

*Enemies and Friends
of the State*

Ancient Prophecy in Context

edited by

CHRISTOPHER A. ROLLSTON

EISENBRAUNS
University Park, Pennsylvania

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Rollston, Chris A., editor.

Title: Enemies and friends of the state : ancient prophecy in context / edited by Christopher A. Rollston.

Description: University Park, Pennsylvania : Eisenbrauns, [2017] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2017042340 (print) | ISBN 9781575067643 (cloth : alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Bible. Old Testament—Criticism, interpretation, etc. | Prophecy—Political aspects. | Prophecy—Biblical teaching. | Prophets—Middle East—History.

Classification: LCC BS1198 .E54 2017 (print)

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2017042340>

Copyright © 2018 The Pennsylvania State University
All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.

Published by The Pennsylvania State University Press,
University Park, PA 16802-1003

Eisenbrauns is an imprint of The Pennsylvania State University Press.

The Pennsylvania State University Press is a member of the
Association of University Presses.

It is the policy of The Pennsylvania State University Press to use acid-free paper. Publications on uncoated stock satisfy the minimum requirements of the National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Material, ANSI Z39.48—1992.

Contents

Preface	viii
Abbreviations.	x

Part 1: Setting the Stage

Defining the State	3
ALEXANDER H. JOFFE	
The Politics of Voice: Reflections on Prophetic Speech as Voices from the Margins.	25
MIRIAM Y. PERKINS	

Part 2: The Ancient Near East

A Land without Prophets? Examining the Presumed Lack of Prophecy in Ancient Egypt	59
THOMAS SCHNEIDER	
A Royal Advisory Service: Prophecy and the State in Mesopotamia.	87
JONATHAN STÖKL	
Prophecy in Syria: Zakkur of Hamath and Lu ^c ash	115
HÉLÈNE SADER	
Prophecy in Transjordan: Balaam Son of Beor	135
JOEL S. BURNETT	

Part 3: Prophets in the Deuteronomistic History and the Chronicler

Prophets in the Early Monarchy	207
WILLIAM M. SCHNIEDEWIND	
Friends or Foes? Elijah and Other Prophets in the Deuteronomistic History	219
GARY N. KNOPPERS AND ERIC L. WELCH	

-
- Unnamed Prophets in the Deuteronomistic History 257
 JASON BEMBRY
- The Prophet Huldah and the Stuff of State 277
 FRANCESCA STAVRAKOPOULOU
- Prophets in the Chronicler: The Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles
 and Ezra–Nehemiah 297
 LESTER L. GRABBE

Part 4:

***Prophets in the Prophetic Books of the First Temple
 and Exilic Periods***

- Prophecy and the State in 8th-Century Israel:
 Amos and Hosea 313
 ROBERT R. WILSON
- Enemies and Friends of the State: First Isaiah and Micah 329
 J. J. M. ROBERTS
- Jeremiah as State-Enemy of Judah: Critical Moments
 in the Biblical Narratives about the “Weeping Prophet” 339
 CHRISTOPHER A. ROLLSTON
- Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah 359
 C. L. CROUCH
- Obadiah: Judah and Its Frenemy 385
 ALEJANDRO F. BOTTA AND MÓNICA I. REY
- The Prophet Ezekiel: State Priest, State Enemy 395
 STEPHEN L. COOK
- YHWH’s Cosmic Estate: Politics in Second Isaiah 411
 MARK W. HAMILTON

Part 5:

***Prophets and Patriots of the Second Temple Period
 and Early Postbiblical Period***

- Haggai and Zechariah: A Maximalist View of the Return
 in a Minimalist Social Context 433
 ERIC M. MEYERS
- Apocalyptic Resistance in the Visions of Daniel 449
 JOHN J. COLLINS

References to the Prophets in the Old Testament Apocrypha.	463
ROBERT J. OWENS	
Prophets, Kittim, and Divine Communication in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Condemning the Enemy Without, Fighting the Enemy Within	487
JAMES E. BOWLEY	
John the Baptizer: More Than a Prophet	513
JAMES D. TABOR	
Jesus of Nazareth: Prophet of Renewal and Resistance.	525
RICHARD A. HORSLEY	
Late First-Century Christian Apocalyptic: Revelation	545
JENNIFER KNUST	
Oracles on Accommodation versus Confrontation: The View from Josephus and the Rabbis	565
ANDREW D. GROSS	
Index of Authors	583
Index of Scripture	593



EISENBRAUNS

Offprint from:

*Enemies and Friends of the State: Ancient
Prophecy in Context*

© Copyright 2018 The Pennsylvania State
University. All rights reserved.

Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah

C. L. CROUCH

University of Nottingham

Introduction

The prophetic books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah are traditionally dated, as their contents seem to indicate, to the late 7th and early 6th centuries B.C.E. Only Zephaniah has the usual heading allocated to books in the prophetic corpus of the Hebrew Bible, identifying it as originating in the reign of King Josiah, but Nahum is entirely focused on Nineveh, which ceased to exist in 612, and Habakkuk is focused on what it calls the Chaldeans, or the Babylonians, who succeeded the Assyrians as the chief Near Eastern power in the late 7th century.

All three form part of the Minor Prophets, also known as the Book of the Twelve. Due both to recent research on the interconnectedness of these books and to longer-standing discussions regarding their contents and origins, most parts of each of these books have been suggested, at some stage or another, to derive from later redactional work. Space precludes us from undertaking any comprehensive discussion of the redactional strata of these texts; some specific issues will be dealt with as they arise.

Regardless of the detailed redactional debates over specific elements of these books, their explicit statements and implicit sentiments regarding their prophets' and the people's relationships to the state are expressed against the background of the late 7th and early 6th centuries. In the case of Zephaniah, the state in question is Judah, apparently in the context of a dying Assyrian empire; Nahum and Habakkuk are concerned with the imperial states of Assyria and Babylonia. In the present context, it is worth remarking on the absence of prophetic texts between these prophets, active in probably the late 7th and early 6th centuries, and the late 8th-century prophets, Isaiah of Jerusalem and Micah. Although both the major and the minor prophets address a wide range of issues, from cultic matters to social justice and beyond, it seems that affairs of state may have the most persuasive claim for being the *raison d'être* of prophetic activity. In the relative political calm of the 7th century's *pax Assyriaca*, Judah's prophets are also quiet. As Assyria

begins to collapse in the last third of the century, however, the need for powerful prophetic communication once more raises its head.

Context

The hegemony of Assyria's political grip over Mesopotamia and most of the Levant began to deteriorate about the time of the death of its last powerful king, Assurbanipal, in 627. Overextended and struggling to maintain control over the Egyptian and Babylonian reaches of the empire, Assyria retreated from the Levant, leaving it to an uncertain authority for much of the next two decades. The traditional interpretation has been that, in the absence of Assyria and prior to the arrival of the Babylonians, Judah and the other southern Levantine states enjoyed a period of independence. It is against this background that the apparent nationalism of Josianic expansion and reform—relevant particularly to the context of Zephaniah—has been generally understood. More recently, however, extra-biblical evidence has been interpreted to suggest a more-or-less peaceful transfer of power from Assyria to Egypt, as the Assyrian administrative and military presence withdrew from the region. The direct power and involvement of the Egyptians in inland Judah seems to have been relatively low, with the new imperial presence interested primarily in the commercial potential of the coastal port cities. Its power was sufficient, however, that upon the death of Josiah it could depose his chosen successor (Jehoahaz) and install its own puppet king (Jehoiachim) in Jerusalem.

The remaining years of Judah's existence were characterized by grave uncertainty over which rising power would ultimately come out victorious. The Egyptians and the Assyrians allied for some years in an attempt to fend off the rising Babylonian tide; even the fall of Nineveh in 612 does not appear to have decisively concluded the Assyrians' defeat, as three years later Egypt was still on campaign toward Mesopotamia. Ultimately, however, this alliance failed; Assyria fell to Babylonia and Egypt was left in control of the Levant.

This respite did not last long: Egypt and Babylonia continued their contest for control of Assyria's former territories. In 605, Nebuchadnezzar defeated Neco at Carchemish, provoking a shift of southern Levantine—including Judahite—allegiances to Babylonia. On-going skirmishes between Babylonia and Egypt, however, continually raised the question of the permanency of this arrangement, and in 601, Jehoiachim rebelled against his Babylonian masters. This prompted the Babylonians' first invasion of Judah in 598/597, the first fall of Jerusalem, and the deportation of a first group of exiles to Babylonia. The following decade is equally turbulent, and a second ill-advised rebellion by the Babylonians' own puppet king, Zedekiah, culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and a second round of deportations in 587/586.

These chaotic decades form the backdrop for the prophetic texts of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. Although parts of these books have almost certainly

been edited and revised by later editors, the Assyrian, Egyptian, and Babylonian imperial ambitions of this period, including ongoing uncertainty over the likely success of these ambitions, comprise the background against which these texts' statements regarding state power and state responsibilities are cast.

Nahum

Current research on the book of Nahum is characterized by a near-complete lack of agreement on all aspects of the book.¹ Some argue for its three chapters as a unified or a nearly-unified whole, while others contend that they comprise a more-or-less random collection of oracles united only by their common interests in Assyria and Nineveh.² Scholars have argued for the text(s)'s origins in the 7th century—shortly after the fall of Thebes in 663, in connection with the supposed revolt of Manasseh reported in Chronicles, or around the fall of Nineveh in 612—in the exilic period, and in the Persian period.³ Assertions of the text's hopelessly

1. For an introduction to the history of interpretation on Nahum, see D. L. Christensen, "The Book of Nahum: A History of Interpretation," in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts* (ed. J. W. Watts and P. R. House; JSOTSup 235; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 187–94.

2. Confining these particular references to commentaries in favor of significant redaction are, among others, L. Peritt, *Die Propheten Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja* (ATD 25,1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004); K. Seybold, *Nahum Habakuk Zephanja* (ZBK 24,2; Zurich: Theologische Verlag, 1991); J. M. O'Brien, "Nahum," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (ed. J. Barton and J. Muddiman; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); cf. A. C. Hagedorn, "Nahum—Ethnicity and Stereotypes: Anthropological Insights into Nahum's Literary History," in *Ancient Israel: The Old Testament in Its Social Context* (ed. P. F. Esler; London: SCM, 2005), 223–29. In favor of an essentially unified book, K. Spronk, *Nahum* (HCOT; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1997); M. H. Floyd, *Minor Prophets: Part 2* (FOTL 22; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000); D. L. Christensen, *Nahum: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 24F; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009).

3. Spronk (*Nahum*, 1) favors a date immediately after the defeat of Thebes; Floyd prefers the decade following the fall of Nineveh in 612, prior to the appearance of the Babylonians in the southern Levant, with this main text drawing on older prophetic material from around 701 (*Minor Prophets*, 19–20); Vuilleumier concludes that it is prior to 630 (C.-A. Keller and R. Vuilleumier, *Michée, Nahoum, Habacuc, Sophonie* [CAT; Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1971] 103). Seybold has a main collection of oracles originating sometime between 663 and 612, with salvation for Judah added sometime after 612 (probably after 587) and ch. 1 much later, in the postexilic period (*Nahum*, 11–12), and Peritt devises a similar schema (*Die Propheten*, 1–4). Christensen at one stage argued for a text originating around the time of Manasseh's supposed revolt (D. L. Christensen, "Acrostic of Nahum Reconsidered," *ZAW* 87 [1975] 27–29) but by the time of his 2009 commentary concluded that the historical prophet is entirely "lost" to the canonical redactor of the Book of the Twelve, effectively locating the text in the Persian period (*Nahum*, 54–57); O'Brien similarly shuns any attempt to identify a pre-redactional component of the text (J. M. O'Brien, *Nahum* [Readings; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009], 21–22; compare her application of film theory to contend that the vivacity of Nahum's language has little to do with its date, in J. M. O'Brien, "Violent Pictures, Violent Cultures? The 'Aesthetics of Violence' in Contemporary

corrupt state appear repeatedly, as do declarations that it is essentially well preserved.⁴ Some insist on the impossibility of interpreting the book without complete reference to the Book of the Twelve of which it forms a part; others dismiss this wider context as largely irrelevant or ignore it altogether.⁵

A major point of issue in most of these diverging opinions is the state and status of the theophanic “hymn” in Nah 1. Aside from this opening paean to YHWH, the book of Nahum is essentially one long oracle against Nineveh and the king of Assyria. Unsurprisingly, the unity of Nah 1 and Nah 2–3 has been questioned regularly, with the broad and cosmic language of the opening poetry deemed incompatible or inconsistent with the more specific focus on the particular military woes in chs. 2–3. Contributing to this discussion has been the particular literary construction of ch. 1: ever since Delitzsch suggested an alphabetic influence on 1:3–7, the chapter’s core (variably identified as 1:2–8 or 1:2–10) has attracted a significant proportion of Nahum scholarship.⁶ Because the acrostic identified by Delitzsch was neither complete nor entirely consistent, much subsequent energy and creativity was expended attempting to reconstruct a full alphabetic acrostic, a redactional and emendational enterprise largely responsible for continuing negative evaluations of the text’s relative degree of corruption.⁷

The major interpretive effect of the attention to 1:2–8 (etc.) as an acrostic or potentially acrostic poem has been the conclusion that, if all or part of this first chapter was indeed an acrostic, it is substantially unlike the rest of the book and ought therefore to be identified as a later addition. One of the earliest and most influential proponents of such a view was Gunkel, who, under the influence of the

Film and in Ancient Prophetic Texts,” in *Aesthetics of Violence in the Prophets* [ed. C. Franke and J. M. O’Brien; LHBOTS 517; London: T. & T. Clark, 2010], 112–30). The Maccabean period, once favored by Haupt, went out of possibility upon the discovery of a Nahum *peshet* at Qumran (P. Haupt, “Eine alttestamentliche Festliturgie für den Nikanortag,” *ZDMG* 61 [1907] 275–97). For an attempt at dating the book on an empirical basis, see R. E. Bee, “An Empirical Dating Procedure for Old Testament Prophecy,” *JSOT* 11 (1979) 23–35, the critique by B. Becking (“Bees’s Dating Formula and the Book of Nahum,” *JSOT* 18 [1980] 100–104), and Bee’s response (“Dating the Book of Nahum: A Response to the Article by Bob Becking,” *JSOT* 18 [1980] 104).

4. O’Brien declares the text “notoriously difficult” (“Nahum,” 599; note her response to this issue in *Nahum*, 25–26). Arguments in favor of an essentially uncorrupted text include those of Christensen, *Nahum*, 64–66 (on the basis of logoprosodic analysis) and Spronk, *Nahum*, 2–3, who traces the generally poor opinion of the book’s text to the attempts to reconstruct an acrostic in ch. 1.

5. For the former, see Christensen, *Nahum*, 54–57; O’Brien, *Nahum*, 21–22 and J. M. O’Brien, “Nahum–Habakkuk–Zephaniah: Reading the ‘Former Prophets’ in the Persian Period,” *Int* 61 (2007) 168–83; J. Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve* (BZAW 217; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993), 37–40 and Nogalski, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve* (BZAW 218; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993), 93–128; in forceful contrast, see Peritt, *Die Propheten*, xiv–xv.

6. F. Delitzsch, *Biblischer Commentar über die Psalmen* (Leipzig: Dörflein & Franke, 1867), 107.

7. For a recent history of research on this chapter see T. Renz, “A Perfectly Broken Acrostic in Nahum 1?” *JHS* 9 (2009) 4–9.

Urzeit-Endzeit cosmological-eschatological system, according to which he understood much of Israelite religion, theology, and practice, argued that the material in Nah 1 had been added to oracles against Nineveh in the postexilic period in order to cast Nineveh and its defeat in the context of a future eschatological end-time.⁸ Many scholars subsequently followed his conclusion that the original Nahum, if such could be identified, was restricted to Nah 2–3. The assertion that the material in Nah 1 is a late addition to the book remains common.⁹

Current research on Nah 1 has drawn this into question. Most scholars have now abandoned earlier radical attempts to reconstruct a full acrostic, conceding that, if an acrostic did exist, it extended no further than *kaf* at the most; others have gone even further, denying that the text originally contained an acrostic at all.¹⁰ More common are suggestions that the author of (this part, at least, of) Nahum was using a preexisting poetic text for his own purposes and/or was not concerned about preserving a perfectly acrostic aspect of the text.¹¹ Perhaps most significant, however, are arguments to the effect that these verses do not form some foreign appendage to the book of Nahum but are intimately linked to it. Two particular cases are of note. First is the suggestion by Renz that the acrostic elements of 1:3–7 are neither accidental nor adopted from some preexisting text but ignored in the current one, but rather that its brokenness is a deliberate means of articulating and emphasizing YHWH's role in the creation and destruction of order in the world.¹²

8. H. Gunkel, "Nahum 1," ZAW 11 (1893) 223–44, cf. H. Gunkel, *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12* (trans. K. W. Whitney Jr.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006) 314–15 n. 244.

9. E.g., Seybold, *Nahum*, 11–12; Peritt, *Die Propheten*, 1–4; B. Renaud, "La composition du livre de Nahum: une proposition," ZAW 99 (1987) 198–219; J. Nogalski, "The Redactional Shaping of Nahum 1 for the Book of the Twelve," in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings* (ed. P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines; JSOTSup 144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 193–202; Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 37–40; Nogalski, *Redactional Processes*, 115–17, 127–28. With regard to the latter's arguments, see, however, B. M. Zapff, "Die Volkerperspektive des Michabuches als 'Systematisierung' der divergierenden Sicht der Volker in den Buchern Joel, Jona und Nahum: Überlegungen zu einer buchübergreifenden Exegese im Dodekapropheton," BN 98 (1999) 86–99, and B. M. Zapff, "The Perspective of the Nations in the Book of Micah as a 'Systematization' of the Nations' Role in Joel, Jonah and Nahum: Reflections on a Context-Oriented Exegesis in the Book of the Twelve," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 38 (1999) 596–616.

10. M. H. Floyd, "The Chimerical Acrostic of Nahum 1:2–10," JBL 113 (1994) 421–37.

11. E.g., K. Seybold, "Vormasoretische Randnotizen in Nahum 1," ZAW 101 (1989) 71–85; compare with K. Spronk, "The Line-Acrostic in Nahum 1: New Evidence from Ancient Greek Manuscripts and from the Literary Analysis of the Hebrew Text," in *The Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis* (ed. R. de Hoop, M. C. A. Korpel, and S. E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 228–40; also Christensen, who prioritizes the poem's logoprosodic structure ("The Acrostic of Nahum Reconsidered"); and "The Acrostic of Nahum Once Again: A Prosodic Analysis of Nahum 1:1–10," ZAW 99 [1987] 409–415 and Nogalski, who attributes the disruption to the book's integration into the Book of the Twelve (*Literary Precursors*, 37–40; *Redactional Processes*, 115–17).

12. Renz, "Perfectly Broken."

Second, a few scholars have recently observed that the opening lines of the book form a short sentence acrostic of a type otherwise known only from Mesopotamia: the first letters of 1:2a, 2b, 3a form the word אֲנִי 'I', while the last letters of 1:1, 2a, 2b, 3a form the Tetragrammaton, יְהוָה.¹³ Together, this acrostic-telestic forms the familiar divine self-declaration, אֲנִי יְהוָה 'I am YHWH'. Significant from a redactional point of view is that these words link the poem of 1:2 and following to the heading in 1:1, which is normally marked off as being one of the usual headings added at a late stage to prophetic collections. Developing this observation into the book as a whole has been the identification of other short name-acrostics, references to Assyria (אֲשׁוּר) and Nineveh (נִינְוָה), at 1:12 and 3:18, indicating deliberate structuring techniques "at the beginning, at the end and at the major break of the book."¹⁴

As these more recent developments suggest, the rationale for dividing the material in Nah 1 from the rest of the book on text-critical grounds has lost much of its former footing. Contributing further to this is a more-sophisticated understanding of the mythological language used by the poem to describe YHWH, which Gunkel had taken to be gross eschatological imagery deriving only from the late postexilic period in which prophecy was transforming into apocalyptic. Contrary to Gunkel's claim that YHWH's battle against chaotic forces was a particular characteristic of narratives about creation, appearing otherwise only with descriptions of a final, ultimate battle at the *Endzeit*, more recent research has demonstrated that YHWH's battle against chaos was an ongoing historical process, involving both the divine and earthly realms.¹⁵

As mentioned tangentially by some commentators, Nah 1 is characterized by language associated with theophany, the revelation of the divine nature. Less often recognized is that the theophanic language in Nah 1 is part of a network of ideas surrounding the presentation of YHWH in military guise and, in particular, as a deity who battles both earthly and cosmic enemies in the production of a universal order. Some elements of this are more to the fore in Nahum than others; certainly the idea that YHWH's earthly counterpart in these military efforts is the king of

13. First A. S. van der Woude, "The Book of Nahum: A Letter Written in Exile," in *Instruction and Interpretation: Studies in Hebrew Language, Palestinian Archaeology and Biblical Exegesis: Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference Held at Louvain, 1976* (ed. H. A. Brongers; OtSt 20; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 108–26, followed and elaborated by K. Spronk, "Acrostics in the Book of Nahum," *ZAW* 110 (1998) 209–22.

14. Spronk, "Acrostics," 222; cf. Spronk, "Line-Acrostics."

15. C. L. Crouch, *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East: Military Violence in Light of Cosmology and History* (BZAW 417; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 29–32, 65–80. On Nahum specifically, see Crouch, "On Floods and the Fall of Nineveh: A Note on the Origins of a Spurious Tradition," in *New Perspectives on Old Testament Prophecy and History: Essays in Honour of Hans M. Barstad* (ed. Rannfrid I. Thelle, Terje Stordalen, and Mervyn E. J. Richardson; VTSup 168; Leiden: Brill, 2015), 212–16.

Judah is in the background, if explicitly present at all.¹⁶ Of particular import for the question of continuity between Nah 1 and Nah 2–3, however, is that the image of the deity who battles against the forces of cosmic chaos (typically personified as or described with reference to the sea or rivers, although the polytheistic aspects of this are heavily played down in most biblical renderings) is closely connected to the idea that both the deity and his human counterpart act together against earthly chaos.¹⁷

The point of this, as far as Nahum is concerned, is that there is no meaningful distinction between the earthly battles enacted against earthly enemies and the cosmological battles enacted by YHWH against cosmological chaos. Such a theoretical distinction is not, therefore, a legitimate cause for separating Nah 1 from Nah 2–3 and, furthermore, not a reason to suggest that the material in Nah 1 represents a generalizing, later spin on the specific discussion of Nineveh that follows.¹⁸

In light of this more nuanced understanding of YHWH's warrior persona, active on both the heavenly and earthly planes, there is much less cause for dividing Nah 1's theophanic description of YHWH battling against those who challenge him from the more prosaic description in Nah 2–3 of YHWH battling against earthly enemies—namely, Nineveh. Indeed, once the conceptual continuity between these sections is recognized, the artistic continuity and literary sophistication of these chapters may be more clearly acknowledged. Throughout Nah 1–3, the text is notable for its use of remarkably vivid imagery: “In its poetic form,” writes Christensen, “the book of Nahum has no superior within the prophetic literature of the Tanakh.”¹⁹ In Nah 1, this is focused on YHWH's tempestuous efforts toward marshalling the created order. When the text turns to Nineveh, there are vivid descriptions of soldiers sent to attack and to defend the city and descriptions of the

16. On the matter of the often-unspecified addressees in Nahum, see M. A. Sweeney, “Concerning the Structure and Generic Character of the Book of Nahum,” *ZAW* 104 (1992) 364–66, with further references.

17. In the traditional form of this relationship the human counterpart is the king of Judah (see, for example, Pss 18 and 89). That the advent of world empires might demand a non-Judahite agent for YHWH, however, is an idea seen quite clearly in the polemicizing of Ezekiel in particular (see C. A. Strine and C. L. Crouch, “Yahweh's Battle against Chaos in Ezekiel: The Transformation of a Traditional Motif for a New Situation,” *JBL* 132 [2013] 883–903).

18. For a related discussion, see Sweeney, “Concerning the Structure,” 369–71; also Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 10–12, who, while disagreeing with Sweeney in his genre classification, agrees that 1:2–8 should not be described as eschatological. In somewhat more general terms, Floyd writes that the two-fold structure of the book (1:1–2:11, with a Judahite orientation, and 2:12–3:19, from an Assyrian perspective) effectively presents the fall of Nineveh “as an event to be vicariously relived again and again, and as an event that maintains its relevance for succeeding generations, because it is a concrete historical example of a recurring situation in which Yahweh typically acts the same way. As creator of the world he can influence cosmic forces in favor of those who cooperate with him in maintaining a just world order, and he can influence cosmic forces to the detriment of those who oppose him in this regard” (Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 7).

19. Christensen, *Nahum*, 23.

former city in leonine terms, transformed into the shamed and publicly humiliated female. Though not generally recognized, cosmological language appears in these descriptions too.²⁰ Although the present text of the book is highly unlikely to be a facsimile of the original, there is no need to separate the opening poetry from what follows.

Though somewhat circuitously, this brings us at last to the matter of Nahum's relationship to the state. The relationships between YHWH , Nineveh (as *pars pro toto* for Assyria), and—although very much a secondary character—Judah in Nahum present clearly the conclusion that, however powerful in earthly perspective, the imperial power of the Assyrian state is no match for the ultimate power of YHWH .²¹ In support of this point, one might cite nearly any passage in the book, from the opening description of YHWH 's control over the universe, designed to emphasize his power and authority against any who might challenge it, to the final oracle against the king of Assyria, describing the disarray of his empire. This latter is particularly interesting, concluding as it does with the rhetorical question:

There is no assuaging your hurt, your wound is mortal.
All who hear the news about you clap their hands over you.
For who has ever escaped your endless cruelty? (3:19)

In addition to suggesting a talionic principle of justice at work in YHWH 's punishment of Assyria—note also the links between Assyria's economic exploitation (3:1–4) and the disappearance of its commercial agents (3:16), as well as the focus on the king's demise (3:18–19) after attention to the disgraceful behavior of the royal family (2:12–14)—the text effectively declares that the state is not a law unto itself: its cruelty is not unlimited but is accountable to the ultimate power of YHWH .²²

The extended leonine metaphor in 2:12–14 makes a similar point, using intensely violent language to describe the activities of the Assyrian king demonstrating his power: “The lion has torn enough for his whelps and strangled prey for his lionesses; he has filled his caves with prey and his dens with torn flesh” (2:13 [ET 2:12]).²³ Yet even this king of beasts is subordinate to YHWH , and YHWH assures

20. Crouch, “On Floods and the Fall of Nineveh.”

21. Note in particular Sweeney's suggestion that the frequent ambiguity of antecedent for pronouns in Nahum is not a result of editorial sloppiness but designed to force the audience to consider their own place in the schema that Nahum describes (for or against YHWH) (Sweeney, “Concerning the Structure,” 364–65, 371–73). The message, in other words, is not specifically limited to a statement about the limited power of the Assyrian state but rather comprises a wider point with regard to the subordination of all power to YHWH . As the most powerful state yet known to the ancient world, Assyria serves as the extreme example: if even this sprawling empire is ultimately under the power of YHWH , how much more must this be true of the less powerful?

22. On talionic justice see Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 6; compare with Crouch, *War and Ethics*, 169–72.

23. This is often supposed to be a particularly Assyrian image, but see M. Cogan, “The Lions of Nineveh (Nahum 2:12–14): A Check on Nahum's Familiarity with Assyria,” in *Birkat*

his audience that such violence will see its just end.²⁴ Not even the most powerful agents of the state—its king and its ruling classes—are exempt from the consequences of their actions (3:10, 18–19).

Although Assyria's domination has/had its place, it is always and ever under the ultimate control of YHWH. Just as the success and power of Egypt were ultimately illusory, so too Assyria's reach is depicted as a limited and destructible phenomenon (3:7–11). Acquiescence to the imperial state is absent, if not rejected outright in the case of an empire extended beyond just bounds; allegiance is due always and only to the deity who pulls its strings.

Habakkuk

Whether or not the following book of Habakkuk approaches the remit of the imperial state with a similar attitude depends on identification of the book's antagonist. The sole named entity in the book, aside from Habakkuk and YHWH, is the "Chaldeans" (the Neo-Babylonians) specified in 1:6. The Babylonians are thus commonly considered to be the antagonists of the piece or of at least a significant part of it.²⁵ Complicating this association of Babylonia with that against which the prophet rails are the fact that the Babylonians appear explicitly as YHWH's own agents in 1:6 and the various references, throughout the book, to the "righteous"

Shalom: Studies in the Bible, Ancient Near Eastern Literature, and Postbiblical Judaism Presented to Shalom M. Paul on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday (2 vols.; ed. C. Cohen et al.; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 1:433–39; see also B. A. Strawn, *What Is Stronger than a Lion? Leonine Image and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (OBO 212; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005). Various other elements of the book are often thought to reveal particular knowledge of Assyria and its history, including the reference to the defeat of Thebes in 3:8–10 (J. R. Huddleston, "Nahum, Nineveh, and the Nile: The Description of Thebes in Nahum 3:8–9," *JNES* 62 [2003] 97–110), possible references to the goddess Ishtar in 2:8 (M. Delcor, "Allusions à la déesse Ištar en Nahum 2:8," *Bib* 58 [1977] 73–83; A. Pinker, "Descent of the Goddess Ishtar to the Netherworld and Nahum II 8," *VT* 55 [2005] 89–100), and the long-standing tradition that Nahum knew some of the particulars of the mechanics of Nineveh's destruction (see H. W. F. Saggs, "Nahum and the Fall of Nineveh," *JTS* 20 [1969] 220–25 and the various discussions by Pinker, of which "Nahum and the Greek Tradition on Nineveh's Fall," *JHS* 6 [2006] n.p., provides the most extensive references to the relevant literature).

24. As with all oracles against nations in the Hebrew Bible, it is unlikely in the extreme that the rhetorical "you," Assyria (or its representative), was ever expected to actually hear the words in question; the audience of these texts is the Yahwistic listener(s) who knows this imperial excess first hand. (Floyd draws an analogy to the narrative of Isaiah, Hezekiah, and the Assyrian delegation in 2 Kgs 19, concluding that "[l]ike the first speech addressed to the character of the Assyrian king (1:14), the speeches in 2:2–3:19 addressed to Nineveh and to him are never actually meant for their ears. They are rather meant to be overheard by the character playing the role of Judah's representative and are actually for Judah's benefit" [*Minor Prophets*, 17]).

25. Among others, Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 82–86; D. E. Gowan, "Habakkuk," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (ed. J. Barton and J. Muddiman; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 601; M. A. Sweeney, "Structure, Genre, and Intent in the Book of Habakkuk," *VT* 41 (1991) 67–69, 73–78; M. D. Johnson, "The Paralysis of Torah in Habakkuk 1:4," *VT* 35 (1985) 257–66.

and the “wicked,” sometimes taken as referring to divisions within the population of Judah or even to specific individuals, such as Jehoiachim or the prophet.²⁶ It is also striking that neither Judah nor Israel—nor, indeed, any specific individual—are explicitly mentioned at any stage in the book as the target of Habakkuk’s condemnation.²⁷ Given that the prophetic books do not elsewhere have any compunction about naming Israel/Judah as the target of their condemnations if that is their intention, it therefore seems unlikely that the author(s) meant the text to be construed as, in whole or in part, against Israel/Judah.

This returns us to the matter of the Babylonians, whose mention constitutes the sole historical reference in the book. They are, indeed, introduced as the agents of YHWH—whose speech in 1:5–11 declares that “I am rousing the Chaldeans, that fierce and impetuous nation”—but an actual and highly negative experience of the Babylonian empire is probably the cause of the complaint which comprises the impetus for the book.²⁸

The first chapter (sometimes continuing to include part or all of the second) is traditionally seen as a dialogue between YHWH and Habakkuk, in which they converse regarding the particularities of divine justice.²⁹ Habakkuk begins

26. Andersen identifies the righteous man as the prophet and the wicked as Jehoiachim, damned as an Egyptian puppet against the background of a rising Babylonian empire; he thereby accounts for the positive description of the Chaldeans in 1:6 by identifying them as on the side of the righteous (F. I. Andersen, *Habakkuk: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 25; New York: Doubleday, 2001], 24–25). Seybold is not dealing with a unified text that must make consistent sense, but in what he identifies as the original prophetic layer of the text he emphasizes a concern with (in)justice within Judah, to which the Babylonians are an essentially ancillary player, akin to the social justice critiques of Isaiah and Amos (*Nahum*, 46–47). Haak identifies both the wicked and the righteous as royal figures within Judah, with the deposed Jehoahaz as the righteous and Jehoiachim as his wicked replacement; even more than Andersen, he emphasizes the positive depiction of the Babylonians, going so far as to argue that the entirety of the book is pro-Babylonian (primarily by explaining the woe oracles as concerning Jehoiachim, rather than the Babylonians) (R. D. Haak, *Habakkuk* [VTSup 44; Leiden: Brill, 1992], 107–45). Sweeney separates the righteous Judah and the wicked Babylonians (“Structure,” 73–78), while Holladay splits the difference by arguing that the woe oracles in ch. 2 were originally directed against Jehoiachim in 601 but that several were revised in 594 to be against Nebuchadnezzar (W. L. Holladay, “Plausible Circumstances for the Prophecy of Habakkuk,” *JBL* 120 [2001] 123–30). Pinker suggests that *šdyq* ‘righteous one’ in 2:4 should be read as Zedekiah (A. Pinker, “Habakkuk 2.4: An Ethical Paradigm or a Political Observation?” *JOT* 32 [2007] 91–112); Gunneweg traces the language to wisdom traditions (A. H. J. Gunneweg, “Habakuk und das Problem des leidenden קָדוֹשׁ,” *ZAW* 98 [1986] 400–415).

27. The nearest the book gets is a reference to YHWH’s people and YHWH’s anointed, in 3:13.

28. M. H. Floyd, “Prophetic Complaints about the Fulfillment of Oracles in Habakkuk 1:2–17 and Jeremiah 15:10–18,” *JBL* 110 (1991) 397–418. See also Johnson, “Paralysis of Torah,” for an argument against the general assumption that Babylonians are positively presented in 1:5–11.

29. So, for example, Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 15; K. J. Cathcart, “‘Law is Paralyzed’ (Habakkuk 1.4): Habakkuk’s Dialogue with God and the Language of Legal Disputation,” in *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar* (ed. J. Day; LHBOTS 531; New York: T. & T. Clark, 2010), 339–53; Gowan, “Habakkuk,” 602; Sweeney,

the dialogue with an expression of concern about abundant violence for which there seems to be no justice (1:2–4); this is addressed by an oracle from YHWH which promises the arrival of the Babylonians, acting on a punitive mission from YHWH (1:5–11). This is followed by Habakkuk's concerns about the excessive and violent nature of YHWH's Babylonian agents and, in particular, the theological implications of this for YHWH (1:12–17). This discussion may stop here or may continue into ch. 2; 2:1 appears to be a description of a prophetic solicitation of an oracle, which is then given in 2:2–20 as a series of "woe" oracles, although some would limit the oracular response to the material between 2:2 and either 2:5 or 2:6 (or part thereof) and classify the following woe oracles separately. However far YHWH's response extends, the obvious point is YHWH's assurance to Habakkuk that the wicked will surely be punished.³⁰

More recently, however, there has been some suggestion that the oracle in 1:5–11 may be a quotation of an earlier oracle announcing the coming Babylonians, which is proving problematic at the point of the book's composition (and, indeed, prompting it) because of the excessive violence employed by the Babylonians. The preceding (1:2–4) and following (1:12–17) complaint passages, rather than being a linear development of the prophet's thinking, both articulate a single concern about the implications of the quoted text.³¹ Habakkuk 2 is accordingly

"Structure," 74. Although text- and form-critical analyses of Habakkuk are slightly less diverse in their conclusions than those regarding Nahum, there is still considerable disagreement regarding the unity of the book and, accordingly, the respective dating of its constituent parts. Seybold, for example, divides the book into three types of texts: prophetic (parts of chs. 1 and 2), hymnic (parts of ch. 3) and parts belonging to a *Klage- und Dankpsalm* (interspersed throughout) (*Nahum*, 43–45). Peritt follows a similar division between chs. 1–2 and ch. 3, but ultimately prioritizes the individual growth processes of each separate section/chapter (1:1–2:5; 2:6–20; 3:1–19), denying the type of overall redaction which Seybold understands has having produced the final form of the book (*Die Propheten*, 42–43). Andersen, by contrast, assumes an essentially unified text, albeit one comprised of three distinct genres: dialogue (1:1–2:6a), woe oracles (2:6b–20), and psalm (3:1–19) (*Habakkuk*, 14–15). Haak sees the entire book as a unified prophetic complaint (*Habakkuk*, 11–20). Floyd is more limited in this ascription, seeing 1:2–17 and 3:2–19a as prophetic complaints, the latter more particularly as a psalmodic representation of prophecy; 2:1–20 constitutes a report of oracular enquiry (*Minor Prophets*, 81–86). That the text is, despite its generic vagaries, thematically unified, he argues with particular attention to the theme of "unjust imperial domination [which] is common to all sections of the book" (*Minor Prophets*, 82). Although he appears ultimately agnostic with regard to whether the first person speaker which dominates all three chapters ought to be identified with Habakkuk himself or is a fictional "I," he sees no indications of a long redactional process (*Minor Prophets*, 87–88).

30. Sweeney, "Structure," 81: "The intent and setting center around an attempt to explain the rise of the oppressive Neo-Babylonian empire in the late-7th century B.C.E. as an act of YHWH which does not contradict divine righteousness and fidelity to Judah;" compare with, for example, Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints," 406.

31. Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints," which is presupposed by Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 79–161; cf. Sweeney, "Structure," who draws on Johnson, "Paralysis of Torah," to argue that 1:5–11 is a heightened version of the complaint in 1:2–4 and the Babylonians are in fact not portrayed

understood as a description of the complainant seeking and receiving an oracular response to these concerns.

In fact, this understanding of Hab 1–2 makes much better sense out of the book as a whole; seen as a dialogue culminating in a series of woe oracles, it has often proved difficult for interpreters to understand what relationship chs. 1–2 have to ch. 3.³² If ch. 1 is a statement of the prophet's complaint concerning the excesses of the Babylonians, however, chs. 2–3 constitute a twofold response to that complaint. Habakkuk 2, as reflected by the relative degree of scholarly comfort in its form and message, constitutes the more usual presentation of that response: a report of the solicitation and receipt of an oracle by a prophet. It is, in other words, YHWH's own response to Habakkuk's complaint. Habakkuk 3, in turn, is Habakkuk's response and conclusion, developing YHWH's assurance about YHWH's actions and his pursuit of justice on behalf of his people through reference to broader mythological themes.³³ "The theme of unjust imperial domination is

positively. The classic *Forschungsgeschichte* of Habakkuk is P. Jöcken, *Das Buch Habakuk* (Cologne: Hanstein, 1977); for an update of the subsequent three decades, see G. T. M. Prinsloo, "Petuhot/setumot and the Structure of Habakkuk: Evaluating the Evidence," in *The Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis* (ed. R. de Hoop, M. C. A. Korpel, and S. E. Porter; Pericope 7; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 198–203.

32. Indeed, while the majority of scholars (certainly among Anglophone scholarship, although this is less the case among Continental scholarship) continue to see Hab 3 as somehow forming a united whole with Hab 1–2, there is a vocal minority who reject Hab 3 as (often) a later addition to a "Habakkuk" originally comprising only chs. 1–2 (see above; and also Nogalski, *Redactional Processes*, 154–81). Indeed, the general isolation of Hab 3 in the scholarly mind is indicated by the number of studies focusing on it to the exclusion of the preceding two chapters; for example, S. Ahituv, "The Sinai Theophany in the Psalm of Habakkuk," in *Birkat Shalom: Studies in the Bible, Ancient Near Eastern Literature, and Postbiblical Judaism Presented to Shalom M. Paul on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (2 vols.; ed. C. Cohen et al.; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 1:225–32; J. E. Anderson, "Awaiting an Answered Prayer: The Development and Reinterpretation of Habakkuk 3 in Its Contexts," *ZAW* 123 (2011) 57–71; B. Margulis, "Psalm of Habakkuk: A Reconstruction and Interpretation," *ZAW* 82 (1970) 409–42; J. W. Watts, "Psalmody in Prophecy: Habakkuk 3 in Context," in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts* (ed. J. W. Watts and P. R. House; JSOTSup 235; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 209–23. On the textual and versional evidence regarding the book's unity, see Haak, *Habakkuk*, 1–11.

33. Although the psalmic form of Hab 3, combined with its superscription (3:1) and use of liturgical instructions (3:19 and the repeated use of the term *selâ*), usually results in assumptions of an independent liturgical origin—its presence explained as either a late addition or rather clumsy contemporary insertion into the book—Watts makes a convincing case in favor of these elements' use as overt signals of what he calls "inset hymnody," akin to the use of psalms in narrative texts. In particular, he suggests that the curious combination of both lament and hymnic elements in the psalm reflects the particularly prophetic expectations that arise from the wider prophetic context ("Psalmody in Prophecy," 213–14, 219–20). For thoughts on the subject more generally, see E. S. Gerstenberger, "Psalms in the Book of the Twelve: How Misplaced Are They?" in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve* (ed. P. L. Redditt and A. Scharf; BZAW 325; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 72–89.

common to all sections of the book; but each treats this theme in a somewhat different way so as to indicate a progression in the way Yahweh is understood to be involved in the world situation.”³⁴

Throughout the complaint of ch. 1, the prophet’s protest does not concern YHWH’s justice as such, insofar as there is no claim that those on the receiving end of the Babylonians’ actions are without guilt; rather, the protestation concerns the appropriate extent of punishment, contending that the Babylonians have gone too far (1:8–11, 17). Given that they act in the name of YHWH and YHWH is indeed just (1:13), the prophet calls on YHWH to rectify the injustice (1:2–4, 13). The ultimate issue for Habakkuk is not that YHWH has seen fit to employ a foreign power but that the power in question has gone to such extreme as to abuse its commission, “destroying nations without mercy” (1:17).³⁵

YHWH’s response is to assure Habakkuk that YHWH’s justice will prevail. Again, the repeated accusation against the Babylonian empire is criminal excess (2:6, 8, 12, 15, 17; probably also 2:4). The oracles reported in this chapter confirm YHWH’s awareness of this excess and affirm Habakkuk’s expectation that such excess must in turn be subject to consequences, thereby regaining the cosmos’s equilibrium.³⁶ “Yahweh affirms that the imperialists have lost all claims to legitimacy

34. Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 82.

35. It is curious that the imagery used in 1:14–17 to describe Babylonian recklessness is of humanity caught in a net, especially given that the description of humanity as “fish of the sea” is clarified as akin to being like “creeping things among whom there is no ruler.” Although there is no extant Hebrew version of YHWH’s battle against the chaotic sea, the net is one of Marduk’s weapons in *Enuma elish*, and it appears (using two other words for net) in a related mythological context in Ezekiel (Strine and Crouch, “YHWH’s Battle”); the term used here for a hook appears also in this context in Job 40:25 (a similarity noted also by Sweeney, who articulates the issue thus: “Rather than acknowledging God as the source of their success, the Chaldeans look to their own power, worshipping their nets/weapons”; “Structure,” 69). Cathcart has also suggested that the term *miqqedem* in 1:12 “is a comprehensive term that Habakkuk uses to remind Yahweh of his victories in ancient times” (“Law is Paralysed,” 344–45). Although it is difficult to interpret the connotations here (and the associations may be entirely coincidental), one does wonder whether the author is using the language associated with YHWH’s battle against chaos (language that is used elsewhere to align the activities of YHWH’s human agent with those of YHWH; see Crouch, *War and Ethics*, 29–32, 65–76) to suggest that YHWH’s agent has abused its divinely-granted power by working not for order (justice) but for chaos (evil, wickedness) and articulating the disrupted cosmological structure in these terms. Rather than YHWH’s agent bringing about order, complete with a divinely-appointed ruler, the Babylonians have upended the cosmos, employing weapons designed for use against chaos in order to create it.

36. Again, although neither overt (to the modern reader, at least) nor extensive, there are a few passing references that seem to allude to—and anticipate Hab 3’s fuller exposition of—the basis of YHWH’s claim to power (including the ability to ensure justice and order) in his defeat of chaos. The slightly clearer of these is 2:14: “And the earth will be filled / to know the glory of YHWH / as the waters cover over Sea.” One of the difficulties in attempts to identify allusions to YHWH’s battles against chaos is that water may appear both as YHWH’s opponent and as YHWH’s weapon; YHWH’s status as storm deity, whose unconventional weaponry (as opposed to standard-issue bows, arrows, etc.) includes the storm itself, is the underlying source of the problem. In any

by greedily pursuing conquest for its own sake and that he has therefore destined them to fall.”³⁷ As in Nahum, the text reiterates that all earthly powers are subject to YHWH; those who go beyond their remit will be sharply curtailed.

That Hab 3 is a declaration of YHWH’s power and YHWH’s promise to enact justice is generally recognized; that this is a reiteration of Hab 2 somewhat less so. The passage’s use of mythological themes to convey this point is generally acknowledged; the psalm is frequently called a theophany, and reference is usually made to the use of YHWH’s victory over the chaos waters as a means of articulating YHWH’s power to act.³⁸ These two elements are sometimes separated, thought to represent two separate traditions regarding YHWH’s character, but this is a false dichotomy; the language and imagery associated with YHWH’s specific battle against chaos are part of his more general character, often revealed in “theophanic” texts.³⁹ The first part of the passage, usually labeled the theophany, establishes YHWH’s fighting character, describing his strength in royal terms and as deriving from his power over the whole created order (3:3–4, 5–6); this is turned against the specific enemy, characterized as the chaotic waters of rivers and sea, using similar declarations of his military might and creative authority (3:9, 11–14; 3:9–11).⁴⁰

Commonly overlooked in discussions of the chapter, however, and partially responsible for the uncertainty regarding the chapter’s relationship to Hab 1–2, is that the description of YHWH’s battle against chaos in Hab 3 is not a description of a primordial battle but rather anticipates YHWH’s present action against an enemy that is characterized as the chaotic waters as a result of it having threatened YHWH’s created order.⁴¹ Although verb forms in poetry are notoriously slippery, it is notable that throughout the description of YHWH’s action against the chaotic wa-

event, one does wonder whether the language here might be a description of YHWH’s defeat of chaos.

37. Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 82.

38. On the use of liturgical markers in the chapter, see Watts, “Psalmody in Prophecy.”

39. See Anderson, “Awaiting an Answered Prayer,” especially 60–61, for one such argument; cf. Seybold, *Nahum*, 77–83; Perlitt, *Die Propheten*, 82–83. For brief specific counterargument to this type of division, see the *Postscript* in J. Day, “Echoes of Baal’s Seven Thunders and Lightnings in Psalm 29 and Habakkuk 3:9 and the Identity of the Seraphim in Isaiah 6,” *VT* 29 (1979) 151.

40. For further links between the “theophany” and YHWH’s battle against chaos, see M. L. Barré, “Habakkuk 3:2: Translation in Context,” *CBQ* 50 (1988) 184–97, who argues that 3:2 ought to be understood as a reference to this battle; J. Day, “New Light on the Mythological Background of the Allusion to Resheph in Habakkuk 3:5,” *VT* 29 (1979) 353–55, who suggests that the references to pestilence and plague in 3:5 should be understood against the same background; and B. Peckham, “The Vision of Habakkuk,” *CBQ* 48 (1986) 633, who notes various similarities to *Enuma elish* and to Genesis 1 and Exodus 14.

41. Although note Floyd, who does pick up on this idea: “an imminent conclusive change . . . will be a re-creation of the world order that recapitulates the process through which Yahweh created the world to begin with. Just as he then did battle with the forces of evil and chaos in order to establish the possibility of a just existence for all creatures, so he will now do battle with the

ters (variously the rivers, the sea, and the deep; 3:8, 10) the verbs indicate ongoing action; this is a battle in the present, not the past. They only shift to completed action (a prophetic perfect) after the triumphant declaration of YHWH's purpose in 3:13.⁴² Habakkuk 3 is a description of YHWH's action against a present enemy, the Babylonians, who have threatened his created order. It repeats and reiterates the promise of divine action made in prosaic terms in ch. 2 and develops the brief allusions to YHWH's battles against chaos in chs. 1–2 into a full-blown rendering of the current threat to divine justice and order in these terms.

Compared to Nahum, Habakkuk is less concerned with YHWH's power, as such, than it is with YHWH's use of that power. There is never any real doubt that YHWH has power and is the driving force behind the Babylonians; the question is whether YHWH will use his power to ensure the justice and order on which his reputation are based. This question comprises the complaint of Hab 1; Hab 2–3 provide the answer. The Babylonian Empire, Habakkuk assures the reader, is merely an instrument of YHWH, albeit one that has careened beyond its allotted role. No earthly agent, even if commissioned by YHWH, has the authority to extend itself to the level of violence and excess that the Babylonians have exhibited. Those that do so upset the equilibrium of YHWH's rule and will, in time, be eliminated for its restoration.

Zephaniah

Zephaniah's relationship to the state is much less clear than either Nahum's or Habakkuk's, in no small part a result of ambiguity regarding the state in question. On the one hand, its superscription locates it in the reign of Josiah (640–609), placing its message squarely in the last decades of Judah's monarchy. On the other hand, its canonical location undermines this historical location; whereas Nahum and Habakkuk (and indeed the minor prophetic books more generally) proceed in chronological sequence, from the Assyrian period to the Babylonian, Zephaniah is—in both the Masoretic and Septuagint orderings of the Twelve—placed after Habakkuk. Canonically, therefore, the book may demand a post-monarchic reading, perhaps as an explanation for the fall of Jerusalem to the aforementioned Babylonians or perhaps as an articulation of a post-monarchic society.⁴³ The

tyrannical oppressor to reestablish this possibility for all, and thus bring about the deliverance of his people" (*Minor Prophets*, 89).

42. That YHWH acts not only on behalf of the people but also on behalf of his anointed (3:13) is also related to the present form of YHWH's battle against chaos, in which the norm is for a Yahwistic king to serve as YHWH's earthly agent; the statement appears to anticipate a return to this normal arrangement upon the defeat of the agent-turned-chaos, Babylon.

43. Although the book's canonical location is generally noted by commentators and its place in the Twelve widely acknowledged (see, for example, M. B. Shepherd, "Compositional Analysis of the Twelve," *ZAW* 120 [2008] 189–90), the extent of the effect of the wider context on the interpretation of Zephaniah itself is debated; note Hadjiev's argument that little of the book

combination of these makes for an ambiguous message, at the least: is the book to be understood against the background of the late 7th century and, if so, does it align itself with the royal house or against it? Or is the association with a monarchic prophet merely a claim to a certain type of prophetic authority, made to buttress an essentially post-monarchic message?

The book is conventionally divided into three parts, according to the three types of material found in prophetic books: oracles against Judah and Jerusalem (1:2–2:3), oracles against the nations (2:4–3:8), and oracles of salvation for Judah/Jerusalem and the nations (3:9–20).⁴⁴ According to this analysis, the book's logic follows a standard prophetic progression, beginning with judgment on YHWH's people, followed by judgment on their enemies, and culminating with an announcement of the salvation to come after judgment. Elsewhere, however, this supposedly standard progression is seen only in Ezekiel and in the LXX ordering of Jeremiah; it is also problematic within Zephaniah, and it is accordingly of little surprise that recent scholarship has begun to question the accuracy of this division.⁴⁵

After the superscription, the book begins with a broad declaration of YHWH's intention to undo the work of his creation (1:2–3).⁴⁶ This serves as a prelude, setting the scene for the following, more specific judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (1:4–18). This judgment is said to be the consequence of a number of related actions on the part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. First among these is the pursuit of non-Yahwistic worship practices, with particular reference made to the worship of Baal, to the *kāmārīm* priests, to the host of heaven, and, apparently, the wor-

can be attributed to efforts to integrate it into the Twelve, suggesting that this canonical reading is not inherent to the book itself (T. Hadjiev, "Zephaniah and the 'Book of the Twelve' Hypothesis," in *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar* [ed. J. Day; LHBOTS 531; London: T. & T. Clark, 2010], 325–38); contra Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 171–215. Compare Sweeney's observations regarding the LXX translation of 2:1–3, which does produce such an effect (M. A. Sweeney, *Zephaniah: A Commentary* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003], 21–23).

44. So E. Ben Zvi, *A Historical-Critical Study of the Book of Zephaniah* (BZAW 198; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992), 325–46; Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 170–71; Perlitt, *Die Propheten*, 98; Seybold, *Nahum*, 85–86, 88; J. Vlaardingbroek, *Zephaniah* (trans. J. Vriend; HCOT; Louvain: Peeters, 1999), 1–9. Berlin abdicates and relies on the divisions in the Leningrad Codex (A. Berlin, *Zephaniah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 25A; New York: Doubleday, 1993], 17–20). For a brief history of research, see Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 165–69.

45. See especially M. A. Sweeney, "A Form-Critical Reassessment of the Book of Zephaniah," *CBQ* 53 (1991) 388–408 and Sweeney, *Zephaniah*, 5–10; Sweeney's influence is seen in, for example, Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 166–73.

46. M. de Roche, "Zephaniah 1:2–3: The 'Sweeping' of Creation," *VT* 30 (1980) 104–9; note that Sweeney argues that the specific terminology indicates that the background of these verses is not the present text of Genesis (which in extant form is certainly later than the 7th century) (*Zephaniah*, 16).

ship of the Ammonite god Milkom (1:4b-5a); this is explicated as a summary of non-Yahwistic worship among those who also worship YHWH (but should do so exclusively), those who previously worshiped YHWH (but have now forsaken him), and those who have never worshiped YHWH (but presumably ought to) (1:5b-6).⁴⁷ Subsequent verses elaborate the nature of YHWH's forthcoming punishment (1:7-18) and specify that the guilty culprits who will be on the receiving end of YHWH's judgment are the elites of society ("the princes" and "the sons of the king"), connecting their aforementioned offense to the foreign associations of their actions (1:8-9a) and their disregard for justice (1:9b).⁴⁸ Commerce and wealth are recurring elements in this description of YHWH's judgment on these elites (1:11, 13, 18).⁴⁹

This declaration of judgment, however, is not irrevocable. Having terrified its audience in ch. 1, Zephaniah presents in 2:1-3 an opportunity to repent. Here the wealth and superior status of the lawless and fraudulent elite, accused in ch. 1, are contrasted with the humble and law-abiding repentant (2:1-3); the latter's discovery of shelter in YHWH (2:3) is contrasted with the destruction of the homes of the wealthy (1:13).⁵⁰ Having heard the black announcement of judgment in ch. 1—the imminent destruction of the sinful—the subsequent verses present a

47. Those who locate Zephaniah under the reign of Josiah and consider (at least part of) the book to reflect his message with some accuracy tend to point to the general plausibility of its attacks on cult syncretism against the background of both Josiah's cult reforms and the growth of YHWH-alone advocacy around the same time, as reflected in the Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomistic literature. This debate, as well as subordinate discussions of whether the various references to Baal, Milkom, and the host of heaven reflect a period prior to the reform (which is never explicitly mentioned) or afterward are all further related to and dependent upon historiographical issues surrounding the reliability of the 2 Kings account of Josiah's reign and, in particular, whether (or to what extent and what type) any reform actually occurred. On the cult practices in question and their relationship (or otherwise) to such a reform, see Sweeney, *Zephaniah*, 16-17; Vlaardingerbroek, *Zephaniah*, 17-22; R. Mason, *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel* (OTG; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994) 35-43; note that one potential counter-argument to analyses that emphasize the essentially post-monarchic nature of the book is the fact that while the syncretistic worship practices described in ch. 1 appear to have been relatively common in the preexilic period (and were becoming a point of contention in the late monarchic period), the exclusive worship of YHWH was well-established by the postexilic period (Berlin, *Zephaniah*, 36). As O'Brien notes with regard to Nahum, of course, historical vivacity need not necessarily have any direct correlation to the actual date of a text's composition ("Violent Pictures, Violent Cultures?"); one may, however, wonder as to the point of such lengthy condemnation in a context where such practices are no longer a real issue. On the relationship between 1:4b-5a and 1:5b-6, see Sweeney, "Form-Critical Reassessment," 394-95; also K. Jeppesen, "Zephaniah 1:5b," *VT* 31 (1981) 372-73.

48. The possible association of the prophet with royalty in the superscription, combined with the book's particular focus on Jerusalem and Judah's elite, has produced a full spectrum of theories regarding Zephaniah's social location; see Vlaardingerbroek, *Zephaniah*, 12-13; Mason, *Zephaniah*, 26-33.

49. On the relationship between this and the preceding, see M. Rose, "«Atheismus» als Wohlstanderscheinung (Zephanja 1,12)," *TZ* 37 (1981) 193-208, especially 197-200.

50. On the possibility of a connection with the *ʿānāwā* of the psalms, see Ben Zvi, *Historical-Critical Study*, 354.

positive argument for repentance: those nations that are or have been superior to the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be brought low by the powerful and trustworthy YHWH.⁵¹ Zephaniah 2:4–7 describes the forthcoming fate of the Philistine city-states, articulating YHWH's power and control over these neighboring nations and culminating in the declaration that the territories dominated by Philistia will become the possession of Judah (2:6–7).⁵² This theme is elaborated in the oracle concerning Moab and Ammon, in which YHWH's speech assures its audience that they need not despair but should trust in YHWH, who is aware of everything (2:8) and controls all (2:11). Again, the repentance to which the audience was summoned in 2:1–3 is here justified in positive terms, describing the rationale for repentance and return to YHWH in terms of YHWH's trustworthiness and power. These declarations of YHWH's power culminate in the announcement that even the most powerful states of the period will succumb to YHWH (2:12–15).⁵³

The option of exhortative coaxing toward repentance having been exhausted (and perhaps having failed to succeed, 3:7), Zeph 3 reiterates the declaration of YHWH's justice (3:5) and power (3:6) in negative terms, despairing that this is not recognized (3:7). Those in authority are again the focus of attention (“her princes,”

51. Sweeney, “Form-Critical Reassessment,” 397–99.

52. On the 7th-century context of the nations listed by these oracles, see D. L. Christensen, “Zephaniah 2:4–15: A Theological Basis for Josiah's Program of Political Expansion,” *CBQ* 46 (1984) 669–82; more recently, Sweeney, *Zephaniah*, 14; Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 172–75. On the rhetorical mechanisms of the passage, see L. Zalcman, “Ambiguity and Assonance at Zephaniah 2:4,” *VT* 36 (1986) 365–71, and R. Gordis, “A Rising Tide of Misery: A Note on a Note on Zephaniah 2:4,” *VT* 37 (1987) 487–90. Worth note from a historical point of view is that the beginning of the 7th century had seen the Assyrian reassignment of much of Judah's territory in the Shephelah to the Philistine city of Ekron (S. Gitin, “Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Type Site for the Inner Coastal Plain in the Iron Age II Period,” in *Recent Excavations in Israel: Studies in Iron Age Archaeology* [ed. S. Gitin and W. G. Dever; AASOR 49; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1989], 43; cf. N. Na'aman, “Two Notes on the History of Ashkelon and Ekron in the Late Eighth–Seventh Centuries B.C.E.,” *TA* 25 (1998) 219–27; N. Na'aman, “Population Changes in Palestine following Assyrian Deportations,” in *Ancient Israel and Its Neighbors: Interaction and Counteraction* [vol. 1 of *Collected Essays*; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005], 209). Ashdod and Gaza are also said to have profited from Judah's punishment, as did Ashkelon (H. Tadmor, “Philistia under Assyrian Rule,” *BA* 29 [1966] 97). This area had been Judah's primary agricultural region, and its reallocation to Philistia constituted a major blow to Judah as a viable regional power in the 7th century. Against the background of the Philistine domination of the area in the 7th century, the declaration that this territory will be returned to Judah (2:6–7) constitutes a statement of a major change in Philistia's status in the region.

53. There has traditionally been some difficulty in understanding the relevance of Egypt (Cush) to a late-7th-century context, but recent research suggests that Egypt took over the southern Levant more or less as the Assyrians withdrew from it, possibly in a deliberate arrangement between the two states (see B. U. Schipper, “Egypt and the Kingdom of Judah under Josiah and Jehoikim,” *TA* 37 [2010] 200–226; also N. Na'aman, “The Kingdom of Judah under Josiah,” *TA* 18 [1991] 3–71). Berlin notes that the absence of an oracle against Babylon may be thought odd if the book derives from very much later than the reign of Josiah (*Zephaniah*, 34–37; cf. Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 172–73).

“her judges,” “her prophets,” “her priests,” 3:3–4). Yet all is apparently not lost; those of whom the message speaks will surely recognize YHWH when he acts in ultimate fury, in a judgment that returns to the creation traditions (cf. 1:2–3) to declare that YHWH will, unrelentingly, enforce his recognition, undoing the confusion of Babel (3:9) and reestablishing the universal worship of YHWH (3:9, cf. 2:11).⁵⁴ The language of humility and the eradication of the overweening pride of the accused reappear in this declaration (3:11–13), an emphasis on YHWH’s glorification that is elaborated in the final passage (3:14–20).⁵⁵

Whether this criticism of the elites of Judah and Jerusalem intends to reform the existing leadership structures of the state or to undermine them entirely is a matter for debate. The superscription not only associates the book with one of Judah’s most revered kings but may trace the ancestry of the prophet to whom its words are attributed to king Hezekiah; if this is deliberate, it implies that what follows constitutes a critique from within, not a critique from the margins.⁵⁶ If the book is understood to derive from—or be intended to be read as reflecting—a monarchic context, it may also be taken as significant that it does not seem to be the elites’ existence, or any particular aspect of their structural arrangement, that is offensive to the prophet’s sensibilities.⁵⁷ Rather, it is the elites’ actions which are

54. On 2:11, see D. Rudman, “A Note on Zephaniah,” *Bib* 80 (1999) 109–12. One might also wonder whether the reference to the rivers of Cush and the presentation of offerings by *bat-pūṭay* might be some kind of allusion to the rivers of Eden, but this cannot be more than speculation. For a summary of allusions to the creation traditions, which appear in all three chapters, see Berlin, *Zephaniah*, 13–14.

55. How much of this latter is later elaboration(s) is variously analyzed; see, for example, M. Beck, “Das Tag YHWHs-Verständnis von Zephanja iii,” *VT* 58 (2008) 159–77; H. Irsigler, *Zephanja* (HThKAT; Basel: Herder, 2002) 56; Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 176–78; Seybold, *Nahum*, 87–89; Vlaardingerbroek, *Zephaniah*, 9–10.

56. With four generations, Zephaniah’s patronymic is the longest in the prophetic corpus. This peculiarity, combined with the final named ancestor being one “Hezekiah,” has raised speculation that the superscription intends to claim royal descent for the prophet. Whether this is the case remains unclear (see Vlaardingerbroek, *Zephaniah*, 11–13 for a summary of the arguments).

57. Although most recent commentators are very cautious with regard to any critical technique’s ability to identify older or more “original” parts of the book, it is still probably the majority of scholars who attribute at least some meaningful part of the book to a 7th-century prophet, although rarely with any great exuberance or confidence. Foremost among these is Sweeney, who “demonstrates no major redactional work in the book of Zephaniah” (*Zephaniah*, 14–18). Seybold dates parts of chs. 1–2 to a late-Josianic Zephaniah, attributing the more hopeful material of ch. 3 to a post-exilic redactor and various “apocalyptic/eschatological” material to yet another (*Nahum*, 87–89); Vlaardingerbroek attributes most of 1:2–3:8 to the prophet himself and limits most of the additions to 3:9–20 (*Zephaniah*, 9–10; cf. O’Brien, “Nahum–Habakkuk–Zephaniah,” 178). Going against the trend of locating the original material primarily in ch. 1, Hagedorn sees the book’s origins in the oracles against the nations in ch. 2, against a background of Josianic expansion (A. C. Hagedorn, “When Did Zephaniah Become a Supporter of Josiah’s Reform?” *JTS* 62 [2011] 253–275). Floyd acknowledges the possibility of post-monarchic completion raised by Ben Zvi but circumnavigates the issue by concluding that, although the text should probably not be traced to a Josianic prophet in its entirety, the Josianic period is nonetheless the context

the problem: their entanglement with foreign practices, their failure to worship YHWH exclusively, and—the cause of both of these—their failure to trust in YHWH. If 2:1–3, in particular, is understood to be in any way integral to the overall message, these verses' exhortation to repentance suggests that the prophet's goal is not the total eradication of the government of which these elites form a(n errant) part but rather its reformation, in alignment with a recognition of YHWH as the ultimate power and source of justice in the world.

Complicating a reading of the book in its attributed monarchical context are both its aforementioned canonical location and the presence of elements within the book that may reflect a post-monarchic context for its final form and, depending on the extent of these elements' influence on and extricability from the rest of the book, demand a post-monarchic interpretation for its message.⁵⁸ Indeed, much of recent critical scholarship emphasizes a post-monarchic completion, context, and meaning for the book.⁵⁹ Taken to extreme, this produces a reading of Zephaniah that constructs its meaning in a late, non-monarchic context, in which the author's interest in the state is little more than as a contrast to a future (present) ideal society unsaddled with any political, monarchical elite—a society in which the only king is YHWH and the idealized community is a community of the pious and humble.⁶⁰

Which of these interpretations is the more accurate reflection of the book's intent is difficult to say and, indeed, it is entirely possible that both reflect some of the revisions inherent to most prophetic texts, as each subsequent generation attempted to reinterpret prophetic words for changing social and political cir-

in which the book is designed to be read (he also argues that there is nothing in the text that requires an exilic or postexilic date and seems to imply that its production may well have been quite close to its self-described context in the Josianic period; *Minor Prophets*, 177–79).

58. Most extreme in this regard is Ben Zvi, who acknowledges the possibility, even likelihood, of earlier prophetic content in the book but denies the possibility that this content may now be recovered (*Historical-Critical Study*, 357–58). Contrast Sweeney, *Zephaniah*, 14; note also Hadjiev, “Zephaniah.” Contrast especially Ben Zvi's deemphasis of the figure of the prophet in favor of the word of YHWH (*Historical-Critical Study*, 349) with Sweeney's subordination of the word of YHWH to its presentation in the context of prophetic exhortation (“Form-Critical Reassessment”).

59. See especially Ben Zvi, *Historical-Critical Study*, the influence of which is prominent throughout subsequent scholarship: for example, Berlin, *Zephaniah*, 31–43; Floyd, *Minor Prophets*; and Sweeney, *Zephaniah*, although all to a lesser extent. Explicitly acknowledging Ben Zvi, but making a more determined attempt to identify what Ben Zvi refers to as the “pre-compositional material” (that is, the material that might—although need not necessarily—be attributed to a preexilic prophet), Perlitt identifies early material in the judgment on Judah and Jerusalem in ch. 1; he attributes the rest of the book—including the “apocalyptic” perspective of, for example, 1:2–3—to a long process of redaction culminating in the pre-Hellenistic period (*Die Propheten*, 98–99; compare with Seybold, *Nahum*, 86–86 and Irsigler, *Zefanja*, 55–65, although both are more inclined to consider the possibility that chs. 2–3 may also contain some material from a Josianic Zephaniah [or his immediate tradents, in the case of Irsigler]).

60. Ben Zvi, *Historical-Critical Study*, 353–56.

cumstances. Which interpretation takes priority depends on the reader's relative weighting of the book's self-identification as monarchic, its likely redactional completion in the postexilic period, and its canonical location between Habakkuk and Haggai.

Final Observations

Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah are agreed on one thing: YHWH is the ultimate authority in all affairs of state. Though he may employ a variety of human agents—both foreign kings and home-grown leaders—to enact his will, YHWH is the source and arbiter of all human claims to power. All who exercise such power on his behalf must answer to him as regards their use of it. In Nahum, the acknowledgement of this fact takes the form of a declaration that YHWH will not allow the Assyrians untrammelled scope for the implementation of violent capacities; in Habakkuk the focus is on the implications of YHWH's control over the Babylonians for understanding the justice of the divine nature. Zephaniah, whether understood in a monarchic or post-monarchic context, reiterates that even the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem must acquiesce to YHWH's authority; if they do not, they cannot survive. No human power, however superlative, is independently founded; every state, great or small, derives its power from YHWH and is accountable to him for its use of it.

Bibliography

- Ahituv, S. "The Sinai theophany in the Psalm of Habakkuk." Pp. in 255–32 in vol. 1 of *Birkat Shalom: Studies in the Bible, Ancient Near Eastern Literature, and Postbiblical Judaism Presented to Shalom M. Paul on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*. Edited by C. Cohen et al. 2 vols. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008.
- Andersen, F. I. *Habakkuk: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 25. New York: Doubleday, 2001.
- Anderson, J. E. "Awaiting an Answered Prayer: The Development and Reinterpretation of Habakkuk 3 in Its Contexts." *ZAW* 123 (2011) 57–71.
- Barré, M. L. "Habakkuk 3:2: Translation in Context." *CBQ* 50 (1988) 184–97.
- Beck, M. "Das Tag YHWHs-Verständnis von Zephanja iii." *VT* 58 (2008) 159–77.
- Becking, B. "Bee's Dating Formula and the Book of Nahum." *JSOT* 18 (1980) 100–104.
- Bee, R. E. "Dating the Book of Nahum: A Response to the Article by Bob Becking." *JSOT* 18 (1980) 104.
- _____. "An Empirical Dating Procedure for Old Testament Prophecy." *JSOT* 11 (1979) 23–35.
- Ben Zvi, E. *A Historical-Critical Study of the Book of Zephaniah*. BZAW 198. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992.
- Berlin, A. *Zephaniah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 25A. New York: Doubleday, 1993.

- Cathcart, K. J. "Law is Paralysed' (Habakkuk 1.4): Habakkuk's Dialogue with God and the Language of Legal Disputation." Pp. 339–53 in *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*. Edited by J. Day. LHBOTS 531. New York: T. & T. Clark, 2010.
- Christensen, D. L. "The Acrostic of Nahum Reconsidered." *ZAW* 87 (1975) 17–30.
- _____. "The Acrostic of Nahum Once Again: A Prosodic Analysis of Nahum 1:1–10." *ZAW* 99 (1987) 409–15.
- _____. "The Book of Nahum: A History of Interpretation." Pp. 187–94 in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts*. Edited by J. W. Watts and P. R. House. JSOTSup 235. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996.
- _____. *Nahum: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 24F. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009.
- _____. "Zephaniah 2:4–15: A Theological Basis for Josiah's Program of Political Expansion." *CBQ* 46 (1984) 669–82.
- Cogan, M. "The Lions of Nineveh (Nahum 2:12–14): A Check on Nahum's Familiarity with Assyria." Pp. 433–39 in vol. 1 of *Birkat Shalom: Studies in the Bible, Ancient Near Eastern Literature, and Postbiblical Judaism Presented to Shalom M. Paul on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*. 2 vols. Edited by C. Cohen et al. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008.
- Crouch, C. L. "On Floods and the Fall of Nineveh: A Note on the Origins of a Spurious Tradition." Pp. 212–16 in *New Perspectives on Old Testament Prophecy and History: Essays in Honour of Hans M. Barstad*. Edited by Rannfrid I. Thelle, Terje Stordalen, and Mervyn E. J. Richardson. VTSup 168. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- _____. *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East: Military Violence in Light of Cosmology and History*. BZAW 417. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009.
- Day, J. "Echoes of Baal's Seven Thunders and Lightnings in Psalm 29 and Habakkuk 3:9 and the Identity of the Seraphim in Isaiah 6." *VT* 29 (1979) 143–51.
- _____. "New Light on the Mythological Background of the Allusion to Resheph in Habakkuk 3:5." *VT* 29 (1979) 353–55.
- De Roche, M. "Zephaniah 1:2–3: The 'Sweeping' of Creation." *VT* 30 (1980) 104–9.
- Delcor, M. "Allusions à la déesse Ištar en Nahum 2:8." *Bib* 58 (1977) 73–83.
- Delitzsch, M. *Biblischer Commentar über die Psalmen*. Leipzig: Dörflin & Franke, 1867.
- Floyd, M. H. "The Chimerical Acrostic of Nahum 1:2–10." *JBL* 113 (1994) 421–37.
- _____. *Minor Prophets: Part 2*. FOTL 22. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.
- _____. "Prophetic Complaints about the Fulfillment of Oracles in Habakkuk 1:2–17 and Jeremiah 15:10–18." *JBL* 110 (1991) 397–418.
- Gerstenberger, E. S. "Psalms in the Book of the Twelve: How Misplaced Are They?" Pp. 72–89 in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve*. Edited by P. L. Redditt and A. Scharf. BZAW 325. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003.
- Gitin, S. "Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Type Site for the Inner Coastal Plain in the Iron Age II Period." Pp. 23–58 in *Recent Excavations in Israel: Studies in Iron Age Archaeology*. Edited by S. Gitin and W. G. Dever. AASOR 49. Winona Lake, IN.: Eisenbrauns, 1989.
- Gordis, R. "A Rising Tide of Misery: A Note on a Note on Zephaniah 2:4." *VT* 37 (1987) 487–90.
- Gowan, D. E. "Habakkuk." Pp. 601–4 in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*. Edited by J. Barton and J. Muddiman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

- Gunkel, H. *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12*. Trans. K. William Whitney Jr. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006.
- _____. "Nahum 1." *ZAW* 11 (1893) 223–44.
- Gunneweg, A. H. J. "Habakuk und das Problem des leidenden צדק." *ZAW* 98 (1986) 400–415.
- Haak, R. D. *Habakkuk*. VTSup 44. Leiden: Brill, 1992.
- Hadjiev, T. "Zephaniah and the 'Book of the Twelve' Hypothesis." Pp. 325–38 in *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*. Edited by J. Day. LHBOTS 531. London: T. & T. Clark, 2010.
- Hagedorn, A. C. "Nahum—Ethnicity and Stereotypes: Anthropological Insights into Nahum's Literary History." Pp. 223–39 in *Ancient Israel: The Old Testament in Its Social Context*. Edited by P. F. Esler. London: SCM, 2005.
- _____. "When Did Zephaniah Become a Supporter of Josiah's Reform?" *JTS* 62 (2011) 253–75.
- Haupt, P. R. "Eine alttestamentliche Festliturgie für den Nikanortag." *ZDMG* 61 (1907) 275–97.
- Holladay, W. L. "Plausible Circumstances for the Prophecy of Habakkuk." *JBL* 120 (2001) 123–30.
- Huddleston, J. R. "Nahum, Nineveh, and the Nile: The Description of Thebes in Nahum 3:8–9." *JNES* 62 (2003) 97–110.
- Irsigler, H. *Zefanja*. HThKAT. Basel: Herder, 2002.
- Jeppesen, K. "Zephaniah 1:5b." *VT* 31 (1981) 372–73.
- Jöcken, P. *Das Buch Habakuk*. Cologne: Hanstein, 1977.
- Johnson, M. D. "The Paralysis of Torah in Habakkuk 1:4." *VT* 35 (1985) 257–66.
- Keller, C.-A., and R. Vuilleumier. *Michée, Nahoum, Habacuc, Sophonie*. CAT. Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1971.
- Margulis, B. "Psalm of Habakkuk: A Reconstruction and Interpretation." *ZAW* 82 (1970) 409–42.
- Mason, R. *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel*. OTG. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994.
- Naʿaman, N. "The Kingdom of Judah under Josiah." *TA* 18 (1991) 3–71.
- _____. "Population Changes in Palestine following Assyrian Deportations." Pp. 200–219 in *Ancient Israel and Its Neighbors: Interaction and Counteraction*. Vol. 1 of *Collected Essays*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005.
- _____. "Two Notes on the History of Ashkelon and Ekron in the Late Eighth-Seventh Centuries B.C.E." *TA* 25 (1998) 219–27.
- Nogalski, J. *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*. BZAW 217. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993.
- _____. *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve*. BZAW 218. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993.
- _____. "The Redactional Shaping of Nahum 1 for the Book of the Twelve." Pp. 193–202 in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*. Edited by P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines. JSOTSup 144. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993.
- O'Brien, J. M. "Nahum." Pp. 599–601 in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*. Edited by J. Barton and J. Muddiman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- _____. *Nahum*. Readings. 2nd ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009.

- _____. "Nahum–Habakkuk–Zephaniah: Reading the 'Former Prophets' in the Persian Period." *Int* 61 (2007) 168–83.
- _____. "Violent Pictures, Violent Cultures? The 'Aesthetics of Violence' in Contemporary Film and in Ancient Prophetic Texts." Pp. 112–30 in *Aesthetics of Violence in the Prophets*. Edited by C. Franke and J. M. O'Brien. LHBOTS 517. London: T. & T. Clark, 2010.
- Peckham, B. "The Vision of Habakkuk." *CBQ* 48 (1986) 617–36.
- Perlitt, L. *Die Propheten Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja*. ATD 25,1. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004.
- Pinker, A. "Descent of the Goddess Ishtar to the Netherworld and Nahum II 8." *VT* 55 (2005) 89–100.
- _____. "Habakkuk 2.4: An Ethical Paradigm or a Political Observation?" *JSOT* 32 (2007) 91–112.
- _____. "Nahum and the Greek Tradition on Nineveh's Fall." *JHS* 6 (2006) n.p.
- Prinsloo, G. T. M. "Petuhot/setumot and the Structure of Habakkuk: Evaluating the Evidence." Pp. 196–227 in *The Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis*. Edited by R. de Hoop, M. C. A. Korpel and S. E. Porter. Pericope 7. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Renaud, B. "La composition du livre de Nahum: une proposition." *ZAW* 99 (1987) 198–219.
- Renz, T. "A Perfectly Broken Acrostic in Nahum 1?" *JHS* 9 (2009) n.p.
- Rose, M. "«Atheismus» als Wohlstanderscheinung (Zephanja 1,12)." *TZ* 37 (1981) 193–208.
- Rudman, D. "A Note on Zephaniah." *Bib* 80 (1999) 109–12.
- Saggs, H. W. F. "Nahum and the Fall of Nineveh." *JTS* 20 (1969) 220–25.
- Schipper, B. U. "Egypt and the Kingdom of Judah under Josiah and Jehoiakim." *TA* 37 (2010) 200–226.
- Seybold, K. *Nahum Habakuk Zephanja*. ZBK 24,2. Zurich: Theologische, 1991.
- _____. "Vormasoretische Randnotizen in Nahum 1." *ZAW* 101 (1989) 71–85.
- Shepherd, M. B. "Compositional Analysis of the Twelve." *ZAW* 120 (2008) 184–93.
- Spronk, K. "Acrostics in the Book of Nahum." *ZAW* 110 (1998) 209–22.
- _____. "The Line-Acrostic in Nahum 1: New Evidence from Ancient Greek Manuscripts and from the Literary Analysis of the Hebrew text." Pp. 228–40 in *The Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis*. Edited by R. de Hoop, M. C. A. Korpel, and S. E. Porter. Pericope 7. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- _____. *Nahum*. HCOT. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1997.
- Strine, C. A., and C. L. Crouch, C. L. "Yahweh's Battle against Chaos in Ezekiel: The Transformation of a Traditional Motif for a New Situation." *JBL* 132 (2013) 883–903.
- Sweeney, M. A. "Concerning the Structure and Generic Character of the Book of Nahum." *ZAW* 104 (1992) 364–77.
- _____. "A Form-Critical Reassessment of the Book of Zephaniah." *CBQ* 53 (1991) 388–408.
- _____. "Structure, Genre, and Intent in the Book of Habakkuk." *VT* 41 (1991) 63–83.
- _____. *Zephaniah: A Commentary*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.
- Tadmor, H. "Philistia under Assyrian Rule." *BA* 29 (1966) 86–102.
- Van der Woude, A. S. "The Book of Nahum: A Letter Written in Exile." Pp. 108–26 in *Instruction and Interpretation: Studies in Hebrew Language, Palestinian Archaeology*

- and Biblical Exegesis: Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference Held at Louvain, 1976.* Edited by H. A. Brongers. OtSt 20. Leiden: Brill, 1977.
- Vlaardingerbroek, J. *Zephaniah*. Trans. J. Vriend. HCOT. Louvain: Peeters, 1999.
- Watts, J. W. "Psalmody in Prophecy: Habakkuk 3 in Context." Pp. 209–23 in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts*. Edited by J. W. Watts and P. R. House. JSOTSup 235. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996.
- Zalcman, L. "Ambiguity and Assonance at Zephaniah 2:4." *VT* 36 (1986) 365–71.
- Zapff, B. M. "The Perspective of the Nations in the Book of Micah as a 'Systematization' of the Nations' Role in Joel, Jonah and Nahum: Reflections on a Context-Oriented Exegesis in the Book of the Twelve." *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 38 (1999) 596–616.
- _____. "Die Volkerperspektive des Michabuches als 'Systematisierung' der divergierenden Sicht der Volker in den Buchern Joel, Jona und Nahum: Überlegungen zu einer buchübergreifenden Exegese im Dodekapropheten." *BN* 98 (1999) 86–99.