

## Will God's Vengeance Bring the End of the World?

**Romans 1:18:** *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.*



If we take a look around us, what we see can be confusing. On the one hand, we live in a time where science, technology and medicine are incredibly advanced. Billions of people throughout the world hold the world in their hands with their smartphones. That's amazing! We are creating artificial intelligence that can solve problems and do research. That's unbelievable!

A doctor in one location can do surgery on a patient in another location through technology. That's breathtaking! On the other hand, we have striking and disturbing depths of unrest, partisanship, dissatisfaction and egotism. We have so much, yet we

wallow in our discontentment. All in all, what's lacking is a foundational respect for and loyalty to our Creator. God is the One who gave us a mind capable of such amazing things and yet we disdain His presence in our society. No wonder He is unhappy!

Some people are very bitter against God. Here are just two excerpts from listeners who have written into Christian Questions:

- ✉ "I once believed whoever or whatever is behind this world was all-kind, all-loving and all-good. But He watched, watches and will watch billions of people suffering until He decides their suffering is enough and they can finally die."
- ✉ "It seems God doesn't need the devil very much at all—it is God who does the killing, God who brings evil upon mankind, God who sends plagues and locusts and butchering armies."

It's disturbing, and yet we can see why people feel this way. This is why we are addressing this subject. Let's examine why God is angry with the world and the consequences of that anger.

**We begin with the Apostle Paul's summation of the issue. Remember, this was written 2,000 years ago:**

**Romans 1:18-20:** *18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*

The Apostle Paul is talking about God's anger at sin.

- *Ungodliness* is a lack of reverence towards God.

- *Unrighteousness* is essentially a lack of reverence towards others. It means moral wrongfulness—violating law and justice.

Paul is saying there is no excuse for not knowing God. Primitive societies could look up and around them to witness to everything God made. Now we not only look out into far galaxies with sophisticated telescopes, but we also peer into the tiniest nanoparticle to see the infinitely complex. Our understanding of these things will have profound implications in the fields of medicine, energy, electronics and more.

**Evidence of God has ALWAYS been available through the natural world and the nature of humanity:**

**Romans 1:21-23:** *21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.*

**Romans 1:21-23:** (NLT) *Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship Him as God or even give Him thanks...they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles.*

Ever since Adam's first sin, humanity has been on a path of regularly misappropriating God's glory to themselves, to others and to their imagined gods.

**Vengeance: Merriam Webster Online Dictionary**

- punishment inflicted in retaliation for an injury or offense: retribution

It is often used as a synonym for revenge.

When we say someone is "back with a vengeance," it means to an extreme or excessive degree.



What does God's vengeance look like? Is He taking excessive revenge on mankind? Is He uncontrollable and full of rage because of all the ways we've turned our back on Him?

As we examine Scripture and begin to define this, let's remember the quotes from our listeners we read earlier. They feel God is an out-of-control monster, not worthy of being worshipped.

**Genesis 4:15:** (KJV) *And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance <5358> shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.*

**Vengeance:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5358 *nāqam*; to grudge, i.e. avenge or punish

God instructed the rest of the population not to take vengeance into their own hands. His vengeance here was not full of emotion or rage; it was a warning He put in place—a deterrent—so that no one would harm Cain until his natural life ended. God was saying, *I'm in control; you're not. Hands off.*

**Deuteronomy 32:35-36:** 35 *Vengeance <5359> is Mine, and retribution, in due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, and the impending things are hastening upon them.* 36 *For the LORD will vindicate His people, and will have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their strength is gone, and there is none remaining, bond or free.*

**Vengeance:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5359 *nāqām*;  
revenge:—avenged, quarrel, vengeance

God proclaims clearly here that His vengeance is designed to thwart wrongdoing. He has calculated that *in due time their foot will slip*, bringing about the appropriate consequence.

It is important to understand the difference in motives:  
When we want vengeance—what is our focus?  
When God wants vengeance—what is His focus?

God's focus is  
designed to thwart  
or put aside  
wrongdoing.

**Jeremiah 15:15:** *You who know, O LORD, remember me, take notice of me, and take vengeance <5358> for me on my persecutors. Do not, in view of Your patience, take me away; Know that for Your sake I endure reproach.*

Jeremiah is abiding by what was declared in Genesis. *I'm not taking vengeance on anyone, but please, God, do not let them take me away (kill me) because You are being patient with them!* Jeremiah felt they should have a consequence, but he doesn't seem to be looking for God to destroy them; he wants a just consequence.

**Let's look at one more Old Testament example:**

**Leviticus 19:17-18:** 17 *You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him.* 18 *You shall not take vengeance <5358>, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.*

God warns against taking vengeance and bearing a grudge. **The Hebrew word for grudge here means to guard, keep or even cherish anger.** Israel was not to take vengeance—to not seek to put justice in place, nor to hold and cherish their anger against their fellow countrymen. They weren't to do either!

Jesus told us not to hate even our enemies, even if they do something wrong against us. If this is God's standard, we can reasonably assume He applies this standard to His own



character. We are to rise above emotional reactions, but where is the justice for me when I am wronged?

Good question! If we aren't to take vengeance, how do we get justice? We will revisit this in our next episode #1371.



We want to see the whole picture, not just for a moment in time and not just in the Old Testament. How is God's vengeance expressed in the New Testament? The New Testament words for *vengeance* can all carry the same thought of a just action, not an emotionally-driven action.

**Vengeance:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #1556 *ekdikeo*; to vindicate, retaliate, punish

**Vengeance:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #1557 *ekdikesis*; vindication, retribution

**Romans 12:18-19:** *18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. 19 Never take your own revenge <1556>, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, VENGEANCE <1557> IS MINE, I WILL REPAY, says the Lord.*

**Vengeance:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #1558 *ekdikos*; carrying justice out, i.e. a punisher

Romans 12:18-19  Deuteronomy 32:35  The Apostle Paul is quoting from Deuteronomy 32:35, linking back to the Old Testament.

**In addition:**

**Proverbs 20:22:** *Do not say, I will repay evil; wait for the LORD, and He will save you.*

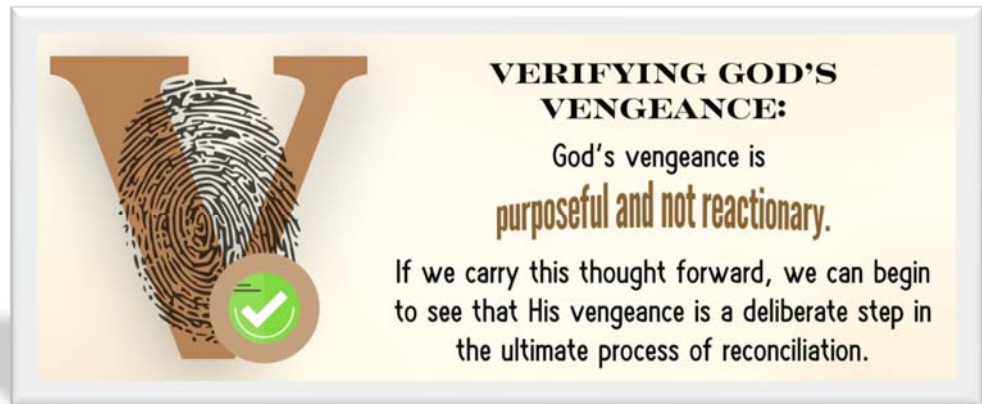
(Source: Bible commentary from MacLaren's Expositions) *Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord—* Dwelling in such a system as we do, how dare anyone take that work into his hands? It requires perfect knowledge of the true evil of an action, which no one has who cannot read the heart; it requires perfect freedom from passion; it requires perfect immunity from evil on the part of the avenger; in a word, it belongs to God, and Him alone.

There is a reason that just retribution belongs to God and not to us. This commentary lays out the requirements for God's vengeance.

**Let's go to another New Testament scripture that helps us understand God's vengeance:**

**1 Thessalonians 4:4-6:** *4 That each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger <1558> in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you.*

Paul is warning to not get all tied up in our passion like the Gentiles do. God is the avenger.



God sees people through the eyes of their potential. His vengeance is in relation to that potential.

Framing vengeance within the context of purposeful action towards a wrong rather than an emotional reaction certainly gives us something to think about.

**So far, we have been introduced to God's vengeance as a clear-thinking response. But why does He need it?**

Whenever we look to grasp any particular part of God's character, we must proceed with respect and honor, always observing any one part as a necessary ingredient of the whole:

- God's love without His justice would be unreliable.
- His power without His wisdom would bring fear.
- God's vengeance must be understood as an outgrowth of all of His other attributes.

When people look at God and see Him only through the eyes of vengeance, they miss the point of God Almighty. They take one piece, and say, "If that's your God, I don't want Him." Well, if that was our God, we wouldn't want Him either! This is why we need to understand God's entire character.

**With this understanding, let's review what God expects from His human creation, even in a sinful state:**

**Exodus 20:1-7:** (excerpts from the Ten Commandments are in gold) *1 Then God spoke all these words, saying, 2 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 You shall have no other gods before Me. 4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. 7 You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.*



1. You shall have no other gods before Me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.
3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.



What is God looking for? He is looking for those who would live in freedom—remember, He gave Israel their freedom from Egypt and then gave them these commandments—to recognize the source of that freedom.

Because freedom ultimately comes from God, He and no one else deserves praise and honor for it.

So, how are we doing with these first three commandments in the world today?



Not so good. Just because we don't keep a golden calf in our kitchen doesn't mean we don't worship idols today. An *idol* is anything that takes our focus away from God. Are we focused too much on ourselves? On our "stuff"? On social media? On how rich people and celebrities live? Everywhere we look, elevating "self" is admired, praised and sought after. This can be idolatry.

**The prophet Isaiah sums it up well:**

**Isaiah 44:9:** (NLT) *How foolish are those who manufacture idols. These prized objects are really worthless. The people who worship idols don't know this, so they are all put to shame.*

Let's take a look at a prophecy that talks about God's vengeance. The first chapter of the book of Nahum is a prophecy against Nineveh, the city that was spared from destruction back in Jonah's day due to their repentance. But they went back to their wicked ways. As we look at this description of God's vengeance, we see a future application of God's vengeance unfold beyond the incident with Nineveh, referring to the *Day of Vengeance*:

The phrase *the day* (or *days*) *of vengeance* is found in several places, including **Isaiah 34:8; 61:2, Jeremiah 46:10, Luke 21:22** and others. It is also called *the day of the Lord*, *the day of Jehovah* and other titles. This is the name of that period of time in which God's kingdom under Christ is to be gradually *set up* in the earth. It is everywhere described as a dark day of intense trouble, distress and perplexity upon mankind as the old structures of rule are torn down to make way for the new, perfect system of rule under Christ.

**Zephaniah 3:8:** *Therefore wait for Me, declares the LORD, For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal.*

*Indignation...anger...zeal*—if we are trying to defend God in His vengeance, does this text help make the case? It actually does when we keep reading in context, as we will do soon, and compare with other texts.

**Walking through an overview of Nahum chapter 1 will help us understand God's vengeance:**

**Nahum 1:2-3:** *2 A jealous and **avenging** <5358> God is the LORD; The LORD is **avenging** <5358> and wrathful. The LORD takes **vengeance** <5358> on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies. 3 The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished...*

*Avenging and vengeance in those verses are the same Hebrew word.*

God's anger is directed at sin and those who perpetrate it. He will always avenge anything that sin defaces.

Sin is anything that misses the mark. That means God's vengeance will be toward human governments, false religions and even false teachings within Christianity. This covers the full spectrum of humanity. People seem to revel in committing sin and degrading themselves for shock value. Yet, people want evil vanquished. To make sense of all of this, we have to think about it from the perspective of what is happening in the world, God's appropriate response to sin and what the end result will be.



**Remember, the character of God needs to be clearly understood as a whole:**

**Psalm 89:14:** *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; lovingkindness and truth go before You.*

God's vengeance works within the principles of righteousness, justice, lovingkindness and truth. If we only focus on the vengeance aspect of God's plan—ignoring its place in the overall plan for man's recovery from sin—we are being hypocritical. Would we want anybody looking at us only when we were mad and deciding that was the whole of who we are? *Well, but you don't know the rest of me!*

Why is God angry? We must remember *righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne*. Therefore, His anger must have a just and righteous purpose.

**As we continue, let's focus on the highly symbolic nature of prophecy. The words said are not ultimately the words meant:**

**Nahum 1:3-4:** *3 ...In **whirlwind** and **storm** is His way, and **clouds** are the dust beneath His feet. 4 He rebukes the **sea** and makes it dry; He dries up all the **rivers**. Bashan and Carmel wither; the blossoms of Lebanon wither.*

Bashan, Carmel and Lebanon are all places in or around Israel.

Let's consider prophetic meanings of these descriptive words. Remember, the words said in prophecy have symbolic meanings.



**STORMS AND CLOUDS:** We suggest storms and clouds generally represent great trouble in society. Yes, there are some "nice" clouds, like the one over the Tabernacle in the wilderness that represented God's presence, but here we are talking about clouds in the context of God's vengeance.

**Joel 2:1-2:** *1 Blow a trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming; Surely it is near, 2 A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness...*

This is a day we would rather skip for one with bright sunshine! It is a day we would want to avoid. When we look at prophetic “clouds,” we can see that this isn’t a good situation.



**WHIRLWIND:** A whirlwind is a concentrated type of storm that uproots and destroys, creating lots of dust. In this context, it could represent an intense kind of societal trouble like anarchy.

**In prophecy, whirlwinds can come from God or man:**

**Isaiah 66:15:** *For behold, the LORD will come in fire and His chariots like the [whirlwind](#), to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire.*

**Jeremiah 25:32:** (KJV) *Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great [whirlwind](#) shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.*

In Isaiah, the whirlwind came from God. In Jeremiah, it came from the coasts of the earth. It is a concentrated kind of storm, and storms bring destruction—especially a storm like a whirlwind. This prophetic whirlwind references a “storm” within society.

Previously in **Nahum 1:4**, we read, *He rebukes the [sea](#) and makes it dry; He dries up all the [rivers](#).* The sea and rivers being dried up may be focusing on “drought” conditions—God’s word not being heard or understood—because of a lack of the refreshing “rivers of truth” feeding the “sea” of restless humanity.



**SEA:** The sea is large, unstable and uncontrollable, aptly picturing the restless, turbulent, dissatisfied masses of the world.

**For example:**

**Isaiah 57:20:** *But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud.*

This is plainly descriptive. Humanity's restlessness cannot be controlled. Nature, in the form of hurricanes and storm surges, illustrates this well. *The tossing sea* is prophetically humanity's uncontrollable, discontented restlessness.



**RIVER: Literally a stream of water, flowing from one place to another:**

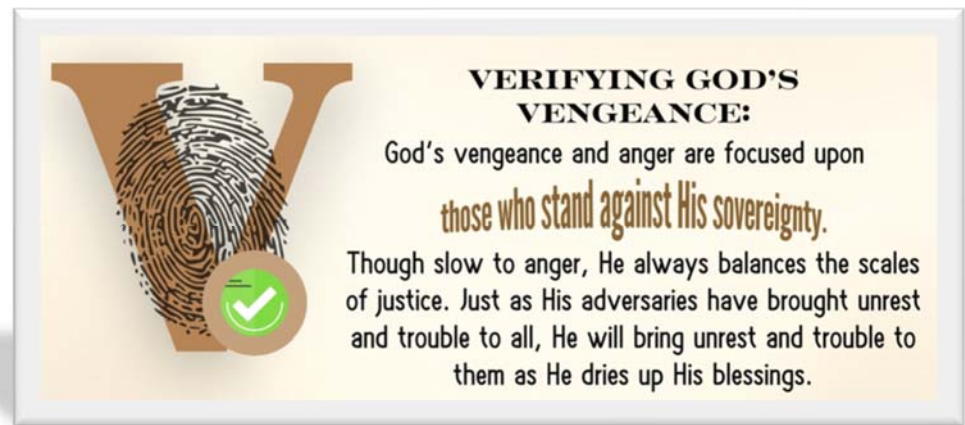
**Revelation 22:1,17:** *1 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the lamb, 17 the spirit and the bride say, Come. And...let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.*

This is a beautiful picture of a river bringing the water of life to those who are thirsty.

When we look at the picture language in the Nahum prophecy: **WHIRLWIND, STORM AND CLOUDS, SEA and RIVERS**, we see what is said is not what is meant prophetically.



These word pictures are about PEOPLE and SOCIETAL CONDITIONS, not physical weather on our planet. This is an important understanding of what God's vengeance will be focused on.



God's vengeance is part of the big process that will produce something outside of and beyond His vengeance. It is not vengeance for the sake of revenge; rather, it is a necessary stage in the outworking of God's plans.

While looking at prophecies and their symbolism helps us understand them, it still doesn't take away the potential for being afraid!

**So far, the symbols we have seen in prophecy are not very happy.  
How does all of this begin to make sense with the totality of God's character?**

The further we go, the more disturbing all of this can become if we don't keep it in perspective. God's plan for humanity is one that is based upon justice and love, not His vengeance. It is being executed, not with His vengeance, but with His power through His wisdom. While God's wrath plays a necessary role, we need to remember that it is also a limited role. If we don't see that, we can't see God. And if we cannot see God, we cannot appreciate the magnitude of who He is and the magnitude of this subject.

**Back to what God looks for from His human creation through the standard of the Ten Commandments:**

**Exodus 20:8,12:** *8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.*

The theme here is honor. Honor Him by honoring what He purposely proclaimed the seventh day to mean—a day of rest. This means allowing our “whirlwind” lives to slow down enough for a *Selah* moment—to “pause and consider” for a period of time.

Honor your parents—honor that which has gone before you with respect, humility and care.

So, how are we doing with this in the world today?

(Source: Psychology Today magazine: “Whatever Happened to Respecting Your Parents—Nowadays ‘Honor thy father and mother’ is just a suggestion,” June 15, 2019) Parents are “...confused and frustrated with their adult children’s apparent disregard for the basic rules of social conduct that the parents learned when they were children...and could have sworn they passed along...In the past, we demonstrated respect for adults through language like “sir” and “ma’am.”

We avoided speaking the truth if the truth might make the adult look or feel bad. Both children and adults showed respect for our elders, whether we actually respected those people or not.”

(Source: Pew Research Center [April 4, 2024] What’s It Like to Be a Teacher in America Today? Survey of over 2,500 teachers in October 2023)

- 47% of teachers say students showing little or no interest in learning is a major problem in their classroom. The share rises to 58% among high school teachers.
- A majority of teachers (68%) say they’ve experienced verbal abuse from a student – such as being yelled at or threatened. Some 21% say this happens at least a few times a month.
- 40% of teachers say a student has been violent toward them, with 9% saying this happens at least a few times a month.

Our society's degradation of parents, authority figures and teachers shows that we are not doing very well.

Are we, as a society, elevating everybody to a higher level of integrity and goodness, or are we falling into the pit of misery, despair, selfishness and violence? When we look at God and say, *Your vengeance is awful; You are a monster*, let’s look at how we’re teaching our children. Let’s look at how we are choosing to contribute to society.

God’s vengeance is ALWAYS in context with His plan, and God’s plan has Jesus and his ransom sacrifice as its center. That’s the fulcrum, the balance point of how His plan works.

**Nahum 1:5:** *Mountains quake because of Him and the hills dissolve (KJV says melt); indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, the world and all the inhabitants in it.*

*Mountains quake, hills melt, and the earth is upheaved by His presence—this doesn’t sound happy—it doesn’t sound like we would welcome what God is doing at this point!*



**MOUNTAINS:** Mountains are large, controlling natural structures that impose their presence on man. You can’t just walk through or over a mountain. We understand them to represent kingdoms or, in our day, governments. That would include human governments as well as the governing power of God.



**HILLS:** Hills are smaller mountains—hills would therefore be the organizations of humanity.

**Micah 4:1:** *And it will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, and the peoples will stream to it.*



**EARTH:** The earth is solid and stable, especially in contrast with the sea (restless masses of humanity). It is the social structure of man, the stable portion of society.

**WORLD:** The entire order of earthly influence.

**Psalms 33:8:** *Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.*

*Let all the earth*—is this talking about the dirt reverencing God? No. We all know that when we read this, it refers to “all the people.” In Psalms, we have the earth fearing the Lord and *the inhabitants of the world* (the whole system) standing in awe at His presence.

In Micah, we had *the chief of the mountains*—God’s kingdom will be the chief of all earth’s governments. These symbols help us see the Nahum prophecy more clearly.

In Nahum, the *mountains*—the governments of the world—quake because of Him, and all the hills—the lesser organizations—dissolve. They just dissolve and come apart. The entire orderly influence of things in this world is in a state of upheaval because of Him. The world—the earthly influence—is shaken.

All these things happen in that one verse of this Nahum prophecy. It sounds like all of what we know in this society is being pulled apart, piece by piece. The governments of man are shaken, the organizations of humanity lose their strength, and that which was stable is now in all aspects in a state of upheaval.

We have quaking, dissolving and upheaval. This does not sound good, happy or peaceful. This is what God’s vengeance brings. Aha! He is angry! Yes, but is He out of control? Is this an emotional outburst, or is there a reason behind all this quaking and shaking?

**Nahum 1:6:** *Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire and the rocks are broken up by Him.*



**FIRE:** Fire in Scripture either consumes or purifies. Here, *fire* represents the destruction of whatever is burned—tares, dross, earth (social organization), or whatever it’s describing.

God’s anger against sin and rebellion will be displayed in a way that will never be forgotten. Make no mistake, what happens in this *Day of Vengeance* is serious and the experiences are not happy. They are painful. There is anguish, loss and misery. We are not trying to minimize this time.

Like a volcanic eruption that destroys anything and everything in its way, God’s justice and righteousness will be restored through the necessary destruction that comes through God’s anger.

How does this make God's vengeance look good? Remember, God's anger is only part of the big picture of God's character. God's justice is forever. God's love is forever. God's wisdom is forever. God's power is forever. But God's vengeance is expressed only in certain circumstances.

Remember the picture language! The idea of anger that overthrows all opposition is appropriate when we remember who He is angry with, why He is angry and what His anger is being dispatched to accomplish. We shouldn't look at God's vengeance without looking at the future result.


When humans seek vengeance, their only aim is destruction. When God applies vengeance, it is one small part of His total plan of restoring mankind to a peaceable kingdom. We must give ourselves the opportunity to see Him in totality.

**Nahum 1:7-9:** *7 The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him. (Now there seems to be a ray of hope!) 8 But with an overflowing flood He will make a complete end of its site, and will pursue His enemies into darkness. 9 Whatever you devise against the LORD, He will make a complete end of it. Distress will not rise up twice.*

## Julie's Experience

On a basic level, this reminds me of going through double hip replacement surgery. You live with pain until your quality of life is so bad as to be unmanageable and all-consuming. The surgery itself is difficult, literally sawing away the damaged parts and hammering in the new pieces. There was excruciating pain waking up, and for a while, I thought, *What did I just do? This can't possibly get better!* But with time and physical therapy, it absolutely got better, and it was no doubt the best decision.

Going into the last surgery, Julie knew what the pain would be like, but knew that after the time of pain and suffering was over, healing would result.



**VERIFYING GOD'S VENGEANCE:**

In this Nahum prophecy, God's vengeance has been revealed as **the necessary tool** to remove the deeply rooted systems of humanity that have developed over thousands of years. While the harshness of this cannot be ignored, the necessity of this removal process cannot be stressed enough. You cannot build something that will last for eternity upon a foundation that is unstable and crumbling!

No architect builds a building on an unstable foundation. God is better than any architect we can imagine. The world as it is right now has an unstable foundation, which is why God's wrath and vengeance come into play.

So, in this prophecy, everything is falling apart, or rather, being taken apart by God's wrath. Though scary, we need to remember the big picture!

**Thankfully we are done with that prophecy in Nahum!  
Can we take a breather? Where do we go from here?**

Hold on, because our understanding of the difficulties and consequences of God's wrath need more input. Next, we will verify all that Nahum said by briefly visiting two more of the many prophecies that reveal the work of God's wrath and as we go, we will begin to see the much larger picture unfold.

Why are we dwelling on the misery part? Because we need to see it for what it is and then put it into the context for what it accomplishes and what it brings.

**Back to what God looks for from His human creation:**

**Exodus 20:13-17:** *13 You shall not murder. 14 You shall not commit adultery. 15 You shall not steal. 16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*



Again, how is mankind doing with these today?

The obvious observation is that the dignity and integrity God expects from humanity are all but lost. Every commandment here continues to be broken because society encourages us to believe we have the right to think and act as we please.

Jesus elevated the Commandments to a level above physically committing the sin—you don't have to actually murder someone, but you can "murder" their reputation. Adultery includes not just the act, but also simply lusting after someone who is not your spouse (**Matthew 5:27-28**).

Of course, social media and many TV shows are all about wanting the rich, glamorous and beautiful lifestyle someone else has. The world's standards are very much outside of God's principles.

In our lack of understanding, we may look at the effects of God's wrath and rage against Him in our hearts. But His vengeance has the purpose of breaking down the present evils of society, exacting justice against sin, and ushering in a marvelous future for mankind. Rather than blaming God, we should look at ourselves honestly and judge whether we are doing what we are supposed to do. Are we living up to the integrity the Lord expects of us?



**With our own faultiness in mind, let's look at yet another difficult prophecy:**

**Psalms 46:1-3:** *1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the **earth** should change and though the **mountains** slip into the heart of the **sea**; 3 Though its waters roar and foam, though the **mountains** quake at its swelling pride. Selah.*



**Let's overlay our prophetic definitions and read this again:**

*God is our refuge and strength. He carries us even though the **mountains** (earth's governments) slip into the heart of the **sea** (the restless masses) though its waters roar and foam (the masses of people who rage, clamor and fight for their real or perceived rights).*

We certainly see this happening all over the globe, but we don't have to fear even though we know it will get much worse. Why? Because *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

**There is more good news in the midst of trouble:**

**Psalms 46:4-5:** *4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling places of the Most High. 5 God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.*

While the mountains are quaking and slipping into the heart of the sea—earth's governments and ruling organizations being swallowed by the masses demanding their real and perceived rights—those who seek God have a spiritually-safe dwelling place within their knowledge and faith in God's plan.

This gives us great solace because we know God's character. Instead of looking at the vengeance of the day—at the destruction justice demands to clear out the sin—we see God for His whole character.

**And yet the trouble grows:**

**Psalms 46:6-8:** *6 The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. 7 The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. 8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, who has wrought desolations in the earth.*

Of course, the earth doesn't literally melt. **Ecclesiastes 1:4:** *...But the earth remains forever.*

Yet we see the trouble—it is unmistakable. *The nations made an uproar.* Where there is an uproar, everyone notices. The *Day of Vengeance* is gaining momentum! Take note of what God's anger destroys—the governments and all these constructs of humanity that are against the principles of God.

**With that in mind, now look and see what the anger and vengeance of God accomplishes:**

**Psalms 46:9-11:** *9 He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire. 10 Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. 11 The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah.*

*He makes wars to cease*—isn't that what everyone wants? God's vengeance brings about this result. The purpose of His wrath, His vengeance, is revealed. It is there NOT to rage but to accomplish something, to engage in action that will bring about a new righteous order on this earth. We are seeing despair replaced by hope.

All this trouble will prepare the world to realize that no matter how we try to solve our problems, our plans are futile as long as ignorance and selfishness lead the way. All will be convinced that the only feasible way of correcting the difficulty is by God setting up His strong and righteous government for all.

That is what is shown in **Psalm 46**. It was also shown in the Micah scriptures we quoted earlier. There is a reason for the vengeance. God's vengeance is always in character with the rest of who He is. The actions He takes are all within the balance of justice, wisdom, power and love. Those are the foundations of His character.



God's vengeance is only used in specific moments for specific reasons. It is not the same emotional need for revenge that might motivate us. Rather, it is a meting out of justice to eliminate sinful earthly governments and organizations in order to set up His righteous government.

**One last prophetic look at God's anger:**

**Zephaniah 3:8:** *Therefore wait for Me, declares the LORD, for the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal.*

As difficult as this sounds, it is good for us to see that God's vengeance is focused on something very specific! For the unbeliever, this causes great fear and anger. They see God as a monster. We get that! If we don't look at the rest of the evidence that would be our conclusion also. In essence, we would be looking at God with blinders that cut off the expanse of His character. We would see only the one aspect mentioned in this verse. In order to understand the complete picture, we must look at the context of all the verses to see what God's purpose is.

**This verse reveals an entirely different picture:**

**Zephaniah 3:9:** *For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder.*

This shows there is hope. It shows the amazing end and the purpose for God's vengeance. The KJV calls *purified lips*—"a pure language." This new understanding will provide every person an opportunity to receive everlasting life on a perfected earth. In prophecy after prophecy regarding the trouble, we have the same promise repeated.

There is great hope because His vengeance will turn the tide from something that looked impossible to something that is unbelievably wonderful!

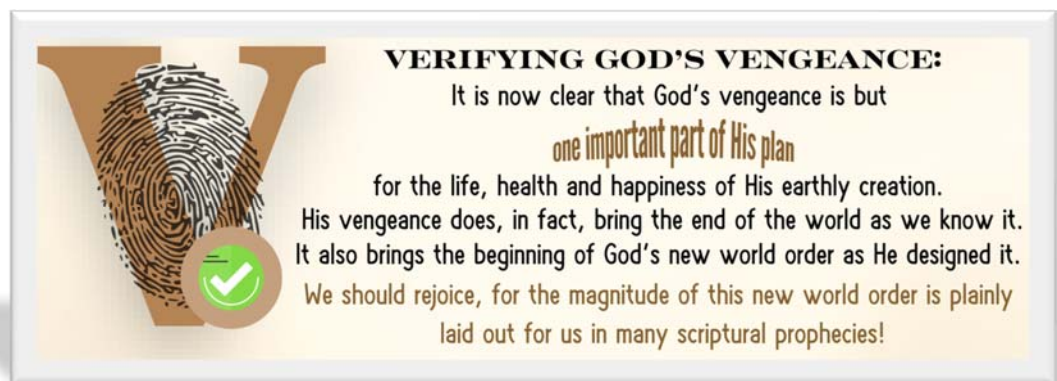
**God's vengeance and anger bring purified life and harmony. There IS hope:**

**Psalms 76:8-10:** *8 You caused judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared and was still 9 when God arose to judgment, to save all the humble of the earth. Selah. 10 For the wrath of man shall praise You...*

Think about that! *The wrath of man shall praise You.* It is important we see that in Bible prophecy, God's vengeance is a tool of God's justice, love, wisdom and power. God is merciful.

When we began, we asked, "Where is justice for me?" How can we answer that in the context of God's vengeance and the current situation on earth?

The answer to this is that "justice for me" is coming. Our next episode will look at the other side of this—what the RESULTS of God's vengeance are all about. It will unfold in such a way that makes God's vengeance look like a little blip on the screen.



This is an important perspective. God's vengeance is very real. It is harsh; it is hard, and there is pain and suffering. There is no question about those things because that is where our ignoring of God's standards has left the world. However, it is but a moment in relation to the eternity of what His vengeance accomplishes. It is there as a tool. It is put into effect to clean out the sinfulness, and then it is removed. God's justice, love, wisdom and power are NEVER removed because they are who He is.

Praise God for His vengeance in the context of the rest of His character.

**So, will God's vengeance bring the end of the world?  
For Rick, Jonathan, Julie and Christian Questions...  
...Think about it!**



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*All scriptures cited are from the NASB1995 translation unless otherwise noted.*

### **Bonus Material and Study Questions**

#### **Recommended additional study:**

**Ep.927: Does Science Show the Existence of a Creator?**

*How true science verifies superhuman intelligence*

<https://christianquestions.com/society/927-does-science-show-existence-creator/>

**Ep.969: Will God's Vengeance Squash Us Like Bugs?**

*What God's vengeance means—how it works and why it happens*

<https://christianquestions.com/current-events/969-will-gods-vengeance-squash-us-like-bugs/>



Parents and Bible class teachers, continue your studies on this topic with this short, animated video for kids at [ChristianQuestions.com/YouTube](https://christianquestions.com/YouTube):

**What are the Ten Commandments?**

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/what-are-the-10-commandments/>

**What does the Bible say about honor?**

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/what-the-bible-says-about-honor/>

**What is idolatry?**

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/what-is-idolatry/>

**Here are just a few prophecies that give some details about God's wrath:**

**Nahum 1:1-15:** *1 The oracle of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. 2 A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; the LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies. 3 The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In whirlwind and storm is His way, and clouds are the dust beneath His feet. 4 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry; He dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither; the blossoms of Lebanon wither. 5 Mountains quake because of Him and the hills dissolve; Indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, the world and all the inhabitants in it. 6 Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire and the rocks are broken up by Him. 7 The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him. 8 But with an overflowing flood He will make a complete end of its site, and will pursue His enemies into darkness. 9 Whatever you devise against the LORD, He will make a complete end of it. Distress will not rise up twice. 10 Like tangled thorns, and like those who are drunken with their drink, they are consumed as stubble completely withered. 11 From you has gone forth one who plotted evil against the LORD, a wicked counselor. 12 Thus says the LORD, though they are at full strength and likewise many, even so, they will be cut off and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no longer. 13 So now, I will break his yoke bar from upon you, and I will tear off your shackles. 14 The LORD has issued a command concerning you: Your name will no longer be perpetuated. I will cut off idol and image from the house of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are contemptible. 15 Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace! Celebrate your feasts, O Judah; Pay your vows. For never again will the wicked one pass through you; He is cut off completely.*

**Psalms 2:1-6:** (KJV) *1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against His anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. 4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. 5 Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. 6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*

**Zephaniah 3:8-9:** *8 Therefore wait for Me, declares the LORD, for the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal. 9 For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder.*

**Psalms 46:1-11:** *1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; 3 Though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah. 4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling places of the Most High. 5 God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. 6 The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. 7 The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. 8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, who has wrought desolations in the earth. 9 He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire. 10 Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted*



*among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. 11 The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah.*

**Psalms 97:1-12:** (KJV) *1 The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. 3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. 4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. 5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. 6 The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see his glory. 7 Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods. 8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD. 9 For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods. 10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: He preserveth the souls of his saints; He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. 11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. 12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.*

**Zephaniah 1:14-16:** *14 Near is the great day of the LORD, near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. 15 A day of wrath is that day, a day of trouble and distress, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities and the high corner towers.*

# Study QUESTIONS

## Ep.1370: Will God's Vengeance Bring the End of the World?

<https://christianquestions.com/current-events/1370-end-of-the-world/>

See:  CQ.Rewind  
SHOW NOTES

1. Why is God angry with the world? Why should God expect righteousness and honor from people who do not know about Him? Where does the honor which should go to their Creator get misplaced? (Romans 1:18-23)
2. What is vengeance? What is retribution? How you feel when you want to take revenge on someone who has wronged you? Is this the kind of revenge God seeks? What is the difference in the focus or purpose of our seeking vengeance and God's? (Genesis 4:15, Deuteronomy 32:35-36)
3. Do you ever bear a grudge? What are the scriptural guidelines governing our taking revenge? (Genesis 4:15, Leviticus 19:17-18, Romans 12:18-19, Proverbs 20:22, 1 Thessalonians 4:4-6, MacLaren's Exposition quote)
4. **Exodus 20:1-7, Commandments 1-3** – These deal with the relationship between God and man
  - a. Does this present world follow these commandments well? Do you have “idols” in your life?
  - b. **Nahum 1:2-3**: Who is God angry with in these verses? Why? Define God's character. (Psalm 89:14)
  - c. **Nahum 1:3-4**: Generally, what do storms and clouds, whirlwinds, the sea, and rivers scripturally symbolize? (Joel 2:1-2, Isaiah 57:20, 66:15, Jeremiah 25:32, Revelation 22:1,17)
  - d. Is this vengeance for the sake of revenge? Explain. (“Verifying God's Vengeance” box)
5. **Exodus 20:8,12, Commandments 4-5**—These deal with honoring God's provision for us
  - a. How well does our present society honor parents, authority figures and teachers? Do you treat others in a way that will lift them up, help them improve? How does God's plan use vengeance to help man?
  - b. **Nahum 1:5**: What do mountains, hills, earth and the world prophetically symbolize? What is the chief of the mountains?
  - c. **Nahum 1:6**: What does fire do in Scripture? What is God's vengeance accomplishing?
  - d. **Nahum 1:7-9**: Why is it necessary for God to make a complete end to wickedness? Is there comfort here?
6. **Exodus 20:8,12; Commandments 6-10**—These deal with the relationship between people
  - a. How are we doing today with these commandments? Are we living up to the integrity the Lord expects?
7. **Psalms 46:1-11, Zephaniah 3:8-9, Psalms 76:8-10**—Does God's vengeance bring the end of the world as we know it? Discuss Psalm 46 in regards to:
  - a. **Verses 1,4,5: Promises**—can you hold onto these promises to combat the fear of today's troubled times?
  - b. **Verses 2,3,6: Trouble**—rephrase these verses without the symbolic pictures.
  - c. **8-11: Accomplishments**—what was the purpose for all this trouble?
8. How does the wrath of man praise God? How can you see God's vengeance in the full picture of His love, power, wisdom and justice?