

**Requirements from God  
Yes, He is Also Involved in How We Do Business  
Micah 6:8-16**

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We are in the third message Micah has for Israel and Judah.

The people of Israel have inquired of the Lord to discover just exactly what is the minimum stuff we must do in order to get a pass. They simply want their fire insurance without getting too crazy about this following YAHWEH thing. Following YAHWEH is not culturally acceptable in Israel currently.

So, we rested last time, on the requirements. There is no minimum. All in or nothing.

These are applicable today just as they were during the time of Micah. This was tough for Israel to understand, still tough today.

Israel is, for the most part, no longer in belief. "Profound unbelief in God's gracious character and actions induces such spiritual blindness, and as a result it debases the covenant of grace, based on unilateral love, into a non-loving, bargaining contract. Moreover, in those initial acts of salvation I AM had graciously shown himself immanent with his people. Why does the obtuse petitioner now think that it would take extraordinary sacrifice on his part to bridge the gap between I AM in heaven and himself on earth?" (Waltke 2007, 387)

Micah 6:8

“He has told you, mortal one, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?” (NASB 2020)

All the crazy things the folks in Israel thought they would need to do to obtain reconciliation with God, are simply not required. Unbelief leads you down that path though. The problem we see today is that the issues being discussed by Micah are still applicable in the west today. King Solomon was right.

Ecclesiastes 1:9–11

“History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing under the sun is truly new. Sometimes people say, “Here is something new!” But actually it is old; nothing is ever truly new. We don’t remember what happened in the past, and in future generations, no one will remember what we are doing now.” (NLT)

We are in a culture today that is blinded by the lies of the enemy. So much so that Barna now reports that those who hold to a Biblical worldview in the US is around 4%, around 14 million, maybe. Why? It starts in the pulpit where many Senior Pastors have drifted away from truth.

This is no different than what we have already seen to be the source of the problem in the northern kingdom of Israel. The source of the problem was those who were supposedly the spiritual leadership of the nation.

That would be the King, the Priests (but the Levites got kicked out), and the prophets, most who are of the pay to play mindset.

Oppression is the name of the game in the northern kingdom and the leaning into false gods and fertility cults has not been a good thing for them. Thus, the outlandish ideas we looked at last time.

Just as the spiritual leadership of Israel had turned and walked away from the worship of YAHWEH, we have been witnessing the same thing take place in the churches of the west for well over 100 years now, and a major tipping point has been arrived at in the United States.

Per George Barna, we see the following data points today about spiritual leadership trends:

One-third or more of senior pastors believe:

- Sexual relations between two unmarried people who believe they love each other is morally acceptable.
- Determining moral truth is up to each individual; there are no moral absolutes that apply to everyone, all the time.
- The Holy Spirit is not a living entity but is a symbol of God’s power, presence, or purity.
- Having faith matters more than which faith you have.
- Reincarnation is a real possibility.
- It is possible to reach complete spiritual maturity during our time on earth.
- A person who is generally good, or does enough good things for others, can earn a place in Heaven.
- They are willing to try just about anything once.
- Socialism is preferable to capitalism.
- Allowing property ownership facilitates economic injustice.
- The Bible is ambiguous in its teaching about abortion, enabling you to make a strong argument either for or against abortion based on biblical principles.

One-third or more of senior pastors do not believe:

- Human life is sacred.
- Wealth is entrusted to individuals to be managed for God's purposes.
- Success is consistent obedience to God.
- People are born into sin and can only be saved from its consequences by Jesus Christ.
- They, personally, will experience eternal salvation only because they have personally confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as their savior. (Barna 2022)

John 14:1–6

“Do not be worried and upset,” Jesus told them. “Believe in God and believe also in me. There are many rooms in my Father’s house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am. You know the way that leads to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going; so how can we know the way to get there?” Jesus answered him, “**I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me.**” (GNB)

This is not in every church. There are many of us who are standing up to the onslaught of the culture. We have decided to stick to what it is Christ called us to do, make disciples.

1 Corinthians 1:17

“For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—and not with clever speech, so that the cross of Christ would not become useless.” (NET 2nd ed.)

That is the central focus here at Calvary Jupiter and it is also the central focus of Calvary Chapel Martin County.

We catch and clean fish and leave it to others to be worried about cleaning the pond. Why do we need to be protesting the world being the world. That is not our calling per Matthew 28:19.

We knew this drift was coming. Jesus strongly hinted at this in Luke 18:8b, “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (ESV). Today, that question about faith is beginning to look like a really good question to ask. Dr. Barna did ask that question.

Because Dr. Barna asked this question, he was able to make some statistical sense of what he was seeing. “When you put the data in perspective, the biblical worldview is shuffling toward the edge of the cliff,” Barna said. “As things stand today, biblical theism is much closer to extinction in America than it is to influencing the soul of the nation. The current incidence of adults with the biblical worldview is the lowest since I began measuring it in the early 1990s.” (Barna, American Worldview Inventory 2023 Release #1: Incidence of Biblical Worldview Shows Significant Change Since the Start of the Pandemic 2023)

Not good news. Our job is simple.

2 Timothy 4:1–4

“I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: **preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.** For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.” (ESV)

Itchy ear syndrome is a rather commonplace malady these days, it is not a new one either.

That was where the Israel Micah was talking to was, apostate and interested only in self, deep into myths being supported by the religious establishment of the culture.

Based on the data, short of revival, that is where our culture is headed to, or has already arrived at, as well.

The apostasy in Israel had, by the time of Micah, been going on for over 200 years. Very few have a Torah worldview much less even know what the Torah says. So, the citizen of Israel is “blinded to God’s gracious character and acts, he reasons within his own depraved frame of reference: he need not change, God must change. In effect, by his refusal to repent of his unbelief and injustice, he suggests that God, like man, can be bought! In the same way countless people spurn God’s gift of his Son who gave his life a ransom for many, and what these events typify, and substitute their own gifts. In truth, however, they are unwilling to trust the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who died for their sins and rose from the dead, enough to risk their lives for his kingdom. Instead of accepting spiritual regeneration, they hope to buy God off by their works.” (Waltke 2007, 387-388)

Let’s take another look at the solution which was related by Micah. What is it that YAHWEH wants? How do I obtain that much needed fire insurance?

Simple, go back to the beginning and examine what it was that He told you. What YAHWEH desires is in the Shema.

Deuteronomy 6:4–5

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. **You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.**” (ESV)

This is the Shema. Jewish rabbis know what it stresses. Recall that the questioning prior to Micah 6:8 has been along the lines of legalistic views of the relationship with YAHWEH. But when we get to Micah 6:8, we find out immediately how misled Israel truly is.

It stresses that one not observe the commandments because of the fear of punishment or as an attempt to gain divine favor, but rather out of the pure love that represents the highest level in which a human being can relate with God. The Mishnah explains that a person should serve God with passionate love (“with all your heart”), even if this means giving up your life (“with all your soul”) and wealth (“with all your resources”) (Ber. 9:5). (Eisenberg 2004, 415)

External religion without an internal experience, without reality on the inside, is absolutely valueless. There must be a rebirth, a new nature given to the individual. Externalities are not important—God never begins there. If you want to know what God takes delight in, what He requires of man, this verse will tell you. (McGee 1997, 798)

Micah 6:8

“He has told you, mortal one, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?” (NASB 2020)

Earlier, Micah accused the leadership of being haters of good.

Micah 3:2

“**You who hate good and love evil**, Who tear off their skin from them And their flesh from their bones,” (NASB 2020)

When He says “He has told you...what is good,” we already know that they hate it. To make sure they know what the good is, He follows up with “the good.”

The question “What is good?” even when raised by prophets (Isa 1:17; Jer 22:15–16) is a wisdom question...This is followed by a catalogue of things that are “good” for “the man,” with a value system that is not at all skeptical. (Andersen and Freedman 2008, 527-528)

Those things which YAHWEH provides instruction on are countercultural. The culture of Israel was doing the exact opposite of what verse 8 outlines.

Three items are ticked off as “good.” They run from external doing to internal being, from relating to one another to relating to YAHWEH.

1. Do justice
2. Love kindness (mercy)
3. Walk humbly with your God

Did you notice? Not one single mention of making a sacrifice of any kind. “Each of these three is the exact opposite of what they have been doing.” (Hoyt 2018, 765)

Examining item 1, how is Israel doing? Are they succeeding in relationships with each other? Hardly.

They have failed. Micah has already accused them of injustice.

To do justice, we need to look at the one who is telling His people that this is needed. God is the one saying this. God is just or to put it another way, He is righteousness. It is who He is. It is one of His moral attributes.

Whatever God is, says, or does, by virtue of the fact that it is God, makes it righteous. Right and wrong are simply, and respectively, what God either commands or forbids. In other words, God doesn’t do or command something because it is right. It is right because it is done or commanded by God. Righteousness or rectitude or good do not exist independently of God as a law or rule or standard to which God adheres or conforms. Rather, righteousness or rectitude or good are simply God acting and speaking. (Storms 2006)

When He says “to do justice,” He is inviting His people to do what He does and act as He does. This implies the need for a loving relationship based on faith to be in existence. To act justly is something we already know about from Micah 2, both nations have a serious issue with this.

“We want to live in a just world, and we want to be the recipients of justice from others. Yet that isn’t what God is saying here. If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, you’ve already been the recipient of God’s justice, which was satisfied by the substitutionary, atoning death of Jesus. You have been declared not guilty for your sin, and you have received the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. In an unjust world, God commands us to be dispensers of justice to those around us.” (Redmond, Curtis and Fentress 2016, 124)

God is telling His people that they are to reflect Him and His righteousness in all that they do.

How are they doing on that? How are we doing on that?

Micah 6:8

“He has told you, mortal one, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?” (NASB 2020)

Doing justice is only possible through relationship and a desire to be like the one who is justice.

Point 2, doing justice means we will love to express kindness in all that we do. The doing does something about the being, making it a normal outcome.

This is countercultural for those in Israel at the time as the nation was far from being kind to all in the culture.

The word translated as kindness is the Hebrew word חֶסֶד (hesed). We do not have a real good word for the English to translate this word to.

We see the term and realize this is going to be just as tough as the first point.

First, we were told to be just, righteous just like God. That requires relationship which means repentance to the Jew, believing faith for us. Then it is followed up by referring to changes a relationship brings as we begin to “be” something different.

As we grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ, we start off the relationship with a whole bunch of really bad habits and things that we thought were good to do. Some of them were outright wrong for a believer in Christ but He loves us and gives us the Holy Spirit to start to figure some of that out. We also have His word too. Put the two together and the same thing begins to happen, relationship.

As we grow in our relationship with Him, we begin to question things.

For example, I recall working with a new believer who was in that recent believer growing phase. He liked smoking dope.

One day he asked me if being a Christian means he should stop smoking dope. I told him no, and then pointed him to Galatians 5:19 – 24.

He assumed that we had a list of dos and don'ts to follow, I told him we did not have anything like that. But we do have God's word and His Holy Spirit in us to provide us guidance and direction. As we learn to love Him more, He shows us what is the good, the Holy Spirit enables us to follow Micah 6:8.

I asked him to read Galatians 5:19 – 24 and pray about it. I also provided the Greek word for sorcery (witchcraft) to him.

Galatians 5:19–24

“When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there.” (NLT)

He did and told me the next day that the Holy Spirit showed him that he no longer needed to smoke dope or use any other substance since He now had Christ.

In other words, he was becoming more like Jesus, doing, and now was learning about the being, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

He was being taught of the Holy Spirit about hesed and what all of this truly means. Because God is hesed, faithfully loyal in all He does, we desire the same. He wants us to be faithfully loyal to Him and to each other.

[Hesed] is the way God intended for human beings to live together from the beginning—the “love-your-neighbor-as-yourself” brand of living, an active, selfless, sacrificial caring for one another that goes against the grain of our fallen natures. Hesed is a costly brand of love that involves going above and beyond what anyone has a right to ask or expect...YHWH is the ultimate hesed-giver. The confidence and hope of God's people banks on the fact that YHWH is “abounding in love [hesed]” (Exod 34:6). (James 2018, 51)



#### 1 John 3:11–16

“For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. We must not be like Cain who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous. Do not be astonished, brothers and sisters, that the world hates you. **We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another.** Whoever does not love abides in death. All who hate a brother or sister are murderers, and you know that murderers do not have eternal life abiding in them. We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.” (NRSV)

Recapping what we know so far. We are told what is good, what it is the God desires of His people and so far, we know it is to do justice, righteousness and to be in love with hese. It is nothing more than a natural function of relationship. I love YAHWEH and I want to please Him.

This would be something YAHWEH wanted for His people in the northern kingdom, which they have rejected by rejecting the relationship and doing their own thing. He also desires this for us, and He made it possible through the achievement of Jesus Christ on the cross and through His resurrection. The doing and the being results in the walking with.

Point 3, “to walk humbly with your God.” The word translated walk is the Hebrew word *לָכַת* (leket). And what does walking humbly with your God look like? It looks like Jesus Christ and His perfect example provided for us when He was here the first time. Communion.

He brought Himself under the authority of God the Father in order to provide a substitute sacrifice that would produce a perfect atonement for our sin. Consequently, He calls us to do the same—to come under the authority of God our Father, to live for His glory, and to have a heart that reflects His Father’s heart. (Redmond, Curtis and Fentress 2016, 126-127)

#### Philippians 2:5–11

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (NKJV)

For Israel, they are told the secret involves relationship, walking alongside of YAHWEH, in agreement with Him. “This would indicate that this type of walking included living humbly within the covenant, thus living a pure life, as the covenant demands, and the ability to do so requires skill in the sense that the person must learn how to live in such a way. Thus they must learn the covenant in order to live by the covenant, and they will only do this if they are humble in their relationship with Yahweh.” (Hoyt 2018, 766)

All three of the things that Micah, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is talking about are imminently doable for the NT believer as well since they are fruits of the Spirit.

Righteousness is what God requires, but the Old Testament makes it very obvious that we cannot present our righteousness to God—because we don’t have any. Since God requires righteousness, there must be a change in the life because there is none righteous. (McGee 1997, 799)

#### Galatians 5:22–26

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.” (ESV)

Simply, Micah 6:8 restated.

The love of kindness, hesed, is not possible in our human hearts apart from Jesus Christ. “They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.” (Romans 3:12, NKJV) Jesus changes that.

Again, without Jesus Christ and without the Holy Spirit, Micah 6:8 is impossible for us to realize. Now that the ideal has been held up for the people of Israel, how far are they from that? Does God really care about BAU in the day-to-day world? Yes, He does.

Micah 6:9–12

“The voice of the LORD will call to the city— And it is sound wisdom to fear Your name: “Hear, you tribe. Who has designated its time? Is there still a person in the wicked house, Along with treasures of wickedness, And a short measure that is cursed? Can I justify dishonest balances, And a bag of fraudulent weights? For the rich people of the city are full of violence, Her residents speak lies, And their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.” (NASB 2020)

The problem in Israel was that those things the Lord desired for them, those things He required of them, they don't do. Because of that, YAHWEH returns to discipline.

Micah calls out to YAHWEH's people who live in the city and tells them that the Lord is going to call. We are not told which city but a reference in verse 16 leads me to believe we are talking about Samaria in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, but the generality used includes Judah in the mix. Both need to listen.

Micah adds to his call to the city by reminding them just how wise it is to fear the Lord. Why does he have to say that? Because they have spent better than 200 years ignoring YAHWEH and even though He is about to make Himself very visible to them in judgement, they must be reminded of what the scriptures teach in Proverbs.

Proverbs 1:7

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (ESV)

As the people will soon learn, the opposite holds true as well; to treat God wrongly or indifferently is foolish and extremely dangerous. (Burge and Hill 2012, 870)

After calling the city to listen and seek true wisdom by fearing YAHWEH, Micah then names a tribe without naming a specific tribe. As such, it could be meant for all the tribes of Israel and Judah.

This is not a message solely for those in the city, but for all throughout the nation.

The last portion of verse 9 belongs with verse 10.

Micah 6:9b–10

...“Hear, you tribe. Who has designated its time? Is there still a person in the wicked house, Along with treasures of wickedness, And a short measure that is cursed?” (NASB 2020)

The particular form of cheating mentioned here involved the use of false measures. The were measuring containers that held less than they should. When a customer bought something which needed to be measured, the merchant would measure it out with false measures, and the customer would get less than he had paid for. (Clark and Mundhenk 1982, 237-238)

The use of false measures was one of the ways that the rich got richer. When they purchased something, the seller used a false weight on the scale that weighed heavy so they would pay a one-pound price for  $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds, or something similar in their scale of measure.



This form of business involving cheating the customer was BAU for the nation.

Micah 6:11–13

““Can I justify dishonest balances, And a bag of fraudulent weights? For the rich people of the city are full of violence, Her residents speak lies, And their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. So also I will make you sick, striking you down, Making you desolate because of your sins.”” (NASB 2020)

Yes, YAHWEH is interested in being involved in our lives, even our business life. Yes, I know, that is a hard idea for a lot of people.

We tend to compartmentalize our lives here in the 21st century and act like it is something new. It really isn't because of what we are reading here in Micah.

But I have talked with many who have a Business life, a Family life, and a Church life; and never shall those lives meet. Here YAHWEH makes it clear that because we are His followers, we are to do life His way always in all spheres of life.

That is why this litany of crimes comes after what we learned were His expectations of a follower in Micah 6:8.

There is soon to be a crisis, Assyria. This will produce refugees from the country who will go into the cities for refuge. Those in the city see these county rubes headed into town and decide to fleece them.

But the folks from the countryside are as adept at fleecing an unwise buyer as well. What is being described here is one reason why in Florida, there are laws to prevent price gouging as a hurricane moves in as well as the aftermath.

In Israel and Judah, the Torah spoke against this practice, but the leadership got rich from it so they looked the other way. It became an acceptable business practice. In business today, you don't lie, you misspeak. YAHWEH though calls it lies. In fact, He calls it violence in verse 12. The nation has forgotten what the Torah commands.

Leviticus 19:35–37

“You must not do injustice in the regulation of measures, whether of length, weight, or volume. You must have honest balances, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin. I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt. You must be sure to obey all my statutes and regulations. I am the LORD.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Once business practice become corrupt, then an entire class of worker begins to increase. Since the buyer is a crook and so is the seller, contracts become the norm and all of them negotiated with the aid of an attorney to make certain both parties are kept honest. Lawsuits pop up everywhere.

Micah 6:12–13

““For the rich people of the city are full of violence, Her residents speak lies, And their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. So also I will make you sick, striking you down, Making you desolate because of your sins.”” (NASB 2020)

“Of course, that is why God gave government, the courts, and His servants the prophets—each group was to do its part to provide a series of checks and balances on a corrupt society. But when practices such as Micah describes persisted, it is clear that the government was not cracking down on the violators and that the courts were not providing relief. Only God's prophets decried the practices.” (Kaiser and Ogilvie 1992, 74)

Yes, at one level Micah is decrying the lack of social justice in the culture, on the other level, he is making it clear that the behavior is wrong and judgement will come due to it. These are not acceptable business

practices. The days of buying an insurance policy and then having to sue the company to have a claim paid, are numbered.

I used to work in the world of insurance and helped author many of the rules managing the workers compensation system in this nation. I have found a common theme; some insurance companies will bend over backwards to not pay you a dime. Even to the point of twisting very plain and simple language in order to produce a tortured reason for not paying. For example, insurance law states that when there is an ambiguity in a rule or policy, the benefit of the doubt goes to the insured...always. Yet I continuously had to point that out over and over again. Insurance regulators and those carriers who are honest and great companies keep the bad actors limited. But I must ask, has anything really changed since the 8th century BC?

The whole system has been corrupted. The rich started it and must take the major responsibility, but their example has permeated the whole city. The key insight here is that the violence of a few leads to dishonesty by the many. (Prior 1988, 181)

YAHWEH tells us that He sees and will take note of those who are involved in less than honest business practices in Israel and Judah.

The people were so infested with swindling and corruption that God must intervene with terrible judgment and a sinister threat of invasion. The enormity of their sin was so great that the disasters threatened in the covenant curses awaited them (cf. Lev. 26:25f; Deut. 28:15, 18, 39f). Their path through life that had been made easy by using others as stepping-stones would now be reversed. (Lint 1999, Mic 6:13-15)

Mic 6:13 reads literally, "I will make the striking of you sick" = I will strike you sorely. (Waltke 2007, 401)

Illness is promised to those involved in these business practices. This could be due to plague, or due to siege, but it is the result of a covenant promise made by YAHWEH.

Micah 6:14–16

"You will eat, but you will not be satisfied, And your filth will be in your midst. You will try to remove valuables for safekeeping, But you will not save it all, And what you do save I will turn over to the sword. You will sow but you will not harvest. You will tread the olive press but will not anoint yourself with oil; And tread out sweet wine, but you will not drink any wine. The statutes of Omri And every work of the house of Ahab are maintained, And you walk by their plans. Therefore I will give you up for destruction, And your inhabitants for derision, And you will suffer the taunting of My people." (NASB 2020)

From the Targums.

Micah 6:14–16

"You shall eat, but not be satisfied; and there shall be sickness in your insides. You shall obtain, but not carry off, and what you do carry off I will deliver to the sword. You shall sow but not reap, you shall tread the olives, but not anoint yourself with oil; you shall press grapes, but not drink wine. For you have kept the decrees of the house of Omri and you have performed the practices of the house of Ahab, and you have followed their laws, so that they might deliver you to desolation and her inhabitants to devastation; you shall receive the scorn of my people." (Cathcart, McNamara and Maher 1990, Micah 6:14-16)

Wow, what a promise, explosive diarrhea for those involved in these business practices. Some translate this: "As for you, you will eat, but you will not be satisfied, for dysentery will strike you in your inward parts." (Waltke 2007, 395)

YAHWEH is faithful, not only to the blessings of the covenant on behalf of His people Israel, but the curses as well.

#### Deuteronomy 28:58–63

“If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues—great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses. Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed. You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God. And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.” (NKJV)

There is one other item in the law we need to see as well.

#### Deuteronomy 19:14

“You shall not remove your neighbor’s landmark, which the men of old have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.” (NKJV)

He was amazingly patient with Israel, giving them opportunity after opportunity to repent, delaying judgment. But eventually he stopped relenting and abided by his covenant. The covenant curses, especially the ones recorded in Deuteronomy, are very specific about what will happen when they turn away from Yahweh, even down to what type of sicknesses they will face. (Hoyt 2018, 774)

They will eat but they will be too sick to enjoy it. They will try to steal land from others by moving boundary stones around at night, but will not be able enjoy the fruit of that either.

The food that they are able to save, winds up being taken as a result of siege. “The focus is on the utter futility of their attempts to steal in light of Yahweh’s judgment. They will attempt to steal land, but they will not succeed. And what they do manage to steal will be taken away by the sword/war.” (Hoyt 2018, 775)

All of the attempts they make to improve their portfolio, as long as they are doing it contrary to what the law says is acceptable, will not work. Instead, they will suffer the curses of the covenant, as promised by YAHWEH, and the rest will be taken by Assyria and later, Babylon.

God continues with His listing of judgements. The land of milk and honey will not longer produce for them. The blessing they had is now gone. They will sow, but there will not be a harvest. If they are able to obtain olives or grapes, they will get as far as the production of oil and wine, but will never be able to enjoy any of it.

#### Micah 6:15–16

“You will sow but you will not harvest. You will tread the olive press but will not anoint yourself with oil; And tread out sweet wine, but you will not drink any wine. The statutes of Omri And every work of the house of Ahab are maintained, And you walk by their plans. Therefore I will give you up for destruction, And your inhabitants for derision, And you will suffer the taunting of My people.” (NASB 2020)

These verses make clear the eventually inevitable connection between such hardened patterns of sinful behaviour and the curses of the covenant. (Timmer 2021, 206)

And to top it all of, YAHWEH makes a negative observation and uses the name of two Kings of Israel, neither one very good. The father and son combination of Omri and Ahab.

#### 1 Kings 16:23–26

“In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri began to reign over Israel, and he reigned for twelve years; six years he reigned in Tirzah. He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver, and he fortified the hill and called the name of the city that he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer,

the owner of the hill. **Omri did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did more evil than all who were before him. For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in the sins that he made Israel to sin, provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger by their idols.**" (ESV)

Then there was his son.

1 Kings 16:29–33

"In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri began to reign over Israel, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. **And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. And as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal and worshiped him.** He erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him." (ESV)

This makes sense if you are talking only about Israel, but this is about both nations and for Judah to be painted with this brush, is a disaster.

Instead of following the Lord, the people observed the statutes of Omri and all the practices of Ahab's house (dynasty). Omri and Ahab were considered two of the worst kings in the Northern Kingdom for in their rule great apostasy flourished, including Baal worship (1 Kings 16:21–22:40). In Ahab's reign true prophets of the Lord were murdered (1 Kings 18:4). (Martin 1985, 1490)

How did all of this wind up in Judah? Refugees, and then King Manasseh.

2 Kings 21:2–3

"And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the despicable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. For he rebuilt the high places that Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them." (ESV)

It is never a good thing to be compared with Ahab.

A God who upholds moral standards has no option but to make a terrible example of the southerners. The nation is to encounter a fate that will dumbfound its spectators. The citizens of Jerusalem will undergo ghastly experiences. Furthermore they will all have to face the taunts of neighboring nations. The reference here is not only to the world's way of kicking a man when he is down. In a culture where calamity and culpability were held to be synonymous, the natural assumption, with which the book of Job joined battle, was that the sufferer must have been guilty of wrongdoing commensurate with his suffering. Hence Judah and Jerusalem are to undergo an experience so bad that they will face the humiliation of hearing from other nations the jibe, "serves them right." (Allen 1976, 382)

If only there had been serious contemplation of the what that was stated earlier in Micah 6:8, by the people of Judah. But the refugees brought a disease with them, apostasy.

This disease continued uncontrolled for over 100 years resulting in Judah suffering the same fate as Israel, exile. YAHWEH was indeed faithful to His covenant with the Jews, both kingdoms learned a very hard lesson.

For us today, we still hear the Lord telling us what it says in Micah 6:8

Micah 6:8

"He has told you, mortal one, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?" (NASB 2020)

For us today, to come into the good is incredibly simple. All we have to do is believe. Israel didn't and they went into exile. Judah watched and then they too went into exile 150 years or so later.

God is indeed faithful.

I prefer being on the side of the equation which leads to blessing and eternal life.

Here is how you can get that for yourself if you haven't already done so.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

### ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

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