

THE AMERICAN ~~DREAM~~ DISASTER
MAPPING FAULT LINES IN AMERICA
MICAHA 3:1-12

Text:

Introduction:

I love America, and make no apology for doing so. I enjoy her freedoms, especially in being free to worship the true and living God. I still believe the United States is the greatest country on the face of the earth in terms of God's blessing upon it.

Many have migrated to this country because of what is known world-wide as the "American Dream."

Wikipedia says of the American Dream that it is: a set of ideals in which freedom includes the opportunity for prosperity and success, and an upward social mobility achieved through hard work.

James Truslow Adams, in his book *The Epic of America*, which was written in 1931, stated that the American dream is "that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement."

With that being said I feel that the “American Dream” has become “America’s Disaster.”

In Micah 3, the prophet is concerned about something. He wants his nation to know that the God they serve is not only a God of love, mercy, and grace, but also a God of judgment...and though God would rather bless and demonstrate love, and continue to extend His grace and mercy, that there does indeed come a time when, because of sin and rebellion, God’s patience is exhausted.

Eventually God will give a nation [or an individual] what they are demanding. It happened in Noah’s time, and again at Sodom and Gomorrah. It even happened to God’s people, Israel.

Will He make an exception for our nation?

Micah speaks by the Spirit of God and points a bony finger at three distinct groups of people and says, “It’s Your Fault!”

Read Text – (Micah 3:1-12)

No nation was as pure in its inception as the nation Israel— by God Himself in Genesis 12. And yet even Israel went corrupt, and the vast majority of the people were ignorant or indifferent concerning that corruption. For this reason the prophets of judgment

came along, like Micah, calling the people to repentance, and making the people aware that the God who would rather bless will blast if his hand is forced.

I'm optimistic about our nation's possibilities for the future, but I think we should be realistic. And part of loving America is wanting to save it from a corruption that most people are seemingly ignorant of...or at least indifferent to.

Notice with me today as I share with you: "Mapping the Fault Lines in America."

1. FAULT LINE # 1 – CORRUPT POLITICIANS

Micah 3:1-3

¹ And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; *Is it* not for you to know judgment? ² Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; ³ Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron.

Reading these verses is like watching the nightly news. NBC's Tom Brokaw used to do a weekly segment called "The Fleecing of America." It highlighted the price Americans pay at the hands of leadership gone awry. I think you could have put these three verses into his teleprompter and no one would have known the difference!

Note six things God recommends or government leaders from the book of Proverbs:

- Righteousness

Proverbs 29:2

² When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

Proverbs 16:12

¹² *It is* an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

Why is it that today we just look for skills and credentials, and not look to morality?

- Wisdom

Proverbs 8:12-16

¹² I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. ¹³ The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. ¹⁴ Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength. ¹⁵ By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. ¹⁶ By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

- Absolute Honesty

Proverbs 17:7

⁷ Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.

Leaders and liars are not the same thing!

- Separation from bad influences

Proverbs 25:4-5

⁴Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. ⁵Take away the wicked *from* before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

A leader must focus on what is right, not just public opinion or lobbying pressures.

“What’s right not always popular, and what’s popular is not always right.”

- Personal Purity

Proverbs 31:3

³Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.

- Protection of the weal and defenseless

Proverbs 31:8-9

⁸Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. ⁹Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

A leader is to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves, and defend those who cannot defend themselves.

A Biblical leader should stand tall on behalf of the unborn. Some would say, “Abortion is legal. And a

leader is supposed to uphold the law!" Certainly being legally right doesn't make something morally right.

Psalm 94:20

²⁰ Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?

And I should add those who stand for the unborn but turn a blind eye to the poor offend God as well.

When Micah warns the people that God is about to judge, he points first at the corrupt politicians, and says, "It's your fault." And until we acknowledge our faults there is no hope for a change.

Not only do we see the fault of Corrupt Politicians but not also:

2. FAULT LINE # 2 – COMPROMISING PREACHERS

Micah 3:5

⁵ Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

Should they be preaching peace when judgment is coming? Should they preach to the offering plates, altering their message so as not to offend?

- Preacher's Must Preach the Word

2 Timothy 4:2

² Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

We must preach the truth at all times and no matter the cost.

- Preacher's Must Practice the Word

1 Corinthians 9:27

²⁷ But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

1 Timothy 3:2-7

² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; ³ Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; ⁴ One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; ⁵ (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) ⁶ Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷ Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:7-9

⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; ⁸ But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; ⁹ Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

And it is vital that we practice what we preach.

When Micah warns the people that God is about to judge, he points at not only the corrupt politicians, and compromising preachers, but also to:

3. FAULT LINE # 3 – COMPLACENT PEOPLE

Micah 3:11

¹¹ The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, *Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.*

The word "they" is where the complacent people appear.

The people of Israel said, "We know the politicians are corrupt, we know the preachers are compromisers, but it will be ok, because we're ok. The economy is strong, we're happy, and it's alright.

Is not the Lord among us?

No evil can touch us."

Many ignorant Americans make a similar claim: "Our nation has a Christian heritage. We have Godly roots." So did Israel! And so did many other nations which God has judged, or wiped out completely.

Notice the The Laodicean Church found in Revelation.

They had become complacent about the cause of Christ because its members were immersed in the worldly activities of the affluent society in which they lived. Jesus tells them that He would not accept their lukewarm attitude toward Him.

The letter has no word of commendation, neither is there any word of censure for false teaching or immorality.

Revelation 3:14-22

¹⁴ And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; ¹⁵ I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. ¹⁷ Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: ¹⁸ I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. ²¹ To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. ²² He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

A. Condition – Luke-warm (vs. 14-15)

Revelation 3:14-15

¹⁴ And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; ¹⁵ I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

B. Criticism (vs. 17)

Verse 17 digs into the depth of their problem.

Revelation 3:17

¹⁷ Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

Affluence had lulled the church to sleep. The members were wealthy in material good, but poor spiritually.

Their economic wealth has blinded their eyes to their dire need of spiritual riches.

We are much the same today!

C. Command (vs. 18-19)

Revelation 3:18-19

¹⁸ I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Though they were well endowed with the riches of this earth, what they need they could not buy.

Isaiah 55:1

¹ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

He counsels them to buy from Him. They must no longer trust in their riches but come to Him for eternal riches.

They considered themselves self-sufficient but they must humbly find their sufficiency in Christ.

We must pursue hard after God or destruction will certainly overtake us as well.

Close:

Where do we go from here?

We should do our part to elect leaders that seek to fulfill God's righteous requirements. And what do we do if and when corrupt politicians come to power? We may not be able to absolutely control such a situation, but we certainly can focus on ourselves and make sure we aren't compromising preachers, and we can do our job in proclaiming the truth to complacent people in our pews, remembering the promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14:

2 Chronicles 7:14

¹⁴ If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

I think our nation is in trouble. But I also know that Jesus Christ is the hope of our nation and the world. He stands as a light for us to follow. His arms of mercy are open to those who will turn from selfishness and evil to him.

Ultimately, the hope of America is not found in the White House or the State House, nor in the Courthouse. The hope of America is found in God's House, and your house, and my house!