

Micah Chapter 2

Verses 2-11: As chapter 1 denounced sin against God; chapter 2 denounces sin against man. (In verses 1-5), Micah decried the corrupt practices of the affluent. (In verses 6-11), he attacked the false prophets and those who would silence the true prophets.

Micah 2:1 “Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand.”

(In verses 1-2), the courtroom scene continues, with the accusations being read against the affluent: they had violated the tenth commandment (Exodus 20:17; 22:26; 23:4-9). The poor, unable to defend themselves, were at the mercy of the wealthy.

This is speaking of someone who lies awake at night, and figures out ways to cheat the poor out of what they have. These people are not led into sin by their friends. The sin originates in their own minds. They rehearse exactly how they plan to work their scheme, even while they are still in bed. As soon as they get up, they go right out and put their evil plans into action.

They can get away with this, because their plans are against the poor, who have no one to protect them.

Micah 2:2 "And they covet fields, and take [them] by violence; and houses, and take [them] away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage."

“His heritage”: Property in Israel was ultimately to be permanent (Lev. 25:10, 13; Num. 36:1-12; 1 Kings Chapter 21).

One of the Ten Commandments forbids coveting things that belong to others.

Exodus 20:17 "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that [is] thy neighbor's."

Not only does the man covet (in verse 2 above), but he actually will take from a man by whatever force is necessary. They were forcing them to give up the land that was given to them for their heritage. Jesus had something to say about this in the following Scripture.

Romans 13:9 "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if [there be] any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Verses 3-5: As a result of sin, God would allow foreign invaders to divide their land; none of them would have the inheritance apportioned to them. As the rich took from the poor, so God would take back that which He gave as judgment on the nation.

Micah 2:3 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time [is] evil.

As they devise mischief against others, so will I devise an evil against them, as a due punishment for their sin. As they have unjustly deprived others of their inheritances, so a conquering enemy shall dispossess them and carry them into captivity. The word family is equivalent to people, as appears from (Jeremiah 1:15).

They laid snares for others, where open force would not suffice, so that the poor could not get out of their hands, but were impoverished and enslaved. And God here threatens that he will deal thus with them by the Assyrians from whose power they should not be able to defend themselves or to escape.

You have made others hang down their heads and so shall you now; have made it an evil time for sins committed against me and against the poor and innocent. And I will make it an evil time for calamities and miseries on the whole family of Jacob.

God will not overlook this sin. They will feel the punishment for this sin. The "family" is speaking of the whole country. God will not stop the punishment (remove their necks). They have sinned greatly and brought this sin upon themselves. God will break their haughty spirit.

Micah 2:4 "In that day shall [one] take up a parable against you, and lament with a doleful lamentation, [and] say, We be utterly spoiled: he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed [it] from me! turning away he hath divided our fields."

Shall use a figurative speech against you. A parable signifies a speech out of the ordinary way, as the Greek word imports, and illustrated with metaphors or rhetorical figures. So speaking in parables is opposed to speaking plainly (John 16:25; John 16:29).

Their wealth, plenty, freedom, joy, and honor into poverty, famine, servitude, grief, and dishonor. How dreadfully hath God dealt with Israel; removing their persons into captivity and transferring their possessions to their enemies!

The day spoken of is the day when the punishment from God shall come upon them. The parable is probably a taunting song against them. "Lamenting" is mourning out loud. Sometimes it is in the form of a mournful song. Israel is no longer blessed of God, but is feeling the curse that comes by not obeying God's commandments. Even the property now belongs to someone else.

Micah 2:5 "Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the LORD."

Turning away from us in displeasure, God hath divided our fields among others. Thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord. None that shall ever return to this land to see it allotted by line and given them to possess it.

“In the congregation of the Lord”: They shall no more be the congregation of the Lord, nor their children after them.

They have lost their inheritance. God no longer claims them for His own. God will not take back this land for them.

Verses 6-11: False prophets, commanding Micah to cease prophesying, would certainly not prophesy against the people’s evil doing. They would not confront them with the divine standard of holiness.

Rather, their false message (verse 7), had stopped the mouths of the true prophets and had permitted the rulers to engage in social atrocities (verses 8-9), leading the people to destruction (verse 10). They didn’t want true prophecies; therefore, they got what they wanted (Isa. 30:10). It is best to understand that Micah speaks (in verse 6), and God (in verses 7-11).

Micah 2:6 "Prophesy ye not, [say they to them that] prophesy: they shall not prophesy to them, [that] they shall not take shame."

Prophesy ye not” The prophet was accused of childish babbling, when the real babblers were the false prophets (verse 11).

It appears from this, that the people do not want Micah to prophesy anymore. They do not want to hear this negative message. They do not believe him. They are so sure, that since they belong to God, they can get away with sin and not be punished.

Micah 2:7 "O [thou that art] named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the LORD straitened? [are] these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?"

“Spirit of the LORD”: God responded to the evil prophets that their message affirming sin in the nation was inconsistent with the Holy Spirit and His true message to Micah (3:8). God’s words do reward the righteous, but they also rebuke those engaging in evil deeds.

Micah reminds them that these words of prophesy would not worry them, if they were living uprightly. They are aware on one hand that they are sinning just as Micah says, but they do not believe God will attack them.

Those that are named the house of Jacob are the twelve tribes of Israel. They are asking "is the Spirit of the LORD straightened" (is He not still longsuffering toward Israel)? God still blesses those who walk uprightly. He does not bless those who are committing these terrible sins.

Micah 2:8 "Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy: ye pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war."

Against Me is to be here understood namely against God; for this is still spoken in the person of God. The sense is more evident in the Hebrew than in our translation. Namely they who were yesterday (or lately), my people, rise up (now or today), as an enemy.

Ye are guilty of grievous oppression and inhumanity. Ye are not content with spoiling the poor, and those who are weaker than yourselves by just taking their cloak, but take their coat also. Taking the robe with the garment, or the cloak and coat also, seems to have been a proverbial expression to signify a high degree of oppression and injury.

Who, fearing no evil, are going about their private affairs; "as men averse from war". Who are willing to live peaceably with you and give you no manner of provocation: Even these, you in a violent manner strip of all their substance, even to their wearing apparel.

Those who do not keep the commandments of God are acting as enemies of God, even if they call themselves God's people. This is speaking of their sins being so bad, that they actually take the clothing of those who owe them.

The debts are not even honest debts either. They have cheated them. God is not just punishing them for things their fathers and grandfathers did, but for the evil they are continuing to do themselves.

Micah 2:9 "The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever."

"Women of my people": Most likely a reference to widows.

The women, in the verse above are probably speaking of the widows who God had told them to protect and help. This is saying, they took advantage of the widows and took their homes. They had taken all the privileges away that God's people were to have. One commandment of God was to help the widows and orphans.

Micah 2:10 "Arise ye, and depart; for this [is] not [your] rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy [you], even with a sore destruction."

Ye Israelites prepare for your departure out of this land, for it shall be no longer yours; though it was given to the posterity of Jacob for a place of rest under my protection. Yet this was on condition of their continued obedience.

You shall be cast out of it, or shall be destroyed in it; even with a sore destruction. This threatening is to the same effect with the declaration made by Moses concerning the Canaanites whom God drove out before Israel.

And it accords with the solemn caution which God then gave his people saying:

“Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and shall not commit any of these abominations; that the land spew not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spewed out the nations that were before you” (Lev. 18:25-28).

Canaan had been given to Israel as a place of resting. Since they had committed such grievous sins, God will take the land from them and it will not be their place of rest. They have destroyed their own inheritance with their sins. Their destruction is of their own doing.

Micah 2:11 "If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, [saying], I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people."

The people accepted any “prophet” who would tailor his message to their greed, wealth, and prosperity.

Micah is saying, they do not want to hear the true prophet. They want to hear a prophet that speaks only of good times. The people do not want to hear a message of warning. They want to hear a message that appeals to their flesh. The false message promises them wine and strong drink.

Verses 12-13: Messiah will make ready the way, removing the obstacles which might hinder His remnant’s deliverance and return at the Second Advent (Isa. 11:15-16; 52:12).

Micah 2:12 "I 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."

“Remnant” (compare 4:7; 5:7-8; 7:18; see note on Isa. 10:20).

This is a complete change from the previous verse. This is speaking of the restoration of the remnant of the people. He still calls them Jacob, which is speaking of all twelve tribes of Israel.

The noise of the multitude is, possibly, the voices of so vast a number praising God. They are classified as sheep, which represent the saved in Christ.

Micah 2:13 "The 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."

“The breaker is come up before them”: This is a reference to Israel’s Messiah (Jesus), who will break down every obstacle between the people and their God. He will restore them, forgive their sins and implant within them a new heart.

The One that breaketh is their Savior. They passed through the gate to God. Let us look at what Jesus says about this.

John 10:27-30 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:" "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any [man] pluck them out of my hand." "My Father, which gave [them] me, is greater than all; and no [man] is able to pluck [them] out of my Father's hand." "I and [my] Father are one."

"LORD on the head of them" could mean that the LORD was their head, and was leading them. It could also mean, that they were sealed as belonging to the LORD.

Micah Chapter 2 Questions

1. Woe to them that devise _____.
2. What is meant by them devising iniquity on their bed?
3. Are they sinning because of outside influence?
4. What do they do, as soon as they get up?
5. What does the man in verse 2 do, besides covet his neighbor's land?
6. Who is the family speaking of in verse 3?
7. What does "remove their necks" mean?
8. God will break their _____ spirit.
9. What day is spoken of in verse 4?
10. What is the parable, probably?
11. What is "lamenting"?
12. They are, now, feeling the curse that comes from what?
13. What is verse 5 saying?
14. What are the people saying to Micah in verse 6?
15. What does Micah tell them about his prophecy?
16. Who are named Jacob in these Scriptures?
17. In verse 8, what extreme have they gone to?
18. The women, in verse 9, are speaking of the _____.
19. What had God commanded about the widows and orphans?

20. _____ had been given to Israel as a place of resting.
21. What type of prophet do the people want?
22. What are two things the false message bring?
23. What is verse 12 speaking of?
24. What is the noise of the multitude speaking of?
25. Who are spoken of as sheep?
26. The One that breaketh is their _____.
27. What does "LORD on the head of them" mean?