

All Rise! For the Honorable Judge Yahweh The Covenantal Lawsuit (v.1:2-5)

Yahweh the Witness	Yahweh the Judge
<p style="text-align: center;">² Hear, you peoples, all of you; pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it, and let the Lord God be a witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">³ For behold, the LORD is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. ⁴ And the mountains will melt under him, and the valleys will split open, like wax before the fire, like waters poured down a steep place.</p>
He was present and heard and saw every offense.	The aura of doom and dread is horrifying as He comes to judge each offense according to His Law.
The Indictment: The Law has been broken.	
<p>⁵ All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?</p>	

The judgement upon Samaria

⁶ Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country, a place for planting vineyards, and I will pour down her stones into the valley and uncover her foundations.
⁷ All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces, all her wages shall be burned with fire, and all her idols I will lay waste, for from the fee of a prostitute she gathered them, and to the fee of a prostitute they shall return.

The judgement upon Jerusalem

¹⁰ Tell it not in Gath; weep not at all; in Beth-le-aphrah roll yourselves in the dust.
¹¹ Pass on your way, inhabitants of Shaphir, in nakedness and shame; the inhabitants of Zaanan do not come out; the lamentation of Beth-ezel shall take away from you its standing place.
¹² For the inhabitants of Maroth wait anxiously for good, because disaster has come down from the LORD to the gate of Jerusalem.
¹³ Harness the steeds to the chariots, inhabitants of Lachish; it was the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion, for in you were found the transgressions of Israel.
¹⁴ Therefore you shall give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath; the houses of Achzib shall be a deceitful thing to the kings of Israel.
¹⁵ I will again bring a conqueror to you, inhabitants of Mareshah; the glory of Israel shall come to Adullam.

Idolatry: The Means of Enslavement

The transgression of Israel and Judah can be summarized by breaking the 1st and 2nd commandments:

- ²“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
- ³**‘You shall have no other gods before me.**
- ⁴**‘You shall not make for yourself a carved image**, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵**You shall not bow down to them or serve them**, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.” Exodus 20:1-6



The Idolatry Pathway in Romans 1:18-32

- **Love of idol:**
 - Glory and worship are given to a created thing rather than the Creator (Romans 1:23, 25)
- **Loyalty to idol:**
 - “...they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.” (Romans 1:32)
- **Enslavement to idol:**
 - Given over to the lusts of their hearts (Romans 1:24)
 - Given over to dishonorable passions (Romans 1:26)
 - Given over to a debased mind (Romans 1:28)

The Faithful Pathway: Enslaved to Christ

- **He first loved us:**
 - “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:10
 - “We love because he first loved us.” 1 John 4:19
- **He is loyal:**
 - “And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.” Ezekiel 36:27
 - “And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.” John 6:39
 - “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

▪ **Enslaved to Christ**

- “You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- “But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.” Romans 6:22 (see all of Romans 6)
- “Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a *fellow servant* with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation 19:10

Idolatry: The Means of Judgement

What’s in a name? (v.10-15)

- Micah uses a form of Hebrew poetry called paronomasia.
 - The use of words of similar sound and related origin, but different in meaning.
 - The play on words in Hebrew is not for humor. It is an omen of mourning, failure, and woe.
 - Ex. Homewood will be homeless; Vestavia Hills will become a valley; Brook Highland will become a broken lowland
- A name represented your character, destiny, fame, renown, reputation, etc.

The Judgement Coming to Judah			
Verse	Name of Town	Meaning of Name	Judgement
10	Gath	Tell	Do not tell
10	Beth-le-aphrah	House of Dust	Roll in the dust
11	Shaphir	Beautiful	Nakedness and shame
11	Zaanan	Go out/exit	Do not come out
11	Beth-ezel	House of Taking Away	Shall be taken away
12	Maroth	Bitterness	Waiting for good/sweetness
13	Lachish	To the steeds	Harness the steeds
14	Moresheth-gath	Betrothed	Give parting gifts
14	Achzib	Deceitful	Will be deceived
15	Mareshah	Conquer	Will be conquered
15	Adullam	Place of refuge for David fleeing Saul	The people will take flight there to hide

The very thing that each place worships or is known for will be the source of its destruction and the place where its judgement is most clearly seen.

**His Mercy upon our Idolatry:
Godly Grief and Repentance**

Micah Grieves

⁸ For this I will lament and wail;
I will go stripped and naked;
I will make lamentation like the jackals,
and mourning like the ostriches.
⁹ For her wound is incurable,
and it has come to Judah;
it has reached to the gate of my people,
to Jerusalem.

Micah’s Plea to Grieve and Repent

¹⁶ Make yourselves bald and cut off your hair,
for the children of your delight;
make yourselves as bald as the eagle,
for they shall go from you into exile.

A true prophet is a man who fearlessly threatens God's people with God's judgement and stands against them- and then goes home and weeps shamelessly over that judgement because he cares so much for the people who are to be judged. - Dale Ralph Davis (Micah: EP Study Commentary pg. 28)

Godly grief

A vertical grief
 Mourning sin and its consequences
 Mourning the influence of sin upon God's people
 Grief over offense to the Lord
 Grief over separation from the Lord
 God-focused
 Leads to repentance

Worldly grief

A horizontal grief
 Mourning the consequences of sin
 Mourning the opinion of others
 Regret over past mistakes
 No change and no growth
 Self-focused
 Leads to spiritual death

“For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.” 2 Corinthians 7:10

Repentance

Metanoeo (Greek)

To repent: changing one's mind, changing one's focus and purpose, turning back to God. Leads to changed mindset and focus of life

Regret

Metamelomai (Greek)

To regret and feel sad on account of something done or experienced, and wishes could have been different. Leads to mental anguish, remorse, despair, hopelessness

“Now when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus had been condemned, **he regretted** what he had done and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders...” Matthew 27:3 (NET)

Repentance is a gift

- “God may perhaps **grant them repentance** leading to a knowledge of the truth.” 2 Timothy 2:25
- “Then to the Gentiles also God has **granted repentance** that leads to life.” Acts 11:18

Repentance is the call of Christ

- “From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17
- “...and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” Luke 24:47

The New Covenantal Lawsuit

All will be tried in the heavenly courtroom

- “...every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.” Romans 3:19
- “For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God...So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.” Romans 14:10, 12
- “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...” 2 Corinthians 5:10

Our Indictment:

- “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23
- “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” 1 John 1:8

Christ: Our Witness

- “and from Jesus Christ the **faithful witness**” Revelation 1:5
- “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the Amen, the **faithful and true witness**, the beginning of God's creation.’” Revelation 3:14
- “He **bears witness to what he has seen and heard**, yet no one receives his testimony.” John 3:32
- “Then Pilate said to him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to **bear witness to the truth**. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.’” John 18:37

Christ: Our Judge

- “For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son...And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.” John 5:22, 27
- “...but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.” 1 Peter 4:5

Christ: Takes our Condemnation

- “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5
- “And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.” Colossians 2:13-14

Christ: Our Justification

- “Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.” Romans 5:9
- “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:1

Our Gospel Cry

Christ will judge the world
Repent and believe
Receive forgiveness through Christ

“And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” Acts 10:42-43

“The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” Acts 17:30-31

DISCUSSION

1. The root of bondage to sin is loving other “gods” above the one true God. (Idolatry)
How have you experienced inordinate love for something besides God? How did that lead you into despair or enslavement to that idol?
2. How have you experienced “The Faithful Pathway?” How has God’s love redirected your love away from idols towards Him?
3. What are examples of situations where an idol not only enslaves someone, but it actually becomes the form of judgement?
4. How would you seek to counsel someone dwelling in worldly grief? How could you direct them towards godly grief and repentance?
5. What have you learned of God’s character today?
6. What have you learned of Christ the Prophet or Christ the fulfillment of Prophecy?

HOMEWORK

READ:

The Book of Life paper

REFLECT:

1. Revelation 20 says all will stand before the throne and will be judged either by “the books” or “the book of life.” What is the difference?
2. How is someone’s name written in the book of life? When is their name written? How does this strengthen your faith?
3. How would you fair being judged by “the books” of every thought, word, and deed of your entire life?
4. How does a greater understanding of the final courtroom lead you to worship God and not idols?
5. How does an understanding of the book of life change how you experience grief? (Godly vs worldly)

REMEMBER:

Those in Christ stand innocent and justified before God in the divine courtroom because of the blood of Jesus.

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:1

“Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.” Romans 8:33-34