

## **DEvised DISASTER**

**December 6, 2015**

**Micah 1:1-2:13**

“Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil.” Micah 2:3

The role of Israel’s prophets can be generalized into two purposes: to warn of judgment for sin and to comfort with promises of a deliverer. Micah’s name means “Who is like Jehovah?” He was a prophet in Judah who foretold God’s judgment upon Israel, which was located north of Judah. That judgment would descend upon Judah in the south as well, for the same reasons it befell Israel.

Roughly 700 years before Christ, Micah foretold that Jesus would be born in the little town of Bethlehem (5:2) and that His kingdom would be established upon earth “in the last days” (4:1-13). In prophecies regarding judgment and deliverance, the prophets reveal much regarding the character of God.

God’s character shows forth in both the reasons for divine judgment and in the severity it takes, thus warning every generation that follows. Whereas the judgment Micah foretold would come in the form of hostile nations overtaking Israel and Judah, he made clear that it was divine judgment and not simply the aggression of nations. “Thus saith the Lord, behold, against this family do I devise an evil” (2:3). The English Standard Version translates, “against this family I am devising disaster.” Consider the reasons for this judgment.

1. Idolatry, and the defilements that accompanied idolatry. All of this will “be beaten to pieces,” the prosperity it enjoyed “shall be burned with fire” and lost (1:7).
2. Covetous imaginations and actions (2:1-2), from people who decry true prophets (2:6), who desire only prophets who will tell them what they want to hear (2:11). Their gain will be spoiled, and they will be ridiculed and mocked in their loss (2:4).
3. Abusive rulers “who hate the good and love the evil” (3:1-3), who “abhor judgment, and pervert all equity” (3:9), who conspire evil in order to get gain (7:2, 3). These will cry out unto God in their distress, but He will not hear them (3:4).
4. Unfaithful prophets who speak that which God has not said (3:5-7), who are hirelings, serving for money rather than for God (3:11, 12). Their center of religious power will be “plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps,” (3:12). They will be given darkness, shamed and confounded, and God will not answer them (3:5-7).

God is entitled to absolute submission and veneration from every person. Refusal to offer this is not only a sin against God, but a sin against self. When self-veneration preempts true worship of Jehovah through self-service only, and when a mere form of religion is acted out in the place of true worship, divine judgment is impending. God will have that which is due unto Him. Truth and righteousness demand nothing less.

