

MICAH: GOD'S PUNISHMENT AND HIS RESTORATION

IV: God's Judgment Of His People's Leaders

(Micah 3:1-12)

I. Introduction

- A. Micah, who was "a Judean from Moresheth in the SW of Palestine, preached to the common people of Judah." (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1283, "Introduction to the Book of Micah: The Prophet.")
- B. God's coming judgment on the people for their sin against Him and against each other would be unavoidable and severe, but in the end, His Abrahamic Covenant would be honored, and Israel would be blessed.
- C. We view Micah 3:1-12 on God's judgment of His people's leaders for our insight and application (as follows):

II. God's Judgment Of His People's Leaders, Micah 3:1-12 NIV.

- A. The Lord expressed His judgment of the civil rulers who were over His people, Micah 3:1-4:
 - 1. The reference to the leaders of "Jacob" and "Israel" in Micah 3:1a alluded to all twelve tribes of both the Southern Kingdom of Judah and the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1477-1478.
 - 2. These leaders were supposed to know justice, but they loved evil and hated good, Micah 3:1b-2a.
 - 3. Consequently, they acted like ravenous predators toward the people when they were supposed to protect their subordinates from unjust harm like shepherds were to protect their flocks from wild animals, Micah 3:2b-3. "By unfair legal actions, by bribery (cf. v. 11; 7:3), by theft (cf. 2:8), by oppression (cf. 3:9), and even by bloodshed (cf. v. 10; 7:2), they left the people helpless," Ibid., p. 1481-1482.
 - 4. Thus, in the coming invasion by a Gentile army, when these civil leaders would cry out to God for help, He would not answer, but hide His face from them in punishment due to all of their evil deeds, Micah 3:4.
- B. The Lord expressed His judgment of the false prophets who misled His people, Micah 3:5-7:
 - 1. The false prophets were leading the people astray when they were supposed to be giving out God's truth so that the people could relate properly to the Lord for blessing, Micah 3:5a.
 - 2. The drive behind such sin was materialism: if someone fed the false prophet, he would predict "peace," but if the hearer would not give him anything, the prophet would predict severe judgment, Micah 3:5b.
 - 3. God thus predicted that the future for these false prophets would be gloomy: when calamity came and the people wanted an explanation for it, these prophets who had lied to the people for material goods would be ashamed and disgraced, covering their faces because no word had come to them from God, Micah 3:6-7.
- C. Opposite the false prophets, God's prophet Micah was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, equipped with justice and might to declare to all Israel her sin, and he summarily condemned all of her leaders, Micah 3:8-9a.
- D. That message rebuked civil leaders, priests, and false prophets for greed along with their false sense of security that was based on a false view of their relationship with the Lord, Micah 3:9b-12:
 - 1. Micah addressed all of the nation's evil leaders who despised justice and distorted all that was right for their own personal interests and who built Jerusalem with bloodshed and wickedness, Micah 3:9b-10.
 - 2. God's prophet Micah complained that the nation's civil leaders judged for a bribe, her priests taught what the people wanted to hear for a price and her false prophets practiced divination for money, Micah 3:11a. Materialism was the core problem, and materialism is a form of idolatry, cf. Colossians 3:5b.
 - 3. Yet, while committing these sins, the civil leaders, priests, and false prophets would lean upon the Lord and self-deceptively say, "Is not the Lord among us? No disaster will come upon us," Micah 3:11b NIV.
 - 4. Therefore, due to these self-serving, self-deceiving civil leaders, priests, and false prophets, the people had gone astray from God, so His judgment would fall by way of an invading army that would make Zion look like a plowed field and a pile of rubble, with the temple mount being overgrown with thickets, Micah 3:12.

Lesson: *Due to greed, Israel's civil leaders, priests and false prophets took selfish advantage of the people instead of ministering for their welfare. These leaders had also falsely claimed that God was with them and would not let them face disaster, so God would bring disaster upon them in His judgment.*

Application: *(1) May we realize that God's purpose for leaders is that they address the needs of their subordinates, not meet their self-serving interests at the cost of their subordinates. (2) May we who lead realize that we are accountable to the Lord for how we function in leadership, that our blessing from God as leaders is proportioned to how well we fulfill our leadership roles! (3) May we spiritual leaders teach God's truth in reliance on the Holy Spirit, whether that truth be pleasant or unpleasant, for only the truth can actually help God's people! (4) May we who lead avoid the idol of materialism, for it greatly corrupts good oversight.*