

When God Devises Disaster

Micah 2:1-5

Introduction – When God gives a man (or a nation) up to his vile passions and sins, He is not operating like an exasperated parent who is giving up on a rebellious teenager. Nor is He wringing His hands up in heaven wondering what in the world is going to happen next. God's providential hand is everywhere. Arrogantly thinking they have the world in their control, the wicked soon learn that God was using every evil plan of theirs for His own purposes.

Devising Iniquity (vv1-2) - like drinking and driving, coveting and power don't mix.

"Woe to those who devise iniquity, And work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, Because it is in the power of their hand. They covet fields and take them by violence, Also houses, and seize them. So they oppress a man and his house, A man and his inheritance." (Micah 2:1-2).

When Power is Corrupted – Our cultural mandate is to subdue and rule the earth. We are made to wield power. But since the fall, we show ourselves time and again willing to use that power without regard for the second great commandment.

A Seared Conscience – They fall asleep planning evil and jump out of bed well-rested and ready to put their plan to work. This is evidence of a seared conscience, like one who has walked on hot coals (Prov 6:8).

The Power of Covetousness – Once covetousness reigns in the heart, it will bear out in manifold sins, and compassion towards others will be gone. 1 John says that if a man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. In the same way, the love of his neighbor will not be in him. The rich and powerful have many opportunities to express that covetousness and will apart from the grace of God (remember Ahab and Naboth, 1 Kings 21 – also David and Bathsheba). The poor may have less opportunities to apply their coveting, but that doesn't mean they are not tempted to covet.

Thought You Pulled a Fast One (vv3-4) – There is a play on words here. You were 'devising iniquity' thinking God was asleep. He was 'devising disaster'. You 'covet fields', and God will 'divide' those same 'fields'.

"Therefore thus says the LORD: "Behold, against this family I am devising disaster, From which you cannot remove your necks; Nor shall you walk haughtily, For this is an evil time. In that day one shall take up a proverb against you, And lament with a bitter lamentation, saying: 'We are utterly destroyed! He has changed the heritage of my people; How He has removed it from me! To a turncoat He has divided our fields.'" (Micah 2:3-4).

Retribution In Kind – God promises to render an 'eye for an eye' justice. The wicked falls into the ditch he prepared (Ps 7:14-16), or hangs himself on his own gallows (Est 7:9-7). The curse upon King David because of his infidelity is that his family will be broken up (2 Sam 12:10-12), and it begins with Amnon's own illicit sexual desires. A man will reap what he sows, and as Moses promised, *"...be sure, your sin will find you out"* (Num 32:23).

The Yoke of Providence – Matthew Henry summarizes these verses, *"They who will not be overruled will be overcome"*. Rebellion is not only sinful; it is foolish. In their unbelief, they do not understand Who they have now made their Adversary.

That Bitter Proverb – This is what Micah declares, and this is what the Jews, those who have been cut out of the covenant, have been known as for centuries throughout the world – an oppressed and persecuted people. It is the judgment of God. But this is not an anti-Semitic statement when we understand that we have a warning of an even greater judgment if we do not keep the covenant (Rom 11:19-22). Children of the covenant, you should always remember this warning. Do not fall into the sin of covenantal presumption – it will sear your conscience.

A Hint of Hope – *"Therefore you will have no one to determine boundaries by lot In the assembly of the LORD."* (Micah 2:5) The doom of the wicked is sure. The very land you hoped to own will be in someone else's hands. But notice, the wicked have been put out of the assembly of the Lord. This means that the assembly of the Lord will be restored. God will have His assembly. God will have His land. He will have His church who will worship Him in Spirit and Truth.

Applications -

The Promise of Retribution – "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay", says the Lord." – Rom 12:19. We are known for our lawyers, and our litigious society. It is due to our covetousness, but it is also due to our lack of faith in God's promise to make all things right. When you are wronged, do you trust the Lord to bring justice and look to Him?

God's Hand of Providence – God is at work in all things. He has ordered all things. He upholds all things. God is the God of calamities (Is 45:7). You must believe that in order to truly believe that God works out all things for good to those who love God and are the called (Rom 8:28).

Which Yoke Are You Wearing? – You are either wearing a yoke of your own devising; your covetousness, your demand for autonomy from God, and your self-justification of all your sin – and this yoke that feels so nice, so free, so easy – is going to crush you. Or you are wearing the yoke that truly releases burdens and truly frees the soul (Matt 11:20-30)