***“Studying the Southern Kingdom Prophets”—Micah 2, Sins Against Each Other (Man)***

**Micah is one of the twelve minor prophets. His sermons seem to echo a warning to even us today! Chapter 1 boldly assails the sins of God’s people against God, but Chapter 2 will rebuke the crimes against his fellow man. God is pressing for “His own” to become overcomes, in a covenant relationship with Himself. God sees their faults and they are not His!! Jesus admonishes His own to “be overcomers” in His seven letters to the churches in Revelation.**

**1-2, “Woe to those who devise iniquity, and work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. They covet fields and take *them* by violence, also houses, and seize *them.* So they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance.”**

1. **As a review, refer to other scriptural references paralleled in Micah.**
	1. **Micah 2:4 and 6:5, Joshua’s divisions of Promised Land.**
	2. **Micah 1:10, David’s lament over Saul and Jonathan’s deaths.**
	3. **Micah 1:2 and I Kings 22:28, His predecessor’s challenge.**
	4. **Micah 2:1 and 3:2, Psalms.**
	5. **Micah 4:9 and 11, Proverbs.**
	6. **Micah 2:3, 6, 11 and 3:6, Amos. There are a lot of similarities between what Micah says to the Southern Kingdom and what Amos relates to the North.**
2. **The “taunting” that appears in verses 1-2 is reminiscent of other such taunting. See Psalm 13:3-4, 22:6-8, Obadiah 12-13, and Habakkuk 2:6-8 (Israel does the taunting.)**
3. **Discuss “devise iniquity,” verse 2.**  **Woe to those who devise iniquity**: All sin is bad before God, but *premeditated* sin is worse. Here Micah speaks plainly to those who **devise iniquity** - in this case - those who oppress others through their greed and covetousness. THE ROOT OF THIS PROBLEM IS THAT THE POWER IS IN THE UNGODLY…..NO ‘GOD FEARING’ PEOPLE LEFT.
4. **Why the use of “morning light” inference? Is this irony? At morning light** is ironic. Typically thieves practice their work at night, under the cover of darkness. In the ancient world, law courts opened for business **at morning light** because the rising sun demonstrated light dispelling darkness. Micah sees the corruption of Israel’s law courts and shows that they practice their theft and evil **at morning light**, when the courts open.
5. **Whose power is emphasized here?**  **Because it is in the power of their hand**: There are some sins we never commit because we are never put in a place where we can commit them. The real test comes when **it is in the power of** our **hand** to sin and we keep faithful to the Lord.
6. **Review the “six woes” of Isaiah 5.** These are very graphic, and for our times, too.
	1. **Woe 1, 5:8-10, a rant against materialism…. “**Woe to those who join house to house; They add field to field, Till *there is* no place Where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!9In my hearing the Lord of hosts *said,* “Truly, many houses shall be desolate ,Great and beautiful ones, without inhabitant. 10For ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, And a homer of seed shall yield one ephah.”
	2. **Woe 2, 5:11-17, a rant against alcoholism... “**Woe to those who rise early in the morning, *That* they may follow intoxicating drink; Who continue until night, *till* wine inflames them! 12The harp and the strings, The tambourine and flute,
	And wine are in their feasts; But they do not regard the work of the Lord,
	Nor consider the operation of His hands. Therefore my people have gone into captivity, Because *they have* no knowledge; Their honorable men *are* famished,
	And their multitude dried up with thirst.14Therefore Sheol has enlarged itself
	And opened its mouth beyond measure; Their glory and their multitude and their pomp, And he who is jubilant, shall descend into it. 15People shall be brought down, Each man shall be humbled, And the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.
	16But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, And God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness.17Then the lambs shall feed in their pasture, And in the waste places of the fat ones strangers shall eat.”
	3. **Woe 3, 5:18-19, a rant against making a public show of sin. “**Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, And sin as if with a cart rope; 19That say, “Let Him make speed *and* hasten His work, That we may see *it;* And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, That we may know *it.*”
	4. **Woe 4, 5:20, a rant against confusing policies against education that has no “right or wrong.” “**Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”
	5. **Woe 5, 5:21, a rant against “everyone did what was right in their own eyes,” or doing what people think is right. “**Woe to *those who are* wise in their own eyes,
	And prudent in their own sight!”
	6. **Woe 6, 5:22-23, a rant against drinking and taking bribes, “**Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink,
	23Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away justice from the righteous man!”
7. **Review the “land covenant,” aka “The Palestinian Covenant,” conditions of obedience in Deuteronomy 28-30. Read Deuteronomy 28, 29:1, and 30:1-6, and 19.**
	1. **Refer also to Romans 10, the “law of love” message by Paul.**
	2. **See, too, John 3, Jesus’ echo of the same theme.**
	3. **Examine Proverbs 19:21, “**There are many plans in a man’s heart,
	Nevertheless the Lord’s counsel—that will stand.”
	4. **Review how Israel’s land was partitioned out in Joshua18:6, 10. The land was a gift of God to His people, BUT HE ACTUALLY OWNED THE LAND.**
		1. **Review Deuteronomy 10:14 Psalm 50:10, and I Chronicles 29:11.**
		2. **Talk about the inherent promise: if the people remained loyal to God, they would remain on the land. Otherwise, they would lose it. Examine Deuteronomy 4:1-4, 6:1-3, and 13-15.**
8. **Discuss the word “covet” in verse two. See Exodus 20:17, Deuteronomy 5:21** **and Amos 3:15, 6:4**. The last of the Ten Commandments; the only one that speaks of “internal man, the inner man, a sin of the heart, a form of idolatry.” Similar to Amos directly attacks the practice in Samaria. Amos 3:15, 6:4.
	1. **Compare with the story of Ahaz and Jezebel coveting Naboth’s vineyard in I Kings 21:1-15, and is paralleled by Jesus in Revelation 2:20.**
	2. **See the parable mentioned in Luke 12:16-21, the self-indulgent fool.**
	3. **Land grabbing is prohibited in Genesis 12:7.**

**3-5, “Therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, against this family I am devising disaster, from which you cannot remove your necks; nor shall you walk haughtily, for this *is* an evil time. In that day *one* shall take up a proverb against you, and lament with a bitter lamentation, saying: We are utterly destroyed! He has changed the heritage of my people; how He has removed *it* from me! To a turncoat He has divided our fields. Therefore you will have no one to determine boundaries by lot in the assembly of the Lord.”**

1. **Discuss how God’s punishments seem to “fit the crime.” Compare this with Galatians 6:7, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”**  **Against this family I am devising disaster**: The people devised iniquity; God devised disaster upon them. In His justice, He gave them what they gave others.
	1. **Who is lamenting here?** This is an emphatic play on words or wail. In seizing others things, they would lose their own. Just as the north was guilty of all of this, so is the South and will be taken captivity by Babylon.
	2. **“Haughtily” refers to pride. Talk about.**  **Nor shall you walk haughtily, for this is an evil time**: Micah rebukes the pride among Gods people and announces that in the **evil time** to come - the time of judgment coming on Gods people - they will be brought low and will no longer **walk haughtily**.
	3. **What is “divided our fields?”**  **To a turncoat He has divided our fields**: In the coming judgment - in particular, the judgment coming on Israel by the conquering Assyrian Empire - will leave their land in the possession of strangers.
	4. **What is the key point as seen in verse 6, “No one to determine boundaries,” aka, “shalt have none that shall cast a cord,” means their ruin is so complete, that there will be no one left to distribute it. Discuss the ramifications of this dire message. THIS IS A PUN WHICH CAN MEAN, “PAIN.”**
		1. **Compare with I Corinthians 15:3-4. This is the core of the gospel. CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS….PERIOD….**
		2. **Where in the Old Testament do we see the resurrection? Sign of Jonah, also Joshua 2:15-16, 18…..Rahab the harlot told the two spies for three days. “Cord” is the same word as in verse 5, and then changes the word to ’tiqvah’ to mean hope…the three days are from pain to hope…synonym of Jesus in the grave.**
		3. **Psalm 40:7, “**Then I said, “Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book *it is* written of me”.**..Jesus says the volume of the book are of me.**

**READ THIS: MICAH CONFRONTS PREACHERS OF FALSE ASSURANCE…..In verses 6-11; false prophets of Micah’s time are demanding that he stop his preaching. They, rather, gave false hope to the people and would not confront the unrighteousness which was abounding. Verse 7 shows us that they stopped the voice of the true prophets, and in verses 8-9, the rulers were continuing on in social atrocities; these inevitably brought the country’s downfall. THE PUN HERE IS THIS: THE LEADERS DIDN’T WANT THE TRUTH, SO THE LIES ABOUT UNRIGHTEOUSNESS BRINGS THEM DOWN. In Verse 6, Micah is speaking; in verses 7-11, God Himself is speaking.**

**6-9, “Do not prattle, *you say to those* who prophesy. So they shall not prophesy to you; they shall not return insult for insult. *You who are* named the house of Jacob: Is the Spirit of the Lord restricted? *Are* these His doings? Do not My words do good to him who walks uprightly? Lately My people have risen up as an enemy; you pull off the robe with the garment from those who trust *you,* as they pass by, like men returned from war. The women of My people you cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children you have taken away My glory forever.”**

1. **What does “prophecy not” mean? Matthew 13’s parables are like this….silence the messenger and forget the message. See Amos 2:12, 7:16. Religious leaders spoke against the prophets.**
	1. **See Amos 7:10-17. Amaziah came against Amos.**
	2. **Was the responsibility for the Holocaust with the silent pulpits in Germany?**
2. **Compare the theme of this section with the Laodicea Church in Revelation 3.** Micah began his ministry in the reign of Jotham - but nobody listened. Then he prophesied during the reign of Ahaz - but nobody listened. Finally he prophesied during the reign of Hezekiah - and the leaders and the people repented. Micah didn’t give up, even though results were slow in coming. Micah preached for anywhere between 16 and 25 years before there was any response.
3. **Micah mentions an interesting thought: “Is the spirit of the Lord restricted?” Elaborate.**  **Is the Spirit of the Lord restricted?** In their foolishness, the people of Israel thought that *God* was the problem. They needed to understand that there was no restriction on **the Spirit of the Lord**; instead *they* provided all the restriction.
	1. **See I Corinthians 10:13. There is always a way to escape to those who seek it.**
	2. **See also Philippians 4:6-7.**
4. **Is verse 8’s robe and garment an allusion to the “prohibiting of a creditor” retaining pledged garments during the night? See Exodus 22:26.**
5. **Verse 9”s “forever” implied that these dishonest “robbers” had no shame, no contrition. Is that evident in today’s world, too?**
6. **Widows and orphans are in a “special class’ with God. Refer to Psalm 68:5, Isaiah 10:2, and James 1:27. That is a direct challenge to God.**
	1. **Refer also to the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 25:40. God declares to have a relationship with God is to have integrity with other people, too.**

**10-11, “Arise and depart, for this *is* not *your* rest; because it is defiled, it shall destroy, yes, with utter destruction. If a man should walk in a false spirit and speak a lie, *saying,* I will prophesy to you of wine and drink, even he would be the prattler of this people.”**

1. **The land of Canaan was meant to be a place of rest for God’s people. What happened to change this? Examine Deuteronomy 12:9-10, Joshua 1:13, and Psalm 95:11. This is not your rest**: Micah exposes the lies of false prophets showing that they can never really give **rest**. The words of false prophets are **defiled**, and bring **utter destruction** instead of the peace, rest, and restoration of God’s Word. In times of obedience, the land was rest. But, in disobedience, God casts them out of the land.
	1. **Review Deuteronomy 28-30. Discuss how righteous living brings about the Palestinian Covenant.**
		1. **Review the terms of this….when Israel is, in fact, out of the land, it is an indictment on the actions of God’s people.**
		2. **How about when they rejected the Messiah? Is that why the Diaspora happened?** The law of retribution. **Hebrews 3:11-4:11.**
2. **Why is “lying” and “prattling” associated with alcohol consumption? Review Micah 2:6. If a man should walk in a false spirit and speak a lie**: With judgment looming on the horizon - especially for the northern kingdom of Israel - there were false prophets who spoke of days of **wine and drink**, giving false comfort and hope to a deceived people. These were the real prattlers, not the true prophets of God, as they were falsely called by the ungodly in Micah’s day ([Micah 2:6](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Micah+2:6&t1=en_nas)). The only prophet they wanted was one to tell them there would be plenty of alcohol.
	1. **Discuss how this section implies today’s myths/ fables among those who reject the gospel. Evolution, Scientology, Astro-physics, Alien Worship, and Worship of the Earth/Greenies…fables and nonsense take place of the Word of God.**
		1. **Verse 11 is a sarcastic statement by Micah about false preachers. Compare that with today’s pulpit.**

**12-13, NKJV, “I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold, like a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make a loud noise because of *so many* people. The one who breaks open will come up before them; they will break out, pass through the gate, and go out by it; their king will pass before them, with the Lord at their head.”**

**2:12-13, KJV, “12I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men.13The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them.”**

1. **This final section gives “Hope for the Hopeless.” Elaborate.**
	1. **Where else do we see the image of the “shepherd” in the Bible? Note: Psalm 23, 78:52, and 80:1.**
	2. **These final two verses point to the Second Coming of Jesus. Discuss.**
	3. **Having given a graphic picture of God’s retribution, capture, etc., explain why Micah now gives a glimmer of hope to God’s people.** **I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob**: Though judgment was promised because of the great sin of Gods people, they could not out-sin the grace and goodness of God. He still promises restoration to **the remnant of Israel**.
	4. **Who is being “reassembled“here? Jacob**
		1. **Contrast that “regathering” of the Southern tribes with the non-mention of the North, Israel. The S. kingdom is going to be the remnant.**
			1. **Who is “all of thee?”** all 12 tribes
			2. **Why “Jacob?”** When he’s in the flesh.
			3. **See Ezekiel 36:19-26. Explain why God is showing mercy…..**because God is merciful, not because they deserve it.
		2. **Who are “sheep of Bozrah” in verse 12?** **They shall make a loud noise because of so many people**: The remnant will not be few; there will be **many people** brought back to the Lord and His ways - **with the Lord at their head**.
			1. **See Isaiah 63:1-6.**
				1. **Who is speaking here?** Jesus
				2. **Why is Jesus coming from Petra with splattered blood?**
				3. **Why is the Lord angry here?**
				4. **See Isaiah 61:1-2; review why Jesus stopped at the comma at His first coming, but not now.**
				5. **Talk about this being Jesus’ first touch-down in the Second Coming.**
			2. **Where is Bozrah?** Sheepfold, narrow opening to protect sheep
				1. **Review Isaiah 34:1-7,** basin within Mount Seir, narrow gateway Ciq, **and** **Isaiah 33:**
				2. **Discuss Jesus’ “Day of Vengeance” in Isaiah 61:1-2, Luke 4:19-21, and Psalm 2.**
				3. **Reference Hosea 5:15. “I will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face; in their affliction, they will seek me earnestly.”**
				4. **See also Jeremiah 30:7 and Revelation 14:20.** This explains the purpose of the “Time of Jacob’s Trouble.” `1600 furlongs is the exact distance from Megiddo and Petra.
				5. **Daniel 11:41 speaks of Jordan’s escape to allow a refuge for the remnant. Review.**
				6. **Also see Matthew 24:22.** This phrase might mean the body as “the remnant” with the “vultures” the rest of the world coming against them.
			3. **Is this after the Babylonian Captivity?** No, this is far future….still not fulfilled.
			4. **Who is the remnant? See Isaiah 10:20.** Israel ….**Who is “the Breaker?” Liberator…image of deliverance. Jews understand this to be the title of “The Messiah,” the one who is “breaking through” the gates of a prison, who “breaks” the fetters of sin. “Breaking Through.” The one who breaks open can be translated as a title - the King James Version has it as *the Breaker,* messianic title of Jesus - *The Breaker*. In this office, he is the captain and leader of His people, advancing in front of His flock. PUN: “BREAKER”—historians—NEAR FUTURE FOR MICAH-- see Assyria and the great “breaker” of the back of the north, but the true “BREAKER” is the breaker of sin and darkness for all mankind, Jesus, the Messiah.**

BREAKER, n. The person who breaks anything; a violator or transgressor; as a breaker of the law.1. A rock which breaks the waves; (Rock—Jesus, Waves—sea of humanity)—Revelation 13:1. or the wave itself which breaks the waves; or the wave itself which breaks against a rock, a sand bank, or the shore, exhibiting white foam. 2. A pier, mound or other solid matter, placed in a river, to break the floating ice, and prevent it from injuring a bridge below; called also ice-breaker.3. One that breaks up ground. 4. **A destroyer. Micah 2.**

* + 1. **Examine Isaiah 52:12, 43:6, 48:20, 61:1, Hosea 1:11, 2:2, Psalm 118:20, 2 Timothy 2:3, Revelation17:14 and John 10:4.**
		2. **See the “King” also in Hosea 3:5 and Matthew 27:37.**
	1. **Examine the word “before” in Exodus 13:21, Deuteronomy 1:30, 33, and Isaiah 52:12.**
	2. **Who breaks up the siege by the antichrist?** The breaker, Jesus
	3. **Who is the main target of the Armageddon campaign?** Remnant at Bozrah.
1. **Sum-up your “take” on Micah 2. Apply its lessons to today’s world.**

**And, here are the promises…**

***\*\*The Old Testament Sermon on the Mount:***

 **Micah 6:8, “He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”**

**Psalm 40:7,*****“*Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.”**

**John 21: 25, “And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.”**