

Micah 5:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

Analysis

And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. Micah 5 concludes with sobering judgment. After describing Messiah's peaceful reign (v. 2-5a), the remnant's blessing (v. 7), their victory (v. 8-9), and God's purge of Israel's idolatry (v. 10-14), verse 15 addresses "**the heathen**" (הָגֹי, ha-goyim)—the Gentile nations. The phrase "**I will execute vengeance**" (וְעָשֵׂית נִקָּם, ve-asiti nakam) announces divine retribution. "**Anger and fury**" (בְּאָף וּבְחֶמֶת, be-aph u-ve-chemah) emphasizes God's intense wrath—not capricious rage but righteous indignation against persistent rebellion.

The phrase "**such as they have not heard**" (אֲשֶׁר לֹא שָׁמַעַו, asher lo-shame'u) means unprecedented judgment—severity surpassing all previous judgments. Historical judgments (flood, Sodom, Egypt's plagues, Canaanite conquest, Assyrian/Babylonian invasions) pale before eschatological wrath. This echoes Joel 2:1-2: "The day of the LORD...a day of darkness and of gloominess...there hath not been ever the like." Revelation 6:15-17 depicts kings, mighty men, and slaves crying for mountains to hide them "from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Who faces this judgment? Nations that "**have not heard**"—not merely those ignorant of the gospel but those who heard and rejected. Romans 1:18-32 describes Gentiles suppressing truth, exchanging God's glory for idols, deserving death. Romans 2:5-8 warns that unrepentant hearts store up wrath for "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Yet Romans 10:12-13

offers hope: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Before judgment falls, grace invites response.

Historical Context

Throughout salvation history, God judged rebellious nations: the flood (Genesis 6-9), Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19), Egypt (Exodus 7-12), Canaanites (Joshua 6-12), Assyria (Nahum), Babylon (Jeremiah 50-51), Rome (Revelation 18). Each demonstrated God's justice yet foreshadowed final judgment. Micah's prophecy, given in the 8th century BC, anticipated both near judgments (Assyrian and Babylonian conquests) and ultimate eschatological judgment. Jesus warned: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory...before him shall be gathered all nations" (Matthew 25:31-32). Hebrews 10:30-31 solemnly concludes: "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord...It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The cross reveals both God's love and wrath: Christ bore judgment that we might escape it.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does awareness of God's coming "vengeance in anger and fury" shape the urgency of gospel proclamation to unbelieving nations and individuals?
2. What does this verse teach about God's justice—that He doesn't overlook persistent rebellion but will hold all accountable?
3. How do you balance confidence in God's love (shown in Christ's sacrifice) with healthy fear of His wrath (promised for unrepentant rebels)?

Interlinear Text

וְעַשׂ יְתִי	בָּאָרֶץ	וּבְחַמֵּת הָבָא	מִנְקָדֶשׁ	אֶת	הָגֹן
And I will execute	in anger	and fury	vengeance	H853	upon the heathen
H6213	H639	H2534	H5359		H1471
רֹאשׁ אָשֶׁר	לֹא	שָׁמְעוּ			
H834	H3808	such as they have not heard	H8085		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 149:7 (Parallel theme): To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

2 Thessalonians 1:8 (Parallel theme): In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Micah 5:8 (Parallel theme): And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

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