

“God’s Indictment”  
Micah 2:3-5  
(Preached at Trinity, January 22, 2023)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Chapter 1** Micah preached a two-fold oracle – “Woe to Samaria, Woe to Jerusalem” It was an announcement of God’s condemnation upon both the Northern and Southern kingdoms. The problem was not only their wicked kings but also the pervasive wickedness of the entire nation.
2. Moving into **Chapter 2** Micah gets more specific.
  - In **Verses 1-2** Micah describes the depth of their corruption. They were wicked at the very heart of their being. Micah had in focus powerful men who were seeking to increase their estates at the expense of the vulnerable. It was a case of the wealthy robbing the poor.
  - **Verses 3-5** describe the consequences – “Therefore”
  - **Verses 6-11** are a condemnation of the preachers of Micah’s day.
  - **Verses 12-13** – a message of hope through God’s grace.
3. Last week we limited our focus to the first two verses. Micah describes the corruption of those who were given over to greed and covetousness. Without regard for their neighbor, they would lay awake thinking of how they could steal from the poor man. How could they do it legally where it would all look proper. They would lay awake at night coveting the poor man’s fields, calculating ways to rob him of his family’s property, his inheritance.

Land was essential in their agrarian society. A man without land would be forced to become a day laborer or slave. These land barons were particularly cruel.

**Micah 2:2 NAU** - "They covet fields and then seize *them*, And houses, and take *them* away. They rob a man and his house, A man and his inheritance."
4. As I stated last week, we need to study this with regard to the immediate context, the wickedness of these wealthy men in Israel, but we must also be careful not to distance ourselves too much from the sin. Micah is writing about the sins of ancient Samaria and Judah, but it is also an indictment of the nature of our fallen condition.

**Micah 2:1 NAU** - "Woe to those who scheme iniquity, Who work out evil on their beds! When morning comes, they do it, For it is in the power of their hands."
5. I quoted Dale Ralph Davis:

*“Micah uncovers the idolatrous passion of the human heart: ‘They covet.’ Here is a God who can see it—what you ponder in your bedroom (2:1), the secret plans you make and the raging discontentment at the core of your life that drives it all. The fact that you have done nothing like the thugs in the text does not mean you are virtuous, but only that you may lack opportunity to sin in this way. With that verb ‘covet’ Yahweh opens up the septic tank of your own reeking nature and lets you smell it.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Dale Ralph Davis, *A Study Commentary on Micah*, EP Study Commentary (Darlington,

6. In **Verses 3-5** we are reminded once again of the universal end of sin – the judgment of God. **Verse 3** begins with the word, “therefore.”  
**Micah 2:3 NAU** - "Therefore thus says the LORD, "Behold, I am planning against this family a calamity "
- I. God’s judgment is absolute
- A. **Verses 1-2** describe human plans.
1. They scheme and plan. They lay awake at night pondering their evil deeds.
  2. They rise early the next morning to put their plan into action.
  3. From the human perspective we are autonomous. We have liberty of action.  
**Micah 2:1 NAU** - "Who work out evil on their beds! When morning comes, they do it, For it is in the power of their hands."
  4. Our freedom or liberty of action is not absolute, however. We do that which is consistent with our sinful nature.
    - a. Reformed Theology teaches that sin has so resulted in the corruption of the human nature that the lost man lacks the freedom to choose to turn from his sin or to do anything pleasing to God.
    - b. The lost man is spiritually dead and unable rightly approach God.
  5. Fallen humanity has freedom of volition but not freedom of the will. We make choices, we do what we want to do but we are bound by sin. His plans are ultimately motivated by sin.
  6. And most important, human plans are subject to the sovereign direction of God. Every detail of creation is under the sovereign plan of God. God’s Providence is absolute.
- B. Fallen men believe their thoughts are secret.
1. Our thoughts are the one thing that we believe are secret. Everyone has their secrets. Things we’ve thought, our secret motives, secret envy, secret lust, secret hatred. No one knows.
  2. As these men laid upon their bed their hearts were full of covetousness and greed. Their hearts were void of love or compassion They were making careful plans to defraud and oppress their poor neighbors. These thoughts continued until they fell asleep.  
 And no one knew.
  3. But while everyone around them might have been sleeping soundly, God was wide awake. The One who never slumbers or sleeps knows every thought.
  4. This is a two-edged sword.
    - a. For the believer, it is of great comfort knowing that God is always there.  
**Psalm 121:2-4 KJV** - "My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. <sup>3</sup> He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. <sup>4</sup> Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

- b. For the unbeliever—they hope it isn't true. They want to keep God as far away as possible.  
**Psalm 94:6-7 KJV** - "They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. <sup>7</sup> Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard *it*."
- C. The God who sees and knows all things also has a plan.
1. The word for “scheme” in **Verse 1** is the word translated “planning” in **Verse 3**. Man plans and vainly believes his plans are his own. This is vain thinking. James calls it evil thinking.  
**James 4:13-16 NAU** - "Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." <sup>14</sup> Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. <sup>15</sup> Instead, *you ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." <sup>16</sup> But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil."
  2. Human plans are subject to the sovereign will of God. The fallen man demands autonomy, but the reality is he has no autonomy.  
**Proverbs 21:1** – “The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.”  
**Proverbs 16:9** – “The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.”
  3. God does His good pleasure.  
**Daniel 4:35 NAU** - "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And *among* the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"
  4. Micah is describing the situation where man vainly makes his plans as if he is lord of all. **Verse 1** describes it as scheming. The word can also be translated, “Plan, Plot, Calculate, Devise.” They are carefully made plans.
  5. But then we come to **Verse 3** and we read the reality.  
We read, “Thus says the LORD.”  
God says, "Behold, I am planning." This should get our attention. What is God planning?  
**Micah 2:3 NAU** - "I am planning against this family a calamity From which you cannot remove your necks; And you will not walk haughtily, For it will be an evil time."
    - a. God says He is planning a terrible calamity, an evil time.  
The word for “calamity” and “evil” is the same word - רעה - רעה  
It is a word that has many meanings, none of which are good. The ESV, CSB, and NIV translate it “disaster.”
    - b. God declares His plan is absolute. It will not be thwarted.  
“you cannot remove your necks.”  
“I’m about to bring about a disaster from which you will not escape.”

## II. God's plan described – Verse 4

### A. Great humiliation is described

1. Fallen man is full of pride.
  - a. We declare our independence.
  - b. We set ourselves upon a pedestal. We lust for power, prestige, recognition. We put ourselves on exhibition. Our lives are on display for all to admire.
  - c. This is why social media is so alluring. The world becomes our stage. We are able to put on display whatever we decide about ourselves. We get “likes,” meaning people approve of what we say.
2. God's judgment brings us down. He crushes our pride. He humiliates us by exposing our secrets.  
**Micah 2:4 NAU** - "On that day they will take up against you a taunt"
3. The exact meaning is difficult. The word can simply refer to a proverb. But the context here has more of an idea of sarcasm or mockery.

### B. They are stripped of the very things they lusted after

1. They coveted their neighbors lands and houses. God removes their own.  
**Micah 2:4 NAU** - "And utter a bitter lamentation *and* say, 'We are completely destroyed! He exchanges the portion of my people; How He removes it from me! To the apostate He apportions our fields.'"
  2. The second half of **Verse 4** is the script provided for those who are mocking. As if to say, “Awe, you poor things. You are completely destroyed. He has removed your houses and fields.”  
The truth is, they were acquired by dishonest gain, and now they are taken away. Like the rich man in the place of torment with not even a drop of water.  
**Luke 16:24-25 NAU** - "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.' <sup>25</sup> "But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.'"
    3. The word for “apostate” isn't clearly translated. It carries the idea of someone who has turned away. The NKJV translates it “turncoat.” The CSV translates it “traitor.” Micah probably has in mind the poor of the land these rich men had abused. When the Assyrians defeated Israel the wealthy were taken into exile while the poor were left to care for the land. Jeremiah spoke of this regarding the Babylonian exile:  
**Jeremiah 39:10 NAU** - "But some of the poorest people who had nothing, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard left behind in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at that time." What humiliation for the rich to see their lands given to the poor whom they oppressed. God restored the land to those from whom it had been stolen.
3. In **Verse 5** Micah declares they will have no portion in the future distribution of the land. They have been cut off.

**Conclusion:**

1. It may seem that in this life the wicked are prospering. They steal from those who have little. They lay awake at night pondering their schemes. They think their plan will work out perfectly. But God also has a plan.
2. The plans of the wicked will fall. But God's perfect justice will prevail.
3. There is a message of hope here for the poor and oppressed in this life. Micah was giving a word of comfort. In spite of the devastation that was about to come upon Judah, someday the faithful will again inherit the land. And it provides comfort for us. **Verse 5** declares that while the wicked will not have an inheritance among the assembly of the LORD, the righteous, they will receive their full.