

Lamentations 3:60

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their imaginations against me.

Analysis

God's comprehensive observation affirmed: **"Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their imaginations against me."** The Hebrew *raita kol-nikmatam kol-machshevotam li* (רָאִיתָ כָּל-נִקְמָתָם כָּל-מַחְשְׁבוֹתָם לִי) emphasizes divine omniscience. *Raita* (רָאִיתָ, "you have seen") repeats from verse 59, stressing God's observation. *Kol* (כָּל, "all") appears twice—all their vengeance, all their thoughts.

"Their vengeance" (*nikmatam*, נִקְמָתָם) refers to vindictive actions taken against the speaker. "All their imaginations" (*kol-machshevotam*, כָּל-מַחְשְׁבוֹתָם) encompasses not just actions but thoughts, plans, and schemes. The Hebrew *machshavah* (מַחְשָׁבָה) means thought, intention, device, or plan. God sees both external deeds and internal motivations (1 Samuel 16:7, Jeremiah 17:10, Hebrews 4:12-13).

Theologically, this verse celebrates God's comprehensive knowledge. Nothing escapes Him—not overt attacks or hidden schemes. This provides comfort (enemies can't hide their evil from God) and sobriety (neither can we hide our thoughts from Him). Psalm 139:1-4 marvels: "O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me...thou understandest my thought afar off...there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether." Divine omniscience guarantees perfect justice—no evidence needs to be gathered; God already knows all.

Historical Context

The enemies' vengeance and imaginations against Jeremiah included multiple conspiracies. Jeremiah 18:18 records: "Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah." Jeremiah 11:18-23 reveals a plot by his hometown to kill him: "the LORD hath given me knowledge of it, and I know it." Jeremiah 20:10 describes pervasive threats: "I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him."

Despite these schemes, God preserved Jeremiah. The prophet's survival through Jerusalem's fall vindicated him while his enemies perished. Those who plotted vengeance received judgment instead. This demonstrates the principle of Psalm 7:14-16: "Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head."

For exilic Israel, God's observation of enemy schemes provided comfort. The nations that gloated over Judah's fall (Edom, Moab, Ammon, Philistia—Ezekiel 25) thought their plots succeeded. But God saw all and would judge accordingly. Daniel's visions (Daniel 2, 7, 8) revealed that God observes and ultimately overthrows all earthly kingdoms that oppose His purposes. Nothing escapes divine notice or escapes eventual judgment.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does knowing God has seen 'all their vengeance and all their imaginations' provide comfort when facing enemies?

2. What does God's knowledge of hidden thoughts and schemes teach about the impossibility of ultimately getting away with evil?
3. In what ways should divine omniscience affect our own thought life, knowing God sees not just our actions but our imaginations?
4. How does Christ's role as the judge who searches hearts and minds (Revelation 2:23) guarantee perfect justice for both believers and enemies?

Interlinear Text

רָא יְהוָה	כָּל	נִקְמַתָּם	כָּל	מַחְשְׁבֹתָם	לִי:
Thou hast seen	H3605	all their vengeance	H3605	and all their imaginations	H0
H7200		H5360		H4284	

Additional Cross-References

Lamentations 3:59 (Parallel theme): O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong: judge thou my cause.