

# Micah 3 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

MICAH - WHO IS LIKE JEHOVAH?  
Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
Chart by Charles Swindoll

MICAH: WHO IS LIKE JEHOVAH?					
Micah 7:18					
RETRIBUTION Micah 1:1-2:13		KINGDOM Micah 3:1-5:15		WORSHIP Micah 6:1-7:20	
First Message: Judgment Will Come		Second Message: Blessing will follow Judgment		Third Message: An Indictment of Sin & A Promise of Blessing	
Judgment Micah 1:1-2:11	Promise Micah 2:12-13	Judgment Micah 3:1-12	Promise Micah 4:1-5:15	Judgment Micah 6:1-7:10	Promise Micah 7:11-20
Sin and Judgment		Hope and Comfort		Controversy and Pardon	
Sin & It's Outcome Incurable		The King & His Kingdom Inevitable First Coming - Mic 5:2-3 Second Coming - Mic 5:4-15		The Lord & His Justice Inescapable	
Message of Destruction for Samaria & Judah		Message of Doom & Deliverance		Message of Denunciation	
God Gathers to Judge and Deliver		God Judges Rulers and Comes to Deliver		God Brings Indictments and Ultimate Deliverance	
Question 1: Is God Responsible for the Destruction we face?		Question 2: How Do We Know God is with Us?		Question 3: What Does God Want from Us?	
About 25 Years 735-710 BC Approximated					

Micah 3:1 And I said, "**Hear** now, heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know justice?"

- **Hear.** Mic 3:9,10; Isaiah 1:10; Jeremiah 13:15-18; 22:2,3; Hosea 5:1; Amos 4:1
- **Is it** Deuteronomy 1:13-17; 16:18; 2 Chronicles 19:5-10; Psalms 14:4; 82:1-5; Jeremiah 5:4,5; 1 Corinthians 6:5

## Micah 3-5 = The Second Oracle

Deliverance to Doom (Micah 3:1-12)

Micah 3:1-4 - To the Leaders

Micah 3:5-8 - To the Prophets

Micah 3:9-12 - To the Leaders

Deliverance from Doom (Micah 4:1-5:15)

**Hear** - "**Listen!**" calls for the reader's full attention. (He repeats this summons in Mic 3:9) - This introduces an important message to follow. Micah's issues 6 commands to **Hear** - Mic 1:2, 3:1, 9, 6:1, 2, 9. Powerful prophetic (fore- and in our day forth- telling) proclamation without fear of potential persecution has always been a mark of the Spirit filled (Micah 3:8) minister - cf 1Ki 17:1; Mt. 14:4; Acts 4:13, 18-20, 31; Gal. 2:6, 11

**Hear** ([08085](#)) (**Shama**) is an imperative (command). This recalls Judaism's basic confession of faith, the "**Shema**" in Dt 6:4-6 (cf Dt 4:1, Hos 4:1, Amos 3:1). It is a call to listen, to heed and respond by putting into practice what is heard. **Shama** Introduces the three

main sections - Mic 1:1 (Mic 1-2), Mic 3:1 (Mic 3-5), Mic 6:1 (Mic 6-7).

This command reminds us of Jesus' repeated phrase "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Mt 11:15, 13:9, 43, Mk 4:9, Lk 8:8, 14:35). **It is most unwise (even dangerous!) to turn away our ear when the Lord is speaking! Do you (I) ever do this? Do we (I) read a portion of God's precious Word in the morning and totally forget what I have read even before noon?** This also reminds me of the warning in Hebrews "Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS." (Heb 3:7-8-**note** quoting Ps 95:7-8-**note** cp Heb 3:15-**note**, Heb 4:7-**note**) "See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned [them] on earth, much less [shall] we [escape] who turn away from Him who [warns] from heaven." (Heb 12:25-**note**)

The point is...

**Listen!**  
**God is speaking!**  
**This is important!**

**Heads...rulers-** Mic 3:1-4, 9-12 address the leaders (many think primarily judges, magistrates). These "civil servants" were hardly "civil" and certainly not there to serve but to take (and to be "on the take!").

**Is it not for you to know justice?**- Clearly the answer to this rhetorical question is "Yes!" - The leaders and rulers were supposed to know, love and practice justice, "right from wrong." (NLT) These leaders were a far cry from the qualifications Moses enumerated in Ex 18:21! It is not that they did not intellectually know the law codes but that they lacked the compassionate, just hearts to practice the law.

**Waltke - Know** designates not merely intellectual appreciation of the law or of legal exigencies, but also personal knowledge of it, so that out of sympathy for the afflicted one punishes the wrongdoer and re-establishes the outcast of fortune in his right.

**Justice** is a key word in Micah 3 = Mic 3:1, 8, 9, 6:8, 7:9 with **injustice** in Mic 3:10.

**Justice** ([04941](#))(**mishpat**) has the primary sense of exercising the processes of government. The word includes a judgment, a legal decision rendered, justice as a state or condition of fairness in disputes. **Justice** "refers to the entire process of the administration of justice, including hearing the case, rendering a decision, pronouncing a verdict, and implementing the sentence." (Patterson)

**Vine on mishpat** - This word has two main senses; the first deals with the act of sitting as a judge, hearing a case, and rendering a proper verdict. Eccl. 12:14 is one such occurrence: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Mishpat can also refer to the "rights" belonging to someone (Ex. 23:6). This second sense carries several nuances: the sphere in which things are in proper relationship to one's claims (Gen. 18:19—the first occurrence); a judicial verdict (Deut. 17:9); the statement of the case for the accused (Num. 27:5); and an established ordinance (Ex. 21:1).

**Davis** parodies the corrupt justice system - Downtown Jerusalem, 3.00 a.m. Imagine a lone figure struggling along; he lugs a small sledgehammer and a newly-painted placard on a chunk of half-inch plywood to which he has nailed two stakes. He drags his cargo across the small lawn until he is right in front of the squat stone sign that identifies the building as the 'Hall of Justice'. He positions his sign, hammers in the stakes with his sledge and walks away. Five hours later Judah's civil servants arrive for work and read: Jerusalem stockyards—best butchers in town; we slaughter, skin, slice and serve!

**Micah 3:2 "You who hate good and love evil, who tear off their skin from them and their flesh from their bones,**

- **hate** 1 Kings 21:20; 22:6-8; Amos 5:10-14; Luke 19:14; John 7:7; 15:18,19,23,24; Acts 7:51,52; Romans 12:9; 2 Timothy 3:3
- **love** 2 Chronicles 19:2; Psalms 15:4; 139:21,22; Proverbs 28:4; John 18:40; Romans 1:32
- **tear off** Psalms 53:4; Isaiah 3:15; Ezekiel 22:27; 34:3; Amos 8:4-6; Zephaniah 3:3; Zechariah 11:4,5

**LEADERS ACTING LIKE**  
**WILD SAVAGES**  
**RAVENOUS BEASTS**

**You who hate good and love evil (ra' = [07451](#))** - It is a dire situation for any nation when the leaders invert and pervert the truth for personal gain and choose to believe the lie!

Pr 8:13 "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil" (cf Pr 3:7, 14:27, Pr 16:6, Neh 5:15, Eccl 12:13, 14)

It follows that these corrupt leaders in Micah 3:2 had no holy, reverential fear of the Holy God!

Job 1:1 (cf Job 28:28) There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.

Notice the effect of Job's fear on his choices. It follows these leaders had no fear of God!

Ps 97:10-[note](#) Hate evil, you who love the LORD, Who preserves the souls of His godly ones; He delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

Isa 1:17-note Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow.

Amos 5:14 Seek good and not evil, that you may live; And thus may the LORD God of hosts be with you, Just as you have said! 15) Hate evil, love good, And establish justice in the gate! Perhaps the LORD God of hosts May be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

**Who tear off their skin from them and their flesh from their bones** - A striking metaphor (ripping right down to the bone!) depicting the depth of depravity of these despicable leaders, who were veritable "butchers" of their own flesh and blood! Unconscionable!

**Flesh** ([07607](#))(**sheer**) is masculine noun meaning flesh, food, meat, body, self, blood relative, blood kindred. Gilbrant - "Sheer seems to mean "food" in Ex. 21:10 and "food" or "meat" in Ps. 78:20, where it is paralleled by lechem (bread) refers to tearing off of the flesh of God's people (Mic. 3:2), when the rich are oppressing the poor. It can stand for the frail physical aspects of being human as opposed to God's enduring support for us (Ps. 73:26; Pr 5:11). The noun refers to the actual mistreatment of the body or flesh of the Israelites by the Babylonians (Jer. 51:35)." It can mean "kinship, a relative, even close relations (Lev 18:6). Sexual relations were forbidden with a person's paternal aunt because she was literally considered a parent's "flesh" (Lev. 18:12f; 21:2)." (Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary)

**NIDOTTE** - OT 1. Ps 78:20, 27 uses the word of the quail **meat** God provided for the Israelites as they wandered through the wilderness (cf. Ex 16:13; Nu 11:31).

**In a scathing denunciation of socioeconomic injustice, Micah (Mic 3:1–3) accused Israel's rulers of tearing his oppressed people's flesh from their bones and eating it. This imagery of cannibalism highlights in a vivid, albeit hyperbolic manner, the cruel unjust measures enacted by the rich against the poor.** See J. Mays, Micah, 1976, 79.

2. Ps 73:26 and Prov 5:11 view human **שָׁרָא** as the seat of physical strength and vitality. The psalmist of Ps 73 declares his confidence that even if his strength (flesh) grows weak, God is capable of sustaining him. Though some understand the statement, in conjunction with v. 24, as the psalmist's hope for the afterlife (cf. M. Dahood, Psalms, 1968, 2:195–96), this seems unlikely in the context of the Psalter. Verse 24 probably anticipates the psalmist's vindication in this life, and "fail" (v. 26) need not refer to death per se, but can describe the physical weakness characteristic of those approaching death (cf. Job 33:21; Ps 71:9; 143:7; Prov 5:11).

**Sheer** - 17x - blood relative(4), blood relatives(2), body(1), flesh(4), food(1), himself(1), meat(2), relative(1), relatives(1). Exod. 21:10; Lev. 18:6; Lev. 18:12; Lev. 18:13; Lev. 18:17; Lev. 20:19; Lev. 21:2; Lev. 25:49; Num. 27:11; Ps. 73:26; Ps. 78:20; Ps. 78:27; Prov. 5:11; Prov. 11:17; Jer. 51:35; Mic. 3:2; Mic. 3:3

**Tear off (gazel)** is used in Micah 2:2 where it is translated "seize" (referring to what the corrupt leaders did to land that belonged to their brethren).

**Kaiser** - In effect, Micah says, these rulers became nothing more than brutal butchers who cannibalized God's people and skinned them alive (Mic 3:2–3). They were concerned only for themselves; everyone else could fend for themselves!

**Tear...eat...strip off...break...chop** - Emphasizes the cruelty, the brutality and inhumanity of the leaders toward the people. They remind us of the so-called shepherd-leaders described by Ezekiel 34:2-11. The leaders should have been faithful shepherds like those described in Mic 2:12, 7:14.

**Micah 3:3 Who eat the flesh of my people, strip off their skin from them, break their bones And chop them up as for the pot**

- eat Ps 14:4
- chop Ezekiel 11:3,6,7

## LEADERS ACTING LIKE BUTCHERS

**Who eat the flesh** (see [sheer](#) above) **of my people (etc)** - Obviously not literal in this context (It is literal in the time when they come under the curse of Deuteronomy and are under siege - Dt 28:53, 54, 55!) Eating flesh was a common metaphor for social oppression (cf "Eat up My people" in Ps 14:4-[note](#), Ps 27:2, Pr 30:14 = "devour the afflicted", cp the actions of their "father" [Jn 8:44] in 1Pet 5:8-note). Just imagine the corrupt leaders hearing Micah's accusations! This graphic **metaphor** is aimed at awakening the consciences of these reprobates before God's wrath fell on them (cf the Father's heart - 2Pe 3:9-note)! Micah is painting a picture of the extreme degree of oppression and injustice by the leaders - these rulers were "cannibalizing" their own people -- one would think Micah's imagery might stir the consciences of some of these evil men!

**Davis** - Micah didn't have a camcorder. He had to paint his picture in words only. Hence his savage, graphic, blistering barrage to expose the truth about these judicial officials.

**Wiersbe**: The description of these rulers' actions reminds you more of ravenous beasts than of human beings. Instead of being faithful shepherds who protected the flock (Micah 2:12; 7:14), they attacked the sheep, skinned them alive, butchered them, chopped them up, and made stew out of them! But the day would come when these wolves in shepherds' clothing would cry out for God's mercy, but no mercy would be given.

**Micah 3:4 Then they will cry out to the LORD, but He will not answer them. Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time Because they have practiced evil deeds.**

- **Then** Mic 2:3,4; Jeremiah 5:31
- **cry** Ps 18:41; Proverbs 1:28; 28:9; Isaiah 1:15; Jeremiah 2:27,28; Ezekiel 8:18; Zechariah 7:13; Matthew 7:22; Luke 13:25; John 9:31; James 2:13
- **he will even** Deuteronomy 31:17,18; 32:19,20; Isaiah 59:1-15; Jeremiah 33:5
- **as** Isaiah 3:11; Romans 2:8,9

**Then they will cry out to the LORD** - When is "**then**?" When the judgment of God falls on them (all the disasters of which Micah had already prophesied in Micah 1-2)! Presumably when the exceeding ferocious Assyrians invaded and defeated the Northern Kingdom in 722BC and Babylonians the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 586BC.

**Sin is deceitful** (Heb 3:13-note on the **deceitfulness of sin**), so when these leaders sinned (and when we sin), they did not seriously consider (or they refused to believe) that God would truly punish them. They falsely (deceptively) reasoned that surely He would not follow through! But Micah predicts with the time sensitive word "**then**" (be sensitive to the Spirit's strategic use of this important **expression of time**) that the day of accounting would come upon them. And when they felt themselves drowning so to speak, they would seek God's help, but it would be as they say "too little, too late." Beloved, we all do well to heed Micah's warnings against "heedlessness!" Our flesh is the same depraved flesh as Israel's leaders and is therefore prone to wander, to cause others to wander and **not** to **wonder** about God's just punishment.

The crying out of these evildoers has a parallel in the NT, in John's description in the Revelation, when God's wrath would be finally and fully unleashed on the entire world. There we encounter a group that are uniquely named the [earth dwellers](#) will who "**cry out**" to God in the day when His full fury falls on them in time of the the horrific "Bowl Judgments" in Rev 16:9, 11, 21-[note](#).

**Cry out** (02199)([za'aq](#)) means to cry out, to call out for help (especially when in distress), to appeal (even making public sounds of physical and/or emotional anguish - Ex 2:23, 2Chr 20:9, Job 35:9). **Za'aq** can be summoned in the sense of to be assembled (Jos 8:16; Jdg 6:34, 35; 18:22, 23) Finally, **za'aq** can mean to issue a proclamation by sending out an official written document with instructions or principles (Jonah 3:7) The Septuagint translates za'aq with [krazo](#) in Micah 3:4. Za'aq can refer to an appeal to a superior for help in time of trouble as in Ps 107:6, 13, 19, 28. Ps 107 19-20 is my favorite for in it we see how He delivered them...

Then (see Ps 107:18 for when is "then"? Interesting!) they cried out to the LORD in their trouble. He saved them out of their distresses. 20 **He sent His Word and healed them** (see related study - **Jehovah**

**Rapha: The LORD our Healer**) them, and delivered them from their destructions. (Ps 107:19,20)

**Allen** notes the irony in the cries of these evildoers - The term **cry out** is a technical one for appeal to a judge for help against victimization. The woman of **Shunem** exercised this legal right of protest when she returned home after seven years in Philistia and found her farm taken over by others: she appealed to the king, who saw to it that justice was done (2Ki 8:1-6). No such equity had these judges shown. In return they would find their own appeals to God unavailing in their hour of need.

**But** - a painful **term of contrast!**

**He will not answer them** - Solomon records that "He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be answered." (Pr 21:13) and "He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, even his prayer is an abomination." (Pr 28:9) **See also** Isa 1:15-note, Ps 66:18-note (cf Job 27:8,9, Pr 15:8, 29, Jn 9:31)

Isaiah's words parallel Micah's...

But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that (**term of conclusion**) He does not hear. 3 For (**term of explanation**) your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken falsehood, your tongue mutters wickedness. (Isa 59:2-3)

**He will hide His face from them** - This idiom indicates God's wrath and temporary rejection against His covenant people. **Calvin** remarks that "Micah confronts us here with the greatest evil that could ever befall us, that is, that God rejects those who reject Him, and that God refuses to answer them, so that all their prayers are in vain and are no longer received by God." (cf the fate of all who reject God and His free gift of the **Gospel** = 2Th 1:8-9)

Is that is not a horrible thought, that the Omniscient, all seeing God (cf Jer 16:17) would be so offended by our sin that He would hide His face! **Lord, by Thy Spirit keep us from becoming such evildoers that you must hide Thy face from our face. Amen!** The day would come when these evil men would cry out for mercy but would find none as God had warned...

Deut 31:17 "Then My anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and **hide My face** from them, and they will be consumed, and many evils and troubles will come upon them; so that they will say in that day, 'Is it not because our God is not among us that these evils have come upon us?' 18 "But I will surely **hide My face** in that day because of all the evil which they will do, for they will turn to other gods. (Dt 31:17, 18, cf Dt 32:20, Isa 54:8, 57:17, Jer 33:5, Ezek 39:23,24, but contrast when Messiah returns and redeems a believing remnant - Ezek 39:29!)

Even David a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) experienced this terrible sense of abandonment.

For the choir director. A Psalm of David. How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? (Ps 13:1)

**Spurgeon comments:** "How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" This is a far more rational question, for God may hide his face, and yet he may remember still. A hidden face is no sign of a forgetful heart. It is in love that his face is turned away; yet to a real child of God, this hiding of his Father's face is terrible and he will never be at ease until, once more he hath his Father's smile.

**As an aside** - unconfessed sin in a real sense always causes God to hide His face. We must become frequent and quick confessors, so that we might not miss the precious time of the pleasure of His fellowship.

**John Calvin** - Micah confronts us here with the greatest evil that could ever befall us, that is, that God rejects those who reject Him, and that God refuses to answer them, so that all their prayers are in vain and are no longer received by God.

**Matthew Henry** - How they might expect that God should deal with them, since they had been thus cruel to his subjects. The rule is fixed, Those shall have judgment without mercy that have shown no mercy. There will come a time when the most proud and scornful sinners will cry to the Lord, and sue for that mercy which they once neither valued nor copied out. But it will then be in vain God will even hide his face from them at that time, that time when they need his favor, and see themselves undone without it. At another time they would have turned their back upon him but at that time he will turn his back upon them, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings. Note, Men cannot expect to do ill and fare well, but may expect to find, as Adoni-bezek did, that done to them which they did to others for he is righteous who takes vengeance. (**Commentary**)

The tragedy of this verse is that corrupt leaders and judges are "endemic" in America, and as this note is written (2014) even appear to be approaching an "epidemic," for in recent months liberal judges have even been so brazen as to reverse the wishes voted upon

by the people. Government by the people and for the people is becoming an "[Anachronism](#)!" As was Israel in Micah's day, America also is in desperate need of God glorifying, Word centered, Spirit empowered, Christ exalting revival. Let us pray like the psalmist...

My (our) soul cleaves to the dust. Revive me (us) according to Your Word. Ps 119:25

**Because they have practiced evil deeds** - Always pause and ponder **terms of explanation** like **because**. Here we see the human reason for the divine revulsion and the righteous condemnation. God is just (see **Divine Justice**) and His punishment always perfectly fits the crime! In this case the perpetrators of evil have not listened to the cries of others for justice and so they reap what they have sown - divine refusal to hear their cries! (cp "punishment in kind" to Gal 6:7-8-note) Proverbs also reiterates the principle...

He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be answered. (Pr 21:13 [note by Charles Bridges](#))

**Davis** applies Micah 3:1-4 writing - Western secularists may tout their sacred cow of 'separation of church and state', but that mantra will not win them immunity from the scrutiny and judgement of God's word. Micah's attitude is akin to that of Robert Bruce (d. 1631), who, when James VI rudely and repeatedly talked with his cohorts during the sermon, cut him down to size with: 'The Lion of the tribe of Judah is now roaring in the voice of His Gospel, and it becomes all the petty kings of the earth to be silent.'

**Micah 3:5 Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who lead my people astray; When they have something to bite with their teeth, they cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war.**

- **concerning** Micah 3:11; Isaiah 9:15,16; Jeremiah 14:14,15; 23:9-17,27,32; 28:15-17; 29:21-23; Ezekiel 13:10-16; 22:25-29; Malachi 2:8; Matthew 15:14
- **that bite** Micah 2:11; Isaiah 56:9-12; Ezekiel 13:18,19; Matthew 7:15; Romans 16:18

NET Micah 3:5 This is what the LORD says: "The prophets who mislead my people are as good as dead. If someone gives them enough to eat, they offer an oracle of peace. But if someone does not give them food, they are ready to declare war on him.

### PROPHETS PROSTITUTE DIVINE GIFT FOR PERSONAL PROFIT

Micah 3:5-8

In the previous section it was corrupt judiciary, and now it is corrupt "clergy."

**Thus says the LORD** - this "**messenger formula**" (McComiskey) is also used in Mic 2:3 (and a total of 417 times in the Old Testament!)

**The prophets who lead my people astray** - A working definition of a false prophet! Note that Micah 3:5-8 deals with the judgment of these False Prophets. "It is not the need of the people, but the greed of the prophets which drives them." (Davis)

In the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah analyzes the role of the false prophets in Judah's defeat...

Your prophets have seen for you false and foolish visions; and they have not exposed your iniquity so as to restore you from captivity, but they have seen for you false and misleading oracles. (Lam 2:14, cf 2Ti 4:3-4-note)

**Lead astray** ([08582](#))(**taah**) means literally to wander, to wander off, to stagger, to roam about, to travel about without any specific goal (e.g., physical roaming = Ex 23:4). Figuratively **taah** means to err or go astray (active) or in passive sense, to be led astray or to be deceived) as when false prophets led the people astray by their false words and false gods (idols) (Jer 23:13, 32, Mic 3:5; false shepherds in Jer 50:6). In short, figuratively **taah** refers to mental, moral, or spiritual wandering (Ps 95:10) or ethical wandering (Ezek 44:10).

Almost half of the occurrences of **taah** are in the hiphil form which means to cause someone to stray (which is what kings, prophets, and priests did to the nation). Manasseh, Judah's most evil king Manasseh seduced (misled) Israel by erecting altars to Baal and placing the Asherah pole in the temple, so that they did more evil than the surrounding pagan nations which Jehovah had destroyed! Woe! (See 2Ki 21:9; 2Chr 33:9). **Wikipedia** has an interesting note - "Some biblical archaeologists have suggested that until the 6th century BC the Israelite peoples had household shrines, or at least figurines, of Asherah, which are strikingly common in the archaeological remains." ([Asherah pole](#)) The 6th century BC would be about the time Israel was disciplined by Jehovah for her



idolatry and taken off for 70 years in Babylon. If the interpretations of the archaeology finds are accurate, this is a sad note at how far Israel had wandered off from the true and living God, that they would dare place these abominable images in their homes! Now, that's being led astray! **Do we have any "Asherah poles" in our homes as believers?**

**Taah** was used of a lost person wandering such as Hagar in the wilderness (Ge 21:14, cp Joseph in Ge 37:15) or of a person staggering from a drunken stupor (Isa 28:7, Isa 19:14). The picture is wandering off spiritually (or being lead away from) the correct path, the godly path (eg see the "Highway of Holiness" Isa 35:8). (Ps 95:10; 119:110; Pr 7:25; 14:22; 21:16; Isa 29:24; 35:8; 47:15; 53:6; Ezek 14:11; 44:10,15; 48:11). In Ezekiel Jehovah gives a prophet promise "that the house of Israel may no longer stray from Me and no longer defile themselves with all their transgressions. Thus they will be My people, and I shall be their God." (Ezek 14:11)

**NIDOTTE** - Language about loss of physical orientation or erroneous orientation was useful for talking about ways of living, especially living apart from God. Religiously, to go astray (הָטָה) is to leave a point of orientation. To be lost is to be without a reference point such as might be offered by: (a) wisdom, (b) the teaching of the law, or (c) God. Counsel is given not to go astray (הָטָה) in the ways of Dame Folly (Pr 7:25). As for Torah teaching, the psalmist testifies that he did not stray (הָטָה) from God's precepts, the law (Ps 119:110). Of Israel it is said that they "went astray (הָטָה) and ... wandered (הָטָה) from me [God himself]" (Ezek 44:10). The good from which one strays, whether represented by wisdom, the law, or God, leaves one disoriented.

In Micah 3:5 the **Lxx** translates **taah** with the verb **planao** (in present tense = continually lead astray).

**Wander** - To rove; to ramble here and there without any certain course or object in view; as, to wander over the fields; to wander about the town, or about the country. Men may sometimes wander for amusement or exercise. Persons sometimes wander because they have no home and are wretched, and sometimes because they have no occupation. (Webster, 1828)

**Taah** is used in the famous passage - All of us like sheep **have gone astray**, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. (Isaiah 53:4)

**Taah** - 45v - translated as deceived(1), deceiving(1), err(2), go astray(3), goes astray(1), gone astray(3), lead my astray(1), lead you astray(1), leading them astray(1), leads them astray(1), leads to ruin(1), led my astray(2), led them astray(3), led...astray(2), misled(1), reels(1), seduced(1), stagger(3), staggers(1), stray(3), wander(5), wandered(4), wandering(1), wandering away(1), wanders(1), went astray(5).

Genesis 20:13 and it came about, when God caused me to **wander** from my father's house, that I said to her, "This is the kindness which you will show to me: everywhere we go, say of me, "He is my brother.""

Genesis 21:14 So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away. And she departed and **wandered** about in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Genesis 37:15 A man found him, and behold, he was **wandering** in the field; and the man asked him, "What are you looking for?"

Exodus 23:4 "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey wandering away, you shall surely return it to him.

2 Kings 21:9 But they did not listen, and Manasseh **seduced** them to do evil more than the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the sons of Israel.

2 Chronicles 33:9 Thus Manasseh misled Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the sons of Israel.

Job 12:24 "He deprives of intelligence the chiefs of the earth's people And makes them wander in a pathless waste.

25 "They grope in darkness with no light, And He makes them stagger like a drunken man.

Job 15:31 "Let him not trust in emptiness, deceiving himself; For emptiness will be his reward.

Job 38:41 "Who prepares for the raven its nourishment When its young cry to God And **wander** about without food?

Psalms 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; These who speak lies **go astray** from birth.

Psalms 95:10 "For forty years I loathed that generation, And said they are a people who **err** in their heart, And they do not know My ways.

Psalms 107:4 They **wandered** in the wilderness in a desert region; They did not find a way to an inhabited city.

40 He pours contempt upon princes And makes them **wander** in a pathless waste.

Psalms 119:110 The wicked have laid a snare for me, Yet I have not **gone astray** from Your precepts.

176 I have **gone astray** like a lost sheep; seek Your servant, For I do not forget Your commandments.

Proverbs 7:25 Do not let your heart **turn aside** to her ways, Do not stray into her paths.

Proverbs 10:17 He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, But he who ignores reproof **goes astray**.

Proverbs 12:26 The righteous is a guide to his neighbor, But the way of the wicked **leads them astray**.

Proverbs 14:22 Will they not **go astray** who devise evil? But kindness and truth will be to those who devise good.

Proverbs 21:16 A man who **wanders** from the way of understanding Will rest in the assembly of the dead.

Isaiah 3:12 O My people! Their oppressors are children, And women rule over them. O My people! Those who guide you **lead you astray** And confuse the direction of your paths.

Isaiah 9:16 For those (See who they are in Isa 9:15) who guide this people are **leading them astray**; And those who are guided by them are brought to confusion.

Isaiah 16:8 For the fields of Heshbon have withered, the vines of Sibmah as well; The lords of the nations have trampled down its choice clusters Which reached as far as Jazer and **wandered** to the deserts; Its tendrils spread themselves out and passed over the sea.

Isaiah 19:13 The princes of Zoan have acted foolishly, The princes of Memphis are deluded; Those who are the cornerstone of her tribes Have **led Egypt astray**.

14 The LORD has mixed within her a spirit of distortion; They have **led Egypt astray** in all that it does, As a drunken man **staggers** in his vomit.

Isaiah 21:4 My mind **reels**, horror overwhelms me; The twilight I longed for has been turned for me into trembling.

Isaiah 28:7 And these also reel with wine and **stagger** from strong drink: The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, They are confused by wine, they **stagger** from strong drink; They reel while having visions, They totter when rendering judgment.

Isaiah 29:24 "Those who **err** in mind will know the truth, And those who criticize will accept instruction.

Isaiah 30:28 His breath is like an overflowing torrent, Which reaches to the neck, To shake the nations back and forth in a sieve, And to put in the jaws of the peoples the bridle which **leads to ruin**.

Isaiah 35:8 A highway will be there, a roadway, And it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, But it will be for him who walks that way, And fools will not **wander** on it.

Isaiah 47:15 "So have those become to you with whom you have labored, Who have trafficked with you from your youth; Each has **wandered** in his own way; There is none to save you.

Isaiah 53:6 All of us like sheep **have gone astray**, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

Isaiah 63:17 Why, O LORD, do You cause us to **stray** from Your ways And harden our heart from fearing You? Return for the sake of Your servants, the tribes of Your heritage.

Jeremiah 23:13 "Moreover, among the prophets of Samaria I saw an offensive thing: They prophesied by Baal and **led My people Israel astray**.

32 "Behold, I am against those who have prophesied false dreams," declares the LORD, "and related them and **led My people astray** by their falsehoods and reckless boasting; yet I did not send them or command them, nor do they furnish this people the slightest benefit," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 42:20 For you have only **deceived** yourselves; for it is you who sent me to the LORD your God, saying, "Pray for us to the LORD our God; and whatever the LORD our God says, tell us so, and we will do it."

Jeremiah 50:6 "My people have become lost sheep; Their shepherds **have led them astray**. They have made them turn aside on the mountains; They have gone along from mountain to hill And have forgotten their resting place.

Ezekiel 14:11 in order that the house of Israel may no longer **stray** from Me and no longer defile themselves



with all their transgressions. Thus they will be My people, and I shall be their God," declares the Lord GOD."

Ezekiel 44:10 "But the Levites who went far from Me when Israel **went astray**, who **went astray** from Me after their idols, shall bear the punishment for their iniquity.

15 "But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel **went astray** from Me, shall come near to Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood," declares the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 48:11 "It shall be for the priests who are sanctified of the sons of Zadok, who have kept My charge, who did not **go astray** when the sons of Israel went astray as the Levites went astray.

Hosea 4:12 My people consult their wooden idol, and their diviner's wand informs them; For a spirit of harlotry has **led** them **astray**, And they have played the harlot, departing from their God.

Amos 2:4 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Judah and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they rejected the law of the LORD And have not kept His statutes; Their lies also **have led** them **astray**, Those after which their fathers walked.

Micah 3:5 Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who **lead** my people **astray**; When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war.

**When they have something to bite with their teeth** - i.e., something to eat. These greedy prophets are motivated by what they can gain (cf Mic 3:11). Paul warned about these genre of men

For many (NB: "many" not "few"!) walk (speaks of the general conduct of their life), of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction (**apoleia** = not loss of existence but much worse loss of purpose for their existence!), **whose god is their appetite**, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. (Php 3:18-19+note)

**Davis** - As long as the prophets are feeding on the 'perks' people give them, they promise those folk prosperity and success ('peace'). (**Ed**: This sounds like the modern day "prosperity gospel!" "Snakes" always seem to slither into the sanctuary!)

**Bite** (05391)(**nashak**) means to bite, to seize with the teeth. Considering the "serpentine nature" of the false prophets, it is notable that this verb is often used to describe the bite of a snake as it strikes its victim! (Nu 21:6; Eccl 10:8, 11; Amos 5:19; 9:3). It can also describe the intoxicating "bite" of wine (Pr 23:32)! In Nu 21:6 just as the serpent's bite resulted in death to many, the "bite" of the false prophets were in a sense poisoning (spiritually speaking) to their victims.

The Lxx translates **nashak** in Mic 3:5 with the verb **dakuo** which means literally to bite and figuratively to act "spitefully or injuriously toward others" so as to cause them harm (Gal 5:15).

**Baker nashak** "refers to a snake's bite as it strikes. It is used figuratively of the character of Dan, one of the twelve tribal ancestors of Israel (Ge 49:17); and of serpent bites in general (Num. 21:6; Eccl. 10:8, 11; Amos 5:19; 9:3). It describes the bite of an alcoholic beverage like wine (Prov. 23:32); and of the enemies the Lord sent against His people (Jer. 8:17). False prophets are described as biting at what is available to them (Mic. 3:5).

**Nashak** - 12 v - Ge 49:17; Num 21:6, 8f; Pr 23:32; Eccl 10:8, 11; Jer 8:17; Amos 5:19; 9:3; Mic 3:5; Hab 2:7. **NAS Usage**: bit(2), bite(4), bites(4), bitten(1), creditors(1).

Genesis 49:17 "Dan shall be a serpent in the way, A horned snake in the path, That bites the horse's heels, So that his rider falls backward.

Numbers 21:6 The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.

8 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live."

9 And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived.

Proverbs 23:32 At the last it bites like a serpent And stings like a viper.

Ecclesiastes 10:8 He who digs a pit may fall into it, and a serpent may bite him who breaks through a wall.

11 If the serpent bites before being charmed, there is no profit for the charmer.

Jeremiah 8:17 "For behold, I am sending serpents against you, Adders, for which there is no charm, And they will bite you," declares the LORD.

Amos 5:19 As when a man flees from a lion And a bear meets him, Or goes home, leans his hand against the wall And a snake bites him.

Amos 9:3 "Though they hide on the summit of Carmel, I will search them out and take them from there; And though they conceal themselves from My sight on the floor of the sea, From there I will command the serpent and it will bite them.

Micah 3:5 Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who lead my people astray; When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war.

Habakkuk 2:7 "Will not your **creditors** rise up suddenly, And those who collect from you awaken? Indeed, you will become plunder for them.

**Cry** (07121)(**qara**) means to call or to proclaim. It was a technical word for making an announcement. In the Lxx of Micah 3:5, qara is translated with the verb **kerusso** which means preach, proclaim loudly, publicly. In the NT kerusso meant to function as a herald (a public crier, an official crier), especially of divine truth

**Cry "Peace" (shalom - see detailed word study)** (cf false prophets in Jer 6:13,14, 8:10,11) - In Micah 3:11 we see they "justify" this claim, "'Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us.'" In Micah 5:5 the prophet foretells of the coming of a true **peace**, but Micah's peace is not an abstract concept but a Almighty Christ, the **Prince of peace** (Isa 9:6).

You can see the "advertisement" in the Morning Edition of the Jerusalem Post (circa year 700BC) = "Prophets for hire! Our message is guaranteed to tickle your ears!" (2Ti 4:3-4-note) "Prophecy for pay!" (cf our modern ungodly "televangelists!") If the price is right they proclaim pious platitudes of **peace** (thus they counterfeit the true **peace** proffered by the true Prophet, Messiah in Mic 5:5, cf Eph 2:14-note). The perversion of the office of prophet (speaking forth variety) is sadly still rampant in the modern church! Compare a true prophetes rebuke of sin (Mic 3:12).

**But (term of contrast)** - a "change of tune" for those who refuse perks to the prophets!

**Against him who puts nothing in their mouths, they declare holy war** ("jihad," the antithesis of shalom or peace) -

A declaration of war was the false prophet's price for anyone not paying their price for prophecy! This is a clear case of "Holy coercion!" Jesus' warning is apropos...

**Beware** (**prosecho** in the **present imperative** = calls for continual vigilance) of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. (Mt 7:15-**see notes on false prophets**)

**Allen** - To "**preach holy war**" or "wage a religious campaign" refers to the sacred preparations made in ancient Israel before undertaking a war against God's enemies, a crusade against infidels. In this high-sounding phrase Micah echoes the pretentious claims of racketeering prophets to proclaim the vengeance of God against those who could not or would not give them a penny.

**Davis** - There is nothing wrong with a prophet receiving a 'clergy fee'. As Achtemeier points out, it was customary for prophets in Israel to be given gifts or fees in return for services (1Sa 9:7-8; 1Kings 14:3; 2Kings 4:42; 8:7-9). The sin of Micah's opponents, however, is that 'they are letting the size of the fee determine the content of their prophecy'. If you were to butter them up and stump up the shekels from your money-market account, there was a 'prosperity gospel' for you. The prophet's eyes would light up and he would exclaim, 'Something good is going to happen to you!'

**Micah 3:6 Therefore it will be night for you--without vision, and darkness for you--without divination. The sun will go down on the prophets, and the day will become dark over them.**

- **night** Ps 74:9; Isaiah 8:20-22; Jeremiah 13:16; Ezekiel 13:22,23; Zechariah 13:2-4
- **without vision** Isaiah 29:10; 59:10; Jeremiah 15:9; Amos 8:9,10

**NET** Micah 3:6 Therefore night will fall, and you will receive no visions; it will grow dark, and you will no longer be able to read the omens. The sun will set on these prophets, and the daylight will turn to darkness over their heads.

**Therefore** - (term of conclusion) Pause and ponder "What's the **therefore** there for?" In view of the false prophets leading the people astray. **Kaiser** says **therefore** "signals the commencement of the sentencing upon those who had violated the sacred and public trust given to them." **Allen** adds that Micah "prefaces the verdict with **"therefore,"** which attests its logic and justice. These who have abused their prophetic gifts are doomed to be deprived of them." **Beloved, for those of us who have the gift of preaching and teaching, this last statement by Allen (and God's statement in Micah 3:6) should make us tremble at the thought we might be guilty of purposefully mishandling God's holy Word of Truth and Life!**

**It will be night for you--without vision** (cp Ps 74:9, Lam 2:9) - No **vision** means no word from God for these prophets! This declaration is taken by some commentators that Micah is in a sense acknowledging that these prophets have divine enablement to speak. But even if they did have that gift, it is clearly now voided by their misuse of it.

**Vision** (02377) (**chazown/chazon** from **chazah** = to see or behold) is a masculine noun meaning a revelation by means of a vision, an oracle, a divine communication. The emphasis is not so much on what is seen but on the message that is conveyed by what is seen. Thus **chazon** describes a divine revelation conveyed by something seen ("seer"). In this sense **vision** is somewhat similar to a dream, but as used in Scripture however, a **vision** is not a typical "dream" but represents an actual experience in which the individual is given superhuman insight or awareness. Dreams (not "day dreams"!) occur only when one is asleep whereas **visions** can occur while one is awake (cp Da 10:7). Some visions were conveyed by angels to men (Da 10:14). Visions usually conveyed prophetic truths that related to Israel (Da 9:21, 10:14).

One of my favorite uses of **chazon** is Pr 29:18-[note](#) "When there is no **vision** ("prophetic vision"; Lxx = exegetes = literally one who leads on [great description of pastors, teachers!], expounder, interpreter - only 2 other uses in Bible - Ge 41:8, 24; related verb exegeomai of Jesus - Jn 1:18-[note](#)), the people are unrestrained, ("run wild!" which is what is transpiring in America circa 2016!), but happy (better "blessed") is he who keeps (observes) the law." The **NET Note** on Pr 29:18 says "The Hebrew word "vision" (from the verb רָחַז [khazah, "to see"]) refers to divine communication to prophets (as in 1 Sa 3:1) and not to individual goals or plans. [C. H. Toy](#) sees a problem here: The most calamitous period of Israel's history was when prophetic vision was at its height, whereas people were often more obedient when God was silent. He also notes that in the book of Proverbs there is no mention of prophetic teaching with wisdom as a guide. So he emends the word to "guidance" following the LXX (see [Proverbs \[ICC\], 512](#)). The TEV has "guidance"; the NIV retains "revelation." It must be stated that the prophetic ministry was usually in response to the calamitous periods, calling the people back to God. Without them the downward rush to anarchy and destruction would have been faster than with these prophetic calls from God.

Jeremiah 23:16 is instructive "Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; They speak a vision of their own imagination, Not from the mouth of the LORD." False prophets give a message from human origin (cp Ezek 13:16), not the Lord and the result is not surprising - futility!

**Darkness for you--without divination (see note)** - Darkness reinforces the decree of no revelation (reminiscent of the days of 1Sa 3:1). The **oxymoron** of seers unable to see, without spiritual vision. Micah is not giving his "okay" to their practice of divination (forbidden in Dt 18:10), but is saying that even their occult techniques will be futile and fruitless.

**Divination** (07080) (**qasam**) is derived from an Arabic root which primarily means to distribute, divide, decide (by God or so-called fate) and then to determine by lot or magical scroll, and thus to divine. The pagans (and sadly Israel) would divine by various methods -- sometimes by examining the position of the stars, and other times through casting lots with arrows, consulting idols, examining animal organs such as the liver (see esp Ezek 21:21) or through conjuring up the dead (a sin King Saul committed in 1Sa 28:8). The goal of divination was to attempt to predict the future or discern hidden knowledge by one of these occult methods. A **soothsayer** was one who attempted to predict the future by magical, intuitive, or more rational means. Notice that divination was just one of a group of evil (occult) spiritual practices (Dt 18:10)

**Qasam** in this verse is translated in the **Lxx** by the noun **manteia** which means divination, prophetic power, power of divination or oracle (manteia also used in Nu 22:23, Dt 18:10, 14, 2Ki 17:17)

Zechariah gives an excellent summary of the practices of these men and how their occult "arts" deceived Israel declaring "For the **teraphim** (see [Kitto's interesting discussion](#)) speak iniquity, and the **diviners** see lying visions and tell false dreams. They comfort in vain. Therefore (term of conclusion) the people wander like sheep, they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd." (Zechariah 10:2)

**Vine on qasam** - Divination was a pagan parallel to prophesying (Dt. 18:10, 14-15—first occurrence.) Qasam is a seeking after the will of the gods, in an effort to learn their future action or divine blessing on some proposed future action (Josh 13:22). It seems probable that the diviners conversed with demons (1Cor 10:20). The practice of divination might involve offering sacrifices to the deity on an altar (Nu 23:1ff.). It might also involve the use of a hole in the ground, through which the diviner spoke to the spirits of the dead (1Sa 28:8). At other times, a diviner might shake arrows, consult with household idols, or study the livers of dead animals

(Ezek. 21:21). **Divination was one of man's attempts to know and control the world and the future, apart from the true God. It was the opposite of true prophecy, which essentially is submission to God's sovereignty**(Dt. 18:14).

**Hagan** defines divination as "Communication with a deity (**Ed**: I would add - a false one at that!) for the purpose of determining the deity's knowledge, resulting in clarification of a decision or discernment of the future. Two forms of divination developed in the ancient Near East, one using inductive manipulation of natural or human phenomena and the other taking intuitive forms of inner revelation." ([See the full article on Divination in Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#))

**Qasam** - 20v - conjure(1), divination(2), divine(2), diviner(2), diviners(7), divining(1), practice(1), practiced(1), use(1), uses(1), utter...divinations(1). Notice the prevalence of **qasam** in the prophetic books.

Deuteronomy 18:10 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses **divination**, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,

14 "For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and **diviners**, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so.

Joshua 13:22 The sons of Israel also killed Balaam the son of Beor, the **diviner**, with the sword among the rest of their slain.

1 Samuel 6:2 And the Philistines called for the priests and the **diviners**, saying, "What shall we do with the ark of the LORD? Tell us how we shall send it to its place."

1 Samuel 28:8 Then Saul disguised himself by putting on other clothes, and went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night; and he said, "**Conjure** up for me, please, and bring up for me whom I shall name to you."

2 Kings 17:17 Then they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire, and practiced **divination** and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him.

Isaiah 3:2 The mighty man and the warrior, The judge and the prophet, The **diviner** and the elder,

Isaiah 44:25 Causing the omens of boasters to fail, Making fools out of **diviners**, Causing wise men to draw back And turning their knowledge into foolishness,

Jeremiah 27:9 "But as for you, do not listen to your prophets, your **diviners**, your dreamers, your soothsayers or your sorcerers who speak to you, saying, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon.'

Jeremiah 29:8 "For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your **diviners** deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream.

Ezekiel 13:9 "So My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying **divinations**. They will have no place in the council of My people, nor will they be written down in the register of the house of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel, that you may know that I am the Lord GOD.

23 therefore, you women will no longer see false visions or practice **divination**, and I will deliver My people out of your hand. Thus you will know that I am the LORD."

Ezekiel 21:21 "For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use **divination**; he shakes the arrows, he consults the household idols, he looks at the liver.

23 "And it will be to them like a false divination in their eyes; they have sworn solemn oaths. But he brings iniquity to remembrance, that they may be seized.

29 while they see for you false visions, while they divine lies for you-- to place you on the necks of the wicked who are slain, whose day has come, in the time of the punishment of the end.

Ezekiel 22:28 "Her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and **divining** lies for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' when the LORD has not spoken.

Micah 3:6 Therefore it will be night for you-- without vision, And darkness for you-- without **divination**. The sun will go down on the prophets, And the day will become dark over them.

7 The seers will be ashamed And the **diviners** will be embarrassed. Indeed, they will all cover their mouths Because there is no answer from God.

11 Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe, Her priests instruct for a price And her prophets **divine** for

money. Yet they lean on the LORD saying, "Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us."

Zechariah 10:2 For the teraphim speak iniquity, And the **diviners** see lying visions And tell false dreams; They comfort in vain. Therefore the people wander like sheep, They are afflicted, because there is no shepherd.

**Allen** - The sinister figure of **night** is a multiple metaphor which alludes to calamity afflicted by God as well as to the loss of prophetic enlightenment. Shades will gather and smother in their gloom that good light which has been put to evil ends.

**Matthew Henry** - They kept others in the dark, and now God will bring them into the dark.

The **Proverbs** describe the consequence of a people who don't have a word from God and are therefore in **darkness**...

Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, But happy is he who keeps the law. (Pr 29:18 in depth commentary)

**Kaiser comments** - The Hebrew verb *pāra* [no restraint], was used earlier in Ex 32:25 when Moses saw that the people at the golden calf "were running wild" [or "were unrestrained"] and no doubt influenced its use here. The point is this: abandon the revelation or Word of God, even for forty days, as Israel did at the mount, and people become ungovernable and cast off all restraint! The absence of God's Word is fatal to any people.

Micah concludes that the sentence (unable to see spiritual things) will match the crime (their false visions and divination). It is indeed ironic that the revelations of the false prophets will be cut off at night (NET = "night will fall, and you will receive no visions"), the time they often received their "visions!" (cf **NLT** paraphrase - "Darkness will cover you, making it impossible for you to predict the future.")

**Davis** - The judgement does not consist in blazing fire or foreign invasion, but in silence and darkness. Compare the words of **God** through His prophet **Amos**...

Behold (this interjection is always a call for the hearer to "listen up!"), days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, but rather for hearing the **Words** of the LORD. People will stagger from sea to sea And from the north even to the east. They will go to and fro to seek the **Word** of the LORD, but they will not find it. (Amos 8:11-12)

**The sun will go down on the prophets** - As noted above "The coming of night (and darkness in the following line) symbolizes the cessation of revelation." (NET)

**Constable** - The sun, a symbol of God who bestows blessings and favor, would set on their day, and they would have to live in the darkness of His disfavor.

**And the day will become dark over them** (NLT = "your day will come to an end") - Darkness is a metaphor for divine judgment and even death (Job 10:21, Pr 20:20, cf Jesus' words in Mt 8:12, 22:13, 25:30)

**Criswell** - The false prophets will say anything for a man who feeds them. When disaster comes, unlike Micah (Micah 3:8), they will have no answer from God (Micah 3:7).

**Waltke** - By taking away their gift (cf. Jdg. 16:20 [**Ed**: One of those truly tragic passages -Samson losing his gift and not even knowing it!]; 2Sa 17:14), he removes the source of their illicit gain...As other poets liken the loss of knowledge to darkness (cf. Ps 82:5; 69:23), Micah compares their loss of clairvoyance to the setting of the sun. Their 'crystal balls' will become black.

**Davis** has an interesting application - We might pause to ponder this. Some might say that God can't withdraw his word today thanks to Gutenberg; after all, we have Scripture, the Word of God, in writing—and fifty-eight kinds of study Bibles available from evangelical publishers. But God can still 'take away' his word. He may take away the desire for it or interest in it. Who can doubt that this judgement may well be upon the church, the evangelical church, in the West? Our people know more about Britney Spears than the book of Ezekiel. In my part of the USA most professing Christian men know more about Southeastern Conference football than they do about the Psalms. **We abuse—and then lose—the Word of God.** (Ed: Woe!)

**Micah 3:7 The seers will be ashamed and the diviners will be embarrassed. Indeed, they will all cover their mouths because there is no answer from God.**

- **seers** Exodus 8:18,19; 9:11; 1 Samuel 9:9; Isaiah 44:25; 47:12-14; Daniel 2:9-11; Zechariah 13:4; 2 Timothy 3:8,9
- **cover** Leviticus 13:45; Ezekiel 24:17,22
- **mouths** 1 Samuel 14:37; 28:6,15; Psalms 74:9; Amos 8:11



## PROPHETS ARE PUBLICLY DISGRACED!

The **seers** will be ashamed...embarrassed - **Seer** is another word for prophet (1Sa 9:9). A seer who cannot see! He is a prophet without a word from God and is not much value! This is their judgment for perverting prophecy. On the day of God's wrath. Seer is the word *hazah* (02372) which is used of those who see visions (Isa. 1:1-note; Lam 2:14; Ezek 12:27; Hab 1:1-note; Zech 10:2). In addition when the judgment comes, those who prophesied "peace" will clearly be recognized as having giving false predictions and would be have any glory they may have attained replaced by shame and embarrassment! Jeremiah described such men...

They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, saying, 'Peace, peace,' But there is no peace.  
(Jer 6:14)

**Ashamed** (0954)(**bosh**) Strong says means "properly to pale and by implication to be ashamed, disappointed or delayed." The TWOT says the primary meaning is "to fall into disgrace, normally through failure, either of self or of an object of trust." The word has overtones of being or feeling worthless. **Bôsh** means "to be ashamed

**Bôsh** and its derivatives are used in five somewhat distinct ways.

**First**, it is used idiomatically to express long delay or cessation. In Judges 3:25; 2 Kings 2:17; 2 Kings 8:11 it is used to express the sense of confusion which either the waiter or the waited upon feel when a delay becomes excessively long. The two occurrences of the Polel form are also used to express this idiom, e.g. Exodus 32:11 where the people of Israel say that Moses was "ashamed" (ASV and RSV "delayed") to come down from the mountain. While the idiomatic use of *bôsh* to express cessation may be related to the above, it is more likely that it represents an interchange in meaning with *yâbêsh* "to dry up." Four of the five occurrences of this usage are in Joel 1:10-17 where Hiphil forms indistinguishable from those of *yâbêsh* are used. (Cf. Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley, 2d ed., p. 220.)

The **second** usage of *bôsh* expresses that sense of confusion, embarrassment, and dismay when matters turn out contrary to one's expectations. Thus, Job speaks of the shame of the caravaneers when they do not find water in the expected place (Job 6:20). So also, Israel will be shamed when God cuts off the rain (Jeremiah 14:3). In a more profound sense, Israel and the nations will be shamed by their idols when they fail them (Isaiah 42:17; Jeremiah 22:22; Hosea 10:6).

The **third** usage and the one that is most common carries the above thought further expressing the disgrace which is the result of defeat at the hands of an enemy, either in battle or in some other manner. In particular, the awful shame of being paraded as captives is thought of (Micah 1:11; cf. also Jeremiah 2:26). Involved here are all the nuances of confusion, disillusionment, humiliation, and brokenness which the word connotes. The prophets normally use the word with this sense, promising Israel that unless she repents and turns from her idolatrous ways, she will certainly experience the shame of defeat and exile. (Cf. Isaiah 1:29; Isaiah 30:5; Jeremiah 2:36; Jeremiah 9:19 [H 18]; Ezra 9:6; Daniel 9:7, etc.) Intimately associated with this third use of the word is the question of trust. If Israel seeks to insure her own glory by refusing to trust in God but rather trusts in idols (Isaiah 1:29) or in foreign nations (Isaiah 20:5; Isaiah 30:3, 5), she will not get glory, but shame and disgrace. On the other hand, if one will humbly submit to God, he will find his true glory, for God will not let that person come to shame (Isaiah 29:22; Joel 2:26, 27; Zeph. 3:19). It is this promise of which the Psalmist continually reminds God (Psalm 25:3; Psalm 31:17 [H 18]; Psalm 37:19; Psalm 119:46). Similarly, although Israel's enemies may triumph over her for a period, they must inevitably, because of their idolatry and their lack of trust in God, be brought to abject shame (Isaiah 41:11; Jeremiah 46:24; Jeremiah 51:47.) Again, it is the Psalmist's fervent expectation that because he trusts in God, those who are attempting to destroy him must themselves be brought low in disgrace (Psalm 6:10 [H 11]; Psalm 22:6; Psalm 40:14 [H 15]; Psalm 109:28).

**Fourthly**, shame results from imprudent or immoral action. This use is found in 1 Samuel 20:30. From Saul's perspective Jonathan made a fool of himself not only by committing a grave injustice against the reigning king, but also by jeopardizing his mother's position who would become part of David's harem. Likewise Joab accused David of not thinking things through and thus acting foolishly (2 Samuel 19:5 [H 6]). But this usage is largely restricted to Proverbs. All the occurrences are Hiphil participles in references which describe explicitly or implicitly the actions of those who bring disgrace upon their parents or spouses (Proverbs 10:5; Proverbs 12:4; Proverbs 14:35, etc.).

The **final use** of **bôsh** is the one which coincides most closely with the common English connotation: a feeling of guilt from having done what is wrong. Jeremiah (Jeremiah 6:15) is horrified that the people are not ashamed



having committed abomination (idolatry). Similarly, Ezekiel (Ezekiel 16:63) indicates that God's grace, manifested in the restoration, will not allay, but increase Judah's sense of shame. Not until then will she see what a terrible thing it was to trust idols instead of the living God. Ezra, discovering the situation in Jerusalem, cries out that he is ashamed because "our iniquities are higher than our heads." (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

Always take a moment to ponder what is being explained. When failure or sin occurs, there is a disconcerting feeling, a flushing of the face. Always take a moment to ponder what is being explained. Bosh often occurs in contexts of humiliation and shattered human emotions. It is the feeling of public disgrace. The confusion, embarrassment, or dismay when things do not turn out as expected (Micah 7:16 describes the arrogant anti-Semitic Gentile world powers who will definitely be surprised and things do not turn out as they had expected!). Bosh not only conveys the idea of shame, but of a type of shame in which utter defeat pervades the mood. Disillusionment and a broken spirit follow (Ezra 9:6; Isa 1:29; 30:5; Jer 2:36; 9:19).

**Ashamed** - Affected by shame (see below); abashed or confused by guilt or a conviction of some criminal action or indecorous conduct, or by the exposure of some gross errors or misconduct, which the person is conscious must be wrong, and which tends to impair his honor or reputation. Confused by a consciousness of guilt or of inferiority; by the mortification of pride; by failure or disappointment. (Webster, 1828).

**Shame** - A painful sensation excited by a consciousness of guilt, or of having done something which injures reputation; or by the exposure of that which nature or modesty prompts us to conceal. **Shame** is particularly excited by the disclosure of actions which, in the view of men, are mean and degrading. Hence it is often or always manifested by a **downcast look** or by **blushes**, called **confusion of face**. (Webster, 1828).

**Bosh** is translated in Micah 3:8 and Micah 7:16 with the Greek verb **Kataischuno**. Always take a moment to ponder what is being explained. **Kataischuno** can also refer to the shame and disappointment that come to one whose faith or hope is shown to be vain.

The prophet Zechariah uses bosh in issuing a similar judgment in the end times declaring "it will come about in that day (when Messiah returns) that the prophets will each be **ashamed** of his vision when he prophesies, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive (Note: This is one of the goals of a false prophet = to deceive. Like father, like son - Jn 8:44, Ge 3:1-5, 2Cor 11:3, Rev 12:9)." (Zech 13:4)

**NAS** translates **bosh** as - acted shamefully(1), acts shamefully(3), ashamed(60), ashamed at all(1), became anxious(1), become dry(1), been confounded(1), been put(8), been put to shame(8), been shamed(1), brings shame(1), covered with shame(1), delayed(1), disappointed(2), feel...shame(1), put me to shame(1), put them to shame(1), put to shame(32), shame(1), shamed(3), shameful(1), shames(1), utterly dejected(1), utterly put(1), utterly put to shame(1).

**Bosh** - 113 v -

Ge 2:25; Ex 32:1; Jdg 3:25; 2Sa 19:5; 2Kgs 2:17; 8:11; 19:26; Ezra 8:22; 9:6; Job 6:20; 19:3; Ps 6:10; 14:6; 22:5; 25:2f, 20; 31:1, 17; 35:4, 26; 37:19; 40:14; 44:7; 53:5; 69:6; 70:2; 71:1, 13, 24; 83:17; 86:17; 97:7; 109:28; 119:6, 31, 46, 78, 80, 116; 127:5; 129:5; Pr 10:5; 12:4; 14:35; 17:2; 19:26; 29:15; Isa 1:29; 19:9; 20:5; 23:4; 24:23; 26:11; 29:22; 30:5; 37:27; 41:11; 42:17; 44:9, 11; 45:16f, 24; 49:23; 50:7; 54:4; 65:13; 66:5; Jer 2:26, 36; 6:15; 8:9, 12; 9:19; 10:14; 12:13; 14:3f; 15:9; 17:13, 18; 20:11; 22:22; 31:19; 46:24; 48:1, 13, 20, 39; 49:23; 50:2, 12; 51:17, 47, 51; Ezek 16:52, 63; 32:30; 36:32; Hos 2:5; 4:19; 10:6; 13:15; Joel 1:11; 2:26f; Mic 3:7; 7:16; Zeph 3:11; Zech 9:5; 10:5; 13:4.

**Embarrassed** (02659)(**chapter**) means to be abashed, disgraced, humiliated or ashamed. In Psalms we read the antithesis of the state of these prophets perverted prophecies...

They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces will never be **ashamed** (**chapter**). (Ps 34:5)

**Chapter** - 15 v - Job 6:20; Ps 34:5; 35:26; 70:2; 71:24; 83:17; Prov 13:5; 19:26; Isa 1:29; 24:23; 33:9; 54:4; Jer 15:9; 50:12; Mic 3:7. **NAS Usage:** abashed(1), ashamed(1), confounded(1), disgraced(1), disgraceful(1), embarrassed(2), humiliated(6), shamed(1), shamefully(1).

**Indeed, they will all cover their mouths** - Again we see God's "poetic justice!" The very organ they used to promote their prophecies is now the organ they will cover! They were soon to be "spiritual lepers" who would cover their mouth much like lepers covered their mustaches (Lev 13:45)! See also Ezek 24:17, 22 for covering one's face as a sign of mourning.

**Allen** - Micah dramatically refers to a common gesture of grief to which his opponents will resort in their shocked despair, that of covering the upper lip. Ironically it will also be a fitting sign that they have nothing to say; dumbfoundedness will be an apt reaction to their being silenced.

**Matthew Henry** - Those who deceive others are but preparing confusion for their own faces.

**Because** - Pause and ponder this **term of explanation** - **Pause and ask yourself "What is Micah explaining?"**

**There is no answer from God** - In the day of God's wrath the prophets' mouths will be stopped because God does not speak to or through them (cp Ps 66:18-[note](#)). This judgment parallels that given to the corrupt leaders in Micah 3:4. They are left speechless and with no answers.

**Micah 3:8 On the other hand I am filled with power-- with the Spirit of the LORD-- and with justice and courage to make known to Jacob his rebellious act, even to Israel his sin.**

- **I am** Job 32:18; Isaiah 11:2,3; 58:1; Jeremiah 1:18; 6:11; 15:19-21; 20:9; Ezekiel 3:14; Matthew 7:29; Mark 3:17; Acts 4:8-12,19,20; 7:54-57; 13:9-12; 18:5,6,9-11; 1 Corinthians 2:4,12,13
- **to declare** Isaiah 58:1; Ezekiel 16:2; 20:4; 22:2; 43:10; Matthew 3:7-12; Acts 7:51,52

**NET** Micah 3:8 But I am full of the courage that the LORD's Spirit gives, and have a strong commitment to justice. This enables me to confront (NAS has "courage to make known") Jacob with its rebellion, and Israel with its sin.

### **MICAH'S POWER NOT HIMSELF BUT THE SPIRIT**

**On the other hand I** = this an abrupt, strong "adversative" or **term of contrast** - **What/who is being contrasted?** False versus true. Darkness versus light. Wrong versus right. Deflated windbags (cf Mic 2:11 - "walking after wind [ruah]" versus a man filled with the "wind" (Spirit = Ruah = wind in motion) of God! Fortunately, God did not leave His people without a true witness, a real prophet, one unafraid to speak the truth, even when the truth hurts. Being a prophet for God is often a lonely calling and requires that one swim against the stream of sin (energized by the the **world**, the **flesh** and the **devil**)! But Micah like Jesus some seven centuries later could say "I am not alone" (Jn 16:32)

**I am filled with power with (by) the Spirit of the LORD** (cf another OT prophet = Isa 48:16, cp NT "prophets" = Acts 1:8-note) - Note that the Holy Spirit is identified with the power! Thus Micah gives the credentials of a true prophet - the power and presence of the Spirit (in addition to justice and courage). Micah's authority was not in his self but God's Spirit! (cf Isa 48:16, 2Pe 1:20-21-note) His power was from the Spirit even as Jesus as the God-Man laid aside His divine prerogatives to give us the perfect example of a Spirit filled Man (cf Jesus in Lk 4:14, Acts 10:38). Every believer today has access to this same supernatural power (dunamis) because of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. (Eph 5:18-note, Ro 15:13-note).

**Kaiser** - What comparison has chaff to wheat or placebos of false preachers to the mighty word of God? None!

**Chisholm** is correct - "The Spirit of God is the sine qua non for effective ministry." It was in Micah's day and is still the case in our day. **Lord, give America men like Micah, filled with power by Your Spirit and for Your glory. Amen.**

**John Calvin** - Thus, when Micah proclaims: **On the other hand I am filled with power with (by) the Spirit of the LORD**, let us realize that Micah is confessing that in himself he is only a man, that he is not boasting of having a keener mind than others in order to glean their praise; rather, he only wants them to recognize what God has put in his soul. Consequently, if we want our Lord to fortify us with power, then let us acknowledge the absence of such in ourselves, and how empty we are of any good. **Above all, let those who are charged with preaching the Word of God acknowledge their insufficiency.** (Sermons)

**Matthew Henry** asks - Are we full of power at any time, for that which is good? It is purely by the Spirit of the Lord, for of ourselves we are weak as water it is the God of Israel that gives strength and power both to his people and to his ministers.

**Paul** gives us many NT parallels describing his (and our) absolute need for **supernatural power**...

**But** (contrast = 1Cor 15:9-note) by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. (1Cor 15:10-note)

Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2Cor 3:5-6-note, cf Jn 6:63)

And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for **power (dunamis)** is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the **power (dunamis)** of Christ may dwell in me. 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (2Cor 12:9-note ; 2Cor 12:10-note)

Perhaps as you read this, you sense you are weak and are not experiencing the power which is available to you. You might take a moment and meditate on Isaiah 40:31 which also uses the Hebrew word *koach* for strength...

Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary. (Isa 40:31-**see in depth discussion of this great passage**)

**Power** (3581)(**koah/koach - word study**) means strength, might, power in many different contexts. It describes physical and psychological strength to stand up against opposition and discouragement. Basically **koach** is the capacity to do or act and often describes physical strength (Jdg 16:5). Micah 3:8 describes the prophet filled with supernatural power.

When **koach** is applied to God, it suggests His omnipotence in creation (Jer 10:12; 32:17), in the Exodus events (Ex 9:16;15:6), in His capacity to subdue His enemies (Job 36:19), in His power to deliver His people (Isa 63:1). The man is strongest who has discovered the finite limitations of his own capacities in the light of the limitless resources of God through His Spirit (Job 36:22; Isa 40:31; Mic 3:8; Zec 4:6).

This same Strong's number and word **koach** in some contexts means lizard or reptile (Lev 11:30).

In Isa 40:29 the prophet uses **koach** declaring "He (Jehovah) gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases **power** (koach)."

The Lxx often translates **koach** in Micah 3:8 and Isa 40:20 with the Greek word **ischus (word study)** describes inherent ability, not necessarily the accomplishment. *Ischus* is inherent power or force. A muscular man's big muscles display his might, even if he doesn't use them. It is the reserve of strength. *Ischus* therefore conveys the sense of endowed power or ability.

**Vine** - The basic meaning of **koach** is an ability to do something. Samson's "strength" lay in his hair (Jdg 16:5), and we must keep in mind that his "strength" had been demonstrated against the Philistines. Nations and kings exert their "powers" (Josh 17:17; Da 8:24). It is even possible to say that a field has *koach*, as it does or does not have vital "powers" to produce and harvest: (Ge 4:12—first occurrence). In the OT it is recognized that by eating one gains "strength" (1Sa 28:22), whereas one loses one's "abilities" in fasting (1Sa 28:20; 1Ki 19:8).

**Koach** - 121v - **NAS translates koach** -- ability(3), able(1), able\*(2), force(1), fruit(1), might(4), mightily(1), mighty(1), power(40), powerful(1), powerless\*(1), strength(65), strong(1), wealth(1).

Ge 4:12; 31:6; 49:3; Ex 9:16; 15:6; 32:11; Lev 11:30; 26:20; Num 14:13, 17; Dt 4:37; 8:17f; 9:29; Josh 14:11; 17:17; Jdg 6:14; 16:5f, 9, 15, 17, 19, 30; 1Sa 2:9; 28:20, 22; 30:4; 1Kgs 19:8; 2Kgs 17:36; 19:3; 1Chr 26:8; 29:2, 12, 14; 2Chr 2:6; 13:20; 14:11; 20:6, 12; 22:9; 25:8; 26:13; Ezra 2:69; 10:13; Neh 1:10; 4:10; Job 3:17; 6:11f, 22; 9:4, 19; 23:6; 24:22; 26:2, 12; 30:2, 18; 31:39; 36:5, 19, 22; 37:23; 39:11, 21; 40:16; Ps 22:15; 29:4; 31:10; 33:16; 38:10; 65:6; 71:9; 102:23; 103:20; 111:6; 147:5; Pr 5:10; 14:4; 20:29; 24:5, 10; Eccl 4:1; 9:10; Isa 10:13; 37:3; 40:9, 26, 29, 31; 41:1; 44:12; 49:4; 50:2; 63:1; Jer 10:12; 27:5; 32:17; 48:45; 51:15; Lam 1:6, 14; Da 1:4; 8:6f, 22, 24; 10:8, 16f; 11:6, 15, 25; Hos 7:9; Amos 2:14; Mic 3:8; Nah 1:3; 2:1; Hab 1:11; Zech 4:6.

**With the Spirit of the LORD** (cf the prophet Ezekiel - Ezek 2:2; 3:12, 14, 24 and Amos in Amos 3:8) - Here is a beautiful example of the OT ministry of the Spirit. Recall that when we are "filled with" something (like say wine), that something "controls" us. (See Eph 5:18-**see in depth discussion regarding the meaning of being filled with the Spirit**). So here we see Micah yielding to the control of the Spirit. And of course it is no surprise that the Spirit's presence is accompanied by power to accomplish the task at hand. It was that way in Micah's day and remains true in our day. We need the Spirit and His power to live the Christian life ("Christ" life), which was always meant to be a supernatural life not a life lived depending on our natural strength and natural tendencies! Recall Jesus' words to those who were to make up the first Church (suggesting that the same "Church" needs the same Source!)...

but you will receive **power (dunamis)** when the **Holy Spirit** has come upon you; and (Purpose for the power) you shall be My witnesses (Living supernaturally empowered lives - that testify not just that something is different about their life, but that Someone different indwells them!) both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:8-**see in depth discussion of this important verse**, cf Acts 3:12 = man's *dunamis*)

**Peter affirms the role of the Spirit in the OT prophets..**

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, **for** (a strategic term of explanation) no prophecy (**propheteia**) was ever made by an act of human will, but men **moved by the Holy Spirit** spoke from God. (2Pe 1:20-21-**see discussion of this frequently misinterpreted passage**)

**Comment:** From this passage we see that Micah is claiming in essence to be inspired by the Spirit.

**Spurgeon** agrees that - We **must** have the Holy Spirit, and if we have Him not, all our machinery will stand still; or if it goes on, it will produce no effect whatever. I heard of a Christian man whose mill-wheel was noticed to be in motion on a certain Sunday. The people going to worship greatly wondered there at; but one who went by set their minds at rest by pointing out that the wheel was only turning idly round, because the water, by accident, was allowed to flow over it. But the man said, 'It is very like our minister and his sermons. There is no work being done, but the wheel goes round, clickety click, clickety click, though it is not grinding anything.' Therein it also greatly resembles many an organization for spiritual service: the water is passing over it, glittering as it flows; but the outside motion does not join on to any human need, nor produce any practical result, and nothing comes of the click and hum.

**Patterson** - The work of the Spirit in the lives and ministries of the Old Testament prophets speaks to the very nature of God's person as a "plurality" of being.

**A W Tozer** - If God were to take the Holy Spirit out of this world, much of what we're doing in our churches would go right on and nobody would know the difference!...I do not believe in a repetition of Pentecost, but I do believe in a perpetuation of Pentecost—and there is a vast difference between the two.

**Bill Crowder** gives us a pithy **Illustration of the Modern Church's Crucial Need for Power...**

The first winter that my wife Marlene and I were married was marked by severe blizzards. I can vividly remember one Sunday when we awoke to find that the electricity had been knocked out by an ice storm. Huddled around a battery-powered radio for news on that frigid Sunday, we heard a most unusual announcement. The announcer, before giving the list of church services canceled due to the ice storm, said,

**"The following churches will be closed due to lack of power."**

What an interesting comment! I knew what he meant, but I was struck by what he said. The idea of churches closing due to lack of power conjures up some spiritual parallels that directly tie into Jesus' promise of the Spirit. Just prior to His ascension, Jesus told His men in Acts 1:8, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." He directly attached the coming of the Spirit to the empowering of believers. ([Bill Crowder - RBC Ministry - Promise of the Spirit](#))

**Vance Havner** - Satan has scored a point in making us so afraid of extremism about the Holy Spirit—which abounds indeed—that we may miss the true in our fear of the false. We can be so wary of getting out on a limb that we never go up the tree!

**John Murray** - if Pentecost is not repeated, neither is it retracted. This is the era of the Holy Spirit.

**John Stott** - Before Christ sent the church into the world, he sent the Spirit into the church. The same order must be observed today.

**Paul** echoes Micah in his first letter to the Corinthians...

My message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the **Spirit** and of **power** (**dunamis**), (1Cor 2:4)

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the **Spirit** Who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the **Spirit**, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. (1Cor 2:12-13)

**A Summary of the Holy Spirit's work in the Old Testament..**

1. Presiding with God over the act of creation (Ge 1:2, Job 26:13-14KJV, Isa 40:12, 13)
2. Authoring and interpreting Scripture (Mic 3:8; Amos 3:8; Zech 7:12; cf. Acts 4:25)
3. Convicting and illuminating people's hearts (Neh 9:30-32)
4. Regenerating God's people (Ezek 36:26-27; John 3:5-8)
5. Indwelling and giving spiritual renewal to God's people (Ps 139:11-12; Isa 63:10-11; Hag 2:5; Zech 4:6)
6. Sealing the relationship of the faithful with God (as perhaps in the oath of adoption; cf. Josh 4-5; Jer 31:33)

7. Filling people for ministry, enabling them, gifting them for service (Ex 28:3; 31:3; Num 11:25; Jdg 13:25; 1 Sam 16:13)

### **Scofield's Summary of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament:**

- (1) The personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit appear from the attributes ascribed to Him and from His works.
- (2) He is revealed as sharing the work of creation and, therefore as omnipotent (Ge 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps 104:30); omnipresent (Ps 139:7); striving with men (Ge 6:3); enlightening (Job 32:8); enduing with constructive skill (Ex 28:3; 31:3); giving physical strength (Jdg 14:6,19), giving executive ability, and wisdom (Jdg 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25); enabling men to receive and utter divine revelations (Nu 11:25; 2Sa 23:2); generally, empowering the servants of God (Ps 51:12; Joel 2:28; Mic 3:8; Zech 4:6).
- (3) He is called holy (Ps 51:11); good (Ps 143:10); the Spirit of judgment and fire (Isa 4:4); the Spirit of the LORD, of wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge, the fear of the LORD (Isa 11:2), of grace and supplication (Zech 12:10).
- (4) In the OT the Holy Spirit acts in free sovereignty, coming upon men and even upon a dumb beast as He wills; nor are conditions set forth (as in the NT) by compliance with which any one may receive the Spirit. The indwelling of every believer by the abiding Spirit is a NT blessing consequent upon the death and resurrection of Christ (John 7:39; 16:7; Acts 2:33; Gal 3:1 - 6).
- (5) The OT contains predictions of a future pouring out of the Spirit upon Israel (Ezek 37:14; 39:29), and upon "all people" (Joel 2:28-29). The expectation of Israel, therefore, was twofold - of the coming of Messiah-Immanuel, and of such a pouring out of the Spirit as the prophets described.

**And with justice and courage** - These are the Spirit enabled, holy "armaments" of a prophet. The justice of the God's prophet countered and overcame the gross injustice of the leaders (Mic 3:9). His courage enabled him to fearlessly rebuke people for their sins and impending judgment. Wiersbe adds that "a true servant of God declares God's message regardless of whether the people like it or not. He'd like to be a peacemaker, but sometimes he has to be a troublemaker." Compare the assurance with which Micah could speak the true Word of God with what the false prophets had to speak - Jer 23:28 = "straw!" "What is painted fire to real fire?" (M. Henry) Micah surely feared God - it is an axiom - if you fear God, you won't fear men! (cf Jesus' words - Lk 12:5).

**Davis** makes a great point we all do well to ponder - This **(with justice and courage)**, incidentally, reminds us that character, and not merely gifts (cf. 'power'), stamps a servant as genuine. He does not simply 'make a living', but there is a certain godly passion that percolates within him and drives his ministry.

**Justice** was sorely lacking in the corrupt magistrates (Mic 3:1). Micah's use of this word in the context of a judgment message also suggests that God is just in judging His chosen people for their breaking of the Mosaic covenant.

**Waltke** - "The sign of being filled with the Spirit is speaking of justice"

**Patterson** - The touchstone of Micah's message is "doing what is right" or practicing justice (mishpat)

**Courage** (Might, power, strength) ([01369](#))(**geburah** from **gibbor** = speaks of strength of a warrior) conveys the basic sense of strength, power, might (valiant might). With respect to the kings of Israel, geburah refers to what their power produced (1Ki 15:23; 16:5, 27). All **geburah** or power belongs to the Lord and men have power only because He gives it to them (1Chr. 29:11-12). **Geburah** can refer to the strength of animals (horse = Ps 147:10; Job 39:19) and men (Jdg 8:21; Ps 90:10). Because God

possesses wisdom and power (Job 12:13), no one can overturn what he does (Job 12:14–15).

**Geburah** also conveys the following meanings = force, valor, victory, mastery, might, mighty act, power, strength.

**Mounce** - With his might, God will vindicate his people (Ps 54:1); he will save them to make known his mighty power (Ps 106:8), resulting in praise to him for his mighty acts (106:2). God does not delight in the strength of horses or men's legs, but in the fear of the Lord (147:10–11).

The Hebrew root **gibbor** ([01368](#)) is commonly associated with warfare and has to do with strength and vitality of the successful warrior as he goes out to meet the enemy (cf Acts 4:13 which uses the Greek word for boldness **parrhesia**, a key word in Acts 2:29, 4:29, 31, 28:31) (**See** related study of God's great Name - **El Gibbor-Mighty God**).

**Barker** - This word (geburah) has been defined as "a holy courage that enables him to face any danger in delivering his testimony." (**Ed**: This is reminiscent of Paul's parting exhortation to young Timothy who may have been a bit "timid" - 2Ti 1:7**see discussion of Timothy's timidity**)

Here in Micah 3:8, the Lxx translates **geburah** with **dunasteia** = exercise of power, the stem "**duna-**" or "**dyna-**" has the basic sense of "being able" (cf related word is used to translate some of the OT uses of geburah - **dunamis**). Micah displays manliness ("guts" so to speak).

**Baker** - **Geburah** depicts the nature of God's mighty deeds. It describes the strength of the Lord's right hand that delivers His anointed (Ps. 20:6[7]), meaning all of His powerful acts as well as His power and might in general (Deut. 3:24; 1 Chr. 29:11, 12; Job 26:14; Ps. 65:6[7]; 66:7). It describes the strength of various things: animals (Job 41:12[4]; Ps. 147:10); people (Judg. 8:21; Eccl. 9:16). It indicates the might or power by which the Lord's powerful king reigns (1 Chr. 29:30); or the bravery and valor of the king's warriors (Judg. 8:21; Prov. 8:14; Isa. 3:25). It refers to the strength of persons that may prolong their lives (Ps. 90:10). Its usage is flexible and can refer to the power of the sun (Judg. 5:31); or the strength of an army or military plan (2 Kgs. 18:20).

**Geburah** - 61v - **NAS** translates **geburah** as courage(1), might(26), mighty(1), mighty acts(3), mighty deeds(4), mighty ones(1), mighty strength(1), power(9), strength(13), strong(1), triumph(1).

Exodus 32:18 But he said, "It is not the sound of the cry of triumph, Nor is it the sound of the cry of defeat; But the sound of singing I hear."

Deuteronomy 3:24 'O Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand; for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as Yours?

Judges 5:31 "Thus let all Your enemies perish, O LORD; But let those who love Him be like the rising of the sun in its might." And the land was undisturbed for forty years.

Judges 8:21 Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, "Rise up yourself, and fall on us; for as the man, so is his strength." So Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescent ornaments which were on their camels' necks.

1 Kings 15:23 Now the rest of all the acts of Asa and all his might and all that he did and the cities which he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? But in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

1 Kings 16:5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha and what he did and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did and his might which he showed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

1 Kings 22:45 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might which he showed and how he warred, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

2 Kings 10:34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehu and all that he did and all his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

2 Kings 13:8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

12 Now the rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did and his might with which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

2 Kings 14:15 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might and how he fought with



Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

28 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did and his might, how he fought and how he recovered for Israel, Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

2 Kings 18:20 "You say (but they are only empty words), 'I have counsel and strength for the war.' Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me?

2 Kings 20:20 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and all his might, and how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

1 Chronicles 29:11 "Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the **power** and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all.

12 "Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is **power** and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone.

30 with all his reign, his power, and the circumstances which came on him, on Israel, and on all the kingdoms of the lands.

2 Chronicles 20:6 and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You.

Esther 10:2 And all the accomplishments of his authority and strength, and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia?

Job 12:13 "With Him are wisdom and might; To Him belong counsel and understanding.

Job 26:14 "Behold, these are the fringes of His ways; And how faint a word we hear of Him! But His mighty thunder, who can understand?"

Job 39:19 "Do you give the horse his might? Do you clothe his neck with a mane?

Job 41:12 "I will not keep silence concerning his limbs, Or his mighty strength, or his orderly frame.

Psalms 20:6 Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand.

Psalms 21:13 Be exalted, O LORD, in Your strength; We will sing and praise Your power.

Psalms 54:1 For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Is not David hiding himself among us?" Save me, O God, by Your name, And vindicate me by Your power.

Psalms 65:6 Who establishes the mountains by His strength, Being girded with might;

Psalms 66:7 He rules by His might forever; His eyes keep watch on the nations; Let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

Psalms 71:16 I will come with the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of Your righteousness, Yours alone.

18 And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, Until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to all who are to come.

Psalms 80:2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up Your power And come to save us!

Psalms 89:13 You have a strong arm; Your hand is mighty, Your right hand is exalted.

Psalms 90:10 As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away.

Psalms 106:2 Who can speak of the mighty deeds of the LORD, Or can show forth all His praise?

8 Nevertheless He saved them for the sake of His name, That He might make His power known.

Psalm 145:4 One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts.

11 They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom And talk of Your power;

12 To make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts And the glory of the majesty of Your kingdom.

Psalm 147:10 He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He does not take pleasure in the legs of a man.

Psalm 150:2 Praise Him for His mighty deeds; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness.

Proverbs 8:14 "Counsel is mine and sound wisdom; I am understanding, power is mine.

Ecclesiastes 9:16 So I said, "Wisdom is better than strength." But the wisdom of the poor man is despised and his words are not heeded.

Ecclesiastes 10:17 Blessed are you, O land, whose king is of nobility and whose princes eat at the appropriate time-- for strength and not for drunkenness.

Isaiah 3:25 Your men will fall by the sword And your mighty ones in battle.

Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

Isaiah 28:6 A spirit of justice for him who sits in judgment, A strength to those who repel the onslaught at the gate.

Isaiah 30:15 For thus the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said, "In repentance and rest you will be saved, In quietness and trust is your strength." But you were not willing,

Isaiah 33:13 "You who are far away, hear what I have done; And you who are near, acknowledge My might."

Isaiah 36:5 "I say, 'Your counsel and strength for the war are only empty words.' Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me?

Isaiah 63:15 Look down from heaven and see from Your holy and glorious habitation; Where are Your zeal and Your mighty deeds? The stirrings of Your heart and Your compassion are restrained toward me.

Jeremiah 9:23 Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches;

Jeremiah 10:6 There is none like You, O LORD; You are great, and great is Your name in might.

Jeremiah 16:21 "Therefore behold, I am going to make them know-- This time I will make them know My power and My might; And they shall know that My name is the LORD."

Jeremiah 23:10 For the land is full of adulterers; For the land mourns because of the curse. The pastures of the wilderness have dried up. Their course also is evil And their might is not right.

Jeremiah 49:35 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Behold, I am going to break the bow of Elam, The finest of their might.

Jeremiah 51:30 The mighty men of Babylon have ceased fighting, They stay in the strongholds; Their strength is exhausted, They are becoming like women; Their dwelling places are set on fire, The bars of her gates are broken.

Ezekiel 32:29 "There also is Edom, its kings and all its princes, who for all their might are laid with those slain by the sword; they will lie with the uncircumcised and with those who go down to the pit.

30 "There also are the chiefs of the north, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who in spite of the terror resulting from their might, in shame went down with the slain. So they lay down uncircumcised with those slain by the sword and bore their disgrace with those who go down to the pit.

Micah 3:8 On the other hand I am filled with power-- With the Spirit of the LORD-- And with justice and courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, Even to Israel his sin.

Micah 7:16 Nations will see and be ashamed Of all their might. They will put their hand on their mouth, Their ears will be deaf.

**To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, even to Israel his sin** (just as was the call on the prophets - Isaiah = Isaiah 58:1 and Ezekiel = Ezekiel 16:2; 20:4; 22:2; 43:10) - Micah's purpose (as is every prophet = not foretellers but forth tellers) was to "**reprove, rebuke, exhort**, (**red** = **all aorist imperatives**) with great patience and instruction" (2 Ti 4:2-note). When one is filled with the Holy

Spirit, he has supernatural boldness, which enabled Micah to fearlessly and faithfully proclaim God's judgment against sin! See the relationship between Spirit filling (control) and Speaking boldly (Previously denying **Peter** in Acts 2:4, 14; Acts 4:29, 31, **Stephen** in Acts 6:3, 5, 8-10, 7:51-52, 54-60, **Paul** in Acts 9:17, 20, 22, 27-28, Acts 14:3)

**Jacob...Israel** - see this same combination of names in Micah 2:12 (cp Mic 1:5, 2:12, 3:1, 8, 9). See discussion of these same two words used in combination in **Commentary on Micah 1:5**.

Compare Micah's call to "make known" with God's similar command to Isaiah...

"Cry loudly, do not hold back; Raise your voice like a trumpet, And declare to My people their transgression  
And to the house of Jacob their sins. (Isa 58:1)

**Rebellious acts** (pesha' in Mic 1:5, 13, 3:8, 6:7, 7:18) **...sin** (Mic 1:5, 13, 6:7, 13, 7:9, 19) - So bad was Israel, it took two words to describe their lawlessness. And exposure of these acts always meets resistance! God's prophets always warn them of judgment on sin, with the hope that they might repent!

Micah was like Martin Luther who when warned that he must recant his reformation ideas said "Here I stand. I can do no other."

**Davis** - There will always be something surgical about faithful preaching; it will always seek to expose undetected rebellion and hidden idolatry. Genuine believers realize how healthy this is and rejoice to have their sin exposed in this way. In one verse the prophet has encapsulated his ministry: his loneliness (Mic 3:8a), his equipment (Mic 3:8b) and his task (Mic 3:8c). A ministry like his, it seems, is the only antidote to the perversion of preaching in the land. (**Ed**: cp Lam 2:14).

**Matthew Henry** - Thus was this man of God thoroughly furnished for every good word he had to say, and every good work he had to do. Those he preached to could not but perceive him to be full both of power and judgment, for they found both their understandings opened and their hearts made to burn within them, with such evidence and demonstration, and with such power, did the word come from him. ([Commentary](#))

**Micah** was like **Isaiah** who testified...

For the Lord GOD helps Me, Therefore, I am not disgraced; Therefore, I have set My face like flint, And I know  
that I will not be ashamed. 8 He who vindicates Me is near; Who will contend with Me? Let us stand up to each  
other; Who has a case against Me? Let him draw near to Me. (Isa 50:7-8)

**Henry Morris** - After condemning the false prophets, whose character had been disclosed by their receiving "no answer of God" (Mic 3:7; Dt 18:20-22), Micah asserts his own power to reveal God's Word through the Holy Spirit of God. His own prophecies would very soon be fulfilled.

Paul's words to the saints at Thessalonica are similar to Micah's...

For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain, but after we had already suffered  
and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of  
God amid much opposition. :3 For our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit; 4  
but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men,  
but God who examines our hearts. 5 For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a  
pretext for greed—God is witness— 6 nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even  
though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. (1Th 2:2-6-note)

**Micah 3:9 Now hear this, heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, Who abhor justice and twist everything that is straight,**

- **Now hear this** Exodus 3:16; Hosea 5:1
- **that** Leviticus 26:15; Deuteronomy 27:19; Ps 58:1,2; Pr 17:15; Isaiah 1:23; Jeremiah 5:28

**NET** Micah 3:9 Listen to this, you leaders of the family of Jacob, you rulers of the nation of Israel! You hate justice and pervert all that is right.

**MAKING CROOKED  
WHAT IS STRAIGHT**

In Micah 3:9-12 the Spirit filled prophet switches from the false prophets to boldly confront the faulty leaders.

**Hear this** ("Now hear this!", Listen! - reiteration of Mic 3:1) **heads...rulers** - Micah had previously addressed the **"heads"** (ro'sh) in Micah 3:1. It is notable that Micah's first use of the Hebrew word for **"Head"** (ro'sh) was a reference to Messiah (**"The Breaker...King...Jehovah"**) Who was described as the true "Head" of His people! (Micah 2:13 - see **Commentary on Micah 2:13**)

**Who abhor** (despise) **justice and twist everything that is straight** - Their attitude toward justice is that it "stinks!" (see word study below) and this leads to their actions in which they do not hesitate to pervert that which is proper and legal (to their advantage). "From their darkened hearts and deformed characters came distorted actions and detestable conduct...instead of being a theocracy under God's law, Israel had become an oligarchy under criminal tyrants." (McComiskey)

**MacKay** - '**Despise**' is a strong word for expressing the utter contempt in which they hold God's law and twist to their own advantage standards of right and wrong.

He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, Both of them alike are an **abomination** (toebah [see following note], Lxx = bdeklyktos [word study]) to the LORD. (Pr 17:15 - [see commentary by Charles Bridges](#))

**Abhor** (08581)(**taab** related to **toebah** = abomination) means to despise, detest, to loathe, to degrade, to have a hatred or very strong dislike for something. It describes "persons, things or practices that offend one's ritual or moral order." (NIDOTTE) In the niphal it means to be detestable, to be loathed (1Chr 21:6; Job 15:16; Isa 14:19). **Taab** can mean to behave in a vile manner or to act shamefully (1Ki 21:26; Ps 14:1; 53:2; Ezek 16:52) **Taab** implies not only contempt for that something, but also a low opinion of its value.

**Baker** on **taab** - It expresses a strongly detestable activity or the logical response to such an activity. It is associated with a severe sense of loathing (Dt. 23:7; 1Chr. 21:6); the condition of sinful people (Job 15:16); the activity of idol worship (1Ki 21:26); and the Lord's opposition to sin (Ps 5:6).

Both **taab** and **toebah** are used in Deut 7:26 - "And you shall not bring an **abomination** (toebah) into your house, and like it come under the ban; you shall utterly detest it and you shall utterly **abhor** it, for it is something banned."

These evil leaders detested what they should have loved (justice) and loved what they should have hated (evil deeds). Isaiah described a similar inversion of right and wrong "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" (Isa 5:20 - [see discussion of "values reversal"](#)!)

**Taab** is translated here in Micah 3:9 (and in most of the OT uses except Ezek 16:35, 52) in the Lxx with the strong verb **bdelusso** [word study] (derived from **bdeo** = to stink or reek) which means literally to emit a foul odor or to render foul and figuratively means to strongly detest something on the basis that it is abominable (as used in Rev 21:8 - [note](#)) (abominable = quite disagreeable, worthy of disgust, whatever is odious to the mind or offensive to the senses). In Greek usage **bdelusso** means to feel a sea or loathing for food and so came to be used of disgust in general. And so the verb **bdelusso** pictures one turning away from a stench as in disgust. In short here in Micah 3:9 true **justice** "seated" these perverted leaders! Wow! Now that is depravity!

It is worth noting that the verbs used in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** to translate **abhor** (**bdelusso**) and **twist** ([see below](#)) (**diastrepho**) are both in the **present tense** indicating these depraved actions are their daily, habitual practice, in essence their very "lifestyle!" (see more discussion on these two verbs below).

**Taab** - 20v and is translated in **NAS** as abhor(5), abhorred(3), abhorrent(1), abhors(1), acted...abominably(2), committed abominable(2), despise(1), detest(2), detestable(1), made your abominable(1), rejected(1), utterly abhor(1).

Deuteronomy 7:26 "You shall not bring an abomination into your house, and like it come under the ban; you shall utterly detest it and you **shall utterly abhor** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) it, for it is something banned.

Deuteronomy 23:7 "You **shall not detest** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) an Edomite, for he is your brother; you shall not detest an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land.

1 Kings 21:26 He **acted** very **abominably** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD cast out before the sons of Israel.

1 Chronicles 21:6 But he did not number Levi and Benjamin among them, for the king's command **was abhorrent** to Joab.

Job 9:31 Yet You would plunge me into the pit, And my own clothes would **abhor** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) me.

Job 15:16 How much less one who is **detestable** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) and corrupt, Man, who drinks iniquity like water!

Job 19:19 "All my associates **abhor** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) me, And those I love have turned against me.

Job 30:10 "They **abhor** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) me and stand aloof from me, And they do not refrain from spitting at my face.

Psalms 5:6 You destroy those who speak falsehood; The LORD **abhors** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) the man of bloodshed and deceit.

Psalms 14:1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed **abominable** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) deeds; There is no one who does good.

Psalms 53:1 For the choir director; according to Mahalath. A Maskil of David. The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God," They are corrupt, and have **committed abominable** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) injustice; There is no one who does good.

Psalms 106:40 Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against His people And He **abhorred** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) His inheritance.

Psalms 107:18 Their soul **abhorred** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) all kinds of food, And they drew near to the gates of death.

Psalms 119:163 I hate and **despise** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) falsehood, But I love Your law.

Isaiah 14:19 "But you have been cast out of your tomb Like **arejected** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) branch, Clothed with the slain who are pierced with a sword, Who go down to the stones of the pit Like a trampled corpse.

Isaiah 49:7 Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, To the despised One, To the One **abhorred** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, "Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down, Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You."

Ezekiel 16:25 "You built yourself a high place at the top of every street and **made** your beauty **abominable**, and you spread your legs to every passer-by to multiply your harlotry.

52 "Also bear your disgrace in that you have made judgment favorable for your sisters. Because of your sins in which you **acted** more **abominably** than they, they are more in the right than you. Yes, be also ashamed and bear your disgrace, in that you made your sisters appear righteous.

Amos 5:10 They hate him who reproves in the gate, And they **abhor** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) him who speaks with integrity.

Micah 3:9 Now hear this, heads of the house of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel, Who **abhor** (Heb - taab; Lxx = bdelusso) justice And twist everything that is straight,

**Twist** ([06140](#)) (**aqash**) means to twist (to be twisted), to pervert (to be perverse), to make crooked, to prove something perverted.

**Baker** - "It refers to moral, ethical, and social legal perversion. It is the opposite of **tām**, perfect, indicating that something is out of order, guilty, wrong (Job 9:20). It is the opposite of **upright**, straight, level, indicating that something is uneven, twisted (Pr. 10:9; Mic. 3:9). It refers to a person who leads a crooked life (Pr. 28:18; Isa. 59:8)."

**Allen** (TWOT) - The root **āqaš** is a descriptive term in hamartiology that emphasizes the perversion and twisted nature of sin. Hebrew **āqaš** may be related to Arabic **aqāṣ** "to twist her hair" (a woman); as women braid and plait their hair, so people twist their ways. With the exception of "crooked, rough places" in Isa 42:16 (**Ed**: "Rugged" in NAS or "Crooked" in KJV = Heb = **maaqaš** = derivative of **āqaš** and Isa 42:16 is only use in OT), the root **āqaš** and its derivatives are used to describe the twisted and perverted acts of sinful men.

**Swanson** - be perverse, be morally crooked, i.e., be in a distorted, perverted state from what is just according to a standard (Pr 28:18); (piel) take crooked paths, distort what is right (Pr 10:9; Isa 59:8; Mic 3:9); 2. (hif impf.) pronounce guilty, i.e., make a legal verbal pronouncement of wrongdoing and so condemn (Job 9:20)

**Aqash** is translated in Micah 3:9 in the **Septuagint** (**Lxx**) with the verb **diastrepho** [word study] which means to distort or to turn different ways (See use in Php 2:15-note)

**Aqash** - 5v and is translated in the **NAS** as crooked\*(1), declare me guilty(1), made their crooked(1), perverts(1), twist(1).

Job 9:20 "Though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me; Though I am guiltless, He will **declare** me **guilty**.

Proverbs 10:9 He who walks in integrity walks securely, But he who **perverts** (Lxx = diastrepho) his ways will be found out.

Proverbs 28:18 He who walks blamelessly will be delivered, But he who is **crooked** (Lxx = skolios) will fall all at once.

Isaiah 59:8 They do not know the way of peace, And there is no justice in their tracks; They have **made** their paths **crooked** (Lxx = diastrepho), Whoever treads on them does not know peace.

Micah 3:9 Now hear this, heads of the house of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel, Who **abhor** justice And twist everything that is straight (yashar),

**Straight** (03477)(**yashar**) is an adjective which refers to that which is straight or level (not crooked - Ezek 1:7), just or right and is used 4x by Micah (Mic 2:7; 3:9; 7:2, 4).

**Yashar** can refer something physical, such as a way or path (Ps. 107:7 = straight; Isa. 26:7). "The Israelites designated an easy road for traveling as a "level road." It had few inclines and declines compared to the mountain roads....When **yashar** pertains to people, it is best translated "just" or "upright." God is the standard of uprightness for His people" (Vine)

Most uses of **yashar** refer to what is right in an ethical sense and thus describes that which is morally proper according to a righteous standard. In Isaiah 26:7 **yashar** is used as a title of God.

The first use of **yashar** is very instructive...

And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is **right** in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer." (Ex 15:26, Dt 6:18)

**Comment:** Clearly doing what is **right** is doing God's will, obeying His voice (His Word) and came with a clear warning for not doing what is **right**!

The **heads** of the people had twisted what is **right** giving it a new "definition" in essence calling what was wrong "**right**" as in...

Deut 12:8 "You shall not do at all what we are doing here today, every man doing whatever is **right** in his own eyes

Jdg 17:6-note In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was **right** in his own eyes.

Jdg 21:25-note In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was **right** in his own eyes.

**Comment:** Because of Israel's repeated twisting of that which was wrong and seeing it as right, they justified their sinful behavior, which resulted in 300 plus years of moral darkness and despicable behavior in the land which should have been a light unto the nations!

**Yashar** - 119v - **NAS Usage:** conscientious\*(1), fittest(1), Jashar(2), just(1), proposal of peace(1), right(35), safe(1), straight(5), upright(51), Upright One(1), uprightly(1), uprightness(1), what(2), what is right(7), what was right(6), which was right(1), who are upright(1), who is upright(1).

Ex 15:26; Nu 23:10; Deut 6:18; 12:8, 25, 28; 13:18; 21:9; 32:4; Josh 9:25; 10:13; Jdg 17:6; 21:25; 1Sa 12:23; 29:6; 2Sa 1:18; 1Kgs 11:33, 38; 14:8; 15:5, 11; 22:43; 2Kgs 10:3, 15, 30; 12:2; 14:3; 15:3, 34; 16:2; 18:3; 22:2; 2Chr 14:2; 20:32; 24:2; 25:2; 26:4; 27:2; 28:1; 29:2, 34; 31:20; 34:2; Ezra 8:21; Neh 9:13; Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; 4:7; 8:6; 17:8; 23:7; 33:23, 27; Ps 7:10; 11:2, 7; 19:8; 25:8; 32:11; 33:1, 4; 36:10; 37:14, 37; 49:14; 64:10; 92:15; 94:15; 97:11; 107:7, 42; 111:1, 8; 112:2, 4; 119:137; 125:4; 140:13; Pr 2:7, 21; 3:32; 8:9; 11:3, 6, 11; 12:6, 15; 14:9, 11f; 15:8, 19; 16:13, 17, 25; 20:11; 21:2, 8, 18, 29; 28:10; 29:10, 27; Eccl 7:29; Isa 26:7; Jer 26:14; 31:9; 34:15; 40:4f; Ezek 1:7, 23; Da 11:17; Hos 14:9; Mic 2:7; 3:9; 7:2, 4.

**Micah 3:10 Who build Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with violent injustice.**

- **Build** Jeremiah 22:13-17; Ezekiel 22:25-28; Habakkuk 2:9-12; Zephaniah 3:3; Matthew 27:25; John 11:50, cf building projects



under Hezekiah = 2Chr 32:27-29

**NET** Micah 3:10 You build Zion through bloody crimes, Jerusalem through unjust violence.

**Who build Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with violent injustice** - Here Micah specifically states how they twisted everything that is straight. "It was urban renewal with a vengeance, a new Jerusalem that cost the lives of men." (Mays)

**Micah** uses **Zion** 9x (Mic 1:13; 3:10, 12; 4:2, 7,8, 10,11, 13) and **Jerusalem** 8x (Mic 1:1, 5, 9, 12; 3:10, 12; 4:2, 8), with three uses together as synonyms (Mic 3:12; 4:2, 4:8; Ps 149:2; Isa. 4:3; 40:9)

A key word in Micah 3 is **"justice"** and here is "inverted justice" or "injustice" (cf Mic 3:1, 8, 9).

**Habakkuk** issued a warning "Woe" for the crime described by Micah...

**Woe** (used in prophetic announcements of judgment or threats = Isa 1:4, 24; Jer 48:1; Ezek 13:18; Amos 5:18) to him who builds a city with **bloodshed** (damin = same word used by Micah) and founds a town with **violence** ('Evel = same word used by Micah)! (Hab 2:12-commentary)

**Barker** - A woe of divine judgment is pronounced on such people in Hab 2:12. Jerusalem's wealth and power had come at a very heavy price. "Abuse of the sacred is ... the worst of transgressions. (Hillers) Archaeology has confirmed the building activity, the expansion programs, and the tremendous population growth during this period in Judah and Jerusalem.

**Davis** adds - We have evidence that Jerusalem's population mushroomed in the latter half of the eighth century BC; it grew from a site of thirty-seven acres to one of 150 acres. It's likely that much of this influx came from residents of the northern kingdom seeking refuge from the Assyrian incursions of Tiglath-pileser III, Shalmaneser V and Sargon II. (See Zondervan NIV Atlas of the Bible, page 135)

**Bloodshed** (01818)(**dam**) is in the plural here and refers to the shedding of blood as the result of violence. While we don't know the details, this word suggests that when these leaders didn't get what they wanted, they would not hesitate to shed blood. **Kaiser** says "The rulers, priests, and prophets all played the game "the price is right." What massive abuse of high privilege!"

**Violent injustice** (ESV = iniquity) (05766)('avel/'awel from verb 'awal = to distort morally, deal unjustly, be unrighteous - Ps 71:4, Isa 26:10) means injustice or unrighteousness. It refers to anything that deviates from right way of doing things! (Lev 19:15, Dt 25:16, Pr 28:27, Dt 32:4). It refers to "acts, behaviors, or persons which are contrary to a standard." (Swanson)

**Mounce** on **awel** - what is morally perverted, warped, and twisted, an extension of the base meaning of a physically twisted, crooked object (not found in the OT)

The first two uses are in commands to "Lev 19:15 'do no **injustice** in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly." (Lev 19:15) and 'You shall do no **wrong** in judgment, in measurement of weight, or capacity." (Lev 19:35) Why not? "For everyone who does these things, everyone who acts **unjustly** ('awel; Lxx = adikos = adj describing what is unjust or crooked) is an abomination (**toebah**; Lxx = **bdelugma** = detestable used of the "abomination of desolation" in Mt 24:15, from root verb **bdeo** which means "to stink!") to the LORD your God." (Deut 25:16) The antidote for this injustice is describe in Dt 32:4 - "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without **injustice**, Righteous and upright is He."

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates 'awal with **adikia (word study)** which means unrighteousness (= sin in 1Jn 5:17, also used in 1Jn 1:9)

**Usage in the KJV** - iniquity 36, wickedness 7, unrighteousness 3, unjust 2, perverseness 1, unjustly 1, unrighteously 1, wicked 1, wickedly 1, variant 2; 55

'**Evel** (in the KJV) -

51v - Lev 19:15, 35; Deut 25:16; 32:4; 2 Sam 3:34; 7:10; 1 Chr 17:9; 2 Chr 19:7; Job 5:16; 6:29f; 11:14; 13:7; 15:16; 22:23; 24:20; 27:4; 34:10, 32; 36:23; Ps 7:3; 37:1; 43:1; 53:1; 58:2; 64:6; 82:2; 89:22; 92:15; 107:42; 119:3; 125:3; Pr 22:8; 29:27; Isa 59:3; Jer 2:5; Ezek 3:20; 18:8, 24, 26; 28:15, 18; 33:13, 15, 18; Hos 10:13; Mic 3:10; Hab 2:12; Zeph 3:5, 13; Mal 2:6

**Micah 3:11 Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe, Her priests instruct for a price And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD saying, "Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us."**

- **leaders** Micah 7:3; Numbers 16:15; 1 Samuel 8:3; 12:3,4; Isaiah 1:23; Ezekiel 22:12,27; Hosea 4:18; Zephaniah 3:3
- **priests** Jeremiah 6:13; 8:10; Malachi 1:10; 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:11; 1 Peter 5:2
- **prophets** Micah 3:5; Isaiah 56:11; Acts 8:18-20; 2 Peter 2:1-3,14,15; Jude 1:11
- **yet** 1 Samuel 4:3-6; Isaiah 48:2; Jeremiah 7:4,8-12; Matthew 3:9; Romans 2:17-29
- **saying** Amos 9:10

## PERVERTED PRACTITIONERS' PIOUS PRESUMPTION

**Her** (Jerusalem's) **leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe** - Bribery was clearly condemned in the OT, Moses recording that "You shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just." (Ex 23:8; cf Dt 16:19; Pr 17:23). The idea is the judges were allowing bribes to influence their judgments. These corrupt leaders were like Samuel's sons (1Sa 8:3) rather than like Samuel (1Sa 12:3)!

**Micah** (using a different Hebrew word for "bribe" = shillum) repeats these charges "Concerning evil, both hands do it well. The prince asks, also the judge, for a **bribe**, And a great man speaks the desire of his soul; So they weave it together." (Mic 7:3)

**Bribe** ([07810](#))(**shochad**) is "a masculine noun referring to a **bribe**, a reward, a gift. It refers to what is given in a situation to influence persons to act or think in a certain way they would not normally. It was often given to pervert justice and to blind the judgment of even good persons (Ex. 23:8; Deut. 16:19). God does not take bribes (Deut. 10:17). The person who took a bribe was cursed by God (Deut. 27:25). The perversion of justice through bribes was a major downfall of Israel (1 Sam. 8:3). A bribe could consist of a major political gift or present to another king or nation, a glorified bribe (1 Kgs. 15:19)." (Baker)

**Bribe** - "money or favor given or promised in order to influence the judgment or conduct of a person in a position of trust." (Webster)

**Patterson** - "The OT condemns bribery ([, 8816]) because it perverts justice in the judicial sphere and equity in the social sphere of the Hebrew covenant community (cf. Ex 23:8; Dt 16:19; Pr 17:23)."

**Victor Hamilton on shochad** - One may begin by observing that prohibitions on receiving bribes (presumably on the part of judges) are found in the legal sections of the Pentateuch: Ex 23:8; Dt 16:9. Although both verses begin similarly, Ex 23:8 ends, "For a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise (ākāmīm)." Cf. Isa 1:23; 5:23; Mic 3:11. If the price is right a bribe can even produce a "hit-man" who will assassinate an innocent person: Dt 27:25; Ezek 22:12; Ps 26:10, or at least pervert judgment: Pr 17:23. Only he who desists from such flagrant violation of both moral and criminal law can stand in God's presence: 2Chr 19:7; Ps 15:5; Isa 33:15. God himself is above reproach on this point: Dt 10:17 (cf. 1Pe 1:17). Given the greed of man in any age and any civilization it is interesting that only three specific cases of bribery are alluded to (using šoad) in the OT: the sons of Eli (1Sa 8:3); kings Asa and Ben-hadad (1Ki 15:19); and kings Ahaz and Tiglath-pileser (2Ki 16:8). Once again we see the uniqueness of the OT in contrast to pagan nations. In his study of Mesopotamian texts Finkelstein can state, "There is no known cuneiform law outlawing bribery specifically"; "it (i.e. bribery) was not only a common practice, but was recognized as a legal transaction". (TWOT)

**Shochad** - 21v and is translated in the **NAS** as bribe(15), bribes(3), corrupt(1), gifts(1), present(2), reward(1).

Exodus 23:8 "You shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just.

Deuteronomy 10:17 "For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe.

Deuteronomy 16:19 "You shall not distort justice; you shall not be partial, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous.

Deuteronomy 27:25 'Cursed is he who accepts a bribe to strike down an innocent person.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

1 Samuel 8:3 His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice.

1 Kings 15:19 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you a present of silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."

2 Kings 16:8 Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria.

2 Chronicles 19:7 "Now then let the fear of the LORD be upon you; be very careful what you do, for the LORD our God will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of a bribe."

Job 15:34 "For the company of the godless is barren, And fire consumes the tents of the corrupt.

Psalms 15:5 He does not put out his money at interest, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things will never be shaken.

Psalms 26:10 In whose hands is a wicked scheme, And whose right hand is full of bribes.

Proverbs 6:35 He will not accept any ransom, Nor will he be satisfied though you give many gifts.

Proverbs 17:8 A bribe is a charm in the sight of its owner; Wherever he turns, he prospers.

23 A wicked man receives a bribe from the bosom To pervert the ways of justice.

Proverbs 21:14 A gift in secret subdues anger, And a bribe in the bosom, strong wrath.

Isaiah 1:23 Your rulers are rebels And companions of thieves; Everyone loves a bribe And chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, Nor does the widow's plea come before them.

Isaiah 5:23 Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!

Isaiah 33:15 He who walks righteously and speaks with sincerity, He who rejects unjust gain And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe; He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed And shuts his eyes from looking upon evil;

Isaiah 45:13 "I have aroused him in righteousness And I will make all his ways smooth; He will build My city and will let My exiles go free, Without any payment or reward," says the LORD of hosts.

Ezekiel 22:12 "In you they have taken bribes to shed blood; you have taken interest and profits, and you have injured your neighbors for gain by oppression, and you have forgotten Me," declares the Lord GOD.

Micah 3:11 Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe, Her priests instruct for a price And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD saying, "Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us."

**Her** (Jerusalem's) **priests instruct for a price** - Some suggest the priests would only teach those who paid them.

**Patterson** feels that money "was exchanged for priestly rulings on the Torah or law of Moses."

**Barker** - The **priests** made their teaching ministry a source of gain. It was their duty to teach the law and decide controversies (Lev 10:11; Dt 17:9, 11), not to enrich themselves beyond their tithes by charging extra for their services. And the false **prophets** sold their oracles or divinations, divorcing what should have been a spiritual ministry from ethics, morality, and integrity (Micah 3:5). "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1Ti 6:10- **see discussion**).

**Her** (Jerusalem's) **prophets divine** (same word Mic 3:6-7) **for money** - Prophets were to be [watchmen](#) (Jer 6:17, Ezek 3:17-note) who warned of divine judgment for disobedience and call the people to repentance. Instead these prophets became the OT version of many modern money grabbing "Televangelists!" (cf send money for miracle water - see [ABC story on 20/20](#))

**Isaiah** gives a degrading description of these devilish diviners for dinero (Spanish for money)...

His watchmen are blind, All of them know nothing. All of them are mute dogs unable to bark, Dreamers lying down, who love to slumber; 11 And the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied. And they are shepherds who have no understanding; They have all turned to their own way, Each one to his unjust gain, to the last one. (Isa 56:10-11)

**Allen** - A legal problem? Take it to the judge. A religious problem? Take it to the priest. A personal problem? Take it to the prophet. A satisfactory answer was guaranteed if money passed from hand to hand.

**Mackay** - One is reminded that after denouncing the teachers of the law and the Pharisees in Matthew 23 for their misuse of their privileges, Jesus foretold the end of the temple that existed in their time (Mt 24:2). Privilege is the measure of our responsibility, and there is ever the threat of God's chastisement if we do not live up to what we profess.

**Yet** - Note this strategic **term of contrast**. **Davis** - Micah now informs us of the doctrine that these justice-despising, law-twisting, blood-stained, money-grubbing leaders and clergy hold, the belief that gives them a secure 'faith'.

**They** (all three groups) **lean on the LORD** (cf Jesus' words Mt 15:8) - However, their wicked works speak louder than their pious pretension. They don't truly lean on (trust in) Jehovah, but upon their faulty interpretation of His promises. Jeremiah warned against this type of deceptive reasoning...

Do not trust in deceptive words, saying, 'This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.' (Jer 7:4, cp John the Baptizer's warning to the jaded leaders from Jerusalem - Mt 3:7-8, 9, 10)... 8 "Behold, you are trusting in deceptive words to no avail... 12 "But go now to My place which was in [Shiloh](#) ([See Smith's discussion](#)), where I made My Name dwell at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. And now, because you have done all these things," declares the LORD, "and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you but you did not answer, therefore, I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim. (Jer 7:4, 8, 12-15)

Contrast those who truly **lean** on Jehovah...

Who is among you that fears the LORD, That obeys the voice of His servant, That walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. (Isa 50:10)

These corrupt men are like the deceived professors regarding whom Paul warns Titus...

They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed. (Titus 1:16-**see discussion of this important passage**)

**Comment:** Deeds "validate" one's faith as genuine, saving faith! Professions of faith in Jesus are not always tantamount to "possession" of Jesus! Genuine faith is shown to be genuine by its fruit, deeds or works (James 2:14-26-**see discussion beginning with verse 14**). These latter don't save anyone, but they do provide objective evidence of genuine salvation. See Jesus stern warning in Mt 7:21-23-**see explanation of His "hard teaching!"**

**Lean** (08172)(**shaan; sa'an**) primarily means to lean on something or someone. Literally it means to lean on to support oneself (Jdg 16:26 = Samson, 2Sa 1:6 = Saul - both of these uses occurring at their death!). The picture is of someone resting their weight against something to give it support. Figuratively the idea can be to depend on or trust. "The physical act of putting one's weight on a staff or someone's arm for support is used as a metaphor for relying on someone and trusting them for guidance and assistance." (MacKay) For example, a king might lean, or rely on his friends or advisors, which conveys the idea that he is trusting in their counsel (2Chr 13:18 where shaan is translated "trusted").

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **shaan** in Mic 3:11 with the Greek word **epanapauomai** [**word study**] which means to find comfort through confident dependence on. **Paul** used epanapauomai in a similar context in Ro 2:17 in his diatribe against the Jews...

You bear the name "Jew" and **rely upon (epanapauomai)** the Law and boast in God, and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, (Rom 2:19-20)

In Pr. 3:5 we see the parallel use of '**trust**' and '**lean**' (the latter also conveying the sense of to trust) -

**Trust** in the LORD with all your heart and do not **lean** (shaan) on your own understanding. ([See comments by William Arnot](#) or [Charles Simeon](#))

**Shaan - NAS Usage:** lean(3), leaned(2), leaning(2), leans(2), relied(4), rely(4), rest yourselves(1), supported(1), trust(1), trusted(1), trusts(1).

Ge 18:4; Num 21:15; Jdg 16:26; 2Sa 1:6; 2Kgs 5:18; 7:2, 17; 2Chr 13:18; 14:11; 16:7f; Job 8:15; 24:23; Pr 3:5; Isa 10:20; 30:12; 31:1; Isa 50:10; Ezek 29:7; Mic 3:11.

**Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us** -Were they Scripturally correct? Yes, and no. They may have been alluding to Jehovah's promise to Solomon at the dedication of the Temple...

Concerning this house which you are building, if you will walk in My statutes and execute My ordinances and keep all My commandments by walking in them, then I will carry out My word with you which I spoke to David your father. I will dwell among the sons of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel." (1Ki 6:12-13, see also 2Chr 7:17-22)

**Comment:** If this was the passage to which these corrupt leaders were referring, then they clearly neglected to see that it was a conditional statement (begins with "IF"). The promise of God's continuing to dwell among them was conditioned on their obedience. These corrupt leaders failed to see their clear disobedience to God's Law! Davis adds "The promise became their rabbit's foot, a religious security blanket, a pledge of immunity. They were safe no matter what. It's not difficult to imagine this happening—one can pervert promises as well as justice."

**Barker** - They (the corrupt leaders, priests and prophets) reasoned that Jerusalem was inviolable because the Great King's earthly throne (the Ark of the Covenant) was located there in the temple. It was inconceivable to them that Jerusalem and the Lord's temple would ever be destroyed. How wrong they were!

**Is not the LORD in our midst?** - Sin deceives (Heb 3:13-see discussion on deceitfulness of sin) and these leaders, priests and prophets asked a rhetorical question which they were sure called for an affirmative "Of course He is!" They were like many today who "profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient, and worthless for any good deed." (Titus 1:16-note)

Many things can cause people to have a false sense of security regarding their future destiny - study a few of these = Ge 11:4; Isa. 28:14-19; 30:1-5; Ro 2:3-4, 17-27; Gal 6:7-8; 1Th 5:3

We all need to take this passage to heart, for we all have a flesh driven tendency to say "God would never...." That is dangerous thinking and the height of presumption. I live with the fear that God that I might commit some besetting sin, some willful sin, so often that one day He might say "Fine, here's the pig pen. Enjoy!" That God has not given us over to our sin is amazing grace. That God would never give us over to the power of some repeated sin is amazing presumption!

**Patterson** - This claim was based on the idea of the divine presence symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant housed in Solomon's Temple. The corrupt leadership of Jerusalem "justified their lives of lies with the half-truth that the Lord's presence guaranteed the nation's security, forgetting that God made His presence contingent on ethical behavior" (Alexander, Baker, and Waltke 1988:165; cf. Ex 17:7; 33:3, 5, 14-16; 34:9).

**Calamity will not come upon us** - Clearly these leaders, priests and prophets did not understand the warning prophecy in Micah 1:12 (**see comments**)! Sin is by it's nefarious nature deceptive as described by Amos...

All the sinners of My people will die by the sword. Those who say, 'The calamity will not overtake or confront us.' (Amos 9:10)

**Calamity** ([07451](#))(**ra'**) means bad or evil and is a **Key Word** in Micah where it is used 7x in 6v = Micah 1:12 (calamity), Mic 2:1 (evil), Mic 2:3 (calamity), Mic 3:2 (evil), Mic 3:11 (calamity), Mic 7:3 (evil).

**Allen** - If the most sacred institution was not serving its purpose but in the hands of religious perverts was acting as a barrier to God, of what further use could it be to him?

**Kaiser** - I'm afraid many in our day feel the same way (**Calamity will not come upon us**). They believe that America is so specially favored by the Lord that no trouble will ever befall us. Surely, God would not touch the center of most missionary giving, the headquarters for so many evangelical works, schools and institutions. We tend to chant, "Evangelicalism, evangelicalism, evangelicalism." "If conservative Americans are judged, then who will defend inerrancy, missions, and the biblical concept of the family?" we ask, all the while hoping that our assertions alone will make such a difference that no matter how evil our nation grows we will never have to face the consequences. What are we doing but claiming that God will bless us in our wicked ways? Will He?

**Davis** chimes in - What would happen to the kingdom of God if he wiped such a 'support system' off the map in judgement? Nothing. God's kingdom would still come. He doesn't need arrogant 'superpowers' to help him, nor a dozen evangelical 'empires' to assist him. Some of us must keep our eye on that line between patriotism and idolatry.

**John Calvin** - So long as hypocrites trust in God's promises, without thinking too much about God, they imagine God to be on their side and in approval of their conduct. In brief, they want to keep God in their pocket, and treat Him like a little child, who, when He becomes upset, can be mollified with a toy and forced to condescend to their will. That is how hypocrites treat God's promises, while mocking Him and His majesty in total disregard of His Word (Sermons on Micah). (**Ed**: They may "mock" him for a moment, but will surely suffer His righteous wrath in His perfect timing. God is not mocked! Gal 6:7-8-note)

**Micah 3:12 Therefore, on account of you Zion will be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the temple will become high places of a forest.**

- **Zion** Micah 1:6; Ps 79:1; 107:34; Jeremiah 26:18; Matthew 24:2; Acts 6:13,14
- **the mountain** Micah 4:1,2; Isaiah 2:2,3

**Therefore** - Always take a moment to pause to ponder every encounter with this strategic **Term of conclusion**. **What is Micah concluding?** As with the **therefore** in Micah 3:6, Micah concludes that the sentence will fit the crime. Here we the "divine hammer"



fall -- we see the consequences God would bring about because of the corrupt leaders, priests and prophets, all of whom had flagrantly flouted (flout = to indulge in scornful behavior) God's perfect and holy law. As a country's leaders go, so goes the country! **Do we hear that in America or do we lean on His past blessings and protection, thinking that we too can flout His righteous instructions on marriage and the sanctity of life?** (Pr 14:34-[Joseph Parker's comment](#))

**On account of you** - **You** is plural indicating judges (leaders), priests and prophets will all be held responsible for the coming tragedy! "Corrupt leaders who use their positions of power and influence for self-aggrandizement will be judged severely." (Barker) Micah is not saying the general lay public was guiltless, but that the leaders were the driving force of national sin.

**Zion** (originally a Jebusite stronghold, 2Sa 5:7) **will be plowed as a field** - **Zion** is the easternmost ridge of Jerusalem, adjacent to the [Kidron Valley](#) and the [Gihon Spring](#) and here is used as a synonym for the city of Jerusalem.

**Plowed as a field** implies that the site would be "wiped clean," since 'an area had to be totally cleared of debris in order to be ploughed and planted.' (IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament)

**Kaiser** - What a shock to be told that the holy city, inviolable as it was in the theology of Scripture, would experience what apostate Samaria experienced (cf. Micah 1:6)!

**Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins** - **Zion** and **Jerusalem** are synonyms (cf. Isa 4:3, 40:9) Solomon's Temple was razed by Nebuchadnezzar some 100+ years later (586BC).

**Patterson** - God's commitment to justice is such that he is willing to lay waste to his "hometown."

**Heap** (05856) (**iy**) describes ruins, a heap of rubble or rubbish, like a pile of useless trash or garbage or a mound of building material in a random pile. Job 30:24 describes a "broken man" (NIV) one experiencing distress or hardship and therefore in great need. Most of the uses describe a city that has been besieged and demolished (Ps. 79:1; Jer. 26:18; Mic. 1:6; 3:12). Note that "heap" is the metaphor used for the fate of both Samaria and Jerusalem (no partiality with God, even in judgement!)

**Iy** - 5v - Job 30:24; Ps 79:1; Jer 26:18; Mic 1:6; 3:12. NAS Usage: heap of ruins(3), ruins(2).

**Morris** - These terrible prophecies against Jerusalem, like those against Samaria (Micah 1:6), would eventually be fulfilled. It would not be fulfilled by the Assyrians, however, because of the prayer of Hezekiah (2Chronicles 32:20-22), but much later by the Babylonians (2 Chronicles 36:17-19; 2 Kings 25:8-12).

**And the mountain of the temple** - Literally "the mountain of the house" = describes the [Temple Mount](#) area.

**Will become high places of a forest** - Literally "a high place of overgrowth." What a tragic irony - the Most Holy Place would become a most unholy place! Such is God's righteous wrath and retribution, so that He does not even decline to destroy His Own dwelling place because of its perversion at the hands of evildoers! The picture is of the Temple Mount devoid of Solomon's beautiful temple leaving an abandoned area which has overgrown because of disuse. It is notable and probably more that coincidence that Micah uses the same Hebrew word (bamah) that he had used earlier to describe the **high place** in Judah Micah 1:5 (**See commentary on Micah 1:5**).

New Living Translation = "A thicket will grow on the heights where the Temple now stands."

God's Word Translation = "the temple mountain will become a worship site covered with trees."

**Davis** - There is the prophet's picture: Jerusalem/Zion—cleared off, piled up, left behind. Yahweh had, of course, said it would be this way—if Israel proved unfaithful. The microphones for the temple dedication service (1Ki 8) had scarcely been put away before Yahweh warned Solomon (1Ki 9:1–9) that should he and/or Israel prove faithless, 'I will cast out from my presence this Temple that I have consecrated for my name' (1Ki 9:7, JB). Some 250 years later Micah announced that the time had arrived.

It is worth noting that Micah 3:12 is quoted in Jeremiah 26:18 (Notice his "Thus the LORD of hosts has said" indicated Jeremiah viewed Micah's words as inspired - 2Ti 3:16-note) and was used in a sense to "defend" Jeremiah so that he was not executed for his similar scathing prophecy of destruction of the Temple declaring "This house will be like Shiloh (See Jer 7:13-15, Jer 26:4-6) and this city will be desolate, without inhabitant" (See Jer 26:9-11).

Many commentators take the fact that there was over 100 years delay in the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy as indicating that Micah's hearers did repent and turn if only transiently from their evil ways (cf. Jer 18:7–10). For example, **Walter Kaiser** says "the important point is that the people repented and the judgment did not come immediately. When Jerusalem finally fell in 586 B.C., for exactly the same reasons warned about here, Jeremiah lamented "Because of Mount Zion which is desolate" (Lam 5:18; cf. Neh. 2:17; 4:2). Micah's prophecy had finally come true!"

**Allen** - Micah's words, remembered for their shocking severity a hundred years later, deserve to be taken to heart by each



generation of God's people. They challenge every attempt to misuse the service of God for one's own glory and profit. They are a dire warning against the complacency that can take God's love and reject his lordship. They are a passionate plea for consistency between creed and conduct. The Lord is content with nothing less.

**DISCLAIMER:** Before you consult commentaries, sermons or other resources, first consult the Word of God, studying the Scriptures diligently (2Ti 2:15-note) and inductively (See inductive Bible study) in dependence on your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, Who Jesus promised would [guide](#) us into all truth (John 16:13).

## THOUGHTS ON INTERPRETATION OF PROPHETIC BOOKS

In regard to the **OT Prophetic books** such as **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and the 12 "Minor" Prophets**, remember that the most accurate interpretation is derived by applying the following principles:

(1) Read the Scripture **literally** (unless the text is clearly figurative, e.g., Jesus said "I am the door..." Jn 10:9). If one interprets a text symbolically ([allegorically](#), figuratively, spiritualizing) when that text makes **good sense** literally, one potentially opens themselves to the danger of inaccurate interpretation, for then the question arises as to who's "symbolic" interpretation is correct and how imaginative one should be in evaluating a "supposed symbol"? Many of the commentaries and sermons on the OT prophetic books unfortunately are replete with **non-literal** interpretations (except when it comes to Messianic Passages, which are usually interpreted literally). Therefore the watchword when reading any commentary on Old Testament prophecy is caveat emptor ("buyer beware"). Read all commentaries like the Bereans (Acts 17:11-note).

(2) Study the **context** which is always "king" in interpretation (don't take verses out of context.)

(3) Passages addressed to **Israel** should be interpreted as directed to the literal nation of Israel and should not be interpreted as addressed to the **NT Church**, an entity not mentioned in the Old Testament. The promises of **Jehovah** to the **nation of Israel** (e.g., see **Millennial Promises**) remain **valid** (Jer 31:35, 36, 37, Nu 23:19, Lk 21:33) and have not been passed on to the **NT Church** because Israel has "defaulted" (See study Israel of God). Remember that while Scripture has only **one correct interpretation**, there can be many legitimate **applications** (See Application), and therefore the OT prophetic books are extremely applicable in the lives of NT believers.

(4) Scripture is always the best commentary on Scripture. While an attempt has been made to list resources that adhere to these basic interpretative guidelines, not all the works listed in these collections have been read in detail. Therefore should you discover a resource you feel is NOT conservative and/or orthodox, please email your concerns.

### Related Resources:

- Inductive Bible Study - Guidelines to Assure Accurate Interpretation
- Inductive Bible Study Interpretation of Prophetic Scripture
- Interpretative Views of the Revelation of Jesus Christ
- [Allegorical Interpretation - Tony Garland](#)
- [Interpreting Symbols - Tony Garland](#)
- [Basic Considerations in Interpreting Prophecy - John Walvoord](#)
- Millennium - Biblical descriptions of this time on earth, primarily from the OT prophets

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