

## Study 5 - Micah 7

# FROM TRAGEDY TO TRIUMPH



### Introduction

As we come to the end of the book of Micah let's take a minute to revise the story so far.

Micah had the awesome task of bringing God's word before an ungrateful nation. A nation divided, yet prosperous. A nation led by unscrupulous leaders and false prophets, who exploited the poor and the defenceless. A nation whose rich and powerful devoured people instead of defending them.

At times Micah was distraught as he lamented over his people's idolatrous ways and defiance of God. Yet Micah never gave up hope that God remained in control, and that God would ultimately triumph over evil and rescue the remnant who remained faithful to Him.



### Read 7:1-4

In this last chapter, Micah begins with a distinctively meditative approach. As part of a society that's been blessed by God, Micah longed to find godly people everywhere. But to his "misery" he despairs of his nation's plight. He now imagines a time when "not one upright man remains".

Micah pictures himself as a gleaner (someone who gathers the left overs). Yet Micah is a prophet not a fruit picker. So what was Micah hoping to harvest? (v.2a)

As part of their covenant relationship, God's people were meant to purposefully leave the edge of their harvests for the poor to survive. In conjunction with verses 1-2a, read Leviticus 19:9-10, and explain Micah's profound sense of disappointment.

Instead of finding godly people ready to be brought into the harvest of God's Kingdom, Micah finds just the opposite. List the things that Micah includes as examples of ungodliness. (2a-3)

For Micah, the heart of his people's problems remains one of leadership. Put into your own words the type of leadership that Micah describes in verses 3 and 4.

Compare and contrast the above leadership with the model in Titus 1:6-16.

Micah is determined that his vision of "not one upright man" remaining, won't come true and returns (v.5) to warning the people of the imminent judgement.

Micah, at the end of 7:4, uses the word "confusion" to describe what the coming judgement ("the day God visits you") will be like. In verses 3 & 4 Micah declared that no confidence or trust could be put in the past or present leadership, but now he says that there'll be a breakdown of all relationships in society, including those closest to you. Who's included in the list? (vv5 & 6)

Jesus uses the phrasing from Micah 7:6 to describe the kind of hostility between people that his ministry would cause. **Read Matthew 10:34-41.**

One commentator noted that Jesus' paraphrase of Micah 7:6 was like "an extension of Micah's message in the sense that when Christ came into the world, he brought judgement that disrupted the fabric of society." Is this disruption what happens when people either accept or reject Jesus?

Have you found this to be your experience with those close to you? *Sensitively* listen & share your experiences.



With the thought in mind that judgement disrupts (even close relationships), how are we meant to *reconcile* God's judgement, with his message of reconciliation? Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-20.

Further to this, God's work seems to involve both judgement and reconciliation. What's involved in our ministry to others? (2 Corinthians 5:18-20) Does this mean that we never mention God's judgement? If your answer is 'No' to the previous question, in what context do we refer to God's judgement?

### ***Food for thought***

*If at this point you're feeling the weight of all this stuff, maybe you're closer to empathising with Micah than you were a few weeks ago.* The good thing is, that we don't have to be weighed down with the burden of judging others. We leave that up to God. We simply have to allow God to use us as his ambassadors, bringing his complete message of reconciliation before all people. Just as in Micah's time, Israel's need for reconciliation is due to the fact that everyone of us, is born with the false-belief that God plays no part in our life, and that we're rulers of our own destiny.

And like Micah (7:7), our hope and assurance is in our God who knows and "hears" us, our Saviour God.

One would have thought that was a great place for Micah to finish his message, but instead he finishes with a couple of reminders.

### **Read 7:8-20**

Micah's first reminder is that while there are nations who are licking their lips at carving up Israel and Judah, (Assyria, Egypt, and the mention of the Euphrates is a reference to Babylon v.12), God will prove to them that He's very much in control and will triumph over them. How does He do that? (vv11,12).

Micah's other reminder is to those who remain faithful. This includes us. Besides being reminded that God will bring home His remnant (v11), in his praise of God (14-20) Micah also reminds us that God in all His character ...will remain true and merciful to the covenant He made "to our fathers in days long ago". From verses 18-20, describe in your own words the character of God.



### **For those who want to dig a bit deeper.**

Verse 13 appears to be saying that once God's remnant returns home, their former place of exile will suffer from their absence. Does this suggest that where God's people are, the blessings they receive from God are also enjoyed by others? (Genesis 41:41-57) In what way(s) might this apply to our time?