

WHEN GOD FINALLY JUDGES A NATION
MICAH 3:1-12

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Introduction

What if those who gave their lives for our freedom could talk to us today. What would they say? I'm not sure but I think we would hear their voices say something like this:

"Thanks for thinking of me, but you need to think of your children and your grandchildren as we did when we gave our lives for freedom. Instead of just looking back at the past today, you need to focus on the present challenges, and get a vision for the future, so that there might be one! Make your life in America to be a Memorial, not a memory faded!"

You know, I believe that is the best way we can honor those who came before us!

In our text, we see that the prophet Micah was concerned about something. He wanted the nation of Israel to know that **the God they served was not only a God of love, mercy and grace, but that He was also a God of judgment!**

And though the LORD would rather bless His people and demonstrate His love, and extend His grace and mercy, there does indeed come a time, when because of sin and rebellion, His patience is finally exhausted!

Whether we are talking about a person or a nation:

When God manifests His love, but finds that His love is rejected. . . or

When God is gracious and blesses, but finds His blessings are taken for granted. . . or

When God is merciful in withholding His wrath giving His people time for reflection and repentance, but He finds that their wickedness continues to abound and only increases. . . or

When God warns His people through His chastening hand, but His people stiffen their necks and harden their hearts. . .

There eventually there comes a time when God must deal in judgment!

That's the subject here in Micah 3—Judgment! Micah desperately wanted the people to understand that because they served a God Who is Holy and Righteous and Just, they also needed to remember that the God Who loves sinners, still hates sin! And sin must always be judged!

Romans 6:23—"The wages of sin is death. . ."

Ezekiel 18:20—"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Numbers 32:23—"But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."

There is one thing that is for sure today: Everyone person born into this world is headed for a day of judgment! *Hebrews 9:27—"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."*

Listen to me, if you leave this life without Christ in your life, judgment before God's Great White Throne awaits you as does an eternity in the lake of fire!

However, those of us who are saved, praise God our sins were judged almost 2,000 years ago on Calvary's cross! Christ paid the price of our sins!

But does that mean believers are free to live careless or haphazard Christian lives. NO!!!

The same Bible that teaches believers in Christ will not be judged for their sins, also tells us that they will indeed be judged for how faithful they have been to the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:10—"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ"

So every individual—saved or lost—will one day be judged! But I want you to realize today that there is also such a thing as the judgment of cities and even nations!

All we need to do is just read some of the stories of the Old Testament. In Genesis 6-8 we find where God Judged the entire world for its wickedness by a worldwide flood!

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Now, the rainbow is our assurance that God will never again send a worldwide flood. But listen, worldwide judgment is on the way real soon! Its called the Tribulation Period!

But God also has a track record of judging wicked cities and nations, in Genesis 19, it is recorded that God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone:

The prophet Ezekiel recorded the sins that led to their destruction.

Ezekiel 16:49-50—“Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.”

I don't know about you, but to me there certainly seems to be a lot of similarities between Sodom and many of the cities we find in America today.

We also see the nation of Israel, how they were judged as a nation over and over again. Scripture records how that God would at times give them over to their enemies because they would not follow Him!

Micah 3 was a warning from the man of God to the nation of Israel just prior to one of those judgments. He reminded them that the God Who sits patiently on His throne of grace and on the mercy seat there in Heaven, is sometimes forced by a nation to rise up off of that throne, and trample that entire nation under His feet, saying in essence, *“I cannot tolerate the sin and rebellion and wickedness any longer.”*

vs. 12— *“plowed as a field”* is a metaphor for judgment!

Study the history of nations and you'll find that all nations that have ever existed had 3 things in common:

1. No matter how pure their beginnings were, they eventually went corrupt! (Understand that this is a sin-cursed earth...things get worse, not better!)

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2. The vast majority of the members of the great civilizations that fell were either ignorant of that corruption, or indifferent to it!
3. The cause of corruption is always the same!
Whether you look at the Babylonian Empire, The Grecian Empire, The Roman Empire, or any other empire, the cause of corruption is always the same...sin!

No nation was as pure in its beginnings as the nation Israel! It was started by God Himself in Genesis 12, when He called Abraham! And yet even Israel went corrupt, and the vast majority of the people were ignorant or indifferent concerning that corruption!

For this reason God sent the prophets of judgment, like Micah, calling the people to repentance, and making the people aware that **God would rather bless, but will blast if He needs to!**

I doubt today that I need to convince you that America is becoming more and more corrupt with each and every passing day. Our nation is collapsing morally as our moral fabric has ripped at the seams!

Don't get me wrong, I love America, and I still believe it's the greatest place to live on earth! I'm want to be optimistic about our possibilities for the future, but in light of what we see from history and the Bible, I think we should be realistic!

Part of loving America is wanting to save it from a corruption that most people are seemingly ignorant of...or at least indifferent to!

So, when does God finally judge a nation? What does He look for? Who does God blame?

The prophet pointed at 3 groups of people saying *“it's your fault/your fault/your fault!”*

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I. **CORRUPT NATIONAL LEADERS!**

vs. 1— Is a reference to governmental leaders of the Nation of Israel.

vs. 2-3— *“pluck off their skin”*, etc. (I believe he is talking about the fleecing of the people—feeding off of them, milking them, manipulating them, and using them for their own selfish purposes!) Does that sound familiar to you?

If Micah was speaking to Washington today, I think he would say something like this:

“You accept cruises, vacations, and other payoffs from lobbyists in order to support legislative bills which do not benefit your constituency. You care more about the spotted owl and the snail darter than you do the unborn child. You are more concerned about the vanishing rain forest on another continent than you are about the vanishing righteousness on our own continent! You punish people who work hard by taxing them more, and you reward people who won’t work by giving them more handouts. God, the Bible and prayer have been expelled from our public schools and much of the public arena, while you provide taxpayer subsidies to promote the LGBT agenda which most of your constituency back home don’t agree with!”

You see, Micah was not just talking about **political corruption**. He was also talking about **moral corruption!**

We hear ignoramuses say something like this, *“What a man does in his private life is his own business, it has nothing to do with how they run the government.”*

I’ve got a word to say about that, BALONEY!!! God says that character matters!

In The Book of Proverbs, God gives at least 5 requirements for good leadership: No matter what leader you are talking about these principles would apply.

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1. **Good Leaders Must Be Righteous!**

Proverbs 29:2—“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.”

Proverbs 16:12—“It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.”

Why is it that so many today only look at a persons job skills and credentials, but they fail to look at the morality and character of their lives?

Which is more important to God...skill or morality? Morality!
To say that morality doesn’t matter is to say that God doesn’t matter!

2. **Good Leaders Must Be Full Of Wisdom!**

(Proverbs 8:11-16; 9:10)

This means first and foremost that a good leader must fear the LORD!

Proverbs 16:16—“How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!”

It is better to elect a person with righteousness and wisdom than someone who can provide a strong economy! Yet many vote their pocket book come election time!

Wisdom is the reason that an effective leader doesn’t take polls! He doesn’t wet his finger and lift to the political wind to see which direction it is blowing!

In other words, a true leader does not cater to whatever the people want, whether its right or wrong! That’s not a leader! A leader does that which is right!

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President Harry Truman said—*“I wonder how far Moses would have gone if he’d taken a poll in Egypt? What would Jesus Christ have preached if He’d taken a poll in Israel? Where would the Reformation have gone if Martin Luther had taken a poll? It isn’t the poll or public opinion of the moment that counts. . .it is right or wrong leadership, it is men with fortitude, honesty, and belief in the right that make epics in the history of the world.”*

Good Leaders Must Be Righteous/ Good Leaders Must Be Full Of Wisdom.

3. **Good Leaders Must Be Honest!**

Proverbs 17:7—“Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.”

Good leadership and lying doesn’t go together!

A man isn’t a liar because he tells lies, he tells lies because he is a liar! The inability to tell the truth is a character flaw that goes all the way to the core!

We or someone else may say, *“I’m gonna be honest with you,”* but the truth of the matter is this, either we ARE honest or we are not!

Man is never as much like Satan as he is when he lies, for Jesus said that Satan is the father of lies! (John 8:44)

And man is never more like Christ than when he is truthful, for Jesus is the way, the TRUTH and the life! (John 14:6)

Good Leaders Must Be Righteous/Must Be Full Of Wisdom/Must Be Honest.

4. **Good Leaders Must Surround Themselves With Wise People.**

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Proverbs 25:4-5--“Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.”

i.e. God says don’t allow wicked people to influence the leadership of the country!

There are many wicked lobbyists and activists today who put pressure on the leaders in our various local, state, and federal governments to try to get them to cave to their demands!

However, a leader must focus on what is right and not on what is convenient!

We need to surround our leaders with positive support!

On a national level, it’s sad because the perverts are out of the closet and in cabinet level positions, they’re in the Congress, and some have been appointed as judges and justices!

Good Leaders needs to be surrounded by wise people.

5. **A Good Leader Must Protect The Weak And The Defenseless. (Proverbs 31:8-9)**

A leader is to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves, and defend those who cannot defend themselves!

I believe that this war on terror that our country is involved in is the right thing to do! People shouldn’t have to fear that the person in the overcoat standing next to them might blow up!

They can’t defend themselves against that, and the defenseless nations of the world need someone to defend them!

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I believe a lot of what we see going on in the Middle East with ISIS and Hamas and the Taliban is ready to be unleashed on America next because our leaders have allowed our nation to be invaded!

What about the unborn children of our nation? Is there no one left in places of leadership who will stand tall to protect them? Its sad that in our country the most dangerous place for a child is in the mother's womb! (1 out of every 4 conceptions!)

Some may say, *"But abortion is legal now!*
Being legally right doesn't make something morally right!

So we see that when Micah warned that God was about to judge, he pointed first at the Corrupt Politicians, and said, it's your fault!

II. COMPROMISING SPIRITUAL LEADERS. (Micah 3:5, 11)

"Peace"? Should they be preaching that, when judgment is coming? *"Everything is fine!"* they cry.

Where it says *"He that putteth not into their mouths"* means they were preaching to the offering plates!

I've had people in every Church that I have pastored including this one who have tried to influence me because of what they were giving to the Church! I've not listened to it in the past, and by God's grace I'll not listen to it in the future!

Paul charged the young preacher Timothy:

2 Timothy 4:2-4—"2Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

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Our nation needs a revival of old-fashioned, conviction-based, Bible preaching! We need some preachers with some backbone that will stand for what is good and what is right and who refuse to preach to the offering plates!

By the way, understand that if you have been blessed to have money God has a charge for you too:

1 Timothy 6:17-18—"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

CORRUPT NATIONAL LEADERS; COMPROMISING SPIRITUAL LEADERS.

III. COMPLACENT PEOPLE. (Micah 3:4, 8, 11)

Jeremiah 5:31—"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

The people of Israel said, we know the national leaders are corrupt, we know the spiritual leaders are compromisers, but it's ok, because we're ok, the economy is strong, we're happy, it's ok! *"Is not the Lord among us? No evil can touch us!"*

What are the greatest sins in America today? There's a lot of sin we could talk about that God is not pleased with—drugs, drunkenness, murder (including abortion), rampant immorality (including fornication, adultery, sodomy and other perversions!) We could go on!

But listen, one of the greatest sin in America today is the complacency with which God's people are watching it go down the tubes!

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Some Christians don't vote. And some who vote, vote their pocket book, instead of morality! Some people bow down to a political party and worship it, because they always have, or because that's what their daddy did!

Some would vote for the devil if he was a Democrat while others would vote for the Antichrist as long as he was a Republican!
We need to vote based on Biblical and moral principles!

"Is not the Lord among us?" Our nation has a Christian heritage! We have Godly roots! So did Israel! And so did many other nations which God has since judged, or wiped out completely!

Conclusion

What is the most patriotic thing we can do in order to make sure that those who have died for this country have not died in vain?:

2 Chronicles 7:14—"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

It takes humility, it takes prayer, it takes seeking the face of God, it takes repentance of sin!

We need to repent of our complacency and sin!

We need to pray for America—the hope for America is not in the White House or The State House or The Courthouse, but rather it is in God's house, and your house, and my house!