

## THE BOOK OF MICAH

### Lesson 7, Chapter 4

In our previous lesson, we closed at Micah chapter 4 verse 2. This has to be one of the most important, inspiring, hopeful, and yet provocative passages in the entire Old Testament. It is:

**CJB Micah 4:2** *Many Gentiles will go and say, "Come, let's go up to the mountain of YEHOVEH, to the house of the God of Ya'akov! He will teach us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For out of Tziyon will go forth Torah, the word of YEHOVEH from Yerushalayim.*

Before we begin from that point, let's first re-read this hugely important prophetic revelation that is Micah chapter 4, because it speaks of the End Times; a time I believe we have just stepped over the threshold and entered rather recently... although in its earliest stage by my estimation.

### RE-READ MICAH CHAPTER 4 all

I pointed out in our last lesson that Micah and Isaiah were contemporaries and surely knew of each other and probably knew each other personally. So, some of the things we see in Micah are mirrored in Isaiah, and vice versa.

The theme of Micah chapters 4 and 5 is quite different from the first 3 chapters. Those first 3 were all about judgment and the reasons for it. Chapters 4 and 5 are all about redemption and restoration as a result of God's great compassion. One of the most important aspects of this redemption and restoration is that it has a location; it emanates from a specific place. That place is Zion, and the mountain on which the Temple of God will be built. The majesty and glory of this place will rise above anything ever seen on earth in its long history because the king of the world will reside and rule from there. This place is best known today as Jerusalem.

Formerly heathen nations (virtually all other nations on earth other than for Israel) will come streaming to Zion... to this new House of God... to hear the Torah, the Law, and learn to become obedient to it. This fact needs to be

acknowledged and carved into our minds, mostly because Christendom refuses to accept this plain and clearly worded biblical prophecy. This lack of belief is primarily due to the non-acceptance of the ongoing relevance and authority of the Torah and the Law of Moses (as Yeshua Himself commanded in Matthew 5), and they also cannot accept the idea of a *real* and tangible House of God in the 1000-year reign of Christ. Therefore, Christian doctrine does not accept that the Prophets say that this will all come about, and that all nations will come to a *real* physical place to learn the *real* and long existing Torah given to Israel on Mt. Sinai. Rather, the Church generally has spiritualized it all away, making it symbolism, or allegorical, and not real and tangible, because there is no other way to rationalize what are their intellectually dishonest doctrines about the Torah, the Temple, and many other End Times matters laid out by so many biblical Prophets. The danger of this for the world, let alone for professing Believers, is more than I have a word for.

Yet, think about the irony of what we're being told. So many of these gentile nations will be full of Christians. Yet, the bulk of these Christians who have denied all these Scriptural things I've just listed, and that we have read, will need to have all those manmade doctrines they have held dear dispelled, and then they will all have to be re-taught what is actual truth. Generally speaking, Christians don't know anything about the Torah or the Law of Moses, any more than others who have never even known who God is would know the Torah or the Law of Moses. Therefore, as always, it will be the leaders... civil and religious... that will be those who stream to Jerusalem to learn God's ways so that they can pass it on.

I regularly like to point out that the Book of Ezekiel spends 8 or its final 9 chapters describing this new Temple in detail (even including exact physical measurements), explaining who will operate it, what will happen there, where exactly it will be located, etc. I want to read to you the beginning words of this block of chapters from this section of Ezekiel so that you can see what I mean.

**CJB Ezekiel 40:1-5** *In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month- this was the fourteenth year after the city [of Yerushalayim] was struck- it was on that very day that the hand of Yehoveh was on me, and he took me*

*there. <sup>2</sup> In visions God brought me into the land of Isra'el and put me down on a very high mountain; on it, toward the south, it seemed that a city was being built. <sup>3</sup> That is where he took me, and there in front of me was a man whose appearance was like bronze. He had a flax cord and a measuring rod in his hand, and he stood in the gateway. <sup>4</sup> The man said to me, "Human being, look with your eyes, hear with your ears, and pay attention to all the things I am showing you; because the reason you were brought here is so that I could show them to you. Tell everything you see to the house of Isra'el." <sup>5</sup> There was a wall surrounding the house. The man had in his hand a measuring rod six cubits long [ten-and-a-half feet], each cubit [twenty-one inches] being a normal cubit [eighteen inches] plus a handbreadth [three inches]. He measured the wall's width at ten-and-a-half feet and its height ten-and-a-half feet.*

These sorts of measurements continue on chapter after chapter until the last chapter, which goes on to speak about the new division of land for the 12 tribes that will happen during the Millennial times. I urge you to take the 30 minutes or so to read this all, because you will quickly see the absurdity of trying to say that this is only spiritually symbolic and not real and tangible.

Back to Micah 4:2. I think this passage leads us to realize that if we never have, we need to take up obedience to God's Torah now (something we should have been doing all along) and not wait until the Apocalypse finally happens. There's so much to learn, why not learn it now and begin our obedience now? According to Yeshua, there is a big advantage for us who will do this.

**CJB Matthew 5:19** *So whoever disobeys the least of these mitzvot and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Clearly, the terms greatest and least represent the opposite and extreme ends of a spectrum of experience. That is, all who are admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven will be placed into some God-defined hierarchy of social status and order that ranges along a spectrum from the absolute least to the absolute

greatest. This should not sound strange to us; God has always organized His Creation into hierarchies, orders, and categories. It is His nature to do so. We read in the Bible about the way Heaven is set up with different status and levels of authority and power for its many classes of divine beings, and God did the same on earth among His created creatures, placing humans as the greatest. And then within one category of creatures (humans), He again ordered us into various statuses and levels of authority. So, it will remain all throughout the 1000-year reign of Messiah. Why would anyone knowingly choose to be at the lowest end of anything? The Bible urges God-worshippers to study the Torah and the Prophets in order to learn God's ways, and then sincerely walk in those ways (to observe them), and if we do, we will be placed into the higher and greater end of the Kingdom spectrum. Don't, and we will get opposite results. This isn't a manmade doctrine; this is actual biblical pronouncement.

Returning to Micah 4:2, it seems clear that the Messiah Yeshua (king of the Millennial Temple period) will be the teacher and judge. Since this teaching is quite real and not to be spiritualized away into some hazy ideal, then practicality says that all who come to the mountain in Zion will not be personally taught by Yeshua. Rather, just as in His first advent, He put together an inner-circle group of 12 to teach them directly, and the 12 were then assigned to take what they learned from their Master out to others, so there will be some type of similar teaching and then delegation to others when this new Kingdom era begins.

Moving on to verse 3, we read:

**CJB Micah 4:3 *He will judge between many peoples and arbitrate for many nations far away. Then they will hammer their swords into plow-blades and their spears into pruning-knives; nations will not raise swords at each other, and they will no longer learn war.***

This verse expresses the hope of all mankind... that wars will end, and that peace will break out, never to be interrupted by war again. The truth is that although humans ought to always strive for peace, the regular eruption of wars will not cease until Messiah comes to take control of the world. War is

innate in human nature and in human governments, even though starry-eyed intellectuals (whether religious or secular) believe that humanity is capable of achieving world peace on our own. In fact, Marxism, which is all the rage today, teaches that the way to universal peace is for all nations to set God on the shelf and no longer strive to follow His ways. That is, it is only when humanity looks entirely to ourselves and our innate goodness, and shuns God and His commands, that we can bring in a utopia or planet Earth. It is the attempt to follow God's laws and ordinances that is the primary source of human unhappiness and strife, and therefore, it is God that is the primary cause for wars in the first place. As preposterous as this might sound to us, don't ever lose track of the sad reality that there are a number of Christian denominations that believe in this Marxist view to one degree or another. Some believe that only when mankind has achieved a utopian level will the Messiah return. Thus, it is the job of Believers to establish God's Kingdom on earth, and only then will Christ come to rule over a now pacified earth. I don't think I need to say too much about how this is not so; the Bible, when allowed, speaks for itself and clearly makes such viewpoints as nonsense and the exact opposite of what is true.

The one who will be a judge between peoples and nations is called "He," and it is clear from verse 2 that this "he" is Yehoveh. That these nations and peoples are many and varied and far away (from Israel) says that these people being spoken of are not Israel; Yehoveh's judging goes far beyond the Levant. It is because these nations and peoples come to Jerusalem and stand before the judge (who is God), wanting to settle their disputes, that peaceful and perfect resolutions will happen. It is precisely because the Law of Moses... the Torah... will be in effect worldwide that the formula and standard for the settling of differences becomes possible. And it is that perfect code of morality that allows for it.

I want to veer off a little while because of what it is that the first 3 verses of Micah are saying to us, in order to try to help us visualize it in real terms and not just in some foggy mental mist of inspired words. The reality is that the only way any of us can be judged by a government or by God, is according to some known standard that has been previously established. How can someone accuse us of wrongdoing if there is nothing to say what actions of men are

right or wrong? One of the historically earliest enlightened rulers who understood the need for a set-down, stable, and known set of societal rules was Hammurabi. Hammurabi was the 6<sup>th</sup> king of the most ancient national version of Babylon, and he ruled from the mid-1700s B.C. to the end of that century. This means he ruled roughly during the time of Jacob. Hammurabi created a written set of laws for his kingdom to abide by and thus gave them a stable and doable set of rules to be judged by. What was right and wrong, good and evil in his eyes, was known to all, and so his judgments had a standard.

So, the question for us is that since all people on earth are going to have our lives judged, pagan or God-worshipper, then what is that objective and known standard that God is going to use? It is going to be our behaviors that are judged. It is going to be our acceptance and determination to follow God's ways, or our insistence on following our own ways that seem good to us in our own eyes. Yes, true Believers in Yeshua will not be condemned to everlasting death. But that is not the same thing as having our lives and behaviors judged to see how little or much we obeyed God. As I mentioned earlier that particular judgment for Believers will determine where we each fit in a hierarchy of status and authority in the Millennial Kingdom.

The Torah... specifically the Law of Moses... is God's far superior version of the Code of Hammurabi. The Mosaic Law lays out what proper and improper behavior is. Are we doing what is right in God's eyes? Check the Law of Moses. Have we committed a sin in God's eyes? Check the Law of Moses. The Constantinian Church, on the other hand, has demonized and abolished the biblical code, the standard for judging, and says that upon the advent of Jesus, our only command is to love in whatever way we each see fit. What has been lost in such a foolish thing is just how to define love, and what it is in God's eyes. We ought to see by now that each culture of the world has defined love, right and wrong, and proper behaviors in their own way. Is God going to use any or all of those worldly cultural standards as his formula for judging us? God says that to love Him *means* to obey Him. It has nothing to do with our affection. So, what is it exactly that we are to obey? Our Savior says it is the Torah and the Prophets. And that what we find in them will be the standard for the world, says Micah; it will be the standard King Yeshua will use to dispense

justice over all people. For as Paul says, without a law there can be no sin. That is, without an explicit standard of right and wrong, how can one know and do wrong?

The second part of verse 3 says that the implements of war will no longer be used for war. Literally, this is saying they will be converted into agricultural use. While some no doubt will be reworked for the field and vineyard, the point is that no war implements will be needed, and instead, all those resources will be used for creating plenty of food for everyone. Plenty of food is a standard biblical way of speaking of peace and abundance. It is a complete reversal of all the world has known since Cain murdered Abel. Since Nimrod invented warfare between nations. There has never been a time of universal peace on earth and goodwill between all men. Nowhere is this complete reversal so demonstrated as between the words of Joel 4: 9-12 and what we see here in Micah 4:3. Even the same metaphors are used so that we cannot possibly miss it.

**CJB Joel 4:9-12   <sup>9</sup> "Proclaim this among the nations: 'Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men approach and attack.' <sup>10</sup> Hammer your plow-blades into swords and your pruning-knives into spears. Let the weak say, 'I am strong.' <sup>11</sup> Hurry, come, you surrounding nations, gather yourselves together!" Bring your warriors down, Yehoveh! <sup>12</sup> "Let the nations be roused and come up to the Valley of Y'hoshafat [Yehoveh judges]. For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations."**

Can you see this obvious reversal? First, in a time of divine judgment, it is peaceful agricultural plow-blades and pruning knives that are made into weapons of war. Then, later, in a time of divine restoration, it is weapons of war that will be made into peaceful implements of agriculture. Now, instead of the nations learning the ways of Nimrod, the prince of war, the nations will learn the ways of God, the prince of peace. Verse 4 continues this agrarian metaphor as representative of a peace theme.



**CJB Micah 4:4** *Instead, each person will sit under his vine and fig tree, with no one to upset him, for the mouth of Yehoveh-Tzva'ot has spoken.*

“Sitting under one’s vine and fig tree” is another ancient expression of the ideal of perfect peace and abundance. Men will live securely with no need for walls or weapons. A man can sit in his own field and vineyard with no fear of having it taken from him. No poverty, no crime. No strong taking advantage of the weak. It will be to the point that all people are so sold out to following God’s ways, that there will be no one to upset anyone else because we’re all living by the same accepted standard: the Torah. And this is 100% guaranteed to be the situation because, says Micah, “Yehoveh-Tzva’ot” has spoken it. It’s been a done deal in Heaven for a long time. But now, upon the Prophet speaking it on earth, those words of God become dynamic on earth and take on a life of their own. The prophecy has been set into motion, and nothing and no one can stop it. What a wonderful promise and truth we all have to look forward to if only we will embrace it! The downside is that we’re not there, yet. This planet and all of us have much trial and tribulation to go through as we wait upon the Lord.

**CJB Micah 4:5** *For all the peoples will walk, each in the name of its god; but we will walk in the name of Yehoveh our God forever and ever.*

There is no denying that this verse can be puzzling in light of what we have previously read. That said, there’s no evidence that this has copyist errors in it or was added later or redacted at some point. Taking it as original, then, when we factor in that this is given in the genre of Hebrew poetry, I think we can almost put a parenthesis around the words of verse 5. That is, it’s like a side note or comment that Micah is adding. Micah is saying, now that God has revealed all of this to me, what I now understand is that even though this is the way things are now (verse 5), later on it will transform into the way of verses 1-4. For now, in Micah’s day and up until the end of the End Times, people will indeed continue to walk in the ways of their own gods. But we (meaning Israel) will walk in the name of Yehoveh, and this means to walk in the ways of Yehoveh’s Torah. I also lean towards this, implying that Micah



saying they are already walking in the ways of the Torah... so they have a head start over everyone else. Israel is already practicing what will someday have to be taught to the gentile nations. That is, the Torah (which the gentile nations and peoples do not know) will become the divine standard the entire world will be required to meet, and Israel has the advantage of already having this knowledge and blessing to be walking in it already (no matter how imperfectly they are doing so in his day).

It is best if we read verses 6 and 7 together because they represent a single unified thought

**CJB Micah 4:6-7** ***6 "When that day comes," says Yehoveh, "I will assemble the lame and gather those who were dispersed, along with those I afflicted. 7 I will make the lame a remnant and those who were driven off a strong nation." Yehoveh will rule them on Mount Tziyon from that time forth and forever.***

Verse 5 worked as a contrast between it and verses 6 and 7. Verse 5 says this is how it is now and for the indiscernible future. Verses 6 and 7 say this is how it will be "when that day (the End, the Day of the Lord) arrives, as does a new era. But, in order for that day to come, something important must first happen: the lame and the dispersed and the afflicted must reassemble. Clearly, all of these nouns... the lame, the dispersed, and the afflicted... are parts of Israel from different times in their long history. So, God says that when that moment arrives that He begins the judging process, and then brings peace and restoration to it, Israel must first, in all its historic parts, be reassembled and returned to their natural homeland.

I think it is important to grasp a reality that relatively few people have. Not since Micah's time until the year 1948 (post WWII) did that reassembly spoken about begin to occur. Imagine that. We live in the era that God says must happen first before the End of Days and the installation of the Millennial Kingdom finally come about. Although the initial stage of that reassembly of Israel began in 1948 when Israel was reborn as a Jewish nation, the next phase didn't happen until 2005 when a law was passed in Israel that allowed those who were driven off 27 centuries earlier (the 10 tribes of

Ephraim/Israel) to return but without having to convert to the religions of the Jews: Judaism. Those 10 tribes still exist, but generally speaking, they practiced the way of their forefathers.... not the ways of the 2 tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who formed a people later on called "Jews". The ways of Judah and Benjamin are embodied in the religion of Judaism, but the 10 tribes practiced something else. Since 1948, Israel has demanded that any returnee had to prove their Jewishness and to practice Judaism. Many of the 10 tribes refused to say they were Jews or convert their faith practices to Judaism, so they weren't allowed to come. But, in 2005, the door was opened to the return of all of the Israelite remnant; the lame, dispersed, and afflicted... if they could prove that they were indeed one of the 10 Lost Tribes... and come they have by the hundreds, that is slowly growing into the thousands. What a time we live in! So, sit up and take notice because prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes nearly every day, now, after a very long period of dormancy.

Bible history shows us that after long waits from the time a prophecy is announced, to when prophetic fulfillment begins to happen, it often happens suddenly. This is why we see such rapid developments regarding Israel in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as the nations of the world are turning nearly in unison against them. Time is being compressed; we all feel it. Such is what we typically witness when God moves, and I am personally convinced this explains our fleeting era in which a day seems like but an hour, and a month seems like but a week. All that was prophesied is upon us, and we need to react to that startling reality by listening to God more intently than ever before, and doing what He tells us, even if it is costly. What He tells us today was told to the Hebrews long ago and set down in Law at Mt. Sinai; there is no ambiguity. It's only a question of our personal faith and trust. Obey God's laws and commands and have one outcome; don't and have the opposite outcome. If you take nothing else from today's lesson than this, I will be most satisfied.

I do not want to leave verses 6 and 7 before we take a moment to discuss the "afflicted" that are mentioned. The afflicted are those whom God was punishing. They are those whom God warned prophetically to straighten-up-and-fly-right, or they would face calamity in various forms, with these calamities called curses in the Torah. They did not heed Him, and so God reacted in justice by using various methods, including the oppression of other

peoples and nations upon them. Micah's prophecy is saying that the time of their affliction is nearly over. It is time for reconciliation and a return home.

Verse 8 is:

**CJB Micah 4:8** *You, tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Tziyon, to you your former sovereignty will return, the royal power of the daughter of Yerushalayim.*

This verse is to be seen as a kind of pivot-point and transition from verses 1 – 7 to verses 9 – 14. Micah directly addresses people and identifies two specific locations. This is best reconstructed from its original Hebrew that begins with: **wü´aTTâ migDal-`ë°der `ö°pel Bat-ciyyôn.**

The Tower of the flock is more literally **Midgal-eder**. And hill is more literally **ophel**. To understand the references to these two places, we must start with Genesis 35:16. This is the sad place where Rachael, Jacob's wife, died in childbirth with Benjamin. Jacob buried her in a place north of Jerusalem before continuing his intended journey further to the south in Canaan.

**CJB Genesis 35:16-21** *<sup>16</sup> Then they traveled on from Beit-El, and while there was still some distance to go before arriving in Efrat, Rachel went into labor, and she had great difficulty with it. <sup>17</sup> While she was undergoing this hard labor, the midwife said to her, "Don't worry, this is also a son for you." <sup>18</sup> But she died in childbirth. As she was dying she named her son Ben-Oni [son of my grief], but his father called him Binyamin [son of the right hand, son of the south]. <sup>19</sup> So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Efrat (that is, Beit-Lechem). <sup>20</sup> Ya'akov set up a standing-stone on her grave; it is the standing-stone of Rachel's grave to this day. <sup>21</sup> Isra'el continued his travels and pitched his tent on the other side of Migdal-'Eder.*

It is believed that this **Migdal-Eder** is located adjacent to Bethlehem. So very likely, the reference is to the place David was born. This corresponds quite well with the next place mentioned: **Ophel**. **Ophel** is the name of the uppermost section of the ancient City of David. It ends as the Temple Mount

property atop Mt. Moriah begins. Most older commentaries won't ever mention this connection because, until just a few decades ago, the City of David was considered, even by Bible scholars, as a myth. But it turned out it was real, and most of it has been uncovered, and tourists can visit it today. Much of the **Ophel** has not been excavated, however, because the main highway that rings around the Old City of Jerusalem covers over those ancient ruins. Nonetheless some has been uncovered, and it is pretty exciting to visit it. So, this verse is mostly about David in the sense that the two places mentioned are his place of birth and the place from which he ruled as king. This is understood because the model for the kingdom of the End Times is the empire that David and Solomon put together and ruled over. This was considered the Golden Age of Israel, and it was what all Israel hoped to regain. Amazingly the prophecy says that the person these two locations represent (David) is going to be the first to rule over this restored and redeemed Kingdom of God that comes at the End Times. No one in Micah's era or for hundreds of years could possibly have gathered that this meant the Messiah who would come from David's line, and that this Messiah was Yeshua of Nazareth. Unfortunately, most of Israel today doesn't grasp that, either.

The Hebrew term **bat-ciyyon** (Zion) means daughter of Zion. Such a title is a way of speaking of the city of Zion personified as a maiden... a pure virgin. Of course. This is because even though the Zion of Micah's day and up until our time is anything but pure, upon the Day of the Lord, it will be redeemed and made pure.

As verses 6 and 7 need to be read together as one unified thought, so do verses 9 and 10.

**CJB Micah 4:9-10** ***<sup>9</sup> Why are you now crying out? Don't you have a king? Has your counselor been destroyed, that you are seized with pain like a woman in labor? <sup>10</sup> Be in pain! Work to give birth like a woman in labor, daughter of Tziyon! For now you will go out of the city and live in the wilds till you reach Bavel. There you will be rescued; there Yehoveh will redeem you from the power of your enemies.***

Interestingly, the theme of redemption and restoration is paused to insert the theme of misery. Notice the repeat and the use of the word “now”. These each capture a particular moment in Israel’s history. In the case of the first “now”, it is likened to the writhing and moaning of a woman in the midst of childbirth. The second “now” is likened to the terrible discomforts of no longer living in a civilized city but rather being suddenly thrown out and having to live in a foreboding wilderness. Overall, Micah says that although the pain of these events will seem like something that no one could endure for very long, there is a hope of restoration and redemption. These 2 verses together form well-defined Hebrew poetry, as the words are chosen to emit great emotion at the expense of simple, cold prose that could provide more accurate or specific information.

In short summary, verses 1 – 8 picture Yehoveh reestablishing the splendor of the Holy City, and bringing Israel back into their land, and Him moving back into His residence in the Temple to rule over His people. Verses 9 and 10 picture Israel giving way to agony and depression. The King and Counselor of Israel have perished, and Zion is about to suffer foreign oppression and to be removed to a foreign country: Babylon.

The loss of national leaders to coup or battle or illness, or death was par for the course in all the nations of the earth. But Israel has lost her Counselor and King due to their unfaithfulness to God. They sinned and replaced God’s Torah with their doctrines and traditions. Therefore, Israel was to understand that the reason they lost their leaders was due to God’s direct wrath against them and not simply the natural life events, any human experiences, or the power of an enemy who had greater territorial ambitions.

When we remember the two “nows” that refer to two separate historical events, then it is most likely that the first “now” is speaking about the Assyrian invasion of the 10 northern tribes and their dispersion all over Asia and North Africa. The second “now” is better defined because Babylon, as the invader and conqueror, is specifically mentioned. I don’t think the metaphors of a woman in labor pain versus being people kicked out of the city into the wilderness are meant to be compared as to their level of intensity or effect. That is, one isn’t worse or more painful than the other. Rather, God has

determined that Israel... both kingdoms... are going to have to experience humiliation and pain of exiles before they can be restored and redeemed. All of God's warnings through so many prophets over long periods of time have mostly fallen on deaf ears. Or, in a couple of cases, they were heeded for a relatively short time before quickly reverting to their old and perverted ways.

In so many ways, this is a metaphor or illustration of the individual walks of so many God-worshippers. Some remain faithful, and others only for a short time. Some mature and flower even more beautifully as time goes on, while others bloom for a moment, then fade and never progress. Yeshua's parable of the seeds tells this same story so very well. I'll end today's lesson with it as we keep Micah's prophecy in mind and the condition of Israel in his day.

**CJB *Matthew 13:1-9 That same day, Yeshua went out of the house and sat down by the lake; <sup>2</sup> but such a large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there while the crowd stood on the shore. <sup>3</sup> He told them many things in parables: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. <sup>4</sup> As he sowed, some seed fell alongside the path; and the birds came and ate it up. <sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on rocky patches where there was not much soil. It sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow; <sup>6</sup> but when the sun had risen, the young plants were scorched; and since their roots were not deep, they dried up. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. <sup>8</sup> But others fell into rich soil and produced grain, a hundred or sixty or thirty times as much as had been sown. <sup>9</sup> Those who have ears, let them hear!"***