

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

Here the prophet denounces a war against the plotters of wickedness, the covetous and the oppressor, Micah 2:1, Micah 2:2. God is represented as devising their ruin, Micah 2:3. An Israelite is then introduced as a mourner, personating his people, and lamenting their fate, Micah 2:4. Their total expulsion is now threatened on account of their very numerous offenses, Micah 2:5-10. Great infatuation of the people in favor of those pretenders to Divine inspiration who prophesied to them peace and plenty, Micah 2:11. The chapter concludes with a gracious promise of the restoration of the posterity of Jacob from captivity; possibly alluding to their deliverance from the Chaldean yoke, an event which was about two hundred years in futurity at the delivery of this prophecy, Micah 2:12, Micah 2:13.

Verse 1

Wo to them that devise iniquity - Who lay schemes and plans for transgressions; who make it their study to find out new modes of sinning; and make these things their nocturnal meditations, that, having fixed their plan, they may begin to execute it as soon as it is light in the morning.

Because it is in the power of their hand - They think they may do whatever they have power and opportunity to do.

Verse 2

They covet fields - These are the rich and mighty in the land; and, like Ahab, they will take the vineyard or inheritance of any poor Naboth on which they may fix their covetous eye; so that they take away even the heritage of the poor.

Verse 3

Against this family (the Israelites) do I devise an evil - You have devised the evil of plundering the upright; I will devise the evil to you of punishment for your conduct; you shall have your necks brought under the yoke of servitude. Tiglath-pileser ruined this kingdom, and transported the people to Assyria, under the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah; and Micah lived to see this catastrophe. See on Micah 2:9 (note).

Verse 4

Take up a parable against you - Your wickedness and your punishment shall be subjects of common conversation; and a funeral dirge shall be composed and sung for you as for the dead. The lamentation is that which immediately follows: We be utterly spoiled; and ends, Are these his doings? Micah 2:7.

Verse 5

None that shall cast a cord - You will no more have your inheritance divided to you by lot, as it was to your fathers; ye shall neither have fields nor possessions of any kind.

Verse 6

Prophesy ye not - Do not predict any more evils - we have as many as we can bear. We are utterly ruined - shame and confusion cover our faces. The original is singular, and expressive of sorrow and sobbing. Literally, "Do not cause it to rain; they will cause it to rain; they cannot make it rain sooner than this; confusion shall not depart from us." To rain, often means to preach, to prophesy; Ezekiel 20:46, Ezekiel 21:2; Amos 7:16; Deuteronomy 32:2; Job 29:22; Proverbs 5:3, etc.

The last line Bp. Newcome translates, "For he shall not remove from himself reproaches;" and paraphrases, "The true prophet will subject himself to public disgrace by exercising his office."

Verse 7

Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? - This is the complaint of the Israelites, and a part of the lamentation. Doth it not speak by other persons as well as by Micah? Doth it communicate to us such influences as it did formerly? Is it true that these evils are threatened by that Spirit? Are these his doings? To which Jehovah answers, "Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?" No upright man need fear any word spoken by me: my words to such yield instruction and comfort; never dismay. Were ye upright, ye would not complain of the words of my prophets. The last clause may be translated, "Walking with him that is upright." The upright man walks by the word; and the word walks with him who walks by it.

Verse 8

My people is risen up as an enemy - Ye are not only opposed to me, but ye are enemies to each other. Ye rob

and spoil each other. Ye plunder the peaceable passenger; depriving him both of his upper and under garment; ye pull off the robe from those who, far from being spoilers themselves, are averse from war.

Verse 9

The women of my people - Ye are the cause of the women and their children being carried into captivity - separated from their pleasant habitations, and from my temple and ordinances - and from the blessings of the covenant, which it is my glory to give, and theirs to receive. These two verses may probably relate to the war made on Ahaz by Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel. They fell suddenly upon the Jews; killed in one day one hundred and twenty thousand, and took two hundred thousand captive; and carried away much spoil. Thus, they rose up against them as enemies, when there was peace between the two kingdoms; spoiled them of their goods, carried away men, women, and children, till, at the remonstrances of the prophet Oded, they were released. See 2 Chronicles 28:6, etc. Micah lived in the days of Ahaz, and might have seen the barbarities which he here describes.

Verse 10

Arise ye, and depart - Prepare for your captivity; ye shall have no resting place here: the very land is polluted by your iniquities, and shall vomit you out, and it shall be destroyed; and the destruction of it shall be great and sore.

Some think this is an exhortation to the godly, to leave a land that was to be destroyed so speedily.

Verse 11

If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood - The meaning is: If a man who professes to be Divinely inspired do lie, by prophesying of plenty, etc., then such a person shall be received as a true prophet by this people. It not unfrequently happens that the Christless worldling, who has got into the priest's office for a maintenance, and who leaves the people undisturbed in their unregenerate state, is better received than the faithful pastor, who proclaims the justice of the Lord, and the necessity of repentance and forsaking sin, in order to their being made partakers of that holiness without which no man shall see God.

Verse 12

I will surely assemble - This is a promise of the restoration of Israel from captivity. He compares them to a flock of sheep rushing together to their fold, the hoofs of which make a wonderful noise or clatter. So when one hundred sheep run, eight hundred toes or divisions of these bifid animals make a clattering noise. This appears to be the image.

Verse 13

The breaker is come up - He who is to give them deliverance, and lead them out on the way of their return. He who takes down the hurdles, or makes a gap in the wall or hedge, to permit them to pass through. This may apply to those human agents that shall permit and order their return. And Jehovah being at their head, may refer to their final restoration, when the Lord Jesus shall become their leader, they having returned unto him as the shepherd and bishop of their souls; and they and the Gentiles forming one fold under one shepherd, to go no more out into captivity for ever. Lord, hasten the time!