

Micah

#2: Man on Fire

Micah 2

Dr. Kevin Maurice ---- October 11, 2026

I was on an airplane recently and there was a small screen in front of me. And I was scrolling through for something to watch on the flight and tagging things that I might come back to later and hit play on. I saw *Gladiator*—that’s great, but you know, there might be something else I want to see. *The Count of Monte Cristo*—a classic.

I kept scrolling. Ooh, *Taken*—terrific. These are all great revenge movies, right? And so, I’m deciding what I want to watch, and then I see it—*Man on Fire*.



Have y'all seen *Man on Fire*? Okay, I haven't in a while, because as I'm ready to hit play my wife says, "Hey, that's maybe not the best movie to watch on a plane next to your two-year-old." And I agreed with that wisdom, and *Paw Patrol* or something was what I ended up watching.

This is a great movie, okay? Denzel Washington plays John Creasy, this burned-out former CIA operative who is hired as a bodyguard in Mexico City to protect this little girl. One day she's kidnapped. So, Creasy goes on a mission.

And based on my taste in movies, I think you know what kind of mission he's going on, right? At one point in the movie Creasy is going after the bad guy and this old man says to him, "Don't you know about forgiveness?"

And Denzel says, "Forgiveness is between them and God. It's my job to arrange the meeting." [*Laughter from the audience.*] Oh yeah, come on, right? And you spend the whole movie rooting for this guy because somebody did something evil. Somebody hurt that innocent little girl, and now somebody is going to make them pay. And that's not revenge; that's justice.

Believe it or not, that brings us to the Bible this morning. Because the prophet Micah is our man on fire. Because God is furious about the injustice that he sees from His own people. And so, God wants a word with His people, and Micah's job is to arrange the meeting.

So, please open your Bibles with me to Micah 2. We're going to sit in on that meeting today. And as you're turning there, remember where we are in this story. Last week Jeremiah did a great job framing the context of this book for us. Micah is a prophet in a season of massive upheaval for the people of God.

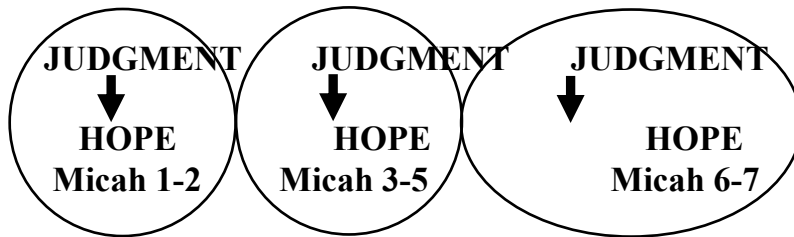
If you'll remember back to this summer, this is taking place during the time of the Divided Kingdom. It's filled with mostly bad kings. So, God sends prophets to speak. There's the kingdom of Israel up north and the kingdom of Judah down south. And looming out there on the horizon are these enemies, these evil enemy kingdoms.

And yet down in Jerusalem, down in the south (that's where Micah is preaching), things seem okay. The economy is good and everyone is kind of happy. The rich are getting richer, but their prosperity is coming at the expense of the poor and the powerless.

And it's all happening under this veneer of religiousness. See, the people haven't rejected God outright; they've just compartmentalized Him. They say, *God, here's a part of our lives. But the rest of is ours—it's mine.*

So, God sends Micah. And Micah's message throughout the book is going to be recycled. It's judgment followed by hope. Judgment and hope.

3 CYCLES IN MICAH:



And we're going to see both today. We're going to get eleven verses of judgment before we finally get two verses where hope breaks through. And when we get there at the very end, it's going to forever change the way you hear and read one of the most famous passages in the Bible.

Judgment

Micah 2:1

Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in the power of their hand.

But before we get there ... judgment. So, let's understand why God is so angry. Let's look at Micah chapter 2, verse 1. It says, "Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in the power of their hand."

What a picture. There is this group of people who are lying in bed. They're supposed to be sleeping, but they're scheming. *How do I get what I want? How do I make sure that the things that should happen to me happen for me? How do I get around whatever is standing in my way?*

And the sun comes up, it's dawn, and they're out the door. And they go and put these evil, wicked plans into action.

And Micah gives us this chilling explanation of why they do this: because it's in their power. Because they can. Maybe they have the money or the connections or the leverage. Micah says they have the power, and so they do it.

Micah 2:2

They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them away; the oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance.

In verse 2 Micah tells us what they've been plotting. He says, "They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them away; they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance."

These powerful people want what belongs to somebody else, so they seize it. They take it.

But notice where it starts. It doesn't start with the seizing. It starts with the coveting, this longing for, this lusting after what belongs to somebody else.

And the sin of coveting is so insidious. It's such a sneaky sin. Because it's never satisfied. It's very rarely admitted. No one says, *Oh, I'm really struggling with covetousness. And it's a sin that is so often rationalized.* Because we say, *Well, I'm just working hard. I'm building something for me. I'm being shrewd financially.* Or, *Hey, everyone else does it. This is just business.*

And this type of sin can even look like good, old-fashioned hard work ... right up until somebody else has to pay for it.

And in Micah 2 somebody else is paying for it. These schemers are taking away people's land. And that's not just their livelihood or where they live; it's their inheritance. For the people of God, where you live, your land, was tied to your covenant identity.

Micah 2:9

The women of my people you drive out from their delightful houses; from their young children you take away my splendor forever.

Later on in the chapter Micah shows us what this actually looks like for the families on the other side. This is chapter 2, verse 9: “The women of my people you drive out from their delightful houses; from their young children you take away my splendor forever.”

Women are driven from their houses. Children have what should be passed down to them ripped away. Families are losing their futures.

Those are the real-life consequences of coveting and taking. So, there is this group of God’s people who see other human beings made in the image of God as less important than their appetite for more.

Micah 2:3a

Therefore thus says the Lord: behold, against this family I am devising disaster ...

And God says, *I see it. And I hate it.* Verse 3: “Therefore thus says the Lord: behold, against this family”—*against my own people*—“I am devising disaster ...”

And don’t miss the language. Verse 1: These people devise wickedness. So, what does God do? He’s devising judgment.

God’s been watching. He cares deeply about this injustice. And so, He sends Micah to say: *Justice is coming.*

Micah 2:3b-5

It will be a time of disaster. ⁴ In that day they shall take up a taunt song against you and moan bitterly and say, “We are utterly ruined; He changes the portion of my people; how He removes it from me! To an apostate He allots our fields.” ⁵ Therefore you will have none to cast the line by lot in the assembly of the Lord.

And the punishment is going to fit the crime. He says, “It will be a time of disaster. In that day they shall take up a taunt song against you and moan bitterly, and say, ‘We are utterly ruined; He changes the portion of my people; how He removes it from me! To an apostate’”—to an enemy kingdom—“He allots our fields.’ Therefore you will have none to cast the line by lot in the assembly of the Lord.”

Do you see what’s happening? The whole time these people have said, *I want that field. I want that home. I’ll just take it.* God says, *You’re going to lose it—all of it. You took other people’s land, you took their inheritance. You’re going to lose your own. The very thing you have done to others is going to come back to haunt you.* And that’s not karma ... that is God’s justice.

Now it’s really easy to read this and hear it and say, *Okay. Man, good history lesson from Micah. Glad I’m not a Judean landowner.*

But God’s Word doesn’t let us off the hook that easily. Before we distance ourselves too quickly from these people in Micah 2, let’s examine our own hearts. Because the sin expressed here might live closer than we think.

The heart issue here is this desire to gain for myself, even at someone else’s expense, simply because I have the power to do it.

And listen, power is anything that God has placed in our hands. It could be wealth or authority or influence. It could be your status or strength—even physical strength. Maybe it’s being the parent or the boss. Power is what God has placed in your hands.

And Bible professor Stephen Dempster puts it this way: “As the one from whom all power is derived, God will demand an accounting for how that power was used.”

God puts things in our hands, even power, so that we can use those things for His glory and for the good of others. And what sin does is cause us to tighten our hands around the things that we want to cling to. And sometimes it even turns our hands into fists.

And once I've decided that something is all mine, it becomes remarkably easy to try to grab for more, to fight for more, even if it comes at a cost to somebody else. That's the sin decided in Micah 2. It's this insatiable hunger for more that causes others to have less.

So, where might this show up in our lives? Where do we see this creeping up? Maybe it's at home or in your relationships with other people.

I'm the stronger personality, so I'll make sure to always get my way.

I'm the husband, I'm the dad, I'm the man of the house, so it's my way or the highway.

Maybe it's Mother knows best. It's for everyone's good that I get everything that I want.

Maybe this sin shows up in your workplace. Do you grab credit from others, but make sure to pass down the blame? Or if you employ people, if you're a business owner or employ somebody to do a job for you on your house or your car or your lawn—whatever it might be—do you look for ways, devise ways, to pay as little as you can simply because you can?

You see, I don't have to wake up in the morning, rubbing my hands together, twiddling a little mustache, thinking, *How can I exploit somebody today?* I don't think it's that comically evil.

I think I can just keep going through my life never asking, *Who has to pay for me to get my way?*

When I look at other people, do I see him or her as an image-bearer of the eternal God, or simply as an obstacle between what is here and what I want?

Grace, this is why we've been talking for two months about generosity and giving and why it's so good for our souls. Coveting says: *I want what you have. So, I'm going to take it. More for me.* Generosity asks: *Okay, God, what have You given me that I can use for others?*

That's what we've talked about throughout these six weeks. And our prayer this whole time would be that God would stir a revival, not just in the world—that's amazing too—but right here—that God would change my heart. That's what He wants.

God, change Your people's hearts so that we would quit coveting and quit taking and quit using our power to harm others; that we would repent. That's why He sent Micah.

Micah 2:6

“Do not preach ... One should not preach of such things; disgrace will not overtake us.”

And the people won't listen. In verse 6 they tell Micah, “Do not preach ...” *Stop saying this stuff.* “One should not preach of such things; disaster, disgrace will not overtake us.”

Micah says: *God sees what you're doing. This is evil. Judgment and justice are coming. Repent.* And their response is: *Shhhhhh ... quit preaching.*

It's like a smoke alarm going off at 2:00 in the morning. It's loud. It wakes you up, you get out of bed, and you grab a ladder and you climb up to the ceiling and pull it off and pull out the battery. Finally, peace and quiet. You go back to bed.

The only problem is that your house is full of smoke. Your garage is on fire. And the noise wasn't the problem. The alarm was the disruption in the darkness that could've saved you. And sometimes that truth that confronts us, that even startles us, is one of God's greatest mercies to us.

Micah 2:11

If a liar and deceiver comes and says, “I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,” that would be just the prophet for this people!

And the people don't want to hear it. So, Micah tells them, kind of sarcastically, *Okay, here's the kind of prophet you would listen to.* Verse 11: “If a liar and deceiver comes and says, ‘I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,’ that would be just the prophet for these people!”

Micah says, *You know who you would listen to? Here's the preacher you guys want. You want this guy. “Hey, eat, drink, be merry, for tomorrow will be fine. There's no fire. It's all good!”*

The people don't want a prophet who will confront them; they want one who will condone them.

And here's where God's word turns a spotlight on us. Because the most seductive lies are the ones that we already want to believe. And if I've listened to a lie long enough, if I believe a lie long enough, if I live a lie long enough, eventually, that lie just becomes part of my operating system.

And then I can do something really dangerous. Instead of letting God's Word, the Bible, change my tune, I make the Bible sing my song.

And I ask God to legitimize what I want. And I twist Scripture to justify how I want to live. And I don't want to ask God's Word to correct me; I only look for it to confirm me.

And I'll listen to whatever kind of prophet or preacher will do that—a liar and a deceiver, even.

We live in the greatest age of access to Christian content in human history. Just think about that. That's an incredible gift. You can find any sermon from any preacher or pastor or any podcast. And if you don't like what one person says, if you don't like their theology or their politics or their story or their style, you can find someone who suits you in sixteen seconds or less.

And I've done it. In college I was at this great church and had this amazing Bible-teaching pastor. His name was actually Matt. I really liked that pastor. But I listened to a bunch of other pastors too. There was Pastor Mark, there was Pastor Rob. And there was nothing necessarily wrong with that. Sometimes they were just more entertaining than what I was hearing on Sunday.

And at times some of it was really impactful. But if I'm really honest, I listened to them because I agreed with them more. Actually, if I'm very honest, I listened to them because they agreed with me more. I mean, my Pastor Matt—did I tell you that he was an Aggie? So, strike one ... thin ice already. Strike two—he had this really annoying habit of convicting me. Because what he would do is preach the Bible—God's Word. And sometimes God's Word said things to twenty-one-year-old Kevin that I didn't want to hear. So, do you know what I would do? I would listen to preaching that I did want to hear.

And that's the danger. The danger isn't the access; the danger is using that access to avoid the message from God that I don't want to hear.

So, the question we have to ask ourselves is: Does the Bible, God's Word, have authority in your life to challenge you? Do you regularly put yourself under God's Word in a way that convicts you? Do you have other Christians in your life, friends or family or mentors or pastors or elders, who have permission to say, *Hey, you're looking at this wrong. You're rationalizing, or you're twisting Scripture there. You need to repent.*

Because if my version of God never disagrees with me, I'm not worshiping God; I'm worshiping an idealized version of myself. And when God's Word confronts me and convicts me, when it starts making noise in my life, do I listen? Or do I just pull out the battery?

That's where Micah leaves us after eleven verses. God's people are stuck in sin. They're using their power to take. They're refusing to hear the truth that could turn them around. Everything is headed in one direction, and that direction is judgment.

Hope

And so, you just start to wonder, what hope is there for people like this? And because I'm people like this, what hope is there for me?

And I'm telling you, that's why you've got to watch *Man on Fire*. Okay? I'm serious ... bear with me for one minute. Throughout the movie Creasy is on this quest for justice. Evil people took that little girl. Someone has to make it right. But at the end of the movie the thing that saves her, the thing that returns her home, isn't vengeance or violence. It's an exchange. Creasy gives himself up for her. He lets the bad guys take him so that she can go free. It's a life for a life—his life for hers. And the story ends with a rescue.

Micah 2:12

I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob; I will gather the remnant of Israel; I will set them together like sheep in a fold, like a flock in a pasture.

And that's how Micah 2 ends. Because God is not finished with His people. Verse 12: "I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob; I will gather the remnant of Israel; I will set them together like sheep in a fold, like a flock in a pasture."

God's people have been grabbing for themselves. God says, *I'm going to gather you. You're my sheep. You've had your land taken away. I've got land for you, pasture.*

Micah 2:13a

He who opens the breach goes up before them; they break through and pass the gate, going out by it.

And here's where things get really interesting. Verse 13: "He who opens the breach goes up before them; they break through and pass through the gate, going out by it."

A breach is a break in a wall or a fence. A breach is often a violently-opened way out. If you've ever read or watched Henry V: "Once more unto the breach ..."

Micah 2:13b

Their King passes on before them, the Lord at their head.

And Micah says there's going to be a breach, and a person will open it. "And it's the king who's going to pass on before you—the Lord."

Out of this mess, out of this cycle of judgment, the people don't just kind of find their own way out. The powerful don't save them. The government, their leaders, don't fix things. God makes a way. Micah says: *A king will come who will go ahead of you and lead you through.*

That's a promise. Micah sees this promise from a distance. He gets a glimpse of something greater.

And from where we sit, this picture should look familiar. Remember what I told you at the beginning? That Micah 2 will forever change the way you read and hear one of the most famous passages in the Bible?

John 10:9-11

I am the door. If anyone enter by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Here it is ... hundreds of years later. Jesus is in Jerusalem, the same city that Micah was preaching in. And He tells the people, “I am the door.” That’s a Greek word. In the Hebrew it’s this word—“gate.” *I’m the gate*. “If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

Grace, do you hear this echo from Micah? Jesus is the shepherd who gathers the sheep. Jesus is the gate through which His people find life. Jesus is the king who goes before us.

But wait, there’s more. It gets even better. Because how does Jesus lead us back to God? He says the shepherd will lay down His life for the sheep. The king doesn’t just show us the way; He opens the way through Himself, violently. Because the King creates the breach.

And it is a breach in His own body: holes in His hands and in His feet, a spear, a breach in His side, violent wounds in His body.

And through those wounds, He makes a way for us, His people, to pass from death to life, from all this sin to salvation.

So, Grace, what do we do with Micah chapter 2? If you’ve been grabbing what’s not yours, open your hands. Repent. Make it right. Practice generosity.

If you’ve been silencing God’s Word, open your ears. And when God’s Word confronts you, listen. Let Him change you.

And above all, follow the King. Because ultimately, our hope isn’t that we just get all of this stuff right. Our hope is in the good shepherd who lay down His life for us. That’s who Jesus is. That’s what He’s done for us.

Communion

And to celebrate that, to remember it, we get to practice communion together. We're going to do that to close our teaching time. If you haven't had an opportunity to pick up the elements, please do so now.

Communion, the Lord's Supper, is a meal that Jesus our King gave His Church to help us remember these truths. So, if you are a follower of Jesus, if He is your Savior and King, you're invited to join us in this.

The night before Jesus goes to the cross, He is sharing this meal with His disciples, His friends. And He knows what's coming. He knows what that night is going to hold. He knows what is happening the next morning. And He knows the cost. He knows what it's going to cost Him to bring His people back to God.

And so, during that meal, Jesus takes the bread and He breaks it. And He says, "This is my body, broken for you."

Jesus gave His life for ours. He died the death that we deserve so that we could be forgiven and spend eternity with God. And He did it willingly—because He loves us. He loves you.

So, I invite you to take a moment and think about the love of God for you—not in abstract. We know that God loves the world, but He loves you personally, as a son, as a daughter. Take a moment and reflect on that, and then we'll eat the bread together.

[Background music plays.]

Jesus, we thank You for Your body, broken for us. Let's eat the bread together.

After they had eaten, Jesus took the cup of wine and held it up and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

The next day His blood would pour out for our forgiveness, for redemption, to reconcile us back to God.

When Jesus held up the cup, He actually made a promise. He said, "I will not drink from the fruit of the vine again until I drink it with you anew in my Father's kingdom."

So, when we take the cup of communion, we don't just remember the cross. We look forward to the future. The world is filled with injustice, filled with sin and brokenness. And we know that one day Jesus is coming back, and He will set everything right. And we will spend

eternity with Him in a new heaven and a new earth in His kingdom. That's what we look forward to.

So, I want you to take a moment and think through some of those things that grieve your heart in our world and in our city, in your family, and even in your own soul—examples of injustice or brokenness. And then reflect on this truth, that one day He'll return and make all things right. Take a moment to do that, and we'll drink the cup together.

[Background music plays.]

Jesus, we thank You for Your blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Let's drink the cup together.

Grace, would you please pray with me?

Heavenly Father, we thank You for who You are. God, we thank You that while we were still sinners, You loved us and You sent Your Son to die for us. God, as we look around the world and see injustice, help us to remember that You are just and You see it and it grieves Your heart even more than it grieves ours, and that one day You will set all things right.

And God, help us to know that in our sin we are those unjust people. And yet You love us. You did not cast us away, but You drew us close and brought us home to You through the life, death, and resurrection of Your Son, so that we can spend eternity as sons and daughters of the King. Help us to be people who would live out and embody that gospel truth. We pray these things in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.