

13 SEP 2020 M2M Discussion Notes

Last Sunday, 6 SEP, we ended our discussion in Micah chapters 1 & 2 with a question/challenge. How do we proceed, act, etc. in times such as those; similar to what we are seeing in the U.S. today? The below questions tried to capture that challenge/thought shared:

- 1) Considering how people in power over another (whatever type of power that is) improperly treat the subordinate, how should we as Christians act? Especially, if we are the subordinate. What example should we demonstrate whether we are the one in power or not?
- 2) What path do we take to help us choose our actions?
- 3) How does light react / challenge / respond to hate?
- 4) What do we do having the knowledge that our situation may not change - we are impacted by God's discipline /punishment of evil?

I asked each of you to explore/research for yourself answers to the above questions. As a potential guide for our discussion, I have provided these ideas, scriptures, and comments. These are intended to supplement what each of you bring to the discussion.

A. Jesus' Instructions to the disciples:

The first thought that came to mind was Jesus addressing the disciples before He sent them out to preach the coming of the Kingdom of God to the Jews. The account is recorded in Matthew chapter 10. I believe it is worth the read before we venture further. Verse 28 is very interesting to have been said to the disciples before they even left for their missionary work.

"Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Mat 10:28

Let us look closely at what Jesus told the disciples about the world they were entering with His message...these were the Jews they were to approach; not the Gentiles or Samaritans.

- 1) How were they to react if welcomed or not welcomed?
- 2) How did Jesus describe the disciples in verse 16?
- 3) What was Jesus' advice if men handed them over (disobedience of the law) authorities?
- 4) Verse 22 tells us to expect what?
- 5) What promise did Jesus give to those who confess Him (verse 32-33)?

B. Exult in the Lord; even when it is bad:

The Old Testament book of Habakkuk has a powerful message for when "our times/situation is bad". Look with me at Habakkuk 3:17 – 19.

¹⁷ Though the fig tree should not blossom
And there be no fruit on the vines,
Though the yield of the olive should fail
And the fields produce no food,
Though the flock should be cut off from the fold

And there be no cattle in the stalls,
¹⁸ Yet I will exult in the LORD,
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.
¹⁹ The Lord GOD is my strength,
And He has made my feet like hinds' *feet*,
And makes me walk on my high places.

1) Can we say in very bad times that we will praise God/exult in the Lord? Praising God does not mean we agree with the situation; nor are we denying the facts/truth of the situation!

Let us look at a few other scriptures:

- Jeremiah 29:10 – 14
- Joshua 1:6 – 9
- Deuteronomy 31:1 – 8
- Psalms 37
- Proverbs 3:5 – 6
- Romans 5:1 – 11
- 1 Peter 1:6 – 9
- 2 Corinthians 12:8 – 10

2) What did you learn from reading the above scriptures?

3) Do you see any central theme?

C. What is the believer up against?

A believer in Jesus, God the creator, and His Holy Spirit must realize that the world in which we live does not want us, like us, or care about us! Take a moment before we look at what the world desires, what guidance the Word gives us in Ephesians 6:10 - 17 to be prepared. Remember who is the enemy.

¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Eph 6:12

Let us look at scriptures that tells/warns us of the evil the believer may experience...remember we are aliens in the land; our home is heaven.

2 Timothy 3:1 – 5

Galatians 5:19 – 26 & 6:9

1) These are only a few scriptures that describe the heart of man...should we expect non-believers to behave as believers?

2) What should we do in response to their actions?

D. Authority; good or bad – do we obey?

To many this is where the rub comes in! How can we obey leaders, laws, etc. that are so bad, unfair, and un-biblical?

I think it is very interesting that God spoke through Micah to reminded the people in chapter 6:8 what they were supposed to already know:

⁸ He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

The true one God was bringing discipline upon the people, and the nation...times were bad! God told them they would not be returning and only a future remnant would reclaim the promise land. They would be living in a foreign land (we are aliens awaiting to return home); must live a new life in that land; adjust to new laws and procedures/methods; and focus on worshiping God.

We should review the following characters in the Bible; and how they handled difficult legal and political situations:

Ester – Book of Ester – Chapter 1:1 - 10

Daniel & his friends – Book of Daniel – Chapter 1:8 -21; 3:1 -30; 6:1 - 28

Peter and the disciples – Book of Acts – Chapter 5:12 - 42

Paul reminds us that God uses authority, and puts authority in place for His purposes. Here a few scriptures worth reading as we prepare to discuss our concerns:

Romans 12:14 – 21 & 13:1 – 7

Mark 12:13 – 17

Proverbs 16:2 & 29:2 – 12

Psalm 46 & 49

1 Peter 2:18 & 3:14 – 15

- 1) Should we obey laws that are directly against the Word of God?
- 2) If we choose to be disobedient of the laws of the land, what should we expect from authority?
- 3) Are we to be silent when asked why we are different; or why we disagree?
- 4) How are we to address/act with even non-believing authority?

Brothers in Christ, I hope these scriptures readings and comments/questions helps you explore Tony's question/challenge to us. I trust you will do some digging and be ready to share how you interpret the Word...what guidance/advice to you see to help us navigate today's rough waters of politically correct speech and non-biblical worldviews, laws, and policies. By no means did I cover every scripture or even approached every angle on the challenge.

I look forward to our discussion on Sunday.