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C1107 – March 2, 2011 – Micah 7:7-13
How To Live In A Godless Society

What we have tonight in Micah 7 is how to live in a godless society. We want to understand that there is a way to live in a godless society, there is hope. Basically it comes down to trusting God's promises through thick and thin. Micah is going to utilize the faith rest drill. And all the great saints of Scripture utilize this drill and so let's review the basics of the faith-rest drill to introduce this section. Basically, the faith rest drill has three parts. One of my friends developed a chart to illustrate the faith rest drill and uses this acronym ReConnecT. Re, standing for recall, and what we mean here is when the pressure is on you need to recall some fragment of Scripture, some doctrine, some story, some promise of Scripture. You've got to have something from Scripture that you can grab on to or else when the pressure is on you're going respond emotionally to the situation and you'll lose it. So step one, the Re in ReConnecT means recall something from Scripture that you have learned, some passage you have memorized, some promise of God, grab on to it and hold tight. Then Connect, connect means link the promise or section of Scripture to your circumstance. If you have a promise or doctrine of Scripture that is totally unrelated to your situation it really doesn't do much good to have some promise hanging over here that doesn't apply. So you want to learn some general ones that apply to multiple situations. Things such as "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose" or "Cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you." Those kinds of promises connect with a whole lot of things that go wrong in life. So the positive side of Connect is to link the promise with your situation. Then the problem comes for most believers. They've recalled some promise, they've linked it to their situation and then there's a break. I've observed this in my own life, I've observed this in others lives and that is at that point they have a hard time trusting the promise. Trust is the third thing, it's the T in ReConnecT. You've got to Trust in order to get to the rest

at the end of the whole thing. So to remedy the inability to trust the promise at the crucial point there's a negative side to step two, Connect. The positive side is to Connect the promise to your situation, the negative side is to cast down the alternative to the promise. In other words, take the promise, maybe you've called up Rom 8:28, "All things work together for good..." that's a great promise, here you are, you just lost your job, your husband just had a heart-attack and your daughter's wedding is tomorrow, some tragedy has just occurred, I don't know, think back to something in your life. You've disciplined yourself enough to Recall some Scripture, you start to Connect it with your tragedy to calm down your soul. What happens in your soul at this point? You start to have this soliloquy in your soul? Soul talk. Now wait a minute, how can this work together for good? Lord, I don't see any good in this. How can you turn this into good? This is bad. This is a nightmare. And now you doubt God's promises. Doubt is the opposite of trust. And we can never get what if we doubt? Rest. We want rest, that's the goal of the faith-rest drill. But as long as we're in doubt we can't Trust. So one of the things you can do at the point when doubt starts creeping into your soul is to reverse the promise. Just turn it around and say it out loud, "All things do not work together for good," or, even better, "All things work together for evil." Now, how about that? What this will do is it will awaken your soul to other things in Scripture where God He took what appeared to be a terrible situation and He did work it "together for good." Things like the Joseph being sold into slavery in Egypt. Things like Paul and Silas being thrown in prison. Things like Jesus Christ being nailed to the cross. And now we're talking because in your soul, your soul is saying on one hand how can this situation work out for the good, but if I don't trust the promise that all things do work together for good then I have to reject the story of Joseph, I have to reject the story of Paul and Silas, I have to reject the cross work of Jesus Christ and finally I have to reject the whole Scripture. I have to say the whole word of God is wrong. Now, when your soul is looking at the problem in that frame of reference your soul will straighten up and you'll say I'm not going to reject the entire Scripture. So a significant thing has happened in your soul right there. You've realized that to reject one promise of Scripture is to reject the whole of Scripture. And that's ridiculous. So it makes it easier to trust the promise of God. God has proved that promise true over and over and over and I will now trust you Lord that you will work it out for the good. And when we do this we enjoy rest, inner peace, tranquility. We can think, we didn't say the problem is no longer there, we just said that the problem has been

brought under the control of the word of God, and now we're trusting that He'll solve our problem and we keep at it until He has. So that's the faith-rest drill and it's the tool Micah will use to ReConnect and keep his cool in the situation.

To get the situation look at Micah 7:1. "Woe is me!" Does that sound like a distressing situation in life? You bet. "Woe is me! For I am Like the fruit-pickers, like the grape gatherers. There is not a cluster of grapes to eat, Or a first-ripe fig which I crave." Why is Micah pronouncing this woe on himself? He uses a metaphor to describe his situation in verse 1, but he explains it clearly in verse 2, "The godly person has perished from the land, And there is no upright person among men. All of them lie in wait for bloodshed. Each of them hunts the other with a net. Concerning evil, both hands do it well." It goes on but what he's describing is the kind of society he had to live in. A godless society. And here he is a godly person in a godless society. Have you ever felt like that? That's how Micah felt. Verse 5, look at this, "Do not trust in a neighbor; Do not have confidence in a friend. From her who lies in your bosom Guard your lips." Did Micah feel alone in his nation? Sure he did. Every relationship in family and society had been fractured by sin. And in a society where all family and societal relationships have been fractured and destroyed by sin, what is the godly person supposed to do? How do you make it in that society? Verse 7 answers; **But as for me, I will watch**

expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation.

What's he saying? He's saying I've got promises of salvation out here, the remnant is going to be delivered, and I'm recalling those promises. It's the faith-rest drill. That's what he's talking about. When the world is crumbling around me I pick up the promises of God for national deliverance and I claim the promises. Otherwise you'd go crazy in a society like that. So he says, what I'm going to do is claim the promise that the Lord is going to come and deliver the remnant. Now he doesn't know exactly when God is going to do that. But he does know that God is going to do it. And we don't know exactly what part of Scripture Micah recalled. But we do know it goes back to what covenant? The Abrahamic Covenant. What did this covenant promise? A land, a seed and a worldwide blessing. That's the general promise, but let's turn to Deut 30 where the land promise is amplified. From what Micah says we gather that the promise he was meditating on may very well have been something like Deut 30. Deut 30 sketches God's land program for Israel. Micah is living in a time when their enjoyment of the land was on the brink of collapse. The

northern kingdom had already been booted out of the land and into Exile in 722BC. The southern kingdom was under Manasseh and Manasseh had undone all the great things his father Hezekiah had done. And so it was getting darker and darker and darker. In that situation Micah began to recall the prophetic outline of his country. Verse 1. So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse," had the blessing and the curse come upon the nation Israel? The blessing had come in the time of King David and the Golden Era of Solomon, the curse had come under Rehoboam and Ahab and all the other idiot kings that followed, "when all these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse," and they had, "and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you." What event? The Exile. The northern kingdom had already gone into Exile. The southern kingdom was on the verge. Verse 2, "and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, 3then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. 4 If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. 5The LORD your God will bring you into the land your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and he will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers." See, the land is the issue in this promise, enjoyment of the land promise given to Abraham. Verse 6, "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendents, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live." That is, learn loyalty to God. There was no loyalty in the land. But Micah is seizing on a promise that guarantees that God will circumcise the hearts of the nation Israel and they will learn loyalty to Him so they can live in the land. Verse 7, "The LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecute you. 8And you shall again obey the LORD, and observe all his Commandments which I command you today. 9Then the LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good, just as he rejoiced over your fathers;" and it goes on the, the point to see is that this is the kind of Scripture that Micah recalled when he lived in a godless society. He recalled a promise that projected out God's plan for the

nation Israel that one day they would live in obedience in the land and he waited expectantly for the Lord, the God of his salvation to fulfill it.

Now in Micah 7:7 Micah is speaking for himself and whatever faithful remnant remained in the land. There is always a faithful remnant. It can get pretty slim at times. Elijah thought he was the only believer in the nation and God said, no Elijah, I've got 7,000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal. But it illustrates that there were times when the remnant of Israel became so sparse that you could walk around for years without bumping into another member of the remnant. Micah lived in a similar time but he knew there was a remnant. I will wait expectantly for the **LORD, I will wait for the God of my salvation.** That's the right perspective when your nation is in chaos. Don't fear, start claiming the promises of God and watch expectantly for the LORD. Look to the promises of salvation.

And notice, he's praying. **My God will hear me.** So he's evidently praying for God's deliverance. He doesn't know when the deliverance will come but he does know that ultimately God will answer this prayer. How does he know God will answer this prayer? Because he's praying Scripture. God already promised He would save the nation Israel in Deut 30 and a whole slew of passages. So if you want your prayers answered pray Scripture and then you can be sure that God will answer the prayer. It's the most certain way to have your prayers answered. So Micah prays Scripture. He says **God will hear me** because he knows God's promises and he knows God is faithful to His promises.

Verse 8, **Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise;** What's he getting at here? What's he doing? He's warning the enemies of Israel who like to taunt Israel. He's warning them not to taunt. Don't do that because if you do that you're not understanding history from a divine view point. Historically Israel was defeated by the Assyrians and Judah was going to be defeated by the Babylonians. And they're going to want to gloat over them but Micah says, don't do that because there's going to be a reversal in the future. **Though I fall I will rise.** Israel was going under Gentile powers, yes, there is a time of the Gentiles, but after the time of the Gentiles it will be the time of Israel. Israel will rise to dominate the world stage. So he says don't gloat over our fall. We will rise. God wrote it in His promises.

End of verse 8, **Though I dwell in darkness, the Lord is a light for me.** He's saying, I live down in the southern kingdom and it's a dark, evil place. He had to watch his country fall apart; he had to watch the economy collapse, he had to watch public health fall apart, he had to watch the military fall apart, he had to watch family relationships fractured, he had to watch corruption in the government, bribery in the courts, you name it he had to live in it. And so he's instructing us here how to live in that situation, and the way to do it is to claim more promises, you need a lot of promises in this kind of situation. He claims Ps 18:28, "For You light my lamp; The LORD my God illumines my darkness." Ps 27:1, "The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?" Even in the darkest society, God is our light, though treachery surround us, He will direct us. They word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. While we live in a dark world, the LORD is our light and we can rest assured that one day He will separate the light from the dark eternally.

Verse 9, **I will bear the indignation of the LORD Because I have sinned against Him;** notice Micah, is Micah a loyal believer? You bet he is! Yet he admits He has sinned against the LORD. Just because someone is a loyal believer doesn't mean they never sin. David was a loyal believer and he sinned. So to be a loyal believer doesn't mean to be sinless, what it means is that when we sin we get with the program and confess our sin and walk with the Lord until the end of our life, we persevere to the end. Micah says, I've sinned against Him, **I will bear the indignation of the LORD.** The Lord's most intense discipline would be poured out on Micah's nation, they would go into Exile and Mica says I'm willing to bear this, I'm not exempt, I too have sinned.

Verse 9, **Until He pleads my case and executes justice for me.** In other words the indignation of the LORD will only last so long. How does he know this? Because it's the promise of God, Deut 30, they would go into Exile but they would be Restored. So he says I'm willing to bear the indignation of the LORD **Until He pleads my case and executes justice for me.** Who's going to plead Micah's case? Micah's *rib*? The LORD Jesus Christ. Who's bringing the case against Micah? Satan is. Satan is the accuser. Micah admits I've sinned, I'm guilty. But Micah has one who will plead His case. The LORD Jesus Christ who died a substitutionary death for Micah's sins. So the LORD Jesus Christ will argue his case and **execute justice for him.**

Satan argues that God cannot call a sinner righteous; the Lord Jesus Christ counters the argument that through substitutionary blood atonement the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ was imputed to Micah's account. And it's this argument that will win the case. The case hasn't been brought yet, we know the case is yet future, at the resurrection of OT Israel just before the sheep-goats judgment will be the resurrection and judgment of Israel. And Micah says My LORD, the Messiah will execute justice for me, then he says, verse 9b, **He will bring me out to the light, and I will see His righteousness.** Who's righteousness is he talking about? The Messiah's righteousness. He's going to bring him **out to the light**, that's the Messianic Kingdom. Micah's going to step into the restored Kingdom of Israel, the Messianic Kingdom. So again he's claiming another promise, they're all promises that related to the final restoration of Israel. Fantastic promises. And He saying finally the Messiah is going to set all things straight. He knows that there is a time when good and evil are mixed, when light and dark are intermingled, and he was living in it, but he knows there's a judgment when the light and dark will be separated. And he knows he is of the light, and so he has hope, meaning not a vague I hope so, but he knows **He will see** the Messiah's **righteousness** in the kingdom. This is where he put his hope, out here in the distant future. He claimed these promises and that's what enabled him to have the strength to live in the dark culture of his time. He didn't get down and moan and groan about it. He claimed the promises of God and trusted.

Verse 10, **Then my enemy will see**, what are they going to see? They're going to see that they were wrong about their analysis of history. He warned them back in v 8, "Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise." They don't have a sound basis to analyze history because they reject the word of God. Anyone who gloats over Israel's defeats and builds theme parks like Hezbollah did up in Lebanon, does not understand the word of God. None of the Arab nations understand the word of God. But they will understand. Israel's defeat means God is disciplining them, not that He's weak or absent, He's disciplining them, but discipline is only for sons. Israel is God's son, the apple of God's eye and if you touch God's son then you're going to get destroyed. **Then my enemy will see. And shame will cover her who said to me, Where is the LORD your God?** They're going to be ashamed, they're going to be embarrassed because when Jesus Christ arrives He's not coming as a meek and mild little carpenter boy. He's coming as a seasoned

Warrior. Isa 60. He's coming in blood drenched battle garments. And it's going to be embarrassing that they ever tried to stand up to the Lord Jesus Christ.

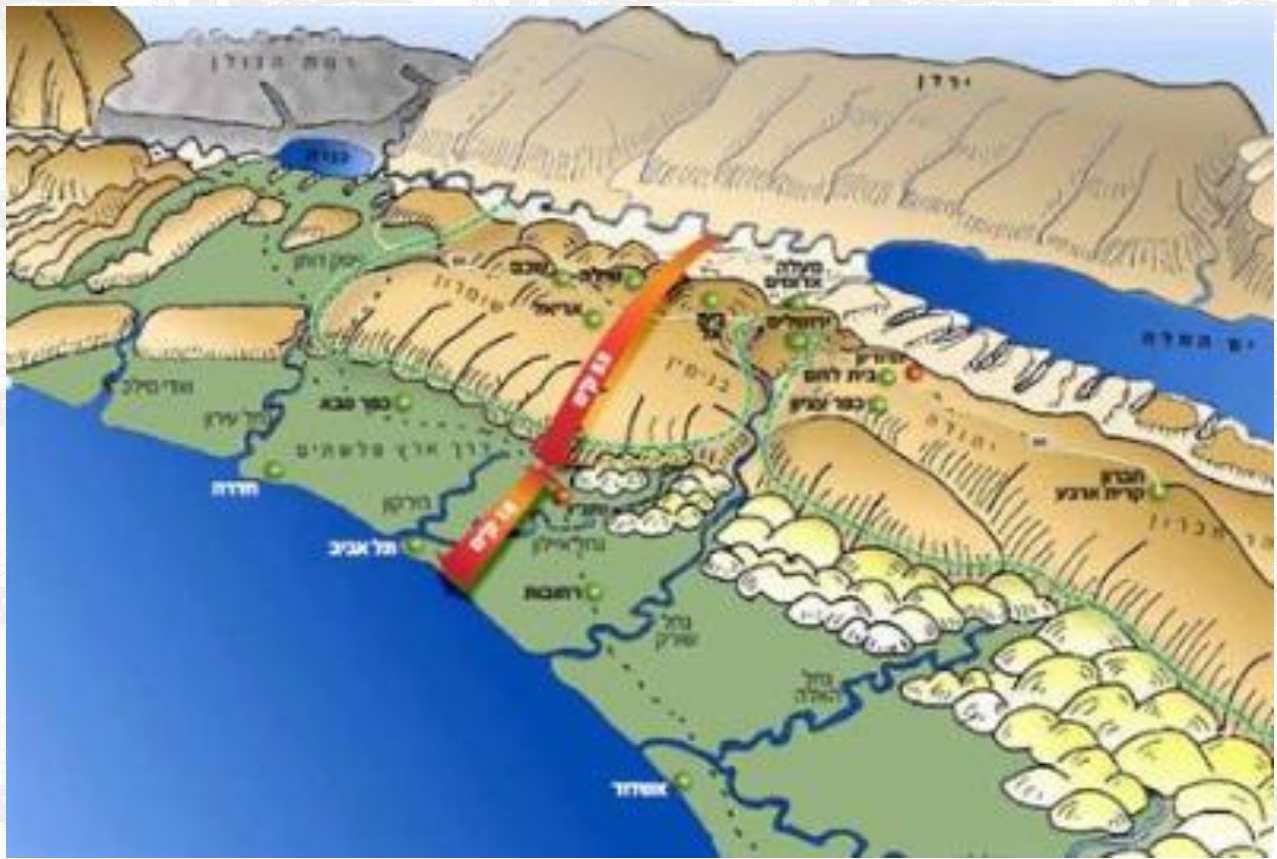
Middle of verse 10, look at what Micah says, this is the picture of what our Savior does when He returns, don't forget this picture, this is a great and powerful picture for a believer because what it means is our God reigns, finally all the wrongs are going to be made right, finally we're going to have a resolution to the good and evil problem. God's going to get rid of the evil. **My eyes will look on her;** that's the enemies of Israel, **My eyes will look on her; At that time she will be trampled down Like mire of the streets.** You know, I don't know if you've ever seen grapes trampled, but that's the picture of these people, they're going to be trampled down, crushed, blood gushing out everywhere. There are no peaceful negotiations when the Lord Jesus Christ returns. Jesus Christ doesn't negotiate. Jesus Christ doesn't ask your opinion. Jesus Christ doesn't send His requests to a committee for approval. Jesus Christ runs the universe by the word of His power. And when He returns He's going to solve this little problem of people picking on His Son Israel. Everyone says Israel is the problem. This little tiny nation of about 15 million people is the problem? Malawi has 15 million people, ever heard of them? Burkina Faso has 15 million people, ever heard of them? Don't you think it's ironic that the whole world turns against this tiny little nation in the Middle East? I think it's strange and I think it's amazingly obvious how true the Bible is.

So that trampling down "like mire of the streets" is a picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ is going to do to all the nations that gather against Israel at Armageddon. They had taunted and taunted Him and now He's going to trod them down. It's going to be a total defeat; a total conquest. Joshua led a partial conquest; a greater than Joshua will lead the total conquest.

Verse 11, **It will be a day for building your walls,** walls not to protect the city of Jerusalem but walls for the vines of a vineyard to climb, there will be no need for walls to protect the city of Jerusalem. Turn to Zech 2. Zechariah is a post-Exilic prophet, he's very late and yet he still foresees a time when Jerusalem will be restored to Israel and without walls. Verse 1, "Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold there was a man with a measuring line in his hand. ²So I said, "Where are you going? And he said to me, "To measure

Jerusalem, to see how wide it is and how long it is.”³ And behold, the angel who was speaking with me was going out, and another angel was coming out to meet him,⁴ and said to him, “Run, speak to that young man, saying, ‘Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls because of the multitude of men and cattle within it.’⁵ For I,’ declares the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’” verse 8, “For thus says the LORD of hosts, “After glory He has sent Me against the nations which plunder you, for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye.” Verse 10, look at the restoration and rejoice because our God reigns, “Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” what theme do you see there? I dwell in your midst. It’s the Immanuel theme, God with us. God’s ultimate dwelling place is with man. And when He dwells with Israel He says there will be no need for a protective wall around Jerusalem. I am their protection. So it’s obvious that the wall in Micah will not be built around Jerusalem. It’s just saying walls built for the vines of a vineyard to grow and produce.

Let’s go back to Micah 7:11. **It will be a day for building your walls, On that day will your boundary be extended,** the borders of the nation Israel will extend to their originally defined borders in Gen 15. The little land of Israel today will be greatly expanded. I don’t know if you realize how small the state of Israel is today. It’s about 150 miles from north to south and about 20 miles wide. That’s it. There’s hardly anything to it, you can drive all over the country in a single day. It’s amazing when you get over there how close everything is. And yet as small as it is everybody on every side wants a piece of it. It’s ridiculous, it’s like someone around here having 10,000 acres and you have two acres next door and they want it. Why? Who cares? That’s the precarious situation the state of Israel is in today. Look at how precarious it really is. This map was published by the Yesha Council last year and what they were trying to do was educate the people of Israel as to the kind of danger they were facing if they tried to give up the West Bank and the Golan in exchange for peace. Always land for peace. They give land they don’t get peace. But some Israeli’s still want to try land for peace. So the Yesha Council said look, look at the land they want. They want the West Bank. Look at the elevation of that area? You think the Arab world is ignorant of the elevation? What’s going to happen if you give them that land? It’s going to be a continual rain of lead, a continual military strike.



If you go up to the north in this gray area, that's the Golan Heights, they said, now look, why do you think they want that? So they can do what they used to do and rain down lead on the cities and villages around the Sea of Galilee so little kids have to sleep in concrete bunkers. And then to the east you have Jordan, right now they're at peace with Jordan but look at the height of the mountains, compared to the green area where Israel has full military control. What's the strategy of the Arab world? To take the high ground, force Israel into the lowlands so they can sit on their perch and strike Israel all day and all night until she's completely obliterated. But that strategy is not going to work because God made promises. And Micah is claiming another promise, **On that day will your boundary be extended.** What's the promise he's recalling? It's the land promise, the real estate promise of Gen 15. So let's go there. God promised the faithful remnant of Israel a specific real estate with specific borders as an everlasting possession. Just what are those borders? And how far will the boundaries have to be extended from their present location? As the Arab world encroaches on Israel how far will Israel encroach on the Arab world? Gen 15:18, "On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river

Euphrates;” so that’s the original boundaries; it’s far larger than the present boundaries. Right now the Lebanese are living in Israel’s land, the Syrians are living in Israel’s land, the Jordanians occupy Israel’s land, and in the Sinai the Egyptians occupy Israel’s land. And those people aren’t just going to pack their bags and move out. They’re going to fight for that land. And there’s a reason for that. Anyone know why? Because of this covenant. God put His strategy down in history that I will conquer and I will give this land to Israel. So if you are Satan and you want to build your kingdom what’s your strategy? You’re going to design a counter strategy to the strategy. You want to take that land and fill it with those in your kingdom. So yeah, there’s a war for that land. But verse 19-21 imply that God’s strategy is going to win. The destruction of any and all inhabitants of the land is part and parcel of the promise to give it to Israel. So in the millennium Israel will have its borders extended from the River of Egypt to the River Euphrates.

Verse 12, **It will be a day when they will come to you From Assyria and the cities of Egypt, from Egypt even to the Euphrates, Even from sea to sea and mountain to mountain.** He’s talking about the Messianic Kingdom. Looked at in light of current events, first we have **Assyria**. **Assyria** is Persia, people in Iran who still consider themselves Persians. And it’s saying a day will come when the Iranians come to Israel, to the Promised Land, they’re obviously coming up for blessing, all blessing in the Kingdom will be channeled through Israel. Right now this is not quite the geopolitical state of affairs. Ahmadinejad and the ruling Shia Muslims in Iran hate Israel. Israel is the little Satan and they want to wipe Israel off the map. Official estimates of Jewish population in Iran is 20,000-35,000. But in 1948 the population was close to 150,000. So they’ve had a mass exodus of Jews from Iran since 1948, particularly after the Islamic Revolution and the rise of Khomeini. They hate Israel. But during the last days there will be many Iranians who turn to the Jewish Messiah, in fact, there already are many coming to Him and before Christ returns there will be many converted and they will enter into the millennial kingdom and come to Israel for blessing. Notice also Egypt, **and the cities of Egypt**. Egypt has been at peace with Israel since 1980 when Israel returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt under Anwar Sadat. Now we have this instability in Egypt and the threat of the Muslim Brotherhood taking control. So we don't know what will happen. But we do know according to a report just two weeks ago there are less than 100 Israeli’s living in Egypt. So, it’s not exactly a friendly place for Israelis. In

1956 the Egyptian government issued a proclamation stating that “all Jews are Zionists and enemies of the state” and threatened them with expulsion. After the 1967 war, nearly all Egyptian Jewish men aged 17-60 were either thrown out of the country or incarcerated and tortured. But in the last days there will be many Egyptians who turn to the Jewish Messiah and will therefore enter the millennial kingdom. And in the kingdom they will come to Israel. Israel will be the greatest superpower on the earth and will be the source of all blessing.

Micah says **Even from sea to sea and mountain to mountain**, people from all nations across the whole earth will come to Israel during the millennial kingdom. The reason they’ll come is because it will be the Law. And if they don’t come up they will be cursed. Assyria and Egypt are singled out is because they were the inveterate enemies of Israel up to this point in history and so it shows that even the greatest enemies of Israel can and will be rescued if they turn to the Jewish Messiah.

Verse 13, **And the earth will become desolate because of her inhabitants, On account of the fruit of their deeds.** Again, this is global in extent and must refer to the future. **the earth will become desolate.** This refers to major geophysical catastrophes. You can read about them in vivid detail in the Book of Revelation. But the cause, notice the cause. Because of her inhabitants. On account of the fruit of their deeds. The cause is human sin. Human sin brings destruction on the environment. And so when human sin reaches its full amount then God’s wrath will be poured out and **the earth will become desolate.** God is just and He will judge.

So the lesson is that when Micah had to live in a godless, corrupt, perverted society where all relationships were fractured by sin and military destruction loomed on the horizon, how did he respond? He responded by using the faith-rest drill and ReConnect’ing. By Recalling the promises of Scripture, by Connecting promises that related to the future restoration of the faithful remnant to His situation. And Trusting that no matter what happened to his nation God was faithful and would give the faithful remnant final victory. At the last the Lord Jesus Christ would plead Micah’s case and bring the faithful remnant into the kingdom.

So as the world is falling apart around you, as you battle in the heavenly places against real cosmic forces of evil, the prince and principalities of this world, Recall the promises made to the Church, the promises of Jesus Christ that the gates of hell will not prevail, that greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world, that we can put on the armor of God daily through prayer and we have ultimate victory in Christ. Connect these promises to your situation and Trust. God will defeat all our enemies and will take us out of this mess and into the presence of His glory. That's how you get through.

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