

# Micah 2:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil.

## Analysis

**Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil** (לֶכֶן כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה הִנְנִי חֹשֵׁב עַל-הַמִּשְׁפָּחָה הַזֹּאת רָעָה, lakhen koh-amar YHWH hineni choshev al-hammishpachah hazzo't ra'ah). The divine "therefore" (לֶכֶן, lakhen) links judgment to crime. God חֹשֵׁב (choshev, devises/plans) רָעָה (ra'ah, evil/calamity) against the מִשְׁפָּחָה (mishpachah, family/clan)—using the oppressors' own vocabulary. They "devised" wickedness (2:1, חֹשְׁבֵי-אָוֶן, choshevei-aven); God devises judgment. Measure for measure—lex talionis (Exodus 21:23-25).

**From which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily** (אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תַמִּישׁוּ מִשָּׁם צַמְרֹתֵיכֶם וְלֹא תֵלְכוּ רוּמָה, asher lo-tamishu missham tsavve'roteikhem we-lo telkhu romah). The imagery is a yoke from which they cannot remove צַמְרֹה (tsavvar, neck)—captivity, subjugation, exile. רוּמָה (romah, haughtily/proudly) describes their former arrogance; judgment will humble them. Those who walked proudly oppressing others will walk bent under exile's yoke.

**For this time is evil** (כִּי עֵת רָעָה הִיא, ki et ra'ah hi). The עֵת (et, time/season) is evil—an era of judgment, not prosperity. Amos similarly warned: **"Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time"** (Amos 5:13). The oppressors' evil deeds inaugurated an evil time of reckoning. Galatians 6:7-8 states the principle: **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."** They sowed oppression; they'll reap captivity.

## Historical Context

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The phrase "this family" likely refers to the ruling class, wealthy landowners, and corrupt officials who exploited the poor. God's judgment came through Assyrian invasion (722 BC for Northern Kingdom, 701 BC assault on Judah) and later Babylonian exile (586 BC). The imagery of a yoke they cannot remove reflects captivity's inescapability—deportation to foreign lands, loss of freedom, subjugation to pagan empires.

The concept of divine measure-for-measure justice pervades Scripture. Haman was hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai (Esther 7:10). Babylon, which destroyed Jerusalem, was itself destroyed (Jeremiah 50-51). Revelation depicts God's judgments as righteous and fitting (Revelation 16:5-7, 18:6-8). The principle: God's justice precisely fits the crime. Those who devise evil against neighbors experience corresponding evil. This isn't vindictive but restorative—removing oppressors protects the vulnerable and vindicates the righteousness of God's moral order.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's use of measure-for-measure judgment (devising evil against those who devised evil) demonstrate both justice and irony?
2. What does the imagery of an inescapable yoke teach about the inevitability of consequences for persistent covenant violation?
3. In what ways might modern Christians walk 'haughtily' in ways that invite divine humbling?



hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.

**Lamentations 5:5** (Parallel theme): Our necks are under persecution: we labour, and have no rest.

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