

“Living in a Godless World”
Micah 7
(Preached at Trinity, February 12, 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. As we’ve seen, the Book of Micah contains judgment and condemnation as well as mercy and hope. This final chapter finds Micah as one of God’s faithful remnant.
In **Verses 1-6** Micah laments the terrible religious decline in Judah. The time-frame is difficult to discern. Is he writing of the time of Hezekiah when he prophesied or does he have his sights fixed on the future when Manasseh is reigning. The truth is, the land was in failure long before the reign of Manasseh exposed the fullness of their wickedness. Hezekiah inherited a throne that was plagued by years of corruption. Even his reforms could not redeem the land. They only postponed the inevitable.
2. God’s demands upon His people are simple. He expects fruitfulness.
 - A. As God’s prophet Micah longed to see this fruitfulness, but as he gazed upon the land he saw nothing but barrenness.
Micah 7:1 NAU - "There is not a cluster of grapes to eat"
 - B. Micah lamented that a Godly man was not to be found in all the land.
Micah 7:2 NAU - "The godly person has perished from the land, And there is no upright *person* among men. All of them lie in wait for bloodshed; Each of them hunts the other with a net."
 - C. What does God demand of your life? What does God demand of our church? He demands spiritual fruitfulness. Of genuine faith that bears the fruit of holiness and faithfulness. Paul described Christian fruitfulness—abounding love and righteousness.
Philippians 1:9-11 NAU - "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; ¹¹ having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."
3. Micah begins, “Woe is me!” He may have been thinking like Elijah lamenting the wickedness of Israel.
1 Kings 19:10 NAU - "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."
4. Like a true prophet of God, he proclaimed God’s judgment that was about to come raining down, but he did so with tears.
Micah was living as one of God’s remnant—the righteous in the midst of the wicked.
5. The land was corrupt from the top down. **Verse 3** has government officials in mind—the prince, the judge – all willing and ready to receive a bribe. The “great man” is probably referring to the king.
Micah says, “so they weave it together.” In other words, they are all in cahoots with one another.

6. In **Verse 4** he announces the judgment – the “watchmen” could refer to the prophets who warned for years. Now the day of judgment was at hand. The punishment long foretold was upon them. “Your punishment will come”
The Babylonian invasion and fall of Jerusalem was still 100 years off. But their confusion was upon them. God had given them over to a reprobate mind. There is no worse condition. Paul spoke of the days before the return of Christ:
2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 NAU - "and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, ¹² in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness."
7. The moral disintegration encompassed every aspect of society. Micah speaks of the corruption of even the closest of relationships.
In **Verse 6** he makes a statement that Jesus speaks prophetically in Matthew.
Matthew 10:32-38 NAS - "Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ "But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. ³⁴ "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ "For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶ and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. ³⁷ "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me."
8. We are watching our own society coming unraveled. Corruption is all around us. How do we live under such moral decline?
Micah speaks as one of God's remnant. "But as for me . . ."
Let all others follow the path of wickedness, but "I will watch expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me."
A. It reminds us of the words of Joshua many years before.
Joshua 24:15 NAU - "but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."
B. David also spoke this way.
Psalms 31:13-14 NAU - "For I have heard the slander of many, Terror is on every side; While they took counsel together against me, They schemed to take away my life. ¹⁴ But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD, I say, "You are my God."
9. How does one live in a world where so few seek to please God? Where do we place our hope? How tragic to watch God's people today placing their hope upon new political leadership. How are we to live?

- I. We maintain a state of watching and waiting – **Verse 7.**
- A. Micah describes persevering with watchfulness
"I will watch expectantly for the LORD"
1. Watchfulness demands focus, an intentional eye upon Christ.
 2. When Micah looked to the leadership and the citizens of his day he saw nothing but barrenness. Instead he kept his eyes upon God.
 3. This demands steadfast prayer and an intense focus upon God's Word, relying on His precepts and resting upon His promises.
 4. Habakkuk reminds us that we can find joy even during times of barrenness.
Habakkuk 3:17-18 NAU - "Though the fig tree should not blossom
And there be no fruit on the vines, *Though* the yield of the olive
should fail And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should
be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls, ¹⁸ Yet I
will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation."
- B. Micah also describes patient waiting
"I will wait for the God of my salvation."
1. This describes hope, expectation. It describes looking for the fulfillment of what God has already promised. God's people have always had this sure expectation. Jacob prayed before his death.
Genesis 49:18 KJV - "I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD."
 2. Isaiah wrote about the same time as Micah.
Isaiah 40:31 NAU - "Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain
new strength; They will mount up *with* wings like eagles, They will
run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary."
 3. We have but one hope.
"I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me."
 4. As we patiently await our Lord our prayer must continually be,
"Oh Lord, keep me faithful until you return."
- II. We live with joy in the midst of the opposition of this world.
- A. Micah was not discouraged by the criticism of those who do not know God
1. Let them mock us when we suffer. God is just in His dealings with us. We are confident in the outcome.
Micah 7:8 NAU - "Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I
fall I will rise; Though I dwell in darkness, the LORD is a light for
me."
 2. Perhaps in **Verse 10** Micah had in mind the mockery of the Assyrians.
Micah 7:10 NAU - "Where is the LORD your God?"
Or perhaps there is a much broader scope as God's people live in this
fallen world. Mockery is always present.
As Bruce Waltke suggests:
"The prophecy is stated abstractly, never naming the enemy, because it is
applicable to the salvation of God's people from any enemy".¹

¹ Waltke, Bruce K., *A Commentary on Micah*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans's Publishing Company, 2007 – page 451.

- B. When we face adversity, we do not complain.
1. We fully confess that we deserve nothing less.
Micah 7:9 NAU - "I will bear the indignation of the LORD Because I have sinned against Him"
 2. Micah and his contemporaries suffered exile because of their own sin. God is always just in His dealings with us.
 3. When we complain during adversity we are joining with our adversaries who say, "where is God?" We boldly proclaim, "He is right here beside me."
 4. We continue to look to Him who will vindicate us in due time.
Micah 7:9-10 NAU - "Until He pleads my case and executes justice for me. He will bring me out to the light, *And* I will see His righteousness. ¹⁰ Then my enemy will see, And shame will cover her who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?"

III. We live with confidence in the outcome

- A. Micah draws attention to a victorious city – Jerusalem restored
1. He speaks of the rebuilding of walls
Micah 7:11 NAU - "*It will be* a day for building your walls."
 2. He speaks of the expansion of boundaries
Micah 7:11 NAU - "On that day will your boundary be extended."
This is fulfilled through the church filled with people from the ends of the earth and finds its ultimate victory in the New Jerusalem.
 3. Micah also speaks of God's judgment. Of condemnation and desolation
Micah 7:13 NAU - "And the earth will become desolate because of her inhabitants, On account of the fruit of their deeds."
 4. And he tells us of a sovereign Shepherd and a people restored
Micah 7:14 NAU - "Shepherd Your people with Your scepter, The flock of Your possession Which dwells by itself in the woodland, In the midst of a fruitful field. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead As in the days of old."
 5. He speaks of the humbling of the nations, their submission to the King.
- B. All of this is by God's redemptive purpose
Micah 7:20-1:1 NAU - "You will give truth to Jacob *And* unchanging love to Abraham, Which You swore to our forefathers From the days of old."
1. From all eternity He has determined the deliverance of His people and the victory of His church.
 2. And what is our response? We marvel at our King and praise Him for His goodness.
Micah 7:18 NAU - "Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession?"
 3. His judgment upon His people was for a moment. His covenant love is everlasting.
Micah 7:18-19 NAU - "He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in unchanging love. ¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea."

Conclusion:

1. This is God's purpose. This is the focus of God's Word. It is about His covenant to redeem His people from their corruption.
2. We see it with God's covenants:
 - The Noaic Covenant where God promised to sustain creation in spite of their universal corruption.
 - The Abrahamic Covenant, where God promised a people, a land, and a seed through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed.
 - We've seen God raising up kings, all suffering under the plague of sin, all failures, none able to provide God's people the benefit of a righteous reign. But God made a promise with one, a covenant with David of an everlasting throne – fulfilled by the King of kings.
3. God has provided a Redeemer, a Deliverer, the Seed of Abraham, the Son of David. God has fulfilled His promise—unchanging love promised from days of old.