

**The Weekly Word**  
April 8-14, 2019

Spring has sprung, the air is warming and God's Word is rich and alive. Happy reading...

Grace and Peace, Bill

To hear the Bible read click this link... <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>.

**Monday, April 8: Micah 4-A day when we get along...**

Micah 4 includes one of the famous prophecies in the OT. *He [The Lord] will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken. All the nations may walk in the name of their gods, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.*

No weapons, no war, no training for war, that is a time worth dreaming upon. That is a day worth looking forward to... a day of real PEACE!

I've read this word many times, but I don't recall noticing the last sentence. *All the nations may walk in the name of their gods, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.*

Micah is not describing 'heaven' where God will settle accounts and provide His new heaven and new earth. The world described by Micah includes people who follow various gods. In this time the Lord's people will walk in faith, they will not be distracted by the other gods, but apparently will be given wholly to the Lord. Is this the 1000 year reign from the book of Revelation?

I tried to imagine what it would be like if all people of various faiths got along and could live together in harmony. This gives me inspiration that we could, and probably should, work toward that right now.

I have Nigerian friends who talk about a time before these latest years of violence. Many neighborhoods were mixed Muslim and Christian and people got along. Then people from the outside began showing up and stirring up things and violence started. As violence, generally sectarian in nature, escalated, the neighborhood peoples separated into Muslim sections of the city and Christian sections. No surprise, violence increased. And my friend, a Christian, noted that now we no longer have friendships and a mutual desire to save our neighborhood, which naturally reduces hostilities and works toward peace and calm. How sad.

As the world polarizes it seems we are moving further and further from Micah's prophetic word. I understand his word is not about the ultimate redemption of the world by the Lord, but he certainly describes a time that is much more desirable than today.

*Lord, give me a personal vision of Micah's day in my day. Show me how to be a man of peace that I might foster goodness, so that we all might live in peace and security. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**Tuesday, April 9: Micah 5- May it be so Lord...**

As I was reading verse 7-9 it struck a cord with me. *The remnant of Jacob will be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, which do not wait for anyone or depend on man. The remnant of Jacob will be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep, which mauls and mangles as it goes, and no one can rescue. Your hand will be lifted up in triumph over your enemies, and all your foes will be destroyed.*

I went back and read them again and these thoughts and musings emerged. I saw this as a word to the church today. Could we, the church, be the scattered remnant *in the midst of many peoples*? God has sprinkled us throughout the world's populations. Could we be the ones who are to 'maul' the self-centered societies by bringing the Good News of Jesus? In the Spirit could we triumph over enemies and foes?

*May it be so, Lord. May it be so.*

I love the imagery of being like dew from the Lord, like showers on the grass which *do not depend on man*, i.e. depend on the Lord!!

*May it be so, Lord, may it be so.*

*Lord, spread Your church out among the world with the Gospel of Jesus. May we depend on no man but only on You and may we nourish the grasses and devour Your enemy. I pray this in the one and only Name, Jesus, the Righteous One. Amen and amen.*

### **Wednesday, April 10: Micah 6- act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God ...**

Micah 6:8 is one of those verses that says much and upon which one could meditate an entire lifetime. *He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

Who of us who is seeking God, even a little bit, hasn't asked, "What is good? What must I do?" God answers that question; *To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

Act justly... this surely involves how we treat others, care for others and think of others. Living the 10 Commandments is certainly a start. Following the law to love neighbors is certainly part of this.

Love mercy... love... giving people your best, giving them the benefit of the doubt, forgiving when necessary and inviting people back into fellowship after forgiveness. And truly loving that you get to do all this. It is not simply do mercy but LOVE mercy!!!

Walk humbly with your God... walk, journey, follow, travel with God and do so humbly. No PRIDE allowed. Humbly. I notice also it is not 'walk humbly with God' but *with your God*. "Your" is a personal pronoun announcing I have taken God to be my God. I have surrendered to Him, because surrender is what a mortal does before the God of the Universe.

This is how I am to live as a Christ follower. This is what I am to do as a Christ follower.

*Lord, I need Your Holy Spirit's strength and grace to even begin to do this. Fill me that I might live as You would have me live. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

### **Thursday, April 11: Micah 7- WELCOME HOME...**

And so Micah ends on a positive note.

Micah declares his allegiance to the Lord, *But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me (7).*

The book closes with a word of God's graciousness... *Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. You will be faithful to Jacob, and show love to Abraham, as you pledged on oath to our ancestors in days long ago (18-20).*

What a wonderful picture of the Lord God for people still to this day. God delights to show mercy. When I (we) fall and I (we) return to Him, God lavishes compassion upon me (us) through forgiveness and restoration. God welcomes me home as the father did the prodigal (Luke 15).

This is not cheap grace. This isn't God will to save and forgive everyone no matter what. This is God keeping the door open and calling us to return to Him in repentance and seeking forgiveness. When a person returns in repentance, seeking forgiveness, God throws open His arms and shows love. As God welcomed back the remnant, as the father welcomes home the prodigal, so God our Father does to any of His creatures who turn to Him through faith in Jesus, the Lord God's one and only Son.

*Lord, I confess that I have had times of pride today, when in my heart I felt superior to others. Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. Cleanse me that I might be whiter than snow. And restore to me the joy of Your Holy Spirit. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

#### **Friday, April 12: Nahum 1- Jesus gift...**

As the sovereign God above all creation, God has the right to speak to anyone He chooses. Today God speaks to Nineveh and judges her. *The LORD has given a command concerning you, Nineveh: "You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the images and idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are vile" (14)*

The Lord God has the right to judge, whether the nation (or person) believes in Him or not. As the creed says, He [Jesus] will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I sit thinking about judgment. God will judge me. He will review my life and I will be found wanting but because of Jesus' sacrifice and my acceptance of it, God will render His judgment as if I were Jesus.

On the cross Jesus took my sinfulness and clothed me in his righteousness. As we march closer and closer to Holy Week and Good Friday the gift Jesus gave on the cross become clearer and clearer...

*Thank You, Jesus, for taking my defilement and giving me Your righteousness. I can never repay You. Never. Thank You. Praise You. In Your name Jesus, I pray. Amen.*

#### **Saturday, April 13: Nahum 2- Frightening words...**

God spoke frightening words to Nineveh through Nahum.

I wonder if they even listened. I wonder if they even cared that some small time prophet from a country they despised spoke this word of destruction to them. I wonder why the Lord cared to send this word. Was God's intent to shock Nineveh to repentance or encourage His people reminding them that He is there and He will save them?

I wonder...

In my wonderings I thought the judgments of God are not something with which to trifle. But this thought comes from someone who believes in God as revealed in the Bible and believes that God will someday judge the living and the dead.

What about all the people who do not believe as I do? Would they dismiss these words as nothing? Possibly? Probably.

Back to me... these words form a powerful reminder that someday God will judge the sin of the world and that means someday God will judge me. I may not have marched on and overrun innocent people. I may not have been ruthless toward others. I may not have tried to exert my power and strength over lesser peoples (nations) like Assyria. However, I have looked past and dismissed people because they were not to 'my standard.' I have used my voice, sometimes harshly, to persuade people to my opinion. And while not on the scale of Assyria, I have nonetheless had moments of selfish sinfulness. I have moments when I sin and fall short of glory of God (see Romans 3:23).

*Lord God, forgive me for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips. I am desperately in need of Your mercy and grace lest I deservedly receive Your just judgment.*

*Oh, the wonder of forgiveness through Jesus Christ, my Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.*

### **Sunday, April 14, 2019, Sunday Worship**

*If any of my thoughts or the Bible readings spark questions send an email reply and I will do my best to answer all questions from people on the list... I will answer personal questions privately; general questions will be answered in a subsequent email installment.*

*If you are reading along with me from the Living Hope website you can send questions or request being placed on the weekly email list by emailing Lisa at [office@LivingHopeCT.org](mailto:office@LivingHopeCT.org).*

Click [here](#) for a link to my sermons on the web. Sermons are generally posted within 2 days.