

Micah 6:1-8**“Your Most Boring (and Deadly) Sin”**

[Text to be read before I come up]

(ILL) Oklahoma boredom killing¹

The BACKGROUND of our passage is the seemingly imminent threat of destruction at the hands of the newest and most brutal of world empires: the Assyrians. They are making a name for themselves as destroyers of kings and enslavers of peoples, and it seems like God’s people are the next targets on their list.

For their part, Israel has it coming. As we have been studying in the book of Micah, if you’ve been here with us, you know that God’s people have been less than faithful to him and to their covenant with him. They have been idolatrous (1:7), wicked (2:1), workers of evil (2:1), covetous (2:2), oppressive towards the poor and helpless (2:2; 3:1-3), liars (3:5, 11), and insincere in their worship of the Lord (3:11)...the list could go on. Any way you slice it, they deserve judgment, and judgment is coming.

¹ <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/christopher-lane-australian-baseball-player-killed-by-bored-okla-teens-police-say/>

In fact, in poetic irony, God intends to use these barbaric nations to punish his unfaithful people, purify them for his loving purposes, and through them deliver a savior who would shepherd God's people and bring salvation to all nations.

This was Israel's original purpose; this is what she was supposed to be from the beginning; this is what she has failed to do. And this is why we have the passage we study today.

In this passage we have what amounts to a courtroom scene. And the way I'd like us to walk through it is by noting 4 plot moves. And with each plot move, we're going to look at what is happening, what God is saying, and make some specific application for you and me.

(1) Plot Move #1: Yahweh Calls for Witnesses (6:1-2)

The Lord begins the case against his people by calling for witnesses to judge between him and his people. This is to be a public trial, one in which all the earth will know God's enduring faithfulness to his covenant and Israel's glaring unfaithfulness.

Three truths I want us to see from these 2 verses:

GOD'S AUTHORITY IS UNIVERSAL

GOD'S PURPOSES ARE GLOBAL

GOD'S JUDGMENT IS PUBLIC

GOD'S AUTHORITY IS UNIVERSAL. — Witnesses from the highest and the lowest, oldest and the youngest.

GOD'S PURPOSES ARE GLOBAL. — "Mountains" brings to mind the covenant of Sinai:

...after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai...There Israel encamped before the mountain, while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...." (Exodus 19:1-6 ESV)

Global purpose through Israel.

GOD'S JUDGMENT IS PUBLIC. — God makes it known that he is a just judge who will not be trifled with, and his own character will not be mocked or impugned. We see this throughout the Scriptures. Noah. In Egypt. The Prophets. Ezekiel (15:7; 25:5; 25:11; 26:5-6; 28:22; 29:9; 30:8, 18; 33:28-29; 35:9, 12, 15). — puts you and I in a really awkward place, because WE have profaned the glory and honor of the Lord.

(APP) *imago dei*.

And because of God's rightful claim on all people, our rebellion against him cannot go unaddressed. —
Christ.

God is consistent in his character as he publically judges sin and vindicates his own name.

(2) Plot Move #2: Yahweh Charges Israel with Forgetting His Salvation (6:3-5)

In this passage we see the actual charges that the Lord brings against the people of Israel. He begins by dismissing the any potential excuses they may make, specifically that it's hard to be faithful. That his commands are burdensome.

(ILL) Brian Regan – I before E rule.

We often feel this way about God's commands, but John reminds us, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:3-5 ESV)

This was the sin beneath the sin. Notice that in this passage God does not list Israel's failures. He's not talking about the specific manifestations of Israel's rebellion, but rather about her heart.

(APP for IDC) Confession; worship; obedience

(APP for indiv. Christian) Where is your heart bored with God's salvation?

(APP for non-Christian) God is after your heart. Salvation freely provided.

Deliverance and salvation (Egypt)

Guidance and provision (Moses)

Blessing and preservation (Balak-Balaam)

Faithfulness and peace (Promised land)

The Lord did all of this “so that you may know the saving acts of the Lord” (5). Friend, see in these verses not only the judgment but the love and mercy of God.

The tone is fatherly, not berating. It's a plea, not merely a condemnation.

The people had seen and tasted all of this, yet they rebelled. So God brings his charge against them, which brings us to the next plot move

(3) Plot Move #3: Israel Searches for Atonement (6:6-7)

Verse 6a shows us that Israel has no proper defense. Her guilt is sure, but it quickly becomes clear that she

does not understand the depth of sin, nor the holiness of God.

2 Corinthians 7:10 tells us there is a worldly grief that does not lead to repentance, but to death, and the speaker's words here suggest that Israel's grief is more worldly than godly.

(ILL) Little kids scared of punishment

Remembering the context, they come to God in crisis, not in repentance.

Man-made attempts at atoning for their sins:

Religious efforts? (6b)

Spiritual excess? (7a)

Personal sacrifice? (7b)

Each of these reveals a heart that is either bored with or unbelieving in God's salvation, and we reflect them every day.

(3) Plot Move #4: Yahweh Instructs His Covenant People (6:8)

(ILL) Couch nap

In verse 8 God (Micah) tells the people of God what is expected of them.

It's already been told them.

His commands are good. Thriving. Flourishing.

1) Justice – “It calls for a sense of responsibility toward weaker members of society . . . It insists on the rights of others; it demands an instinct of social preservation.” (Allen, 373)

2) Love Kindness – the heart attitude behind the performing of justice.

Cf. Deut. 10:14-21 (see both the love and the action)

3) Walk humbly with your God – no room for an unholy justice; no room for a spiritually dead justice

Summary and Response