**Word For Life Says. . .**

“There is No Rest for the Wicked!”

Micah 2:4-11    July 5, 2015

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Introduction:

One of my favorite stories to read to my children when they were younger was “The Gingerbread Man.” My youngest would especially get a kick out of it because of the voices and actions I performed when reading it. She literally requested this book at almost every night’s reading before bedtime.

Many are familiar with the story of the little prideful and brash gingerbread man who jumped out of the oven too soon, running through the town and fields attempting to get away from those who sought to eat him up. In his running he would mockingly sing and taunt, “Run, run, as fast as you can. You can’t catch me! I’m the gingerbread man!” exasperating those in pursuit (resource information: Wikipedia). With that, he proceeded to dodge and avoid all who tried to capture him.

He was confident in his abilities. He was witty, though it seemed, until one moment changed everything for him forever. That moment was when he put his confidence in the wrong thing: the fox. Posing as someone to help him across the water, when the fox got him to the place of no return, he swallowed him whole thereby ending the running of the Gingerbread Man for good. His taunting song to be heard no more for now he reaped the fruit of his doings.
A good lesson we can take away from this childhood favorite is that one can run and think they are avoiding the consequences of their actions, but eventually the jaws of justice will clamp down on them bringing them to the point of utter destruction.

This was a lesson that the prophet Micah was chosen to deliver to God’s people in today’s lesson. Not much is known about Micah himself except that he was a Morasthite who prophesied during the reign of “Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah,” (Micah 1:1). His prophesies were pointed to Samaria and Jerusalem, the capitals of Israel and Judah (see Micah 1:1, 5).

As with Amos, God used Micah, along with others such as Isaiah and Hosea to warn the people of their impending danger to fall at the foot of judgment. And, as with Amos the people didn’t have an ear to hear. They rebuked the sound word of God and chose rather to hear from those who would tickle their ears with what they wanted to hear.

This is dangerous ground for anyone to be on, particular those who are children of God. Their idolatry; their harlot like ways; their oppression of their fellow man – all would be recompensed upon their own heads.

God’s word does good for those who walk uprightly (2:7), but for those who continue down this path of sin, destruction laid at the door for them. As with the Gingerbread Man, they too will fall into the jaws of justice.

**Micah 2:4-5** “In that day shall one take up a parable against you, and lament with a doleful lamentation, and say, We be utterly spoiled: he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed it from me! turning away he hath divided our fields. Therefore thou shalt have none that shall case a cord by lot in the congregation of the LORD.”

In the verses prior to these, Micah pronounced a WOE against the people. The reason being they “devise iniquity, and work evil upon their bed,” (2:1). Some of the accusations against them were similar to those of Amos. They practiced oppression of their fellow man, especially the poor. They were also accused of coveting peoples with fields, manipulating plans to take them, if necessary by
violence. Robbing men of houses and heritage which God has blessed him with (see Micah 2:2).

Because of this God would have the final say. For the evil they devised against God and against one another, God had a pronouncement against them: “Therefore thus saith the LORD: Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil,” (2:3).

They devised, now God said, “I devise!” and what He plans, they will not get away from it.

The Bible explicitly tells us, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord,” (Romans 12:19). The thing is this is not just as a reference in regard to dealing with enemies. This is for all who choose to walk in the path of disobedience and defile the commandments of God. Even to His people who have chosen to oppress and degrade his fellow man; who have chosen to bow down and worship idols, God will have the final say.

God told them since they devise evil that same calamity shall now be upon their own heads.

“In that day shall one take up a parable against you, and lament with a doleful lamentation.” We are very used to seeing the word parable, particularly in the stories that Jesus told to bring divine attention to some through the comparison of a story or situation that would make it easier for them to understand.

Here, this parable worked more like a song to taunt those to whom God’s judgment fell on (compare Habakkuk 2:6). They would be made fun of and ridiculed, rubbing salt into the opened wound of their calamity.

They would lament, mourning the adversity and harsh circumstances they are now faced with. “We be utterly spoiled,” they would wail in the grief of that day. “He hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed it from me! turning away he hath divided our fields.”
At that time, the impacts of their own actions will be felt because recompense has hit home. They didn’t mind oppressing others, but now they would feel and experience for themselves what it was like to lose everything to those who come in and take unfair advantage of you.

At one point in their history God reminded them, “I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat,” (Joshua 24:13). God blessed them to be where they are. They took advantage of that blessing and got greedy for more against their fellow man and now God was going to give it to another for a time, **turning away he hath divided our fields.**

They are yours no more!

“The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and liftest up,” (1 Samuel 2:7). God can give and God can surely take it all away! **Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the LORD** (emphasis mine). Back in Joshua he “cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions,” (Joshua 18:10). Now, they would have none to delineate and divide the rights of land one from another.

The time of the enemies reign and their looming captivity would take away all privileges of the people from them until God’s restoration comes after their captivity (see previous lesson “Inheritance Promised” for more details and Ezekiel 47:13-23 on www.wordforlifesays.com).

**Micah 2:6-7** “Prophesy ye not, say they to them that prophesy: they shall not prophesy to them, that they shall not take shame. 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.”

They didn’t want to hear what God had to say. They refused to apply the words of **prophesy** to themselves and to take the **shame** for what they had done. They had no remorse; no guilt. The prophet’s words did not move the people to a
place of repentance. Their hearts were hardened and their necks were stiffened at the forewarning of impending doom.

They didn’t want to hear that they were not right in the eyes of God. They didn’t want to hear words of rebuke that lets them know they have fallen short of the glory of God. They didn’t want to hear sound doctrine. Therefore, they refused to listen at all. They wanted their ears tickled with words of blessings and peace. Doom and gloom was not the type of prophet they wanted.

Verse 11 of our lesson verifies this by saying, “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.”

If a man lie to you and tell you what you want to hear, you will make him your prophet. You will also end up in captivity and the camp of the enemy because you didn’t hear from the sincere word of God.

2 Timothy tells us, “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; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables,” (4:3-4). That was not only a thing that will happen in the future and has happened in the past – this is very much true in the day and age we are currently living in.

Where the Word is allowed to operate understanding has a chance to thrive. Psalm 119:130 says, “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple.” Be reassured that God’s Word can illuminate your life. God’s Word can open up your understanding and help you find your way, if you’ll let it. If given permission, God’s Word can do AWESOME things in the lives of those who take heed to it.

He said, “Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?” God would much rather bless His people than punish them. It is the people who are not walking uprightly that have stopped the flow of God’s blessings in their lives. But, they didn’t want to hear about that.
Blessings flow through the vein of obedience just as judgment flows through the vein of disobedience (Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28). God was in a covenant relationship with His people. But those blessings of the covenant were contingent on their ability to adhere to the word of God.

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success,” (Joshua 1:8, emphasis mine). True, biblical success only comes through adhering to the word of God.

There is a very real and prevalent epidemic in the land today that flows along the same lines as those who rebuked God’s word and refused to hear. What’s more dangerous is when the rebuke comes from those claiming to be God’s people. That’s why Jesus said, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven,” (Matthew 7:21, emphasis mine). The wicked, on the other hand, will find no rest there.

Micah 2:8-11 “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. The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever. Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction. 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.”

NEVER should anyone want to be considered an enemy of God! If you are an enemy of God, than you are a friend of the devil. There is no in between. There is no other way to put it. James warns, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God,” (4:4). This is speaking directly of choosing the world’s system over God, thereby making themselves His enemy.
Speaking in this lesson directly to God’s people, they have allowed greed and such infest them so that they didn’t care what they did, as long as it expanded their personal wealth. They robbed the garments off of some leaving them threadbare and worn like a soldier coming back from a war. Mothers/women were evicted from their homes with no hopes of passing anything down to their children. The wicked have “taken away my glory for ever,” God said.

When God was speaking of bringing them into their land He said, “When ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety,” (Deuteronomy 12:10, emphasis mine).

God’s design was for this land to be a place of rest. As they evicted the women from their houses, God would evict His people from their land. “Arise ye, and depart;” He declared, “for this is not your rest.” They caused their own blessings to be taken away from them. They caused retribution to come upon their own heads. There will be no rest for the wicked.

The land has become polluted and will suffer sore destruction. “It shall destroy you!” Micah exclaimed.

Alas, they still didn’t want to hear it. It was not the message from the pulpit they wanted preached to them, and they loved to have it that way. Jeremiah says, “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?” (5:31, emphasis mine).

One needs to be on guard and take heed to what they have allowed their ears and hearts to be invested in. For if invested in a lie, then the fruit of the lie one will reap and lose out on every blessing of God. If we are going to thrive and avoid the destiny of the wicked we need to “desire the sincere milk of the word,” (1 Peter 2:2). Our ears have been tickled for far too long.

Conclusion:
Listening to and obeying God’s true word will keep you from the destiny of the wicked.

Psalms 19 reminds us of some very important facts about God’s Word:

“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward,” (7-11, highlights mine).

The Gingerbread was finally caught and paid the price. The wicked will, too.