Micah 6-7

Review…

- **Micah** – the 33rd book of the OT – the 6th of what is known as the 12 Minor Prophets…
  - Micah was a contemporary of prophets Hosea / Amos / and Isaiah…
  - But uniquely was called by God to prophecy against both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms!
  - His message was broken up into 3 sermons – each begins with the phrase – "Hear…"
- The 1st message was to the cities of Samaria and Jerusalem – judgment was coming!
  - But Israel and Judah were living in denial of the coming judgment…
  - Israel wanted someone to tell God was ok with their sin – no consequence for their actions!
- The 2nd message – to the leaders of Israel…
  - Micah condemned the leaders – because rather than serve the people they devoured them!
  - He condemned the prophets – who only prophesied for money!
  - Because they led the people astray – Jerusalem and the Temple of God would be destroyed!
  - Yet Micah predicted that in the Last Days the (*4th*) Temple would be rebuilt…
  - But first Judah would be conquered by Babylon / then the Messiah would be killed (*struck*)…
  - After which He would return to restore the remnant of Israel – defeated the nations (*Assyrians*)…
  - And finally establish His Millennial Kingdom – and all people will come to the House of the Lord!

The 3rd message – from failure to fogiveness… (*3 things*)

- **1st – Welcome to the court room – put your faith in God… vs. 1-8**
  - 1st – None are righteous… vs. 1-3
    - For the 3rd and final time Micah calls on Israel to 'Hear' the Lord…
      - Micah introduces a courtroom scene – to answer the question of faithfulness...
      - Israel was up first – and they had an opportunity to plead their case against God
      - They were to plead their case before the 'Jury' – the mountains and the hills…
      - These were the perfect witness – because they had been around from the beginning…
      - They had seen the generations come and go – and could act as an unbiased mediator!
    - God called on those same mountains / foundations to listen to Him…
      - He ALSO had a complaint – and He would prosecute Israel to the full extent of the law!
      - How had God offended (*wearied*) Israel – He demanded to know the answer (*testify*)!
      - The assumption is that Israel had 'complained to the hills' – about the Law of God…
      - The Law represented the contract between God and Israel - 613 laws – **Leviticus 18:5**…
      - A contract that they had not been faithful to uphold – they were guilty…
      - But Israel argued there were too many 'wearisome' commands – the Law was too hard!
    - Because the point of the Law was never to make us righteous – but to wear us out!
      - Most people think they are 'good' – few if any would say they are 'Bad'…
      - But what is their definition of 'good' – whose definition are they using…
      - God defines good as perfection - **Matthew 5:48** – which is why Paul tells us…
      - **Romans 3:10** – "There is none righteous, no, not one…'"
  - 2nd – The problem of the heart… vs. 4-5
    - God freed Israel from the bondage of Egypt – gave them Moses and Aaron…
      - And When Balak tried to curse – God made Balaam bless Israel instead – **Numbers 23:11**
      - He brought Israel from the Acacia grove – to Gilgal – the entrance to the Promised Land…
      - **Numbers 25:1** - Israel was camped at Shittim (*acacia*) when God made Balaam bless them
      - But since King Balak could not get Balaam to curse Israel – he used a devious tactic...

- He sent the women of Moab to come down and seduce the men of Israel...
- Of course they did not send their ugly women - they sent the most beautiful...
- And the men of Israel were quickly smitten - and began to fall for these pagan beauties...
- Part of the pagan worship of Baal Peor (*Chemosh*) - the god of Moab - was sensual...
- The women would entice Israel to worship their god through seduction…
- So King Balak got Israel to compromise - he got them to curse themselves!
- Yet God spared Israel – though 23,000 died – and he still brought them to Gilgal!

▪ Get the picture – God brought Israel out of bondage and made them His people…
- And God WOULD NOT let anyone curse His people – they were untouchable…
- But in spite of His faithfulness – Israel managed to find a way to CURSE themselves!
- God was trying to show Israel the problem was not the Law – they were the problem…
- They were going to find a way to sin no matter what – because they were sinners!
- In **Matthew 5** – Jesus gave a famous teaching we call the Sermon on the Mount…
- In it He challenged the self-righteousness - those who thought they were good…
- You have heard it said – do not murder / do not commit adultery…
- But I say if you have hated a brother / or looked at a women – you are guilty!
- Because the problem is not our actions – murder / adultery – the problem is in our heart!
- We are not a sinner because we sin – we sin because we are by nature a sinner!

o 3rd – The futility of sacrifice… vs. 6-7
▪ Israel knew one-day everyone would have to stand before the Lord…
- And having established their guilt – how could they come bow before the HIGH GOD…
- Could Israel offer a sacrifice for their sins – with any of the 4 types listed in the Law…
- 1 – Burnt offerings - a free will offering – **Leviticus 1:3-9**...
- 2 – A one year old calf – the sin offering – **Leviticus 9:2**
- 3 – With thousands of rams – the peace offering - **Leviticus 3:1**
- 4 – with 10,000 river of oil - LOTS of grain offering – **Leviticus 2:15**
- The assumed answer is no amount of sacrifice would ever be able to change their hearts!
- Under the Old Covenant - the Law of Moses - they sacrificed animals...
- The animal would die in their place - pay the penalty / the price for their sin...
- **Hebrews 10:4** - "It is not possible the blood of bulls & goats could take away sins."
- The problem with animal sacrifices is they could only cover sin - not take it away...
- Every time you made a mistake - you had to go to the temple and offer a sacrifice...
- That covered your sin - no longer guilty - but it did not change your heart!
- The sacrifices under the Law had no power to change the person to not want to sin!

▪ Could they offer their first-born son – the fruit of your body to pay for the sin of your soul…
- An extreme example meant to show that no sacrifice they made could save them!
- But it did hint at what it would take to absolve men of their sins!
- God so loved the whole world He sent His ONLY SON to die for our sins...
- Jesus who came and did what no one else could – He lived a perfect sinless life...
- Then Jesus – the only perfect man – paid the price for our sin – Death!

o 4th – What God requires… vs. 8
▪ Since the Law was only there to show Israel they were not 'Good'…
- And sacrifices could do nothing to change their heart – what did God require of them…
- Micah reminded them God had already shown Israel what was good…
- God had told Israel what He required of them – in the Law of Moses…
- **Deuteronomy 10:12** - "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul…"

- 1 – To do justly / fear the Lord and walk in His ways…
  - The reason there is no justice in the world today – is because people do not fear the Lord…
  - They do not fear the Great White Throne – they do not fear the Lake of Fire…
  - But there are only two kinds of people when it comes to God...
  - Wise sinners who fear the Lord and see their need for Jesus - and those who did not…
  - For those who reject Jesus - all that waits them is certain and terrifying judgment...
  - For those who walk justly – in His ways – eternity in the presence of the Lord!
  - **Psalm 111:10** – "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom…"
- 2 – To love Mercy / love the Lord…
  - We are cannot be saved by keeping the Law / good works - but if we are saved...
  - People will be able to tell – by what kind of works / fruit comes from our lives...
  - If we love the Lord – we will begin to take on the character of God – which is Mercy…
  - He has shown Mercy to us – not giving us what we deserve – judgment / hell…
  - When we begin to reflect that same Mercy towards others – no matter what they do to us!
  - This is the fruit that shows we have been saved – the proof of our faith in Jesus!
  - **James 2:18** – "I cannot see your faith if you do not have good deeds, but I will show you my faith through my good deeds."
- 3 – To walk humbly / serve the Lord with all your heart and with all your soul
  - Like Israel - we are all on trial - to see if we are guilty or innocent...
  - We are also in a courtroom - we are on trial for our sins - God is the judge...
  - Satan is accusing us - **Revelation 12:10** - wants to see us condemned to hell...
  - He has all the 'evidence' he needs - all our sins / our immoral thoughts...
  - But Jesus can be our defender – come to our rescue - points out one simple fact...
  - All our sins were paid for in full on the cross - we can be found not guilty…
  - But only if we walk humbly – see our need for Jesus – and believe in Him…
  - Then He will pour out His Grace – and transform us to serve Him with all our heart / soul!
  - **James 4:6** - "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

- **2ND – HEAR THE ROD – LEARN TO TRUST IN GOD… VS. 6:9 – 7:6**
  - 1st - The voice of the Lord cries out in the city… vs. 9-16
    - God was brining the ROD against Israel – for 2 reasons – and they would be wise to listen!
      - First – Israel kept making money though dishonest means (*treasures of the wicked*)…
      - God would not count pure - dishonest scales / short measures – it was an abomination!
      - They used 'wicked scales' and 'deceitful weights' – and it was cruel (*violent*)!
      - The people were so used to telling lies – their tongues could not longer tell the truth!
      - This might seem a minor offense – just a little bit of cheating to get an extra buck…
      - But often the minor offenses are the most important – because they reveal the heart…
      - People start out small because they are afraid of getting caught…
      - But if we check our heart in the little things – it will keep us from greater sin!
    - As punishment – God would strike them / make them weak (*sick*) and desolate!
      - 1 - They would eat – but never be satisfied – their hunger would always come back… vs. 14
      - 2 - They would save money – but it would not last – it would be taken by their conquerors…
      - 3 - They would plant crops – but not eat them – no oil / or wine to enjoy!
      - 4 - They kept the statues of Omri – and followed the counsel of Ahab…
      - **I Kings 16:25/30** – "Omri did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all who *were* before him…. Ahab the son of Omri did evil… more than all who *were* before him."
      - Therefore God would make an example of them – hissing (*mocked*) among the nations!
      - People often foolishly follow the counsel of the world (*Ahab*) rather than the Lord…

- Then they are surprised when there is never enough food / money…
- When everything they try to do / plant – never bears any lasting fruit…
- The fact is if we do not put the Lord first – everything we try in life will fail…
- It will be as if we are cursed – all of our best efforts are doomed come to nothing…
- It is only when we seek Jesus before ANYTHING else – that we find success!

o 2nd – The second reason for the Rod - there was no faithfulness… vs. 1-7
- Micah felt like a fruit-picker – who came to the fields after the harvest…
  - Like a man who desired grapes – or a ripe fig (*fruit*) - but there was none to be found…
  - The picture of the fig – is representative of the nation of Israel - **Mark 11:13**
  - The grapes – is representative of fruit coming from abiding in God – **John 15:4**
  - The idea being there was no good fruit in all of Israel – none that lived for God!
- The saints (*faithful men*) have perished from the earth – there is none 'upright'…
  - The word upright is 'Yashar' – it means to be straight / righteous…
  - A common name in the Middle East – where is has come to mean 'to live forever'…
  - Micah was singing a modern song – where have all the good men gone!
  - 1 – Men are all murderers - even setting traps for their own brothers…. vs. 2
  - 2 – Men are bent on doing evil – they are successful at it using both hands… vs. 3
  - 3 – The prince asks for 'gifts' / the judge seeks a bribe (*politicians / special interests*)…
  - Along comes the wealthy man with his evil plans – and they conspire together!
  - 4 – The best of them a brier – the most upright (*Yashar*) more crooked than a thorn hedge!
- As a result the day of the watchman (*prophets*) is coming – a day of punishment and perplexity
  - Do not trust anyone - neighbor (*friend*) / companion (*counselor*) / even wife (*bosom*)…
  - A son will despise his father / daughter-in-law against mother-in-law…
  - The enemies of a man will come from his own house!
  - As we look around us and we see the depravity of a world bent on doing evil…
  - We might feel like Micah and ask – where have all the good men gone..,
  - There is the temptation to try and find answers in those around us…
  - We run to neighbors – counselors – even our family / spouse looking for answers…
  - But if we put our faith in men – ANY MAN – we set ourselves up for disappointment!

o 3rd – But when Israel finally breaks – once everyone else has failed her… vs. 7-9
- Then she will finally look up to the Lord – the only one that can save her – and He will hear!
- It often takes having everyone / everything else fail us in life before we look to the Lord…
- God wants us to look up – but we stubbornly insistent on doing things our own way…
- It is only when we are defeated / broken – that we finally look up and find the answer!
- But the amazing thing is – the moment we do – God will hear us and answer!

- **3RD – SHEPHERD YOUR PEOPLE – BEING LED BY GOD… VS. 8-20**

o 1st – Micah changes tone – and speaks repentantly as one from Israel… vs. 8-13
- Even though I had fallen – and the nations rejoiced - I will get up…
- Even though I was in darkness – the Lord will be my light…
- I am being punished for my sins – but in the end God will plead my case…
- He will bring me into the light – and make me righteous again!
- The day will come when those who asked ' where is your God' – will see me restored…
- Then my the enemies will be trampled down like the mud in the streets…
- The walls and cities of Israel will be rebuilt – and the nations will come to see the Lord!
- However - for a time the land will be desolate - because of the sins of the people!

- When we make a mistake – there is forgiveness when we turn to Jesus – **I John 1:9**

- He will restore us – He will bring us back into the light and make us righteous again…
- But does not mean there are no consequences for our actions...
- When we choose to sin – there is always a price to be paid - **Galatians 6:7**

o 2nd – The closing prayer of Micah… vs. 14-20
- Shepherd your people with your rod – those who are lost / alone in the woods (*Carmel*)…
  - Lead them back to the fertile pastures of Bashan (*fruitful*) and Gilead as they did long ago…
  - Like you did when you brought them out of Egypt – show them mighty wonders again!
  - The practice of shepherds used to be to break the legs of sheep that wandered...
  - Then they would then take that sheep and carry them till the leg healed...
  - The purpose was to teach the sheep to completely depend on the Shepherd!
  - Our Heavenly Father loves us very much – and He warns us to stay close to Him...
  - Our problem is we like to sin – and sin separates us from God...
  - We end up wandering off in sin and get lost in the woods – and God has to come rescue us...
  - Sometime He rescues us with a ROD - 'broken leg' – but it is then Jesus carries us...
  - So that we learn always to trust in Him – and get to see His mighty works again!
- Let all the nations of the world be ashamed…
  - Let them cover their mouths – no longer will their ears hear the mocking the saints…
  - They will crawl back in their holes like the snakes they are – afraid of the Lord!
  - Because who is like our God – Micah give 4 amazing descriptions…
  - 1 - He pardons iniquity / 2 - He passes over transgression…
  - 3 - He does not hold onto anger / 4 - instead He delights in Mercy!
- AND He will do for 4 incredible things for Israel…
  - 1 - He will have compassion on Israel / 2 - Trample (*subdue*) sin under His feet…
  - 3 - Cast sins into the depth of the sea / 4 - Give truth and mercy to Jacob and Abraham!
  - A promise that He gave to Israel from long ago!
  - **Hebrews 13:8** – "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."
  - The same God who was willing to pardon Israel – who delights in Mercy…
  - The same Lord who tramples sin underfoot / casts our sins into the sea…
  - Is the same God who can take any sin / all of our sins – and forgive us today!
  - He promised that He would long ago – and He still will today if we come to Him!
  - **Colossians 2:14** – "He has taken [our sin and]… nailed it to the cross."