

The Book of Micah

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Life's Builder Ignored

Micah 1:2-5

- ² Hear, all ye people;
Hearken, O earth, and all that therein is:
And let the Lord God be witness against you,
The Lord from his holy temple.
- ³ For, behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place,
And will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.
- ⁴ And the mountains shall be molten under him,
And the valleys shall be cleft,
As wax before the fire,
And as the waters that are poured down a steep place.
- ⁵ For the transgression of Jacob is all this,
And for the sins of the house of Israel.
What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?
And what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?

In 1968 there began the construction of a bridge that would one day carry over 160,000 vehicles per day. Two years into the construction. At 11:50am on 15th of October 1970 the bridge collapsed with a large section of the bridge falling 50 meters into the river and part of the land below.

It was at an hour that many of the construction workers were having their break inside work huts located beneath the bridge. 35 construction workers were killed, most were in those huts. The collapse of the West Gate Bridge crossing the Yarra River would be Australia's worst industrial accident.

It was found that the fault was due to both a structural design fault as well as a poor alternative construction method employed by the contractor.

I work in the construction industry; in the building of any building, whether it be a house, an office building or a bridge, **there are absolute rules to follow**. In steel beams there are what is called *Bending Moments*, telling you that, **with a certain load, under a certain temperature, in consideration of the dimensions of the beam**, the beam will bend and fail.

We can choose to overlook those rules, **come up with alternative rules** and still believe with all our hearts that the structure will perform equally as good if not better, **but the reality will always be what is revealed in the end**, the truth of the matter will always eventually come to pass.

We often think that we can improve on almost everything, build it cheaper, faster, desiring to stay within both a cost budget and a time budget. **We try alternatives** using the same materials we are given whose structural rules are absolute. **But it's not until we see the consequences of trying to build with these alternative methods that we go back to the rule book.** Sadly, the cost can be deadly and the memory of failure can last.

Man tends to do the same thing with his life. The master builder has set governing principals in place, **Bending Moments in our lives, consideration was given by him concerning what load we can bear, the temperament of our nature and the dimension of our lives.** Absolute rules were put in place and any attempt to live life according to an alternative style will have consequences.

Its interesting isn't it? God has built us for a purpose, his has designed that purpose within the very fabric of our being. He has looked at our lives like the architect looked at the West Gate Bridge, within his minds eye **he could see it functioning perfectly in accord with how he has envisioned.** The bridge for example, will find its purpose fulfilled when it is built according to the absolute design principles that govern its structure.

We will also find our lives completely fulfilled when we live our lives according to the absolute design principals of our creator; the Architect who has provided the absolute rules by which to live according to the design he has built in us.

Micah was a voice that rose to both the people of Israel in the North and the people of Judah in the south. He was not of the princely class like his contemporary Isaiah, he was a country boy who became a prophet for fifty years to the people of the land. His voice rose high and loud to tell the people that they are living in a manner alternative to that with which they have been designed **and their lives WONT WORK.**

Hear, all ye people;
Hearken, O earth, and all that therein is:
And let the Lord God be witness against you,
The Lord from his holy temple.

He speaks this out to all the world concerning the sin of Gods people. It was the people of God who had the advantage of **the Oracles of God**, none of the world had it. But they would be held to account as they hear and watch how God deals with his own.

His own are those who where given the blueprints of life.

Its like, only certain engineers had the formula required to build the perfect bridge structure that will perform in the way intended. **Only the Jews had the oracles of God** and Micah called to witness against them, the entire world who did not have **that perfect law of liberty.**

Imagine that for a moment. Imagine being the engineer who had in his hands the absolute design rules to build the perfect bridge structure, you have something no other people in the world have, something every other engineer in the world would love to have in order t be successful in his endeavour, **but you choose to set it aside**, to ignore it, and fail just as everyone else without those principals.

That is what Micah is calling out to witness against.

“Look and see how the people be who have the word **by the dispensation of angels and have not kept it**”

³ For, behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place,
And will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.

⁴ And the mountains shall be molten under him,
And the valleys shall be cleft,
As wax before the fire,
And as the waters that are poured down a steep place.

And now Micah tells of the one who gave them such a charge and such a rule, who will now leave his place **And will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.**

Do we have any historical knowledge of this happening? When did the **Lord cometh forth out of his place?** When did he **come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth?** Has this happened since Micah wrote or is it yet future?

There is a chance it may be both, verse 4 gives us a context that looks to the last days, but consider he who left his place might also have returned to it. Turn with me to the book of Hosea chapter 5.

Hosea 5:15

¹⁵ **I will go and return to my place,
Till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face:
In their affliction they will seek me early.**

Well it seems that for the Lord to return to his place there must have been a time when he had left it. But there is an offence they are to acknowledge, and also that they will seek his face in their affliction. What affliction?

Matthew 23:37-39

³⁷ **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! ³⁸ Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. ³⁹ For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**

Certain that God came out of his place, he walked upon the sea, he was **That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;**

But, yes, it also refers to his coming during a period known as Jacobs trouble when he when judge the world.

Turn back to Isaiah 26:20-21

²⁰ **Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers,
And shut thy doors about thee:
Hide thyself as it were for a little moment,
Until the indignation be overpast.**

²¹ For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place
To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity:
The earth also shall disclose her blood,
And shall no more cover her slain.

But the people in the focus of Micah are the people of God, both their houses are those in his focus, neither one nor the other are to be dealt with independently, both had the oracles of god and both disregarded them to live according to a live the does NOT WORK.

⁵ For the transgression of Jacob is all this,
And for the sins of the house of Israel.
What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria?
And what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?

Life's Structure Collapsed

Micah 2:7-11

⁷ O thou that art named the house of Jacob,
Is the spirit of the Lord straitened?
Are these his doings?
Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?

⁸ Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy:
Ye pull off the robe with the garment
From them that pass by securely as men averse from war.

⁹ The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses;
From their children have ye taken away my glory for ever.

¹⁰ Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest:
Because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.

¹¹ If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying,
I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink;
He shall even be the prophet of this people.

Before a single shovel of soil is turned in the ground to lay a foundation for a structure, **there has to be trust in the engineer who engineered the foundation**, trust in the architect who designed the structure, and faith in the builder who will undertake the work.

The longer their historical success, the more consistent the outcome, the more dependable they are to trust. Ultimately when we build in direct accord with the specifications given by those more qualified, the responsibility of the result becomes theirs.

We have a saying in my company, “We install the systems according to the system, so if there is a problem, its not our problem”.

God is the one who created you and all that is around you. You are not the pinnacle of God's creation as some people like to think, **you are the reason for it**. Everything in this world is

designed with you in mind and all the laws that govern creation are in place in order for you to prosper and live full lives.

If we trust the creator, there is no reason for us not to abide fully with the way he has called us to live.

⁷ O thou that art named the house of Jacob,
Is the spirit of the Lord straitened?
Are these his doings?
Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?

Turn forward to Micah 6:3-4

³ O my people, what have I done unto thee?
And wherein have I wearied thee?
Testify against me.
⁴ For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,
And redeemed thee out of the house of servants;
And I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

The Lords reputation was from ancient times. He was faithful to bring them out of bondage just as he said he would when he spoke those words to Abraham some six hundred years before saying

Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; ¹⁴ And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. (Gen 15:13)

The he gave them his law and brought them faithfully through the wilderness just as he said he would. Everything he told them came to pass. Even to the point of arguing their cause back to the one who desired to curse them.

Look at the next verse, verse 5 of Micah 6

O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted,
And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him
From Shittim unto Gilgal;
That ye may know the righteousness of the Lord.

That ye may know the righteousness of the Lord.

Astounding it is that all that was written afore time was written for our learning, that, through the patience and comfort of the scriptures we might have hope! (Roman 15:4) Yet they still will not trust him enough to live life in accord with his design.

Turn to Micah 2:1

Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds!
When the morning is light, they practise it,
Because it is in the power of their hand.
² And they covet fields, and take them by violence;
And houses, and take them away:

So they oppress a man and his house,
Even a man and his heritage.

How long can a person last who's thought on their bed is to devise iniquity, who lay there thinking to themselves how they are going to get away with sin. "Hmm, how can I claim this deduction so the tax department does not know" "How can I hide my intention so my wife/ husband does not know". "What will I say when they ask me..." "What excuse can I make so I don't have to go to that event"?

And you can name it. **They devise iniquity in their beds and in the morning they are ready to practise the evil of their own minds.**

They have come up with an alternative to living life, one they believe will give them a "short cut" to a better more fulfilled life.

They don't trust the one **who has never been wrong**, they trust and put their faith in the one **who has never been right**, themselves!

This is why God gives to them priests according to their own hearts lusts.

Look at verse 11 of Chapter 2

¹¹ If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying,
I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink;
He shall even be the prophet of this people.

Time and time again the Lord has warned that this leadership will be the judgement God gives to the people who will not follow him.

Go down to Micah 3:5-7

⁵ Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err,
That bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace;
And he that putteth not into their mouths,
They even prepare war against him.

⁶ Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision;
And it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine;
And the sun shall go down over the prophets,
And the day shall be dark over them.

⁷ Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded:
Yea, they shall all cover their lips;
For there is no answer of God.

Jeremiah 5:31 reminds us of the error that still continues well after Micah saying

The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

It's like the builder who does not want to follow good engineering and will not learn from his

error, he goes from one bad engineer to another, one bad tradesman to another. In fact, he does not even want to look at top engineers and tradesmen **because, on the surface, it seems to cost too much, he is looking for shortcuts!**

This is the same fault everyone has who tries to shortcut Life, they become their own curse.

But is this just a freak of history? Is this just one of those things of the old testament? Surely we know better now, surely after Jesus has come and lived and died and rose and has given us of his very spirit, we no longer live like those wicked Israelites?

Turn to 2 Tim 3:1 and see first hand the behaviour of the Church, even in these very days today.

3 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ⁶ For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ⁷ Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

This does not describe the world “Out there”, the world ALWAYS behaved this way. This is Pauls letter to Pastor Timothy respecting the last days IN THE CHURCH and brethren I can tell you and even show you of a certainty that this describes TODAY.

Those who call themselves Christians sit in churches devising evil. Not just in their beds, but even in their pews, thinking of what they will do when they leave Church for the day.

They don't trust to live life in accordance with the author of life, even the one who indwells them. They disregard his laws, they pick and choose which to follow and it is a matter of time that they will gather to themselves pastors who think like they do.

Turn forward to Chapter 4

4 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; ² Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴ And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Dear brethren, know of a certainty that if you will not turn to the Lord to trust him in every part of your life, but try to justify disobedience, it will be a matter of time before you **will not endure sound doctrine; but after YOUR own lusts will heap to yourselves teachers, having itching ears;** ⁴ And ... turn away your ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

You know what else, if I am not careful and I seek to justify my own sin and am not held to account even by you, I may also become that very person who will not chastise you for your error, but will also excuse it. I wont preach the whole counsel of God, and you will be the worse for it, and I will give account!

And how will it end?

Turn back to Micah 3:1

3And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob,
And ye princes of the house of Israel;
Is it not for you to know judgment?
2Who hate the good, and love the evil;
Who pluck off their skin from off them,
And their flesh from off their bones;
3Who also eat the flesh of my people,
And flay their skin from off them;
And they break their bones,
And chop them in pieces, as for the pot,
And as flesh within the caldron.
4Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them:
He will even hide his face from them at that time,
As they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Life's very structure collapses when the engineer of life is not able to be heard from nor consulted. We are living in days when there is no longer an absolute authority for man that man will accept.

They have rejected the truth of the Lord.

Soon homosexuals will marry and raise children that are not theirs.

Those who think to suffer will choose death to gain life

We already live in a world that thinks gain is Godliness, that thinks borrowing money will free them from debt, that thinks war will bring peace and loss of privacy will bring freedom.

That destroys the life in the womb thinking to free their responsibility for that life.... and the list goes on.

In Short; you cannot live life according to your alternative rules and think that you will have a **shortcut to fulfilment**. Micah warned the people then, and he warns you now.

Life's Builder Rebuilds

5Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops:
He hath laid siege against us:
They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.
2But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah,
Though thou be little among the thousands of Judah,
Yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel;
Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.
3Therefore will he give them up,
Until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth:

Then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.
⁴ And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord,
In the majesty of the name of the Lord his God;
And they shall abide:
For now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

There are those who truly believe that if the work is to be done correctly they need to do it themselves. I have often felt that way at work. It's difficult to give instructions, no matter how clear those instructions are, but to see them not carried out IN FULL.

But there have been **more times that I failed to carry out the work properly**, It's not until you realise that there are things that you simply cannot do yourself, that you call for help, and sometimes it's not even help that will help, **but someone else to replace your failed efforts completely.**

Certainly you will recognise Micah's prophetic passage here in chapter 5, it is repeated again in the Bible.

Turn to Matt 2:1-6

2 Now when Jesus was born in Beth-lehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, ² Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. ³ When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. ⁵ And they said unto him, In Beth-lehem of Judaea: **for thus it is written by the prophet, ⁶ And thou Beth-lehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.**

This is the prophecy of the King that should come. All the kings that came before him were to rule and govern according to *his* standard and none kept it perfectly.

We recall that in 1 Samuel 12 the people desired a King to govern and rule over them, and Samuel rebukes them for asking **for themselves a King when the Lord God was their king.**

God is the one who was to rule and govern perfectly. And here we have a King. **Fourteen generations** have passed since there was a king who ruled in Judah, of the Kings that did reign in Judah only half were considered Good Kings, not perfect, but good.

Of the nineteen kings who ruled in Samaria there were none good.

But **thou Beth-lehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.**

As you read from verses three to nine you see how this governor shall work and how the people will be benefited and it's wonderful to know the Lord and all he does to benefit us in our lives when we have asked him to rule and to govern, when we have come to the end of ourselves, knowing that we simply cannot be ruled by ourselves.

Turn to John 15:4-5

⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: **for without me ye can do nothing.**

Micah was making the same point for the people of the land of Israel, he was showing to them that the one that will come to govern will govern perfectly and these will be your benefits!

But there are things within our lives that are not good that we desire to be rid of but simply cannot, **it's almost as if we ourselves will be UNDONE** trying to remove the things that we have put there.

There are some failing parts in the structure of our lives, **like the parts that failed on the collapsing bridge in October 1970.** Only this Governor can remove them;

Read with me from Micah 5:10

- ¹⁰ And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord,
That I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee,
And I will destroy thy chariots:
¹¹ And I will cut off the cities of thy land,
And throw down all thy strong holds:
¹² And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand;
And thou shalt have no more soothsayers:
¹³ Thy graven images also will I cut off,
And thy standing images out of the midst of thee;
And thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands.
¹⁴ And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee:
So will I destroy thy cities.
¹⁵ And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen,
Such as they have not heard.

The very causes of the trespass and sin of the people, God would remove and execute his judgements.

As parents we have the same responsibility to our children, to remove the cause of trespass, the cause of error and trouble in their lives to have them restored. We don't exercise judgment on them, but on the cause of their trouble.

Just before my mother passed away I went to her home and had seen the books and the items that I knew were the cause of all her trouble, looking at them I despised them and just wanted to burn it all.

Her ougie Board, her Tarrot Cards, her pagan New Age books. The very things that imprisoned her and bound her and which I knew where the demonic causes of her misery, I wanted to remove and destroy with all my heart. But it was too late. Mum was dying, it did not matter now.

Or did it? My sister took ownership of those things and they are now a cause of trespass for her.

Social media today is one of the great troubles for young teens. It is the greatest cause of

insecurity they have ever faced.

In the US I read a story of a young 16 year old girl who's addiction to social media was her life. Her mother, a strong Christian woman, took away her phone even among threats of violence against her. Yes parents have been beaten up for taking away the cause of their trouble.

It took several months before the addiction was gone, she has never again returned to it and she is invited to speak at numerous events around the nation warning of the dangers.

CLOSING

Micah speaks about the complete collapse of the nation that will be restored only by the Lord.

There are times when nothing but a complete collapse of the structure of our lives will suffice before we ask the master builder to restore it.

The West Gate Bridge would not have been able to be repaired even if the fault was found. There were structural elements on that Bridge that need to be removed and replaced but it would have been impossible to do.

The Bridge needed to fall before it could be rebuilt.

Friends, within each of us are structural faults that we cannot repair. Things we simply cannot fix ourselves. Our rest is in the Lord, who can both destroy and build up.

That which is dead, only he can make alive through Jesus Christ, that Governor from Bethlehem

Ephesians 2 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; ² Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³ Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, ⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;).