

### Proverbs 3, Amos 3-9, Micah 1 (#119) Revised 2024

**Proverbs 3** — *What are the three actions we need to take in order for the Lord to guide and direct our paths? See verses 5-6. Extra Question: What will be the result if we honor the Lord with our wealth?*

**Amos 3** — Now Yahweh reasons with Israel, beginning with a series of rhetorical questions that show a relationship between their sin and its consequences. Israel had the privilege of being specially chosen by God but at the same time had the responsibility of being responsive and obedient to Him. This faithful God will not come in fury upon His unfaithful nation without first sending his prophets to warn the people. When the Lord speaks to a prophet, he can't keep the message of judgment to himself. The following is God's decree upon His people who are incapable of doing right. When the Lord finishes with Israel in judgment there won't be much left. In fact, nearly everything will be demolished including the altars of Bethel, the ivory summer and winter houses, and all the personal belongings which will become the plunder of the enemy.

**Amos 4** — In unflattering words, Amos calls the women of Samaria the cows of Bashan who oppress the poor, crush the needy, and demand that their husbands provide for them their every desire. Someday they will be taken away with hooks in their noses by the enemy, but now they make a big show of their tithes and offerings to the idols at Bethel. Over and over again they have suffered God's judgment through famine, drought, destruction of crops, sickness, death, and defeat in war, but all this is to no avail. So now Yahweh says to this incorrigible nation, "Prepare to meet your God" in this final judgment when Israel will be destroyed and carried off to Assyria. *Amos says that one of the criteria that the women of Samaria would be judged by is the way they treat the poor and the needy. What have you or can you and your church do in meeting the needs of the poor and the oppressed?*

**Amos 5** — Amos sings a dirge about the future fallen state of Israel when only 10 percent of people are still left in the cities after their destruction by their enemy. Yahweh is asking that Israel really seek Him and not lifeless religion, or He will come and consume everyone and everything with fire which no one can extinguish. Israel has become so morally twisted that the people hate honest judges, despise the person who speaks with integrity, and tramples on the poor. When the righteous are oppressed and the poor are deprived of justice, the wise knows that speaking up is a lost cause. Nevertheless, Amos challenges the people to seek good and not evil, to establish justice in the courts, and perhaps the Lord

will be gracious with the remnant of Joseph. The Day of the Lord's judgment is coming when there will be darkness and not light. The Lord says, "All the rituals you are doing in order to placate your gods I really hate. Here is what I want: let your justice flow like water, and righteousness, like an ever-flowing stream, or I will send you into exile beyond Damascus (adapted)." *Israel mixed their idolatry with the types of worship prescribed by Moses (this is called syncretism). The Pharisees of Jesus' day mixed man-made rituals with their biblical worship. Paul talked about professed Christian people having a form of godliness but denying its power (II Timothy 3:5a). How can we as Christians keep our private and public worship from becoming mere ritualism and going through the motions instead of giving our hearts fully to God in genuine worship?*

**Amos 6** — Who are the ones that will be the first captives to go into exile? Those who are at ease in Zion and feel secure in Samaria. Instead of thinking of the possibility of a day of destruction, the people are complacent, fully materialistic, self-indulgent, and pleasure-seeking without any spiritual sense of the future devastation that is around the corner. Because the Lord hates their arrogance and self-adulation, Israel will be smashed to pieces by a nation He is raising up.

**Amos 7** — Amos sees five visions of God's judgment on Israel. In the first two visions, which were locusts and fire on Israel, judgment is averted by the intercession of the prophet. The third vision was that of the Lord standing by a vertical wall with a plumb line in His hand. A plumb line of God's law declares that the pagan shrines will be deserted, the pagan temples will be in ruins, and the house of Jeroboam will come to an end by the sword. When warned by Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, to go back to Judah and prophesy there, this fearless prophet says that although he was only a herdsman and not a prophet or son of a prophet, God called him to prophesy to the people of Israel. He then prophesies that Amaziah would die on foreign soil, his family would be killed, and his wife would become a prostitute. *Complacency can be a great sin in the life of a Christian or in the local church. Read Revelation 3:14-21. How was the church of Laodicea a lot like Israel at this time? What can we do to keep our church from becoming like the church of Laodicea?*

**Amos 8** — In the fourth vision Amos sees a basket of ripe summer fruit. The people of Israel are ripe for God's judgment because the Lord's wrath cannot hold back any longer. The merchants trample the needy and poor and can't wait for Sabbath to be over so they can cheat the poor out of more money

with dishonest scales or sell them chaff. As a proof of future disaster, an earthquake will come and everyone will wear sackcloth with great wailing and mourning. A great famine will come, but this will be a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord when people will roam from sea to sea to seek God's Word but will not find it. *Verse 11 says that there would be "a famine of hearing the words of the Lord." Do you think there is a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord in your country? Explain.*

**Amos 9** — In this fifth vision, the Lord stands beside the altar and will judge His people, and no one will escape the all-seeing eyes of God and the fury of His righteous anger. The all-powerful God will destroy all the wicked from the nation but there will be a remnant that will be preserved who will be renewed and restored. Ending this prophecy on a positive note, Yahweh promises to raise up the fallen house of David and to restore the fortunes of His people Israel. In this kingdom age, the Lord will bring back the exiled people from distant lands. *When in the future will this restoration take place? How can you prove your answer from this passage?*

**Micah** — The Lord chose Micah to give warning to Israel and Judah of the coming judgment of God because of the idolatry of the people, and therefore, they must repent and turn again to Him. Micah was a contemporary of Hosea and Isaiah and came from the town of Moresheth in Judah (25 miles southwest of Jerusalem) and prophesied from 742 B.C. to 687 B.C. It was Micah who spearheaded the great revival in Jerusalem under the leadership of King Hezekiah (Jeremiah 26:18-19). Micah championed the rights of the poor because wealthy land barons were buying up the land and displacing the poor. Micah prophesied the coming destruction of Samaria (722 B.C.) as well as the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

**Micah 1** — Micah prophesies about the future devastation on Israel and Judah because of the idolatry that has replaced the worship of Yahweh. Samaria was completely destroyed by Assyria in 722 B.C. In 701 B.C. King Sennacherib devastated Judah starting at Lachish. This town was the first to follow their northern brothers from Israel into idolatry. Thousands from Lachish and other cities in the area were slain, and thousands of others were taken into captivity by Assyria. The leaders at this time would flee to the caves of Adullam to hide, and the precious children would be taken as slaves to foreign lands. *As Micah prophesied about the sin and idolatry of Israel and Judah of his day, we also see in our country and our world the same patterns of idolatry, immorality, and evil. What can we do as Christians to be salt and light to our country in order to postpone the inevitable destruction that is coming?*

Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups, c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV, c. 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB, c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion, c. 2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc., Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible, c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc., Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009 David C. Cook. 9. Halley's Bible Handbook, c. 2000 Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI. 10. 500 Answers from the Bible, c. 2006 Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Understanding the Bible, c. 2000 Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c. 1992 Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014 Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL.

## Proverbs 4, Micah 2-7, Proverbs 5 (#120) Revised 2024

**Proverbs 4** — “Guard your heart above all else for it determines the course of your life (v. 23 NLT).”  
*Explain the meaning and importance of this verse in our Christian life.*

**Micah 2** — The wicked plan evil in bed and when they get up in the morning, they go out and seize the fields and the houses of the poor to satisfy their lust for more. God is planning disaster on these people who walk about proudly. The rich who do such things will come to ruin and all that they have will be taken by others (vv. 1-5). The people do not want to hear of God’s judgment, but they continue to do evil by even stealing the robes of the poor and forcing them out of their homes. They love and accept any prophet who will tell them lies and who agrees with their wicked lifestyle (vv. 6-11). The Shepherd-King will lead the righteous remnant back to their land. Once again, the land will be filled with the joyful noise of people (vv. 12-13).

**Micah 3** — The prophet gives three oracles proclaiming judgment on the civil leaders and prophets of Israel and Judah because of their wicked actions. The civil leaders act unjustly, hate good, love evil, and exploit the people mercilessly for material advantage. On the day of God’s vengeance, they will cry out for mercy but God will turn His face away from them (vv. 1-4). The prophets proclaim the blessings of peace for a price, but curse those who won’t pay them. Their visions will be turned to darkness, their mouths will be shut, and their seers will be ashamed because they will receive no messages from God (vv. 5-7). The heads of Israel abhor justice, build Jerusalem on bloodshed, and pervert everything that is right. The priests and prophets are all about monetary gain, but proclaim that the Lord is with them and therefore no disaster will come their way (vv. 8-11). The reality is that “Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets (v. 12 NIV).” *What were the sins of the rich (2:1-2), the civil leaders (3:1-3, 9-11), and the prophets (3:5) in these two chapters? Do we see these sins in your city and country?*

**Micah 4** — Right in the middle of condemning Israel and Judah for their sins, the prophet is comforting the remnant with a hope that in the last days “the mountain of the Lord’s house will be established” in future Israel when the nations of the world will stream into it. The nations of the world will come to Jerusalem to be taught the ways of the Lord. There will be universal peace and prosperity because the Messiah will be ruling from Mount Zion (vv. 1-8). Going back to the near future, Micah looks to the time Judah will have no king and will be carried off to Babylon, but where they will eventually be rescued and

return to their land. Verses 11 to 13 seem to return to the last days and the battle of Armageddon (Zechariah 14) when Israel will be delivered (vv. 9-13). *What will be some of the changes in the future Millennial Kingdom that will make it different from our present world? See verses 3-8.*

**Micah 5** — The author begins the chapter by talking about Babylon's attack on Jerusalem in 586 B.C. with the last king of Judah in David's line, Zedekiah, being captured (v. 1). Now, Micah brings to the forefront the next king from the line of David that is to come on the scene. This king is the Messiah, who will be born in Bethlehem. Although there will be an interval of time between the first and second advent of the Messiah, Israel will once again return to Yahweh and will live securely with their Messiah. He will be their peace and extend His greatness to the ends of the earth. In those last days, the remnant of Jacob will be like a lion of the forest and will triumph over their enemies by the power of the Lord. In that kingdom age, there will be no need for instruments of war (horses and chariots) or protective walls to defend cities. Idolatry and false religions will be demolished and all nations who will not obey will be destroyed. *What great mystery and miracle seems to be revealed by Micah in verse 2? See also Isaiah 9:6.*

**Micah 6** — Yahweh brings a lawsuit against the people of Israel and makes His case charging them with their forgetfulness of His goodness to them from the time of their rescue from Egypt, and includes all His other righteous acts throughout the centuries. God's primary concern for Israel is not in bringing sacrifices, but in living justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with their God (vv. 1-8). However, Israel did the very opposite. They lived unjustly and without mercy by deceptive weights, lies, violence, and deceitfulness. Since they chose to walk in defiance to God (not humbly in obedience), they will never find satisfaction in the acquisition of material things, or in the enjoyment of food and drink. The Lord will bring Israel to complete desolation and ruin because of their sins. *What does the Lord require of you? Expound on the deeper message of verse 8 of acting justly, loving kindness and mercy, and walking humbly with our God as it relates to the way the Israelites were actually living, but at the same time thinking that God was pleased with them.*

**Micah 7** — Although Micah begins the chapter describing the great spiritual decline in Israel, he ends the chapter and book on a note of hope. Observing the moral decadence of the nation, Micah says that one cannot find a godly person, but that everyone is out for another person's blood, and the officials and judges demand a bribe. People cannot rely on each other and family members oppose one another. Micah, however, looked to the Lord and waited on Him to save him (vv. 1-7). Even though God will judge

His people, it won't be completely over for them. As they patiently bear up under the punishment for their rebellion, the day will come when the walls are rebuilt and their boundary will be extended. Then the Messiah will shepherd His people and do mighty miracles for them during the millennial reign. Who can compare with our faithful God who completely removes our iniquity and casts our sins into the depths of the sea? Yahweh will show His faithful love He had promised in His covenant to Jacob and Abraham in days long ago (vv. 8-20). *What was Micah's view of the Lord? See verses 18 to 20.*

**Proverbs 5** — *What are some of the reasons mentioned in this chapter for not being involved in sexual immorality?*

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