

# Micah 2:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy: ye pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war.

## Analysis

**Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy** (וְאַתָּמָל עַמִּי לְאֹיֵב וְקֹמֶם) we-etmul ammi le-oyev yeqomem). אַתָּמָל (etmul, recently/lately) indicates recent escalation. God's own עַמִּי (ammi, my people) have become לְאֹיֵב (le-oyev, an enemy)—shocking role reversal. Covenant people acting as God's enemies is profound tragedy. קֹמֶם (qomem, rise up) suggests organized, aggressive hostility.

**Ye pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely** (מִמְול) (שְׁלָמָה אֶדֶר מִפְשָׁטוֹן מַעֲבָרִים בְּטַח). The imagery depicts violent robbery—stripping שְׁלָמָה (salmah, outer cloak) and אֶדֶר (eder, inner garment, often translated "robe") from travelers passing בְּטַח (betach, securely/safely/trustingly). These travelers aren't soldiers but peaceful citizens expecting safety in their own land. Exodus 22:26-27 commanded returning pledged cloaks before sunset because the poor needed them for warmth.

**As men averse from war** (שׁוּבֵי מִלְחָמָה) (shuvei milchamah). שׁוּב (shuv, return) describes men returning from war—veterans expecting peacetime security. Instead, they're robbed by their own countrymen. The oppressors' cruelty extends even to those who defended the nation. This illustrates societal breakdown where covenant community becomes predatory, the vulnerable are exploited, and trust evaporates. Romans 13:10 declares: "**Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.**" Israel's elite failed this basic covenant obligation, preying on neighbors rather than protecting them.

## Historical Context

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The 8th century BC saw increasing wealth disparity and social breakdown in Israel and Judah. While elites accumulated luxury goods (Amos 3:15, 6:4-6), the poor were exploited through debt slavery (Amos 2:6), judicial corruption (Isaiah 1:23), and violent robbery. The prophets consistently condemned this covenant violation —Micah, Amos, Isaiah, and Hosea all attacked economic oppression.

The specific crime—stripping cloaks from travelers—violated explicit law. Exodus 22:26-27 required returning a pledged garment by sunset: "**For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep?**" Deuteronomy 24:12-13 similarly protected debtors' basic needs. Yet Israel's elite ignored these protections, treating covenant brothers as enemy spoil. James later condemned similar oppression: "**Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just**" (James 5:5-6).

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's designation of His own people as 'risen up as an enemy' underscore the severity of covenant violation?
2. What does the crime of stripping garments from peaceful travelers teach about how sin destroys community trust and safety?
3. In what ways might Christians 'rise up as enemies' against God by exploiting or harming fellow believers?

## Interlinear Text

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אֲזֶר שְׁלָמָה מִמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶתְתָּמָן וְלְעִמִּי  
Even of late my people as an enemy is risen up with the garment the robe  
H865 H5971 H341 H6965 H4136 H8008 H145

מִלְחָמָה: שׁוֹבֵב בְּטַח מַעֲבָר יָמִים תְּפַשֵּׂט וְלִ  
ye pull off from them that pass by securely as men averse from war  
H6584 H5674 H983 H7725 H4421

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