

Micah Chapter 7

Verses 1-6

Micah lamented the circumstances of his day.

In his vain search for an upright person (verse 2), he compared himself to the vinedresser who enters his vineyard late in the season and finds no fruit.

The leaders conspired together to get what they wanted (verse 3).

No one could be trusted (verses 5-6).

Christ used (verse 6), as an illustration when He commissioned the twelve (Matt. 10:1, 35-36).

Micah 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."

"Woe is me":

Micah gives a fearful picture of the demoralized state of society in Judah which had called down the vengeance of God.

As the early fig gathered in June is eagerly sought for by the traveler, so the prophet sought anxiously for a good man; but his experience was that of the Psalmist:

"The godly man ceaseth; the faithful fail from among the children of men."

Micah sounded like Isaiah (Isa. 6:5).

Micah is speaking for a penitent people, who know they have sinned, and, been judged, and set for punishment.

Perhaps, the thing they are most sorry for is their lack of blessings from God now.

Woe is me, seems as if they are feeling sorry for themselves.

Suddenly, there are no blessings from God.

Their desire for their first relationship with God to be back is evident here.

Micah 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."

"The good man":

Who loves and is kind to men in need, and is so from the sense of God's goodness, and in a designed imitation of God. Is godly in the frame of his heart and course of life towards God, and beneficent to men for God's sake.

Is godly in the frame of his heart and course of life towards God, and beneficent to men for God's sake.

Is perished":

Is dead and gone, and left no heir of his godlike virtues.

"Out of the earth":

Out of Israel and Judah too, though Hezekiah was (probably), now their king.

"None upright":

An honest, plain-hearted man, who thinks no deceit, but speaketh the truth, that is, without crooked and perverse designs.

Such a one may possibly, but not easily, be found among the people of the ten opposite of the two tribes.

This proves the prophet's charge against this people, for the good and upright man imagined no evil against any.

But it is evident that in Israel (and Judah too), the temper of the most was sly, designing, and watching to do mischief.

To the ruining of families, the murdering of innocents, and seizing their estates, Ahab like (1 Kings 21; Prov. 1:19).

The net, which in the Hebrew term comes from a verb meaning to shut up, was used both by the fisherman and the fowler.

"They lay wait for one another, as hunters for wild beasts."

This is speaking of a society that has no morals at all.

They are degraded, to where it would be difficult to find even one person living for God.

They will even murder, if it will help their personal cause.

When they should be trying to help their brother, they are scheming every way they know how to cheat him.

Micah 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."

Literally, "well": Dr. Benisch.

In his Old Testament newly translated under the supervision of the Rev. the Chief Rabbi of the United Congregations of the British Empire (1852), avoids the oxymoron of doing "evil" "well" by translating the passage, "concerning the evil which their hands should amend."

Which satisfactorily harmonizes with the rest of the passage.

"So they wrap it up":

All three, prince, judge, and great man, wrap it up, or twist it together.

Consent each to other, and jointly promote violence and bloody cruelty.

This is speaking of cheating and stealing to the utmost.

Their hands are seeking evil things to do.

It appears the judges are taking bribes as well.

Micah 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 gentlest of them is a thorn, strong, hard, and piercing, which lets nothing unresisting pass by but it takes from it.

"Is sharper than a thorn hedge":

Literally, the upright, them a thorn hedge.

They are not like it only but worse, and that in all ways; none is specified and so not included.

They were more crooked, more tangled, and sharper.

Both, as hedges, were set for protection; both turned to injury.

Jerome: "So that, where you would look for help, thence comes suffering."

And if such be the best, what about the rest?

“The day of thy watchmen”:

The day foretold by thy (true), prophets, as the time of "thy visitation" in wrath (Grotius).

Or "the day of thy false prophets being punished"; they are specially threatened as being not only blind themselves, but leading others blindfolded.

Nothing now hinders the "visitation", which "thy watchmen" or prophets had so long foreseen and forewarned of.

"Now shall be their perplexity”:

"Now" without delay; for the day of destruction comes suddenly upon the sinner.

"When they say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thess. 5:3).

"Whose destruction cometh suddenly at an instant".

They had perplexed the cause of the oppressed; they themselves were tangled together, intertwined in mischief, as a thorn-hedge.

They should be caught in their own snare; they had perplexed their paths and should find no outlet.

Even the very best of them are like thorns that stick you every time you get near them.

They will all damage you if you get too near.

Micah is saying, this should be the day of the watchmen.

The watchmen have warned them of their evil, and now the day of their judgment is here.

This day of perplexity will be a day, when the LORD will chastise them for the evil they have done.

God will send deliverance, but it will not be until they have been punished for their sins.

Micah 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.”

“Trust ye not “:

All is now distrust and suspicion.

The households are divided each against itself, and the relationships which should mean mutual confidence and support have become the occasion of the bitterest hostility.

First, "the friend" or neighbor, the common band of man and man; then "the guide" (or as the word also means, one "familiar").

United by intimacy, to whom by continual communications, the soul was "used".

Then the wife who lay in the bosom, nearest to the secrets of the heart.

This is a time when you cannot even confide in a friend.

The guide will lead you to your own destruction.

The guide has been an extremely close friend whom you had taken advice from, but you must not take that advice anymore.

This is saying that you should even be careful what you say to your wife, or girlfriend.

Micah 7:6 "For the son dishonoreth 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."

Speaks contemptibly of him; behaves rudely towards him; shows him no respect and reverence; exposes his failings, and makes him the object of his banter and ridicule.

Who ought to have honored, revered, and obeyed him, being the instrument of his being, by whom he was brought up, fed, clothed, and provided for; base ingratitude!

“The daughter riseth up against her mother”:

By whom she has been used in the most tender and affectionate manner; this being still more unnatural, if possible, as being done by the female who is usually more soft and pliable.

But here, losing her natural affection, and forgetting both her relation and sex, replies to her mother giving ill language.

Opposes and disobeys her, chides, wrangles, and scolds, strives and litigates with her.

“The daughter in law against her mother in law”:

This is not so much to be wondered at as the former instances, which serve to encourage and embolden those that are in such a relation to speak pertly and saucily.

To reproach and make light of mothers in law.

“A man's enemies are the men of his own house.”:

His sons and his servants who should honor his person, defend his property, and promote his interest.

But, instead of that, do everything that is injurious to him.

These words are referred to by Christ, and used by him to describe the times in which he lived (Matt. 10:35).

We see in this, a time when you cannot even trust those who should have natural affection for you.

Matthew 10:21 "And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against [their] parents, and cause them to be put to death."

2 Timothy 3:2-3 "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy," "Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,"

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

In spite of his dire circumstances, Micah, as a watchman (verse 4), would intently look for evidence of God's working.

Trusting God to act in His own time and way (Hab. 3:16-19).

This is a statement similar to the following.

Joshua 24:15 "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that [were] on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

The God of my salvation is of course, Jesus Christ.

They will wait, and trust and He will come.

Verses 8-10

Israel confessed her faith in the LORD, warning her enemies that she will rise again.

She confessed her sin, acknowledging the justice of God's punishment and anticipating His restoration.

Micah 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.”

Here begins a new subject; the Jewish nation in general being here introduced speaking in their captivity, and addressing themselves to the Chaldeans.

“O mine enemy”:

The Hebrew word is strictly a female enemy (see Micah 7:10), and is used of enemies collectively.

The cities of Babylon and Edom are probably intended.

They are mentioned together (in Psalms 137:7-8): “Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom.” And “O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed”.

The fall of those cities should be final, but Jerusalem would rise again.

“When I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me”:

Neither rejoice nor triumph over me, because I at present sit in darkness, or misery, for Jehovah will again make me prosperous.

Israel is speaking confidence that, even though the circumstances are dark, God will shine His Light.

They will be helped to endure the hardship, knowing that God will send His Light to guide them.

Micah 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 places himself and his people with confidence in the hands of God.

So too did David speak when his sin was brought home to him by God: “I am in a great strait; let us fall now into the hand of the LORD: for His mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man” (2 Sam. 24:14).

“This is the temper of all penitents when stricken by God, or under chastisement from Him.”

“Until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me”:

That is until God Himself think the punishments inflicted is enough, and judge between me and those through whose hands they come.

The judgments which God righteously sends and which man suffers righteously from Him, are un-righteously inflicted by those whose malice He overrules.

Whether it is of evil men, such as the Assyrian, the Chaldean or the Edomite or of Satan; the close of the chastisements of His people is the beginning of the visible punishment of their misdeeds, which used amiss the power which God gave them over it.

"He will bring me forth to the light":

Of His Countenance and His favor and His truth.

Micah speaks in the name of those who were penitent and so were forgiven and yet in that they were under punishment and seemed to lie under the wrath of God.

For although God remits at once the eternal penalty of sin, yet we see daily how punishment pursues the forgiven sinner, even to the end of life.

The light of God's love may not, on grounds which He knows, shine constant upon him.

We should not know the blackness of the offence of sin and should never know the depth of God's mercy, but for our punishment.

He says, "I shall behold His righteousness":

Because they had a righteous cause against man, although not toward God.

And God, in His just judgment on their enemies, showed Himself as the righteous Judge of the world.

They are accepting the punishment that God has sent upon them, because they know they sinned, and their punishment is just.

They are earnestly looking to God to forgive them, as He had done so many times in the past.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Hebrews 12:6-7 "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

Micah 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."

"Where is the LORD thy God" (Psalm 42:3, 10; Matt. 27:43).

This is speaking of the world power.

They will see that Israel was not taken because God was weak, but to teach her a lesson.

This speaks destruction on the world power.

Israel will see the destruction of their enemy.

Verses 11-13

Micah again spoke, recounting the many blessings awaiting the faithful remnant in Messiah's millennial rule.

It would include unprecedented expansion (Zech. 2:1-5), and massive infusion of immigrants (Isa. 11:15-16).

For those who defied Messiah's millennial rulership, their land would become desolate (verse 13; Zech. 14:16-19).

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

"Decree" (Hebrew choq, "statute," "famed decree," or "thing marked out"), is probably a reference to Israel's borders or boundary lines, which will be greatly enlarged.

This is speaking of the day when Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

This will happen, when Israel's captivity is over.

God will lift the chastisement He had placed on them, and they will be blessed of God.

Micah 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 beholds people coming from all parts of the earth to Jerusalem.

Isaiah foresaw the like future and spoke of Assyria, Egypt, and Israel being assembled together.

Isaiah 19:25 "Whom the LORD of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people, and Assyria, the work of my hands, and Israel, mine inheritance".

When the Church will be restored, those that were enemies before will come out of all the corners of the world to her.

So that neither fortresses, rivers, seas or mountains will be able to stop them.

When the new kingdom is set up, the people will come from all the nations mentioned here. Jerusalem had been a place, where people from many nations came to worship.

It will be that way again.

The Jews will come home from their captive lands to live.

This speaks of an exodus from all these lands back to Israel.

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

There is still bitterness in the cup.

In the midst of the triumphant expectation of the glory to come, there rises up the vision of the desolation of the land in the near future, by reason of the sins of the people.

Before this grace appears, he shows how grievously the hypocrites themselves will be punished, seeing that the earth itself, which cannot sin, will be made waste because of their wickedness.

The world will be judged of God, and they will be desolate.

The land will bloom again in Israel.

Verses 14-17

Micah petitioned the LORD (verse 14), to shepherd, feed, and protect His people like a flock (Psalm 23).

The LORD answered, reiterating that He would demonstrate His presence and power among them as He did in the Exodus from Egypt (verse 15).

As a result (verse 10), the vaunted pride and power of the nations would be rendered powerless (Joshua 2:9-11), and having been humbled (verse 17), they would no longer listen to or engage in the taunting of His people (verse 16b; Gen. 12:3; Isa. 52:15).

Micah 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."

Or with thy shepherd's staff.

The prophet lifts up his prayer for the people, either dwelling “alone” among the idolaters of Babylon.

Among them but not of them or living a nation mysteriously apart from other nations, returned from Babylon, and settled on the fruitful mountain range of Carmel.

Or in the rich pasture land on the east of Jordan.

The former words were a prayer for their restoration.

Gilead and Bashan were the great pasture-countries of Palestine (see the note at Amos 1:3).

"A wide tableland, with undulating downs; clothed with rich grass throughout," where the cattle ranged freely.

God is their provider.

The "rod" is the shepherd's staff (Psalm 23:1).

The good Shepherd leads them to green pastures, and where there is pure water.

They will neither hunger nor thirst, because the good Shepherd cares for them.

Micah 7:15 "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvelous [things]."

“Marvelous things”:

These things (miracles), will be fulfilled in God’s judgment on the earth which precedes the Second Advent of Messiah (Rev. Chapters 6-19).

God rained Manna from heaven, and fed them on their journey.

He opened the Red sea, and they walked over on dry ground.

He fed them water from the Rock.

God took care of all their needs.

He will do the same thing here.

Micah 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.”

God had answered what He would give to His own people to see.

Micah takes up the word and says what effect this sight should have upon the enemies of God and of His people.

The world should still continue to be divided between the people of God and their adversaries.

Those who are converted pass from the one to the other; but the contrast remains.

Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, shall pass away or become subject to other powers; but the antagonism continues.

“The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might”:

The power and strength the Jews will have to repossess their land, rebuild their city and temple under the encouragement and protection of the king of Persia.

And as this may refer to a further accomplishment in Gospel times, it may respect the confusion the Gentile world would be in at the mighty power and spread of the Gospel.

In the conversion of such multitudes by it and in the abolition of the Pagan religion.

Kimchi interprets this of the nations that shall be gathered together with Gog and Magog against Jerusalem in the latter day (see Ezek. 38:15).

“They shall lay their hand upon their mouth”:

Be silent and boast no more of themselves.

Or blaspheme God and his word; nor insult his people; nor oppose his Gospel; or open their mouths any more against his truths and his ordinances.

They will be as dumb men, and dare brag no more.

It is difficult for the larger nations looking on to see the special care God takes for His own.

It will close the mouths of the other nations.

They will not hear, because they are stunned at the special care God takes for Israel.

How can so small a nation have so much?

Micah 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."

The doom of the determined enemies of the LORD and His people recalls that of Satan, the great enemy, as personified by the serpent.

“Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life” (Genesis 3:14).

“Like worms”:

They shall be afraid to stir out of their lurking-holes; and if they creep out like worms, they shall presently hide their heads again.

“They shall be afraid of the LORD our God”:

Overthrowing the Babylonish empire by Cyrus.

This is expressed (in Isaiah 45:1), by loosening the loins of kings.

“And shall fear because of thee”:

Or if the prophet be considered as addressing God, the meaning is: When they understand that it was long before denounced by the prophets that destruction should come upon them, and thy people be delivered, and they see all things tending to bring this to pass, then shall they begin to be afraid of thy power.

This is speaking of the nations that are enemies of God and His people.

Their fear of Israel and Israel's God has been renewed.

They will be able to obviously tell these are God's people.

They will crawl around like a snake in their shame and fear.

Verses 18-20

In response to the gracious, forgiving character displayed toward Israel by their Master, the repentant remnant of the people extolled His incomparable grace and mercy (Psalm 130:3-4).

Micah 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."

“Who is a God like unto thee”:

Micah began this final section with a play on words involving this name.

The forgiveness and pardon of a merciful and gracious God toward a sinful mankind is declared by the Scriptures to be based on the redemptive work of the savior (Isa. 53:5-12; Matt. 8:17; Acts 8:32-37; Rom. 3:23-25; 1 Pet. 2:21-25).

For the future regathering of the “remnant” of Israel (see the note on Jeremiah 23:3).

I am amazed at the many times God has forgiven His people, and restored them to their heritage.

When we really stop and think for a moment, it is just as amazing that He would forgive you and me, and make us sons of God.

We did not deserve to be forgiven.

It is through the grace of God that any of us are saved.

He is merciful to all who will repent and turn to Him.

Hebrews 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 neighbor, 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."

Micah 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."

Spoken after the manner of man, who in his anger went away, resolved to right himself, but on second thoughts, laying aside his anger, turns again to be reconciled and forgive.

“Compassion upon us”:

With tender bowels he will show himself gracious to us (Jonah 3:9).

“He will subdue our iniquities”:

As our enemies and his, God will break the power, abolish the dominion of sin, which while it reigned, provoked God and undid us.

It polluted and ruined us, but God will pardon the guilt and abrogate the law of sin, and so restore his people (Ezek. 36:29-34).

“Depths of the sea”:

All the sins of Israel and it may denote their being loathsome and abominable to him, and therefore here cast by him.

It is very common in Jewish writing to say of anything that was useless, abominable, accursed, and utterly rejected, that it is to be cast into the salt sea.

Sin is the enemy of all mankind.

Jesus took our sin upon His body on the cross and we no longer have sin.

He clothed us in His righteousness.

The only requirement from us is we must believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths the Lord Jesus and know in our hearts that he was resurrected from the grave.

Thank goodness, the sins are gone.

The fact they are in the depth of the sea, means they are too far away for us to go looking for them.

Micah 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."

“Sworn unto our fathers”:

In spite of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God, the LORD intends to fulfill His unconditional promises in the Abrahamic Covenant made with Abraham and confirmed with Isaac and Jacob (Gen. chapters 15, 17, 22, 26, 28, and 35).

When enacted in conjunction with the Davidic covenant, Israel will again be restored as a people and a nation to the land originally promised to Abraham.

Jesus Christ, the ultimate descendant of David, will rule from Jerusalem over the world as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 17:14; 19:16).

The truth means that God cannot and will not lie.

God keeps His promise of the covenant with Abraham.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

It makes no difference whether you are Jew or Gentile.

We are saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Micah Chapter 7 Questions

1. Who is speaking in verse 1?

2. The _____ is perished out of the earth.
3. What kind of a society is verse 2 speaking of?
4. What is meant by them "doing evil with both hands"?
5. What are the judges doing wrong?
6. How are they like a briar?
7. When is their day of perplexity?
8. When will God send deliverance?
9. Trust ye not in a _____.
10. This is saying, you should even be careful what you say to your _____.
11. What Scripture is verse 7 similar to?
12. The God of my salvation is, of course, _____.
13. When I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a _____ unto me.
14. Why are they willing to bear the indignation of the LORD?
15. Whom the Lord loveth He _____.
16. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with _____.
17. What is verse 10 speaking of?
18. What day is verse 11 speaking of?
19. Feed thy people with thy _____.
20. What is the "rod"?
21. What were some of the marvelous things God showed them on their way from Egypt?
22. Who will lick the dirt like a serpent?
23. What is even more amazing, than the fact that God forgave physical Israel?
24. Where will He cast our sins?
25. When Jesus took our sins, what did He give us?