

MICAH 1-2

INTRODUCTION...

- **THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD**
 - o We finished **Jonah** - the 32st book of the Old Testament - 9th of 16 prophetic books in the OT...
 - o We will start **Micah** - the 6th of what is known as the 12 Minor Prophets...
- **1st - WHO WAS MICAH...**
 - o Micah (*who is like God*) was primarily a prophet to the Southern Kingdom (*where he was from*)...
 - o But he will address both sins of the Northern and Southern Kings kingdoms in his prophecies...
 - o Micah was from the city of Moresheth (*a possession of*)-Gath - about 20 miles from Jerusalem!
- **2nd - WHEN WAS THE BOOK WRITTEN - MICAH 1:1...**
 - o Micah prophesied during the reigns of Jotham / Ahaz / and Hezekiah of Judah - 750 to 700 B.C.
 - o He was contemporary with the prophets Hosea / Amos / and Isaiah...
 - o He wrote during a time of great upheaval / judgment in both kingdoms...
 - o Jotham and Hezekiah were good kings - (*Ahaz was bad*) but Judah was in moral decline!
 - o Assyria had risen to power and was on the verge of conquering the Northern Kingdom - 722 B.C.
 - o They would conquer all but Jerusalem in the Southern Kingdom - but God would save them...
 - o Though the Southern Kingdom would ultimately fall to the Babylonian Empire in 586 B.C.
- **3rd - THE OUTLINE OF MICAH...**
 - o The book of Micah is broken up into 3 sermons - each begins with the phrase - "Hear..."
 - o Chapters 1-2 - The Judgment of the Israel (*Samaria and Jerusalem*)...
 - o Chapters 3-5 - The hope of Judah - the promise of the coming King
 - o Chapters 6-7 - From tribulation to triumph - the restoration of Israel!

THE JUDGEMENT OF ISRAEL... (3 THINGS)

- **1st - THE JUDGEMENT OF THE CITIES... vs. 1-16**
 - o 1st - Addressing the whole nation of Israel... vs. 1-4
 - Hear all you people in the earth/land (*Promised Land*) - Northern and Southern Kingdoms...
 - God spoke from His holy Temple - referring to His Temple in Heaven!
 - The Lord was going to come down and tread the 'High Places' of the earth...
 - And the mountains would melt beneath Him like wax - like water flowing down a hill!
 - Speaking of God coming down to judge Israel for their idolatry (*High Places*)!
 - The Law required ALL sacrifices be offered at the Tabernacle - **Leviticus 17:1-5**
 - The Law required it - so that the people who have accountability in their worship...
 - But it was challenge for the people to always come to the Temple to worship God...
 - Therefore people would just go to a local 'High Place' (*closer to God*) to worship!
 - These High Places eventually evolved into a place for every kind of pagan practice!
 - **There are those who argue they do not need church - they can just read their Bible...**
 - **But it is too easy to do the wrong things and convince yourself your right...**
 - **That is why God call us to fellowship together in church - Hebrews 10:25...**
 - **We help keep each other in check - keep our priorities pointed towards God!**
 - o 2nd - The Judgment of Samaria... vs. 5-7
 - The source of the problem - was the very heart/capitol of both nations!
 - The capitol cities of Samaria (*Israel*) and Jerusalem (*Judah*)...
 - Therefore the Lord would make Samaria a heap of ruins - a place to plant vineyards...

- The walls of the city would fill the surrounding valley – exposing the city foundations...
- All of the idols would be smashed / along with the wealth the idolatry generated!
- What was the sin of these capitol cities that brought the judgment of God – false religion...
 - Religion was big business – and both Israel and Judah had gotten into the game...
 - Israel had the golden calves and their worship of Baal and Ashtoreth...
 - Even Judah had allowed idolatry – and turned the worship of Yahweh into dead religion!
 - Like Demetrius who made money off the idols of Diana - **Acts 19:24**...
 - Or the Pharisees who made merchandise of the worship of God – **John 2:14-16**
 - Religion had become a way to take advantage of the people – to become rich!
 - I cannot help but think of 'Christian bookstores' - marketing 'Christianity'...
 - We have Jesus T-Shirts / Jesus bracelets / and countless books about Jesus...
 - Many men have made fortunes marketing Jesus as if He was some famous actor!
 - It undermines the creditability of the Gospel message...
 - People get the idea that Jesus is just another scam - a way to make money!
- o 3rd – The brokenness of Micah... vs. 8-9
 - Micah was not happen about the judgment – in fact it broke his heart...
 - He went around barefoot and naked (*likely just referring to no shirt*)...
 - Howling like a wild dog / crying out like an ostrich – describing his loud lament...
 - Israel deserved judgment – and the wounds of Samaria were incurable...
 - Assyria would conquer Israel – and even come all the way to the gates of Jerusalem!
 - But it broke the heart of Micah to see his people judged!
 - As we look at the corruption in the world – and the seemingly incurable immorality...
 - Where right has become wrong – and wrong has become right – **Isaiah 5:20**
 - It can be easy to become cynical – even longing for God to judge the world!
 - But we must not forget we are as much a sinner – only we have the Grace of God...
 - When we remember who we were – and only because of Jesus that we are we different...
 - And we realize the fate of those who reject the message of salvation...
 - **Revelation 20:15** – “If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”
 - Our heart breaks for the lost – and we have compassion on those who need Christ!
- o 4th - The judgment of the Cities of Judah... vs. 10-16
 - Micah calls out 11 specific cities by name – all of them in Judah!
 - Many of the names appear to contain a play on words – laying out the coming judgment!
 - Do not tell this in **Gath** (*winepress*) – because the Philistines would rejoice (*not weep*)...
 - **Beth Aphrah** (*house of dust*) in Benjamin – will roll in the dust in mourning!
 - The people of **Shaphir** (*beautiful*) – would pass by (*taken captive*) in naked shame!
 - The people of **Zannan** did not come help when **Beth Ezel** was destroyed (*taken away*)!
 - **Maroth** (*bitterness*) waited anxiously for something pleasant – but disaster came instead!
 - To **Lachish** (*invincible*) flee in fast chariots – because they were the first to sin like Israel!
 - Give good-bye gifts in **Moresbeth-Gath** (*Micah’s’ home*) - there was no hope to save them!
 - **Achzib** (*lies*) did not tell the truth when they said to the kings of Israel they could help!
 - The people of **Mareshah** will be conquered (*heir = possessed*) – the Assyrian army...
 - And the leaders of Israel will flee to **Adullam** (*justice for the people*)!
 - Micah tells them all to make themselves bald – as bald as an eagle...
 - Because of their precious children – whom would all go into captivity as a result of their sin!
 - The influence of the capitol cities had spread corrupting the surrounding cities and villages...
 - The influence of the cities and villages had spread corrupting the families...

- And the sin of the families had doomed their children to a life in captivity!
- A lesson to choose wisely who we allow to have an influence on our lives!
- We all follow the example of someone – they lead us either towards or away from God...
- So we need to be careful whom we spend time with – who we are influenced by...
- Because we will become just like the people we surround ourselves with...
- So if we are looking at the lives of those around us – and they are not good...
- Change groups – choose those who encourage us walk in the Lord!
- **Proverbs 13:20** - “Whoever walks with the wise will become wise; whoever walks with fools will suffer harm.”

■ **2ND – THE JUDGEMENT OF THE PEOPLE... vs. 1-13**

- 1st - Woe to those who DEVISE iniquity... vs. 1-2
 - Men who lie awake in bed - thinking up new ways to do evil...
 - And when the morning comes – they go out practice what they have put in their heart!
 - **James 1:14**– “Evil desires lead to evil actions, and evil actions lead to death.”
 - It is so dangerous to dwell on sin – because the battle for our actions begins in our mind...
 - If we are thinking about sinning – then we can expect we fall into sin...
 - But if we have the attitude of Christ – then our actions will reflect Jesus!
 - **Psalms 119:11** – “Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You!”
 - They covet fields / houses – and take them by violence – robbing men of their inheritance!
 - Therefore says the Lord – He has DEVISED (*same word*) disaster for them...
 - And no one would be able to ‘save their necks’ – for it is an evil time!
 - They will become a proverb for what happens to people who think evil...
 - We are destroyed – and our inheritance was taken – others possess OUR land!
 - Israel would lose the Promised Land that was given to them by lot – **Joshua 14:2**
 - In **I Kings 21** - Ahab wanted to purchase a field from Naboth – but he would not sell it...
 - Ahab (*though Jezebel*) had false accusation of blasphemy brought against Naboth...
 - He was stoned to death – and Ahab swooped in stole the land from his family!
 - But it did not end well for Ahab – the Lord confronted him for his sin!
 - **II Kings 21:19** – “This is what the LORD says: Isn’t killing Naboth bad enough? Must you rob him, too? Because you have done this, dogs will lick your blood outside the city just as they licked the blood of Naboth!”
 - Many assume they are ‘ok’ because God does not immediately punish them...
 - They make mistake of interpreting God’s ‘patience’ for God’s ‘acceptance’...
 - Just because God has not judged yet – does not mean God will not judge...
 - Those who dwell on sin – practice sin – lose their inheritance in the Promised Land!
 - **Galatians 5:21** – “Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”
- 2nd – Woe to those who silence the prophets... vs. 6-7
 - The people demanded the true prophets of God to be silent...
 - They did not like being insulted - hearing the truth - about their sin!
 - People do not like it when we point out their sin - they quickly get offended...
 - But we are called to confront others when they get caught up in sin...
 - Yet our motivation is not to condemn them - we are not trying to ‘beat them up’...
 - Our motive should always be love - we want to see them clean - forgiven!
 - Although Israel was the chosen nation – the house of Jacob...
 - That did not mean that God was not going to act – the Spirit of the Lord was not restricted...
 - They were not doing things that showed they were the children of God...

- If they were - His words through the prophets – would have been received as good!
 - If people were doing what was right – they would love to hear about Jesus...
 - But the darkness does not like the light – because it reveals their sin – **John 3:20**...
 - That is why many people do not like going to church - reading their Bible...
 - They are convicted of their sin - so they stay away from the conviction!
- o 3rd – The accusations against Israel... vs. 8-9
- Lately the people of Israel had risen up as an enemy...
 - They had become an enemy to the Lord – not for Him so against Him – **Matthew 12:30**
 - As well as an enemy to their own people – mistreating those they called friends...
 - The people would steal robes from trusted friends – treating them like prisoners of war!
 - Evicting women (*presumably widows*) and children from their pleasant homes!
 - In **II Chronicles 28:5-12** - King Pekah of Israel attacked King Ahaz (*during the time of Micah*)...
 - Pekah killed 120,000 soldiers of Judah in one day because God was angry with Judah...
 - Then Israel took 200,000 women and children captive from Judah as slaves...
 - But a prophet named Oded (*restorer*) came to the men of Israel and rebuked them!
 - So the army of Israel quickly clothed / fed / and returned their captives to Judah!
 - The way people treat each other today is often shocking – ramming cars into crowds...
 - But we should not be surprised – we live in a world that says God is not real...
 - And the way we treat each other is a direct reflection of how we treat the Lord...
 - Since there is no right and wrong / there are no eternal consequences to our actions...
 - It is any wonder people today are so selfish and cruel in their actions towards each other!
- o 4th – The Diaspora of Israel... vs. 10-11
- God told Israel to ‘arise and depart’ – for this was no longer their rest...
 - God had promised ‘rest’ when Israel came into the Promised Land - **Deuteronomy 12:10**...
 - But they had defiled the Land – therefore God would utterly destroy it!
 - Because it turns out rest is not in a place – it can only be found in a person!
 - **Hebrew 4:8-9** – “If Joshua [Promised Land] had given them rest, He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.”
 - Too often we think of rest being a place or a time – we rest at church / or on a day off...
 - The problem is we have to leave the church – and go back into the world...
 - And even if we take a day off – we still have to go back to work the next day!
 - Meaning that we have not yet entered into THE rest of God...
 - The true rest comes when we see Jesus face to face – when we are home in Heaven!
 - Yet Israel was living in denial of the coming judgment...
 - And if a false prophet came predicting ‘wine and drink’ – they would embrace him...
 - The people did not want to hear the truth – they wanted someone to confirm them...
 - Israel wanted someone to tell them it was ok to party and enjoy life...
 - That God was ok with their sin – and there was no consequence for their actions!
 - **II Timothy 4:3** - “A time is coming when people will no longer listen to right teaching. They will... look for teachers who will tell them what they want to hear.”
 - People still want to hear that God is Ok with their sin – they have itching ears...
 - They do not want to hear about sin / judgment – they would rather be entertained...
 - Because of this a lot of churches have gotten away from teaching the Word of God...
 - These churches are more interested in ‘filling the pews’ - than ‘making saints’!
 - They resort to gimmicks to try and get the attention of people - **II Timothy 4:3**
 - But the church is not a theatre / or a concert / or a place to tell funny jokes...
 - The power of salvation is in the Word of God – so we need to speak the truth!
 - **Acts 20:27** – “For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.”

- **3RD – THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL... vs. 12-13**
 - o 1st - In the midst of judgment – Micah offers a glimpse of hope...
 - God would assemble all of Jacob (*perhaps Judah*) – and a remnant of Israel...
 - As we see the judgment of Israel – it would be easy to think God was through with them!
 - But God promised to the nation of Israel would always be His people...
 - **Jeremiah 31:36** - “I am as likely to reject my people Israel as I am to do away with the laws of nature!”
 - As long as the sun rises – waves crash on the seashore – Israel is God’s nation!
 - Even though they were hard – they did not want to receive Jesus – God was not done!
 - **Since God cannot break His Word – forsake Israel – that means God also cannot reject us...**
 - **A great truth – because it means no matter how bad we get – God never gives up on us!**
 - o 2nd – God will gather Israel like a flock of sheep into the fold of God...
 - The one who freed them (*breaks open*) – will lead them through the gate...
 - **John 10:14** – Jesus is the Good Shepherd / **John 10:9** – Jesus is the gate...
 - **And anyone can enter that gate - and they will be saved / and find pasture...**
 - **God desires that all men be saved - He does not want any to perish - II Peter 3:9**
 - **But it is up to us to decide if we where we want to spend eternity...**
 - **God opened the ‘gate’ for us to go to heaven - but we have to choose to go through!**
 - **If we reject the one-way God has provided - there is no second option...**
 - **The one and only way to get to heaven - is through faith in Jesus!**
 - o 3rd – Israel will pass through the gate with their King leading them – with the Lord as their head!
 - No doubt speaking of the restoration of Israel – and the Millennial Kingdom!
 - After the 7 years of tribulation – when Jesus returns – **Revelation 19:11**
 - All of the Jews will see Jesus – realize He is their Messiah – and believe...
 - **Zechariah 12:10** – “Then I will pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on the family of David and on all the people of Jerusalem. They will look on me whom they have pierced and mourn for him as for an only son.”
 - There will no longer be a need to tell anyone about Jesus – they will already know...
 - **Jeremiah 31:34** – ““They will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their family, saying, ‘You should know the LORD.’ For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will already know me,” says the LORD. ‘And I will forgive their wickedness and will never again remember their sins.’”
 - God will save the whole nation of Israel – all of them will receive Jesus – **Romans 11:26**