

MICAH

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Micah chapter 6 as we continue our study through the Word of God and we finish this book this evening. As we have seen, we have divided this book into three divisions and this evening we will be looking at the last division which covers chapters 6 and 7.

First of all, in the first division, found in Micah chapters 1-3, we saw ***THE COMING JUDGMENT***. The reason for this judgment was that the people had turned from the Lord and because of that we saw how their lifestyles reflected that. From the leaders, to the priests, to the common people, wickedness filled their lives. And because of this, the Judge of the whole earth was going to step forward and judge them, sending both the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah into captivity!

Then, last time we looked at the second division of this book that is found in Micah chapters 4 and 5. In this section we saw ***THE COMING DELIVERER***. Out of the blackness of the judgment that was going to come upon the people for their sin, God shines His light upon them. This was a promise of future restoration, it looked ahead to the Kingdom Age when all things will be restored and the Lord will reign. And the one who is to be Ruler in Israel will be born in Bethlehem. Jesus, as He stepped into our time domain from eternity, is the One who will Rule and Reign from Jerusalem one day. Both the first and second coming of Jesus we saw in that section.

Now this evening, as we conclude this book, we will deal with the last division, ***TRUSTING IN THE LORD***, found in chapters 6 and 7. Now to trust means we not only need to listen, but to obey what the Lord is saying. And not only listen and obey, but believe what He has said, that it will come to pass! That is called faith! And thus, as we trust in the Lord we will walk by faith, we are moving forward, and away from evil.

James Montgomery Boice, in his commentary on the Minor Prophets, makes this point about people almost 40 years ago and how they were not standing up for the truth, they were not taking a stand for what was right and the consequences of their actions or non-actions! He wrote,

Strange to say, however, in an age which boasts of thriving evangelical churches and more than fifty million persons who identify themselves as having had a “born again” experience, American church leaders have had very little to say to the city and its sins. Even stranger, some of the secular writers are beginning to note and bemoan this fact.

On April 1, 1977, the New York columnist William Reel wrote a piece for the *Daily News* called “Mean Street . . . X-rated Streets” in which he had some very harsh words for New York City. He noted recent statistics showing that there were 400,000 alcoholics, 500,000 narcotics users, and 300,000 compulsive gamblers; that there had been 658,147 felonies during the previous year (assaults, robberies, muggings, rapes, and murders); that the pornographers of Times Square had reached new lows in featuring sex films involving children. He called Times Square the “sewer of the universe.” He reported the experience of one citizen who had been the victim of violence, had been brushed off by the authorities, and was about to leave the city.

He came to this conclusion: “Of course, you gave up on New York politicians long ago. They are pathetic and embarrassing. But what is worse than the abdication [abandonment] of political leadership in New York is the abdication [abandonment] of spiritual leadership. There is no one willing to speak the truth, to call the Neros to account, to warn of the wrath of God.

“. . . The Protestant leadership is effete [ineffectual]and insipid [lacking vigor or interest], debating Holy Orders for lesbians at a time when grandmothers are regularly and brutally assaulted by muggers and rapists. The Jewish establishment is moribund [at the point of death]. Jeremiah must weep when, looking down from above, he contemplates these sad sacks sitting in their studies composing Passover messages that have no more spiritual content than a press release from the Liberal Party.”

He concluded somewhat wistfully, “New York was a great city when it put a great emphasis on spiritual values. Maybe we can get back to this.”

- James Montgomery Boice, *The Minor Prophets*, pp. 39-40

That was back in 1977 and look at where we are at today, how much more depraved our society has become because we turned away from God and God gave us over to these things we desired to do. And that is never a good thing when God gives you over!

As we shall see, this chapter opens up with God explaining the evil that His people have done and they need to know their error before they repent and return to Him, before they put their trust back in Him. They need to know that apart from Him they can do nothing!

With that as our background, let’s begin reading in Micah chapter 6 starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

MICAH 6**VERSES 1-2**

1. As you read this I think you can picture in your mind a court of law and Israel is on trial before the Lord. Before all of creation Israel stands and God is going to bring His complaint against Israel, His people. A sad state of affairs but it was all because they had turned from the Lord. Before we get to the charges the Lord is going to remind them what He has done for them and the idea here is that God has blessed them, protected them and yet, they still turned from Him, the One who loves them so much!

VERSES 3-5

1. Keep in mind that the setting here is a courtroom and thus, as Israel steps up to the witness stand I love the question that God asks them, **“What have I done to you?”** In other words, God is asking them why they are acting like they are, why are they in rebellion towards Him when He has done everything to bless them and protect them. He did not hurt them but because they were His children He did chasten them because He loves them, not because He hates them!

And as I read through these verses I see the Lord broken over what His people are doing. It is like a parent who is broken over the trouble their children are in. They rebelled against Him and they had not reason to do that. They should have obeyed the Lord and walked as He had called them to walk but instead they complained and turned from Him!

2. Notice where God starts, in the land of Egypt where they were slaves. And we see that God redeemed them from their bondage in Egypt. He gave them Moses who represented God to man. He gave them Aaron who represented man before God. And He gave them Miriam who brought to them beautiful worship songs. And because of that, they rebelled against God!

Now that may seem strange. It may seem foolish, and it is. But look at man today. God has sent His only Son to pay the ransom for our sins, to redeem us, to free us from our bondage of sin, and man is angry at God, living in rebellion against Him. Man has not changed over the years!

3. Now if that was not enough, this redemption from Egypt, God moves on and speaks of Balak the King of Moab who wanted to destroy the children of Israel. Thus, to do this he wanted the prophet Balaam, who was a for profit prophet, to pronounce a curse upon the children of Israel. And each time he tried to do that, four in total, Balaam pronounces a blessing upon them, which of course makes Balak angry. The point being is that God was the one who instructed Balaam what to say, to bless His people. (Numbers 22-24).

Since Balaam could not bring a curse upon Israel he told King Balak how to bring Israel under the curse of God! In Numbers 25:1-3 we are told, **“Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.”**

Here we see that the women of Moab came before the men of Israel and seduced them, enticed them to sin. They were all dressed up, wearing their short little skirts; make-up to the hilt and the men of Israel fell for it. You see, many of the pagan religious practices were centered around sexual immorality and thus, as they got the children of Israel to have sexual relations with them, it was based on the worship of their gods! Since Balaam could not curse the children of Israel he got the children of Israel to move away from the blessings of God and by doing so they were cursing themselves!

I know, it doesn't say that Balaam told Balak of this plan to bring this curse upon the children of Israel but listen to what we are told in Numbers 31:16, **“Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.”**

And in Revelation 2:14 Jesus tells us in His letter to the church in Pergamos, **“But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.”**

In other words, Balaam told Balak, “Look, I can't curse these people but you can get them to curse themselves by having them turn from the Lord!” And guess what, it worked then and it still works today. May we not fall prey to these devilish schemes but learn the lesson God is showing us! Because of their sin, God did curse Israel - He brought a plague of judgment upon Israel that killed 24,000.

God was trying to bless them and because they turned from Him, because the lust of the flesh drew them away, they were cursed!

4. And then there was Acacia Grove or Shittim. This was the last place the children of Israel camped before entering the Promise Land. (Joshua 3:1) And from there God stopped the waters of the Jordan River so they could pass through on dry ground. Gilgal was the place they set up camp on the west side of the Jordan River, in the Promise Land. (Joshua 4:18-19)

This is what God has done for them, showing them His goodness. And the whole idea for this is that they would come to know the Lord, His righteousness. But, instead they turned from the Lord, rebelled against Him, and for no reason. God showed them only goodness, only love, and they rejected it and saw His wrath. Again, listen, obey, believe - *trust in the Lord!*

VERSES 6-7

1. As you read through these verses here picture in your mind a spoiled, rebellious child who is lashing out at his parents and saying, “What in the world do you want from me? Everything I do you are not satisfied with!” But the reality is that they are living in rebellion, they are not doing what they are supposed to be doing!

Sound familiar? Again, I think that is the idea here. They are upset with God, they are angry with God and the reality is, they brought this on themselves. One writer put it like this, “Blinded to God’s goodness and character, he reasons within his own depraved frame of reference. He need not change; God must change . . . His willingness to raise the price does not reflect his generosity but veils a complaint that God demands too much.” (Waltke)

As a parent, it is heartbreaking when your child or children talk to you like that. Now imagine how God feels when His children respond that way!

2. Now let's play this out, what does God require of man and I think the idea here is what does God require of man to receive forgiveness of sin? What will the Lord accept? Does He want us to bow before Him? Does He want us to offer burnt offerings from the choicest of the animals? Or maybe thousands of sacrifices or ten thousand rivers of oil? Or, can He want the sacrifice of our firstborn child so that our sins can be forgiven us? And of course, this is not what God is interested in. Then what is He interested in? You! ***YOUR HEART!*** He desires a relationship with you!

The same idea of being religious instead of having a relationship is given in Isaiah chapter 1, beginning in verse 10, where the Lord is telling His people He will not accept these things for they have become empty rituals. We read, **“Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah: ‘To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?’ Says the LORD. ‘I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs or goats. When you come to appear before Me, who has required this from your hand, to trample My courts? Bring no more futile sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies - I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. Your New Moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.’”** Isaiah 1:10-15.

You see, empty rituals are meaningless before the Lord. Listen to what the Lord does require in verse 8 and it may surprise you, it may seem like a works relationship or a works salvation but it is not. As you will see it is a salvation that works or is seen in the lives of God's people as they live out their faith!

VERSE 8

1. This is not some mystery to them. They knew what God required of them. God has shown them what He desired of them. That is what Deuteronomy instructed them to do, but they did not follow. In Deuteronomy 10:12-13 we are told, **“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?”**

Now I realize that many of you are thinking, “Wait a minute, that is not what the Lord said here in Micah 6:8. In Deuteronomy He is talking about loving the Lord and here in Micah it is about doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with God. So how does this fit?”

Now hear me out on this. There is no way you can do what is right, love mercy, walk humbly without the power of God's Spirit working in you and God's Spirit is not going to work in you unless you come to that saving faith in Him!

In other words, God works on the inside and it overflows in what we do, what we say, how we live out our faith! And apart from Christ you are not reconciled to God but you are at war with God. And thus, your spirit is dead and you are controlled by your fleshly appetites! That is what we see in this world!

That is what Paul said in Romans 8:5-8, **“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”**

Now I am not saying that people never do anything that is good but apart from God the good they are doing is not accepted and I would guess the good that is done is for some ulterior motive! That is Paul’s point there in Romans, apart from Christ living in us we are carnally minded. There is no way we can be spiritually minded because our spirit is dead and only God can bring our spirit, which opens our communication with God, back to life!

Paul goes on to make that point in Romans 8:9-11, **“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”** Only God can take these dead, lifeless bodies and make them alive again in Christ!

So first of all we are to fear the Lord, we are to acknowledge who He is and come into that relationship with Him through His Son Jesus Christ. Once we do then we can walk in His ways as we love Him. As we serve Him.

And it is out of that inward reality that we see these things manifested in our lives! What has God shown us? God has shown us what He desires of us. First of all, to do justly. In other words, to be fair. Don’t rip people off. Don’t oppress people.

Secondly, to love mercy or lovingkindness. To express to others the same mercy that God has shown you.

And lastly, to walk humbly with our God. To be in fellowship with Him. This is not rituals but relationship. If your relationship with God is right, you will treat your fellow man with righteousness and mercy. If your relationship with God is off, your relationship with man will be off and it is amazing what can flow from a heart that is not right with the Lord.

That is Paul's point there in Romans chapter 8 as he continues on and says starting in verse 12, **“Therefore, brethren, we are debtors - not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”** Romans 8:12-17.

Our spirit, in communication with God will be directed by God. Now apart from God we are guided by the flesh as Paul has said. And truly we see that with both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, they had turned from God and thus, the things they did and said did not reflect justice, mercy and they truly were not walking humbly with God.

And again, this is not a salvation by works but one that works, it is real and it is lived out in the lives of God's people!

2. Let me show you how hearts that are distant from the Lord can do the most outrageous things and yet think they are walking with God. Back on November 27, 2015 we saw the Planned Parenthood building in Colorado attacked by a gunman killing three people. And that was wrong, there was nothing right about it even though abortion is murder. Two wrongs do not make a right.

But what I want you to see is how man thinks about himself apart from God. Listen carefully,

Planned Parenthood's Cowart said she did not know if the dead civilians were patients or visitors at the clinic. Their names have not been released.

"This was a terrifying afternoon for everyone," she said.

Cowart told a packed vigil at the All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church that the 15 employees who were working that day were safe and with their families, and that the attack would not deter the organization.

"We will adapt. We still square our shoulders and we will move on. We will show up for work on Monday," she said. *She was applauded by the attendees, who sang Amazing Grace.*

An overflow crowd spilled into an area outside the main hall where members of the congregation sat at tables writing sympathy notes pertaining to the victims.

Can you imagine, singing Amazing Grace and supporting the murder of children? Where is the justice, where is the mercy and where is the walking humbly with God? It is not there!

Listen to the words to this song, Amazing Grace written by John Newton back in 1779:

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

- Amazing Grace, John Newton, 1779

Singing this song does not make you a Christian and going to church does not make you a Christian. Repenting of your sins and asking Jesus to be your Lord and Savior makes you a Christian and that faith is then seen in what you do and what you say. I guess the best way to put it is like this, **“He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?”** Micah 6:8.

VERSES 9-12

1. Make no mistake about it, Israel felt the rod of God but that did not change them and thus, God is calling for them to hear the rod of God, to pay attention to what He is telling them. These are not natural disasters that have come upon the land. This is not just bad luck. This is the hand of God and you need to hear and understand this so you may change your ways or destruction will come upon you!

It is as C. S. Lewis wrote in *The Problem of Pain*, “We can rest contentedly in our sins and in our stupidities; and anyone who has watched gluttons shoveling down the most exquisite foods as if they did not know what they were eating, will admit that we can ignore even pleasure. But pain insists on being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

You see, God has set the standard. He wanted to shepherd the people but they refused, they rejected Him. Thus, from the wickedness of their heart flowed all kinds of injustices’ so they could obtain more wealth, more possessions. And God was not going to let this cancer continue to grow for the nation would have been destroyed by it. Thus, He will cut it out!

2. There was a case in England many years ago where a baker was taking a farmer to court, complaining that he was using unjust balances. He stated that when he first came to purchase butter from the farmer he got a full pound but now he didn't and was being charged the same cost. He was being cheated.

The farmer responded in his defense that he didn't have any real scales except balance scales. So the farmer would take the pound of bread the baker was selling to him and balance it with the butter he was selling to the baker. The case was dismissed!

It is tragic when people rip others off to make a profit and feel no remorse in doing these things, they have no desire to restore to the person that which was taken. They have rejected what the Lord has required of them, “**... to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with [their] God.**”

I like the way that Boice sums this up as he wrote, “No society is ever entirely upright or godly; there are always evil people in it. But in a well-functioning society the evil are suppressed and those of good character are prominent and rule the land. In times of moral breakdown this is inverted.”

I think, as I look at this nation and truly this world, the scales are tipped in the direction of evil and we are seeing the results of that. The only solution is when a people, when a nation turns back to the Lord, they ***TRUST IN THE LORD***. You see, if they don't then listen to what the Lord has to say.

VERSES 13-16

1. Look at what was going on. They turned from the Lord, they were doing their own thing, they were acquiring things dishonestly, oppressing people and in the end, all that they are taking in will be taken away and if there is anything that remains, it will not satisfy them, they will want more and more and they will not be able to obtain true satisfaction because the satisfaction that they are looking for is only found in the Lord!

Now this was not a surprise to them, for God warned them over and over again in the Scriptures and through the prophets. In Leviticus 26:14-17 we are told “**But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you.**” And if they continued to rebel against God, He would increase the judgment on them until they finally broke and returned to Him. Remember, “**Hear the Rod!**” Micah 6:9.

2. Now verse 16 is interesting because it first of all speaks about King Omri and he was one of the worst Kings in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. In I Kings 16:25 we are told “**Omri did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all who were before him.**” He led the people down a path of sin provoking the Lord to bring judgment upon them.

Then it speaks of Ahab who was also a very wicked King, probably the worst in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. He was part of the demonic duo in the Old Testament with his wife Jezebel. Omri was the father of Ahab and I guess that the apple does not fall far from the tree!

In regards to King Ahab, we are told in I Kings 16:30, “**Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him.**” And he too led the people down a path of sin, into the worship of Baal, provoking the Lord to bring judgment upon them. Thus, Micah is telling us that the people are no different today, they are following those same things, they are provoking the Lord to anger, to bring about His judgment upon them.

Are we any different? Not at all, things are not any different today. We see people in government, people within the church, setting up or establishing practices that are leading people away from God. Thus, we are also provoking the Lord to pour out His judgment upon us, to make us an object of horror for other nations to look at.

Doubt that? America use to be looked upon as the land of the free, a land of opportunity, and to get here was a blessing. Today, many people from around the world cannot believe the immorality, the violence that has fallen upon our land? They are afraid to come here. Why? Because we have moved away from God just as the Northern and Southern Kingdoms did.

MICAH 7**VERSES 1-4**

1. Micah was looking for a few good men and he could find none! Thus, the judgment of God was coming upon them and it will affect their food, their prosperity, everything. And in the beginning they were feeling good about themselves. They were successful even though they were gaining wealth through dishonest gains. But as we are told, “**. . . The day of your watchman and your punishment comes; Now shall be their perplexity.**” Micah 7:4.

You see, as a people or nation turns from God they will deteriorate into all kinds of evil. There will be no respect for life, but blood will fill that land and not necessarily from the enemy outside of the nation, but the enemy from within! And when these things begin to take place, there is no joy in the land.

We see that the leadership, the government becomes corrupt, seeking to fill their pockets rather than ruling justly.

Again, there were no good men to be found. In fact, the best of them was like a brier or thorn! I do like roses but I hate the thorns that are on them. And that is the idea here. You can't get around without getting hurt. The nation had deteriorated that far. And the thing is, you will not be able to do anything about it. “**. . . Now shall be their perplexity.**” Micah 7:4.

VERSES 5-6

1. As you read this you can clearly see the confusion, the mistrust that filled the society. You can't trust your friends. You can't trust your family. You can't trust your children. In other words, you can't trust anyone! That is how bad it was. Things were a mess.

Understand this, the moral base has been eroded because they have turned from the Lord. These are the consequences of that action. All this chaos is not found in God but the result of living apart from Him. Remember what Paul said in I Corinthians 14:33, as he was speaking in regards to the chaos that was taken place in the church in regards to spiritual gifts. And this thought can, of course, be expanded. Paul said, **“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”** May we not forget that truth.

What a hopeless picture being painted for us. You can't trust anyone! That is the place God had brought them and that is not exactly true, that they could not trust anyone. There was still One who they could trust and Micah will pick up on that. And remember what this section is all about, ***TRUSTING IN THE LORD!***

VERSE 7

1. How often we look for answers, for help, for hope in people, in family, in friends, in jobs, in this relationship and that one, in a country or leader and in the end we are disappointed! At one time or another they will disappoint you!

And yet there is hope and that hope is sure, it is secure, it will never fail us because there is no other hope except the Lord! Who else are you going to look to for answers? Who else are you going to run to for help? There is no one but the Lord. It is as Isaiah 25:9 says, **“And it will be said in that day: ‘Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.’”**

In Jeremiah 17:7-8 we are told, **“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit.”**

In Lamentations 3:22-24 we are told regarding our hope in the Lord, trusting in Him, **“Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. ‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘Therefore I hope in Him!’”**

Also, in Romans 15:13 Paul tells us, **“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”**

And lastly, in Hebrews 10:23 we are told, **“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”**

Micah is declaring that it is the Lord that He longs for and needs and that should be our hearts cry as well. He is what brings satisfaction to our souls!

VERSES 8-10

1. There is a song by DC Talk that goes like this,

What if I stumble, what if I fall?
 What if I lose my step and I make fools of us all
 Will the love continue?
 When my walk becomes a crawl
 What if I stumble, and what if I fall?

- DC Talk, What If I Stumble

You see, we may stumble, we may fall, or I should say we will stumble at times, we will fall but if we walk in the Lord we will rise again. It is as David said in Psalm 32:5-7, **“I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,’ and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You in a time when You may be found; surely in a flood of great waters they shall not come near him. You are my hiding place; you shall preserve me from trouble; you shall surround me with songs of deliverance.”**

You see, God is waiting with arms of forgiveness, all we must do is come to Him. And let's face it, we all will stumble, we all will fall from time-to-time as I have said. The problem is that many times we just lay around, we don't get up, but we wallow in our sin, our stumbling. We must remember that as dark as things might seem, with God, there is always hope, there is always light to guide you!

And I see that here with Micah. He does not see himself better than the people and thus, he confesses his sin before the Lord and he knows with confidence that the Lord will forgive. Of this Morgan wrote, “Herein is discovered the difference between remorse and penitence. In remorse a man is sorry for himself; he mourns over his sin because it has brought suffering to him. In penitence he is grieved by the wrong sin has done to God; he yields his personal suffering in the confidence that by it God is setting him free from his sin.”

2. Make no mistake about it, when things are going bad for us, when things are tough the enemy loves to say, “Where is your God?” They did it with Micah but now that the Lord has restored they are the ones who are ashamed! You see, our God reigns! And make no mistake about it, for Micah, it must have been tough as he was ridiculed, made fun of, asked “Where is your God now?” Yes, the situation seemed dark, hopeless, but Micah had a correct perspective of things, that God will bring him through this time.

How about you? Are you going through a difficult time right now? Do things seem dark, hopeless? Are your friends mocking you, asking you “Where is your God now?” Maybe even some of your Christian friends are joining in? What should you do?

Walk in the light, stay focused on Him and He will see you through it, giving you strength to endure till the end. Can you rejoice in the Lord even in the dark times? It is easy to rejoice in the good times, but you should be able to rejoice when things are difficult. You should be able to! You see, God is in control and we are told that all things work together for good if you love the Lord. We might not understand them, but God has a plan, a purpose. Don’t give up! Don’t lose hope! Look to Him to be the strength of your life. And never forget, **“The LORD will be a light to me.”**

VERSES 11-13

1. Things may have looked good outwardly, but the nation was being eaten away inwardly to the point where it was being manifested in their actions, but they did not see it. They may have had health and wealth and prosperity, but judgment was coming because of their fruit, their actions, their sin! Thus, they went into captivity but one-day God will call them back home and in their return the land will be desolate but God will restore.

VERSES 14-15

1. God wants them to return to these places of great grazing land, a fruitful land, where they were not only physically blessed, but spiritually. But they needed to return to Him. God is in the business of restoration and that is what we see here.

Just as God delivered His people from their bondage in Egypt, He will also deliver them from the bondage of their enemies, God will work again. He brought them back from their captivity in Egypt. He brought them back from their Babylonian captivity. And He has brought them back into the land once again today. And, of course, we can look ahead and see the fulfillment of this at the end of the Tribulation Period when God brings one-third of the Jews through the judgment of fire and into the Kingdom Age.

VERSES 16-17

1. You can't fight against God and win and these nations who came against God's people will see this, and they will be devastated by their lack of power against the true and living God. They will be ashamed.

And yes we see evil today and it will continue on until righteousness fills the land in the Kingdom Age. Make no mistake about it, as the Lord comes to establish His Kingdom there is no one who can truly stand before Him for He is holy and righteous. Thus, fear will fill them, and rightly so as they are going to be judged by the Lord.

But who can stand before the Lord? You might be surprised by the answer because there will be those who can. As we read on we will see that answer to that question of who can stand before the Lord!

VERSES 18-20

1. That is a great question, “**Who is a God like You . . . ?**” There is no one that compares to our God, may we never forget that. And remember what Micah’s name means, “who is like Yahweh.”

Remember what we learned a few weeks back about this name. You see, names were important in those days, not like we see today. Thus, Micah is speaking to a nation who turned from the Lord and they needed to be reminded about the Lord. And his name does just that, “Who is like Yahweh?” And, of course, the answer is there is no one like our God! And we see that same idea here in the last few verses of Micah!

2. Now there are several points that Micah is making in these verses and we will look at them a little closer.

➤ ***PARDONING INIQUITY***

This is so important because sin has separated man from God but God can pardon us as we come to Christ. It is as Isaiah 1:16-20 says, “**Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. ‘Come now, and let us reason together,’ says the LORD, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword’; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.**”

➤ ***PASSING OVER THE TRANSGRESSION***

Just as in Egypt the blood of the lamb on the door caused the angel of the Lord to pass over their home, the blood of our Lamb, Jesus Christ applied to our lives causes the angel of death to pass over our lives.

➤ ***DOES NOT RETAIN ANGER FOREVER***

The Lord will use judgment to purge out the evil, but we must also understand that His anger is short lived. It is as Psalm 30:5 says **“For His anger is but for a moment, his favor is for life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.”**

➤ ***DELIGHTS IN MERCY***

God loves to show us His mercy, not giving us what we truly deserve. And His mercy is new, it is refreshed to us every morning!

➤ ***HAVE COMPASSION ON US***

God gets no pleasure in the death of the wicked, He desires to show His compassion towards us. And He understands our frame, that we are flesh. And He is full of compassion towards us.

➤ *SUBDUE OUR INIQUITIES*

Those things that have you in bondage, God wants to set you free from. It is as John 8:34-36 says, **“Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’”**

➤ *CAST ALL OUR SINS INTO THE SEA*

I like this. All our sins will be cast into the depths of the sea, so far down that man can't get to them. That is important, for if we could, we would be stupid enough to go after them and some try.

That is what the Lord has done for us, pardoned our iniquity, passed over our transgression, does not retain anger, delights in mercy, has compassion on us, subdues our iniquities and has cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Praise God for that!

3. And I love how this chapter and book closes. God, who worked in times past with the fathers is continuing to work in the lives of His people today! They just need to receive that gift by faith because the promises that God gave to Jacob, to Abraham will come to pass, He will keep them.

You see, we started out looking at *THE COMING JUDGMENT*. We then moved to *THE COMING DELIVERER*. And now we have concluded with *TRUSTING IN THE LORD*. Why? Because all that the Lord has said will come to pass. You see, *OUR GOD REIGNS!*