

Mic. 7:1 Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage: *there is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the firstripe fruit.*

The prophet is distressed. He can find nothing encouraging as he looks at the response of the people to God's message. He pictures himself as someone who has gone out into the fields after the harvest looking for something to eat, but finding nothing.

Mic. 7:2 The good *man* is perished out of the earth: and *there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.*

Mic. 7:3 That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge *asketh* for a reward; and the great *man*, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up.

His conclusion—There are no good or upright men left in Israel. Just as when Elijah thought he was the only one left who was following God, this is not true. But the scarcity of men who were good and upright made it seem to be true.

The prophet sees that everyone is out to get what he wants at the expense of his fellowman. They are pursuing evil practices “with both hands earnestly.” This expression seems to describe deliberate, serious intent performed with eagerness and zeal. The governing and judicial leaders are operating on the basis of bribes, and it would seem that they are facilitating the ability of the wealthy to get what they covet through these bribes.

“so they wrap it up” – In other words, the governmental leaders, the judges, and the wealthy are manipulating things in accordance with selfish purposes at the expense of the common people.

Mic. 7:4 The best of them *is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity.*

The best of those in the controlling classes are described as *briers*, from a Hebrew word that means “to sting.” The most upright among them are compared to a *thorn hedge*, a hedge or a fence that protects their enterprises. The last part of the verse is declaring that the message of the watchmen, God's prophets, is about to be fulfilled. They are going to experience the judgment declared. When this happens, they are going to be “perplexed.” The Hebrew for this word states “to involve, be entangled.” Webster adds “difficult to be unraveled....To plague; to vex; to torment.” In other words, they are all going to suffer the judgment together.

Mic. 7:5 Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

Mic. 7:6 For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies *are* the men of his own house.

The prophet is stating that the people had become so corrupt that you couldn't trust anyone—*friend* (includes associate, brother, husband, lover, neighbor), *guide*

(includes familiar friend, captains, governors), or “her that lieth in thy bosom” (sexual partner). It would seem that the morals of Micah’s day were no better than those of today; he had to word his instruction to include not only wife, but consort. The picture is even bleaker; sons showed no honor to their fathers, daughters had no honor for their mothers, and daughters-in-law had no honor for their mothers-in-law. Your worst enemies could be found in your own family.

I don’t think that is a dominant position in our society yet, but it is definitely on the increase. Kids are suing their parents for divorce. Parents are spoiling their kids and not holding them accountable for wrongdoing; they are bailing them out of suffering the consequences for wrongdoing. (Frankly, I think this is often done to protect their own reputation and feed their own sense of pride.) This is backfiring and producing a society comprised of people who think that everything revolves around them. It’s not producing children who respect and honor their parents or the rule of law; it is producing a generation that feels they are “owed” by their parents and that crime does pay. Abuse of one’s parents or of the elderly is something that you find in the news more and more often.

For those of us who study prophecy, you can’t help but be reminded of the Lord’s words when speaking of end times.

Mark 13:12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

Luke 12:52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

Luke 12:53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

Paul addressed this same timeframe in his letter to Timothy.

2Tim. 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2Tim. 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

Mic. 7:7 Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.

The prophet concludes that his only hope is in YHWH. He is confident that God will hear his prayers and provide deliverance for him and others that are committed to Him. I think emphasis should be made on his willingness to “wait” for God’s timing and God’s provision. His heart is fixed, and he is not going to be swayed by the circumstances.

Mic. 7:8 Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.

Micah is basically telling his enemies that things aren’t what they might seem to be. We are so prone to judge a situation by human reasoning. Micah is saying that he may fall, but he will get back up. He may experience a time of darkness

and discouragement, but YHWH will give him hope and encouragement to carry him through that time. After looking at the Hebrew for *fall*, I got another thought. He could be recognizing that even if God decides to allow him to die, he will be raised to life eternal.

Mic. 7:9 I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.

Micah is cognizant of his own shortcomings. He knows that as a sinner, he deserves God's judgment. Because he is a man of faith, he also knows that God will intervene to judge his enemies. I also got the thought after looking at the Hebrew for "plead" and "execute judgment" that he was declaring his understanding that the Lord Himself would provide for Micah to stand before Him in righteousness. He knows that he will one day be brought to the light to "behold" the righteousness of God. I believe this is a direct reference to his expected resurrection to eternal life. He had the same confidence that Job had.

Job 19:26-27 And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.

Mic. 7:10 Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the LORD thy God? mine eyes shall behold her: now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets.

Evidently the Hebrew for *enemy* is feminine. Micah is stating his expectation that his enemies will be made to recognize their wrong conclusions. They will be ashamed for having questioned God's faithfulness to His prophet. He will, in fact, see his enemies destroyed. I think in context, as David often did, Micah is assuming his enemies to be God's enemies since he is following God in faith and they are not. I think Micah's faith is representative of all people of faith--in this instance, especially the believing remnant being preserved in Israel.

Again, I am reminded of other verses that support this truth.

Rom. 8:16-19 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

1Pet. 1:3-5 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

After reading a couple of commentaries, I notice that they make application to Israel. I still think that Micah is speaking for himself, but could be representative

of the believing remnant that will eventually result in the “resurrection” so to speak of the nation of Israel to faith and glory.

Mic. 7:11 In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day shall the decree be far removed.

Mic. 7:12 In that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.

The prophet is speaking of a day when the walls of Jerusalem/Israel are to be rebuilt and the boundaries of the land extended. A time when people will come home to Israel from Assyria and other lands from across the seas and mountains. Many of the translations make reference to Egypt and the Euphrates, although I couldn't see that myself. There are other scriptures, however, that would support that thought.

Is. 11:11 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

Is. 11:12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Zech. 10:8 I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased.

Zech. 10:9 And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again.

Zech. 10:10 I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and *place* shall not be found for them.

Mic. 7:13 Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings.

It would seem that the prophet is saying that the land will be desolate at that time, because many will have died as a result of God's judgment of their sin. This fits in exactly with the results of the coming “day of the Lord” when God expends His wrath on His enemies on planet earth and finishes His refining judgment of Israel to bring them to a relationship of faith and obedience toward Him.

Mic. 7:14 Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.

It's like Micah lifts his heart in prayer for a return to the time when Israel was recognized as God's special flock among the nations on planet earth, and He was their Shepherd attending to their every need. A time when Israel was separate from among the nations on earth in their obedience to God. A time when Israel experienced abundant blessings from God.

“Carmel” = fruitful field

“Bashan” = a place of rich pasture and beautiful forests

“Gilead” = a place of abundant spices and healing oil

Mic. 7:15 According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous *things*.

Mic. 7:16 The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay *their* hand upon *their* mouth, their ears shall be deaf.

Mic. 7:17 They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of thee.

I think the NLT expresses the heart of these verses well.

“Yes,” says the LORD, “I will do mighty miracles for you, like those I did when I rescued you from slavery in Egypt.” All the nations of the world will stand amazed at what the LORD will do for you. They will be embarrassed that their power is so insignificant. They will stand in silent awe, deaf to everything around them. They will come to realize what lowly creatures they really are. Like snakes crawling from their holes, they will come out to meet the LORD our God. They will fear him greatly, trembling in terror at his presence.

Mic. 7:18 Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy.

Mic. 7:19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

The prophet now declares the beautiful truth of God’s character; He delights in mercy. There is not one false god that is characterized by this trait. God is unique among the “gods” in His love and compassion for His creation. He is ready to forgive the truly repentant. He doesn’t hold a grudge; He is not only willing to forgive, but to forget.

Psa. 103:11-13 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

Heb. 8:10-12 For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and **their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.**

The context is regarding the believing remnant of Israel, but this truth applies to all people of faith.

Mic. 7:20 Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, *and* the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

I thought this wording was interesting. God promises to perform truth to Jacob, the deceiver, the liar; and He promises to show mercy to Abraham. This reminds me of my recent study of the Beatitudes.

Matt. 5:7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Abraham messed up more than once, but he is depicted as a man of mercy and compassion.

- He gives Lot the choice of pasture even though He was the man in authority
- He desires blessing for Ishmael, the rejected son.
- He seeks to have Sodom and Gomorrah spared for just ten just men.

As I continued to look for verses regarding God's promise to show mercy to "the fathers of old," I finally realized that for Him to keep His covenant with such a rebellious offspring as that of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was an act of mercy. I think the establishing of the new covenant referenced in the verses from Hebrews above is the end result of that mercy. In fact, as is often the case, it is a time when God's grace and mercy act hand-in-hand. They will be given what they don't deserve and not given what they do deserve.

Micah ends on the high note. He is looking forward to God's kingdom on earth and Israel's restoration to fellowship with God. Though many choose to deny that truth, it doesn't change the truth. I, for one, can't wait.