by faith in the Messiah.

f) The theme of zeal is closely connected with all of Christ's covenant-obligated work on behalf of God's glory, and for his elect people.

(1) *It is highly covenantal in this way.*

g) Christ shows that he is zealous that God is not to be served in vain.

(1) *Obedience to his commands will have blessings, and disobedience will earn cursing.*

(a) *The one serving God cannot serve himself, but must be a servant of God's word and Law.*

(2) *It is, then, by faith alone that pleasure can be brought to God since God requires all things to be done in accordance with regenerating faith in the work of Christ.*

(3) *Heb. 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."*

(4) *Such a true faith is rooted in the word and promise of God in Christ, and a resting of the believer in all Christ's work.*

(a) *Rom. 10:17 explains, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."*

(b) *If no promise had been made to man, man would have lived without hope, and a lack of hope is a characteristic of the fall.*

(i) *Eph. 2:12 says, "That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."*

(5) *God's word to Cain was quite poignant in Gen. 4:7, "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."*

(6) *Jesus knew that true happiness is obtained only by being zealous for God's character as it is applied to everything in obedience.*

(a) *1 Timothy 1:5 says, "Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith..."*

(7) *And Christ is very jealous of all this, very zealous indeed.*

(a) *He is zealous for the Christian to be zealous.*

(b) *He is jealous for his holy character, that they would be jealous for it as well.*

(8) *Such a true happiness is a memorial of the Christian's duty towards God.*

(a) *There is no attainment to the life of true happiness but by perfect obedience.*

(b) *This is impossible for men because of the fall.*

(c) *It is only possible through the zeal of the Christ.*

4. Christ's jealousy for God's character is set in the truth.

a) Christ is truthful in this.

(1) *"These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness," (verse 14).*

(2) *Whatever Christ teaches is by precept, promise, threatening, testimony, it is all infallibly to be believed and obeyed.*

b) He is keen to observe all that people do in regard of God's true character.

(1) *He exactly observes with churches in the world and with people in those churches, all those who are unreliable in being zealous and jealous for God's attributes.*

(a) *"I know your works, that you are neither hot nor cold, and I will spew you out of my mouth," (verses 15-16).*

c) He is the great Helper, who send another Comforter, to provide all that is necessary in spiritual provisions to uphold God's character, and to be zealous and jealous for God's attributes.

(1) *Will he give Christians all things?*

(2) *"If God be for us who can be against us?"*

(3) *Shall he not in his covenant work and merit be all sufficient in providing his people all things necessary to be zealous for God's character?*

(a) *Why then are most churches blind to this, why are they not zealous for him?*

(b) *Why do they mostly have a zeal, but not according to knowledge.*

(i) *They have it according to feeling.*

(ii) *What they feel, what they like, what they want, how close can we make the church like the world?*

d) Christ is the perfect pattern of zeal and jealousy for God's nature, right down even to his death.

(1) *Has he set down for his people an example, that they should walk therein?*

(a) *Should they not run after it?*

(b) *Why don't they as they ought?*

(2) *"The zeal of your house, (as was typified in David), has eaten me up," (Psalm 69:9; John 2:17).*

(a) *David was zealous.*

(b) *Christ was perfectly zealous.*

(3) *Should; not Christians desire to be like men after God's own heart and like their Lord?*

(4) *Is it not an evidence of their loyalty to God?*

(a) *"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked," (1 John 2:6).*

e) Is not God himself the pattern?

(1) *He should be imitated in all things who is zealous in all his work and relation to his character.*

(a) *To his own worship.*

(b) *To the covenantal administrations of his Son.*

(c) *To the wellbeing of his people.*

(d) *To the overthrow of all their enemies?*

III. The Text Applied

A. Provoking the Lord to Jealousy is very dangerous

1. 1 Cor. 10:22, "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?"

a) The God "we have to do with" is a jealous God; and it is foolish thing to dare him to do his worst against us in our disobedience.

b) If there is anything in our own life that we should look carefully to in regards to his character and our relationship with it, best be looked to quickly and efficiently.

c) We are the people of God.

d) We are the ones that make that open profession of following the Christ, and following the Father's desire for true worship.

e) Who do you think God will judge first on such matters of life and practice, and his worship?

(1) *The ignorant and unbelieving wicked?*

(2) *Or does judgment for God's jealousy begin at God's house?*

f) It is very true that God is provoked to a jealous fury by heathen nations and false worship.

(1) *He is very jealous by all those who do not know him as they ought.*

(2) *But God is so much more provoked by the sins of his people that have the light of the gospel, the enlightening of the Holy Spirit, that have the spiritual persuasion to know the truth and how that applies to this walk, and those that have the knowledge of the true God.*

(3) *When you are not jealous for God, when you are not zealous for Christ, when you do not care about his character and nature, it argues a lack of love to love what God loves.*

(a) *In this, even in a superficial level, it is an engagement to idolatry of some kind.*

B. Idolatry Provokes God

1. Idolatry provokes the Lord to jealousy in a very special manner because it lessens Christ's description.

a) It is giving honor to something that does not warrant it, or honoring God in a way of human invention.

(1) *Nathaniel Vincent said, "the bowing of the knee to images, as pagans and papists do, displeases the only true God."*

(2) *"Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?" (1 Corinthians 10:22).*

(3) *Idolatry might be very well defined as "daring God, or provoking him to do his worst,"*

(a) *Is this not what 1 Cor. 10 asks?*

(b) *Have we not studied this?*

(c) *"Do ye provoke the Lord to jealousy? are ye stronger than he?"*

(i) *Being bold, presumptuous, and disrespectful to God, daring him, audaciously, to do his worst.*

(ii) *This the church today is doing over and over again.*

b) Jeremiah reverses this on the church.

(1) *"Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?" (Jer. 7:19).*

(2) *Provoke to anger.*

(a) *Practically speaking, it would behoove every Christian to ask themselves if they and their church are "spiritual whores" in light of God's worship.*

(i) *Have they sinned against their husband?*

(b) *Have they suited and changed God's principles to their own tastes?*

(i) *Have they become the wayward wife in another's bed?*

(a) *"It must be regarded as a fixed principle that all modes of worship devised by man are detestable" (Institutes of the Christian Religion, I.XI.4).*

(b) *"Although Moses only speaks of idolatry, yet there is no doubt but that by synecdoche, as in all the rest of the Law, he condemns all fictitious services which men in their ingenuity have invented." (Commentary on Exodus 20:4).*

(c) *“When men allow themselves to worship God according to their own fancies, and attend not to His commands, they pervert true religion.” (Commentary on Jeremiah 7:31). Calvin.*

(c) *In such things, God is very jealous of his name, character, and worship; and in the end, he promises to enact judgment.*

(d) *The highest disgrace that you can do against the love you have of God and Christ, is to condemn and slight God’s nature, and to embrace something else far more base and ignoble.*

(e) *This is a great affront to God to do this.*

(i) *It provokes him in fury.*

(ii) *For in it you despise his love and his Christ.*

2. Objection – but how do we do this?

a) By sin of any kind.

b) You might say, but I thought we were talking about worship and God’s character being jealous?

(1) *All of it is.*

(2) *When you sin, you bring an affront to God and his Christ; for are you not a living sacrifice to God as his property?*

(3) *Sin of any kind is not upholding the character of God, it is all not being jealous for his name.*

(4) *And are you not to be living sacrifices holy and pleasing to God which is your spiritual duty in everything?*

(5) *The bible calls this a tempting God, which is found in every kind of striving against him, not just a formal worship of him in the congregation of the righteous.*

c) Sin against God is a rejection of God’s jealousy.

(1) *Where is ambitious Nimrod, or pigheaded Pharaoh, or conceited Belshazzar, or ruthless Herod, or merciless Nero, or the vain Trumps of the world in this?*

(a) *They reject God and make him jealous.*

(b) *They have zeal for themselves, and reject God’s Christ.*

(2) *If the church is judged first for not following God as they ought, what will happen to such fellows as these if they are not converted to Christ?*

3. God’s love and mercy

a) God being love and being pitiable to his people, should create a fear in us to never forget that God’s is a jealous God in all things surrounding his character and our lives.

b) His love and mercy should press us to consider what Christ has done in jealousy of God’s name and covenant.

c) Is there an unwillingness in you to displease God?

(1) *Hosea 3:5, “They shall fear the Lord and his goodness.”*

(a) *Goodness, righteousness, justice, jealousy, zeal.*

(b) *But what if we do not do this, and we sin?*

c. Mimicking a False Profession

1. Well there is no one that does not sin (and there is the excuse- the out); yet, the covenant between God and his people, who are visibly related to him, is illustrated in Scripture by a marriage contract.

a) Those who break it, God threatens, “And I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy,” (Ezek. 16:38), that is the professing believer.

(1) *Jealousy is the most fervent of all desires.*

- (2) *We have seen how it is an outworking of wrath, and even akin to a righteous anger.*
- (3) *You, as a professing Christian are to be jealous for God.*
- (4) *To be in and part of a church and not to be jealous for his character, for Christ's work, for God's word, for all things of grace, is to be a false professor.*
- (a) *But what did Nahum tell us about this?*
- (b) *"God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious;" (Nahum 1:2).*
- (c) *He does not like it when his covenanted people are not jealous for his name.*
- b) If you have a religious profession of faith, then you have to know that any wicked practices you do provoke God.
- (1) *You sin with the highest dishonor against God and Christ's covenant, because you know better.*
- (a) *You say, but "wait, wait, tell me about Christ, how his blood covers all my sin, how he makes me accepted before God, and how I can feel good about myself."*
- (b) *I don't have any of that for you in this.*
- (i) **Let me tell you why.**
- (2) *You sin against the religion you profess because God's name is attached to it.*
- (a) *You copy those who are false professors by acting like them when you reject God in this way.*
- (b) *God hates this.*
- (c) *Christ hates this.*
- (i) **He commands you otherwise.**
- (d) *It is, what Scripture calls, a mocking of God.*
- (i) **Mock - to treat with contempt.**
- (3) *What is it that you mock when you sin?*
- (a) *God and his character; Christ and his covenant.*
- (b) *You mock his sovereignty, misrepresent his holiness, mock his justice, misrepresent his Christ, mock his love, misrepresent the sacred death of the Mediator on the cross, and so many other things.*
- (c) *Did not the soldiers mock him who killed him and drove the nails in?*
- (i) **"And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him," (Mark 10:34).**
- (ii) **What is this, that Christians mimic a false profession of faith when they act in this way, a mocking of God?**
- (a) **They drive the nails in deeper each time.**
- (d) *How can you profess to know God, to own him as your God, and yet insult him by sin?*
- (e) *It is like what the soldiers did.*
- (i) **They put on him a purple robe and said, "Hail, Master!" and yet, spitting in his face at the same time!**
- (4) *What does Scripture say to this?*
- (a) *"Be not deceived, God is not mocked," (Gal. 6:7).*
- c) What a horrible misrepresentation of his holy name this is!
- (1) *Is this not idolatry?*
- (2) *Is not a life lived in that way really a lie?*
- (3) *Is it not, interestingly, to mimic a false professor?*
- (4) *And then, is it not to mimic a false professor's true father, who is the devil?*

(a) John Howe said, "It is a participation of the *diabolical* nature to be a habitual liar in such a case as this. For we know the devil is the father of lies." "My God, we know thee; but Israel hath cast off the thing that is good," (Hosea 8:2-3). John Howe, *The Works of John Howe*, 636.

(b) *If you are going to take God for your God, then do not halt between two opinions; yours or his.*

(c) "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. ... And the people answered him not a word." (1 Kings 18:21).

(5) *Didn't the foolish virgins claim God and say "Lord, Lord...?"*

(6) *Did not Christ say many will say to me on the that Day, the day of judgment, Lord, Lord?*

(a) *These people even made arguments about things they did ... preach ... prophesy ... many signs and wonders.*

d) Your profession must be grounded on Christ, and exemplify a holy jealousy for God's name in which you are set to do all things for the glory of his name because you can do them in the Spirit.

(1) *What makes your profession of jealousy for God different than a false profession?*

(2) *You have some measure of zeal for God's glory.*

(3) *You have some measure for outrage at all sin.*

(4) *You have some measure of fervent affection in God's service.*

(a) *In contrast, the desires of the false professor are dull, cold, and in favor of sin; which is idolatry.*

(5) *Your measure of jealousy is constant.*

(a) *Theirs is fleeting.*

(6) *Your measure is never idle and always working.*

(a) *Theirs is but talk.*

(7) *Your measure is stoked with spiritual truths standing on the promises of God.*

(a) *They only have an outward show, like they show up for church and sit in the pew.*

(8) *Yours contains a voluntary forsaking of sin.*

(a) *Theirs is done by way of speech, and forced.*

(9) *Yours is a daily combat.*

(a) *Theirs is seldom considered.*

(10) *Yours centers on bringing Christ to everything you do.*

(a) *Theirs rests on their own work, a zeal without knowledge.*

e) I give you one fine motive to be as jealous as God is bound up for our good.

(1) *This is a quote from Nathaniel Hardy, who is very thoughtful on this point in upholding God's character and attributes.*

(2) *"But if zeal [and jealousy] for God's glory will not induce us, yet love to ourselves should oblige us, since, as it is God's honor, so it is our comfort." Nathaniel Hardy, *A Commentary on 1 John*, 102.*

(3) *If you don't understand all this that you've heard about God's character, then be jealous for God selfishly, at the very least, knowing that you will gain some good from that because it is honorable to God, and that in turn, you will be comforted by that which honors him and his Christ because he will bless you for being jealous of his name.*

2. The next sermon will be the last in the attributes on the beauty of God, then after that, we will have one final conclusion to it all.