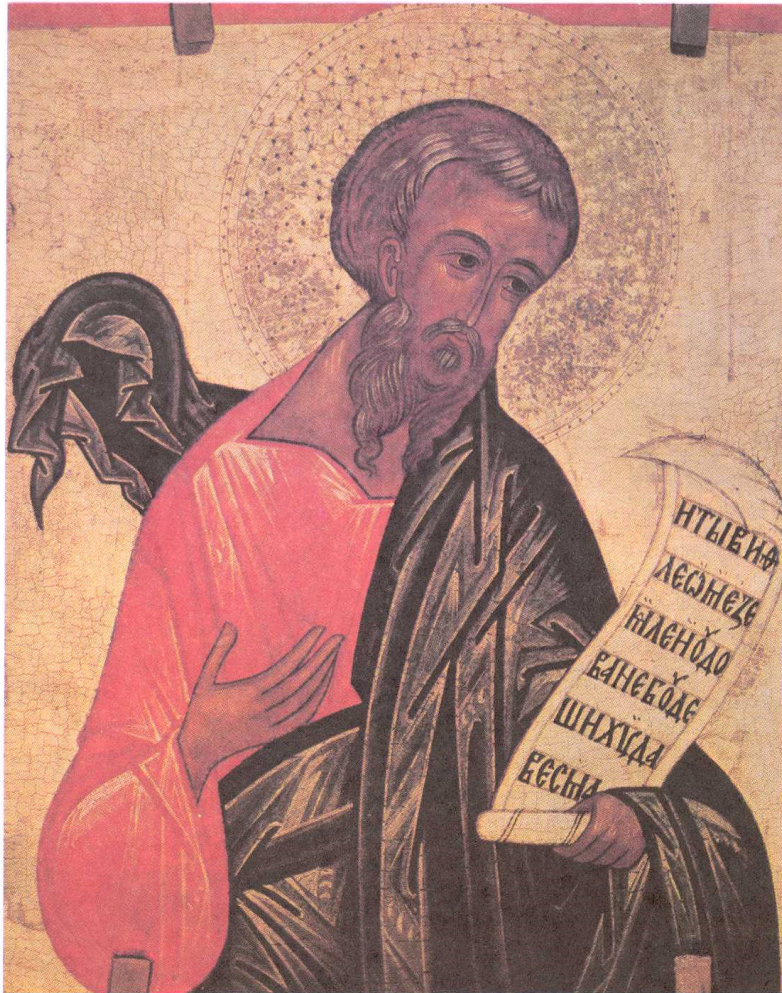


SIMPLE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET MICAH

LEADER'S STUDY GUIDE

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell



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Special Note about the Cover Picture

Micah lived in the 8th century BC. He is viewed by the Church as one of the twelve Minor Prophets. Micah lived in the province of Judah, being a contemporary of other famous prophets, such as Isaiah, Amos and Hosea. From his writings, we can clearly see that the quiet countryside region that was home to him was infected with the same sins that plagued the urban areas of the kingdom of Israel. Micah strongly denounces the rulers and priests of the Hebrew nation, deploring their dishonesty and their exploitation of the poor. He foretells the wrath of God falling upon Samaria and Jerusalem because of the prevailing wickedness and sinfulness that exists there.

The message of the Prophet Micah is not without hope. He also speaks of a glorious future for Jerusalem, where it will become the religious center of the world. Perhaps Micah's most powerful and best remembered prophecy concerns the birth of the Messiah: *Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

The Book of Micah

Human Author: Micah
Divine Author: God the Holy Spirit
Date of Writing: c. 735-700 BC
A Contemporary of the Prophet Isaiah
Key Thought: Denunciation of sin
Key Verse: Micah 6:8

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

Introduction

The book begins with the wretched estate of Israel because of sin. A wonderful promise of divine redemption is to be wrought by Him *“whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting”*. This divine Deliverer would come out of Bethlehem-Ephratah.

MICAH 1

First Division Micah 1-2

Judgment upon Samaria Micah 1: 1-2

1 The word of the LORD that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of [the good king] Jotham [750-732 BC], [the evil king] Ahaz [735-732 BC], and [the godly king] Hezekiah [715-686], kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

1:1 Micah is called *“the Morasthite”*, which means a man of Moreshah, a town located to the south west of Jerusalem in the land of Judah. One hundred years later Micah would be remembered by the elder of Jerusalem in the time of Jeremiah as a prophet who had spoken against Israel but was not arrested by the godly king Hezekiah (Jer. 26:16-29).

2 Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth [land], and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD [Adonai Jehovah] be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.

1:2 **Hear, all ye people.** All of Israel was compelled to hear the words of this prophet, not just the people of Judah. While God has specific messages for individuals He has a universal message as well.

1:2 **from His holy temple.** The memory of the tabernacle in the wilderness is involved (Lev. 1:1) when the voice of Jehovah could be heard from the sanctuary setting forth the holiness that characterized the people in whose midst He dwelt. Now the Lord speaks from the sanctuary to condemn those who have violated His Word. He is a witness against His own people.

3 For, behold, the LORD cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.

4 And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, *and* as the waters *that are* poured down a steep place.

1:3-4 From His secret dwelling place the Lord God has come forth to consider the spiritual state of Israel. Like volcanic fires bursting forth and tearing the earth apart the Lord has come to judge His people.

5 For the transgression [rebellion] of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What *is* the transgression of Jacob? *Is it* not Samaria? And what *are* the high places of Judah? *Are they* not Jerusalem?

1:5 The particular transgression of the nation involved spiritual adultery due to apostasy or a turning away from the Law of the Lord. The nation has embraced the worship of other gods displayed in the creation of high places of worship.

6 Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, *and* as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover [uncover] the foundations thereof.

1:6 Because the people would not repent and destroy the false idols God will judge the nation and destroy the false relics Himself. Samaria will become a place of desolation and will be made to look like a destroyed vineyard.

7 And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the hires [temple gifts] thereof shall be burned with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered *it* of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot.

1:7 **hires.** The hires or gifts representing Jerusalem's wages of sin by endorsing sacred temple prostitution shall be burned with fire after the graven idols are destroyed.

8 Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons [jackal], and mourning as the owls.

1:8 **I will.** This is either the language of anguish of Micah as he identifies himself with the sorrows of Samaria or it will be the language of the people following the judgment soon to come, c. 722 BC.

Judgment upon Judah
Micah 1:9-16

9 For her wound is incurable; for it is come unto Judah; he is come unto the gate of my people, *even* to Jerusalem.

1:9 **her wound.** There comes a time when there is no stopping the hand of divine judgment. While grace is long suffering discipline will come, it must come. The attribute of love in the heart of God must not be stressed to rob Him of His holiness and justice. Sin is like a spreading pestilence. While it may start in Samaria it moves to the gates of Jerusalem.

10 Declare ye *it* not at Gath [lit. *winepress*, one of the five major cities of the Philistines], weep ye not at all: in the house of Aphrah [lit. Beth-Aphrah, *house of dust*] roll thyself in the dust.

1:10. **tell it not in Gath.** Gath was a city of the Philistines. It was a shame the enemies of the Lord had to know of the deplorable spiritual condition of the covenant people.

1:10 **Aphrah.** Playing upon the name the prophet declares the people of the city of dust should roll themselves in the dust as an act of repentance.

11 Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir [lit. beautiful, fair, a Judean town located 3 ½ miles SE of Ashdod], having thy shame naked: the inhabitant of Zaanan [lit. *their flock*] came not forth in the mourning of Beth-ezel [lit. *a place near*]; he shall receive of you his standing.

1:11 In city after city the judgment of God was assured. Saphir, the fair would become Saphir the shameful. Zaanan the place of the flocks would be given over to genocide. Beth-ezel, a half way house, would no longer receive travelers.

12 For the inhabitant of Maroth [lit. *bitterness*, located in the W part of Judah near Jerusalem] waited carefully for good: but evil came down from the LORD unto the gate of Jerusalem.

1:12 Death and devastation continue throughout the land. At Maroth, people hoped for the best and received the worse. Evil rolled like a flood to the gates of Jerusalem. All of this sorrow came from the Lord. It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God who is angry.

13 O thou inhabitant of Lachish [a fortified royal city in the lowlands of Judah located thirty miles SW of Jerusalem], bind the chariot to the swift beast: she *is* the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion: for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee.

1:13 **the beginning of sin.** Every expression of evil has a point of origin. There is a spot in which the soul decides to sin. Micah charges the origin of evil to be in Lachish. When the Lord sends judgment to Lachish the people will try but cannot escape.

14 Therefore shalt thou give presents to Moresheth-gath [lit. *possession of Gath*, either the hometown or resident of the prophet Micah]: the houses of Achzib [lit. *falsehood*, a town in Asher, which was not subdued by the Israelites, Josh. 19:29] *shall be* a lie [snare] to the kings of Israel.

1:14 Any attempt to form a political alliance with the Philistines will be to no avail. Local chieftains will only prove to be a snare to the interests of Israel. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God nor can they be trusted.

15 Yet will I bring an heir [conqueror] unto thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah [lit. *chief place*, a fortified city of Judah]: he shall come unto Adullam [lit. *refuge, retreat*, a lovely city located SW of Bethlehem] the glory of Israel.

1:15 Sin or the servant of sin destroys beauty. It causes lovely places to be wasted.

16 Make thee bald [shave], and poll [mourn] thee for thy delicate children [lit. *sons of your delight*]; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; for they are gone into captivity from thee.

1:16 The mothers of Israel in particular must learn to mourn if not for their sins at least because of them. Expressions of sorrow would include the shaving of the head and for good reason, the children will be taken into captivity.

The Book of Micah
Leader's Study Guide

Micah 1

Review

1. What is the time period for the prophecy of Micah?

Answer. The date of his prophecy is in the reigns of three kings of Judah—Jotham [the good king, 750-731 BC], Ahaz [an evil king, 743-715 BC], and Hezekiah [a good king, 728-686 BC].

2. To whom was the message of Micah directed?

Answer. The prophet addresses his message to Samaria and Jerusalem. Samaria was the capitol of the Northern Kingdom called Israel while Jerusalem was the capitol of the southern kingdom of Judah.

3. What has brought forth the judgment of God?

Answer. Idolatry and sexual immorality has brought forth the judgment of God according to Micah 1:7.

4. What will the wages of sin always be?

Answer. The wages of sin is death.

5. What is the prophet Micah's response to the knowledge that judgment is coming upon his nation?

Answer. Micah is greatly distressed with the news that judgment will soon fall upon Israel. He says that he will howl like a wounded animal and walk around without clothing in mourning.

6. Whom should the Christians lament in the spirit of the prophet Micah?

Answer. We ought to lament the punishments of sinners as well as the sufferings of saints in this world; the weeping prophet did so (Jer 9:1); so did this prophet.

7. List the twelve cities that Micah mentions in 1:8-16.

Answer. Micah speaks of Jerusalem, Gath, Aphrah [Ophrah (?)], Saphir, Zaanan, Beth-Ezel, Maroth, Lachish, Moresheth-Gath, Achzib, Mareshah and Adullam.

8. What is said to come down from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem?

Answer. The sovereignty of God extends over evil or calamity. A distinction must be recognized between moral evil which is the transgression of the Law and physical evil which is the outworking of the transgression of the moral law. .

9. Who should expect to be first in the punishment when the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against sin?

Answer. Those that help to bring sin into a country prepare themselves for the throwing of themselves out of it. Those must expect to be first in the punishment who have been ringleaders in sin.

Reflection

1. Does it matter where the money or gifts come from that are given to the Lord?
2. Whom should the Christians weep over in the spirit of the prophet Micah?
3. Who should expect to be first in the punishment when the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against sin?
4. What are some modern day examples of great cities being destroyed by the ravages of God's judgment?

Personal Application

1. Has your heart ever been broken over sin? How did you express your deep grief?
2. If you receive money for ministry, do you care where it comes from?
3. What sins have you mourned over?

Hiding God's Word in My Heart

Micah 1: 3 For, behold, the LORD cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.

MICAH 2

Introduction

Commenting upon Micah 2 Dr. H. A. Ironside noted that when people do not walk in gospel obedience to revealed truth they lose the power to distinguish truth from error, and may, “*under the deadening influence of the deceitfulness of sin, do the most outrageous things, and calmly announce that they were for the glory of God; yea, and be deeply grieved if their high pretensions are not recognized and bowed to*” (*Notes on the Minor Prophets*).

Upon cruel oppressors

Micah 2:1-11

1 Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! When the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand.

2:1 **Woe.** In *Scripture* the word “*woe*” speaks of great judgment and grief. God is a God of mercy but He is also absolute holiness and will not let the guilty go unchallenged or unpunished. Those who devise iniquity in their hearts and engage in sexual misconduct upon their beds will know a day of divine visitation. Eagerly do the wicked rise early to fulfill the imaginations of their hearts because they know they have the power to hurt others.

2 And they covet fields, and take *them* by violence; and houses, and take *them* away: so they oppress [defraud] a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.

2:14 The characteristics of the wicked are listed: covetousness, violence, fraud and deception and the stealing of a person’s inheritance.

3 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil.

2:3 To the same degree the wicked had shown no mercy to others so the Lord would show the people no mercy. Their former pride and haughtiness against accountability would not save them.

4 In that day shall one take up a parable [taunting song] against you, and lament with a doleful lamentation, *and* say, We be utterly spoiled: he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed it from me! Turning away he hath divided our fields.

5 Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the LORD.

2:4-5 **In that day.** In the day of divine judgment God promised lamentations and mourning would succeed the careless songs of sinners. Their fields would be divided among strangers to the point that none would be left with authority to “*cast a cord*” or divide the land and measure it off to place the landmarks accurately.

6 Prophecy ye not, *say they to them that* prophecy: they shall not prophecy to them, *that* they shall not take shame.

2: 6 Those who are the object of God’s impending judgment do not want to hear they are in trouble with the Lord. In an attempt to silence their conscience they silence the messenger of God calling for repentance. They do not want to be made to feel shame.

Special Note

2:6 An alternative translation of this verse would make the passage to mean that God stops any more prophetic words of warning from being uttered lest the people feel shame and repent (see Matt. 13:13-15).

7 *O thou that art* named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the LORD straitened [angry]? *Are* these his doings? Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?

2:7 In the matter of administering a righteous judgment God declares He is not unreasonable. His words minister good to anyone who walks uprightly. If people repent God shows mercy. God is more willing to save than individuals are willing to be saved. But the problem is the heart. The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. It can become emotionally harder than stone and so will not respond to words of warning or grace.

8 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 [peaceably] as men averse [returning] from war.

2:8 Professing people of the covenant can act as enemies of the Cross. It is imperative that any true profession of faith be manifested by good works, not acts of violence and robbery indicated by stripping off the costly outer robes from those that pass by. The integrity of the church is lost when individuals believe salvation brings no change in behavior.

9 The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever.

2:9 Women were the objects of abuse and injustice as well as men. Widows were left without legal protection. They were forced from their homes. Mother and child were thrown into the streets by unscrupulous creditors.

10 Arise ye, and depart; for this *is* not *your* rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy *you*, even with a sore destruction.

2:10 The Lord calls His people to depart from every expression of evil. Holiness not haughtiness in sin is to characterize the Christian. The believer is to flee fornication and not rest in the company of the profane. To do so is to be polluted and then destroyed. Self destruction comes by provoking God. The judgment will be as severe as the transgression.

11 If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, *saying*, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people.

2:11 False prophets promising ease to God's people in time of judgment have consistently plagued the church. In the modern era, in 1830, a popular teaching was introduced into American theology promising the church would escape great tribulation. The *Bible* teaches the opposite. *Acts 14:22* "*we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*" Unfortunately, those who preach ease to God's people are accepted as true prophets.

*Upon a remnant
Micah 2:12-13*

12 I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the *multitude* of men.

13 The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the LORD on the head of them.

2:12-13 The principle of abounding grace in the midst of abounding sin is brought forth in the closing verses. Despite severe judgment God will remember to have mercy. The church will be assembled as a remnant is kept according to the election of God. Like sheep in a pen, like a flock in a pasture, the elect will be gathered. Then, a divine Breaker will be sent to help the sheep escape bondage. He will set the captive free. Next, in marvelous grace the Messiah shall lead His sheep from glory to glory and they shall rejoice.

*“Rejoice, ye people, homage give,
To God with voice of triumph sing;
He ruleth in dread majesty,
The great, the universal King.*

*He putteth nations under us
And maketh us triumphant stand;
He giveth for our heritage
His promised rest, a goodly land.*

*God hath ascended with a shout,
Jehovah with the trumpet’s sound;
Sing praise to God our King,
sing praise,
Yes, let His glorious praise abound.*

*Our God is King of all the earth,
With thoughtful heart
His praise make known;
O’er all the nations God doth reign,
Exalted on His holy throne.*

*To praise and serve our cov’nant God
The princes of the earth draw nigh;
All kingly pow’rs belong to Him,
He is exalted, God most high.”*

Thomas Williams, 1789

The Book of Micah

Leader's Study Guide

Micah 2

Review

1. What does the word “*woe*” signify?

Answer.

In *Scripture* the word “*woe*” speaks of great judgment and grief. God is a God of mercy but He is also absolute holiness and will not let the guilty go unchallenged or unpunished.

2. What are the characteristics of the wicked?

Answer.

2:14 The characteristics of the wicked are listed: covetousness, violence, fraud and deception and the stealing of a person's inheritance.

3. What do people do when they do not want to listen to the voice of God?

Answer.

In an attempt to silence their conscience they silence the messenger of God calling for repentance. They do not want to be made to feel shame.

4. What do false prophets promise?

Answer.

False prophets promise ease to the people of God.

5. What is the principle of abounding grace?

Answer.

In the midst of judgment God will show mercy.

Reflection

1. Is it possible for a genuine Christian to become the enemy of God? Why or why not?
2. Define holiness.
3. Based on failed predictions and teaching contrary to the historic faith can you identify any modern day false prophets?
4. What are your thoughts about the concept of the church being taken out of the world during a time of great tribulation? What biblical evidence is used for this teaching? Are the passages appealed to valid? Explain.
5. Do you know individuals who could be characterized as an “*enemy of the cross*”? What have they said or done to deserve this characterization?

Personal Application

1. Have you ever taught something that you now consider to be in error?
2. Do you harbor secret wicked imaginations and or fantasies?
3. Is there any evidence you are able to be spiritually discerning? What is that evidence?
4. Have you ever helped a widow or an orphan? What did you do?
5. List at least five manifestations of God’s mercy towards you.

Hiding God’s Word in My Heart

Micah 2: 1 Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! When the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand.

MICAH 3

Second Division

Micah 3-5

1 And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; *Is it* not for you to know judgment?

3:1 **heads of Jacob.** The gospel calls all men to repentance including princes (verses 1-4) along with priests and prophets (5-8).

2 Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones;

3:2 In the soul of the unrighteous there are deep emotions of intense joy and pleasure for the sins of the flesh are loved. There is also deep hatred of good and resentment of any call to repentance. Every person must be self conscious of the emotions in the heart.

3 Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron.

3:3 When individuals of wealth and position lose respect for the common people they are treated with disdain and exploited. The masses become little more than meat for the fleshpots of the privileged. A quote is attributed to Pope Leo X of the Reformation era, "*What a profitable thing this myth about Jesus Christ has been to us!*"

4 Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

3:4 While God is longsuffering not willing that any should perish, perish many do because they abuse the goodness of God for His death. Then the hour comes when God is needed. Individuals cry but the heavens are as brass. God stops listening to the wicked and will even "*hide His face from them*".

5 Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err [go wrong], that bite [do harm] with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

3:5 While the princes rule and abuse people by the power of their position the priests cause the people to err by perverting the Word of God. The priests offer a false peace while preparing hearts to war against God through their will to power and the promise of personal pleasure.

6 Therefore night *shall be* unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.

3:5 God's judgment upon the church is to remove spiritual fellowship with Himself and then take away doctrinal understanding thereby plunging souls further into darkness. Those who serve not the Lord Jesus Christ but their own appetites and by good works and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, give people a heavenly way to go to hell with a religion without righteousness (Rom. 16:18).

7 Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips [upper lip]; for *there is* no answer of God.

3:7 God knows how to make the guilty ashamed. One day He shall. Every false teacher will have their eyes opened and their tongues silenced as their hearts tremble in fear at the great spiritual sin they have committed. False prophets and teachers stand in contrast to the Servant of the Lord who is full of power by the Holy Spirit.

8 But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

3:8 The servant of the Lord filled with the Holy Spirit will be faithful to call people to repentance by declaring specifically the transgressions that people are guilty of committing.

9 Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

3:9 The prophet Micah and thus the Lord pleads with the children of the covenant to listen to the gospel call of repentance. But the people do not listen. While abhorring justice and perverting all that is decent and holy the rulers build up Zion and declare the Lord is in their midst and honors all they do.

10 They build up Zion with blood [violence], and Jerusalem with iniquity.

11 The heads [rulers or civil leaders] thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? None evil can come upon us.

3:11 One of the marks of a false minister is that he is a hireling, he is in the ministry mainly for the money (John 10:12-13). The priests “*teach for hire*”. They care nothing for the people of God. Another characteristic of the religious hypocrite is a self-assurance that God is pleased with their behavior and that no harm will come to them.

12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed *as* a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

3:12 The rulers and the priests had taken the name of God and made Him the minister of unrighteousness. For this evil Zion was to be plowed as a field and Jerusalem destroyed. The Holy Mount was to be treated as the idolatrous high places of the groves. When righteousness is not respected God will remove the candlestick of the church and expose all pretensions. The One who is Holy and True will not allow inequity to continue unchecked and unchallenged.

The Book of Micah

Leader's Study Guide

Micah 3

Review

1. Describe the emotions in the soul of the wicked.

Answer.

In the soul of the unrighteous there are deep emotions of intense joy and pleasure for the sins of the flesh are loved. There is also deep hatred of good and resentment of any call to repentance

2. What does God know how to do with the wicked?

Answer.

God knows how to make the guilty ashamed.

3. Does God hear all prayers of all men?

Answer.

God stops listening to the wicked and will even "*hide His face from them*".

4. Give one distinguishing sign of a false prophet or minister of the gospel.

Answer.

One of the marks of a false minister is that he is a hireling, he is in the ministry mainly for the money (John 10:12-13). The priests "*teach for hire*".

5. What will God do when righteousness is not respected?

Answer.

When righteousness is not respected God will remove the candlestick of the church and expose all pretensions.

Reflection

1. One source that provides sinful pleasure in the modern world is the Internet. In adult chat rooms homes are being destroyed and lives are being changed as individuals meet on line to converse in the most profane way. There is a love for evil conversation. Is your life free of conversing in ungodly conversations?
2. Have you witnessed how some people with money and position can use their resources to perform good works but only so they can lead people away from righteousness? If so, give an example.
3. Have you been filled with the Holy Spirit? How did you know you were filled?
4. What are modern examples of popular doctrines but without a Biblical foundation?
5. What sexual sins are professing Christians capable of committing? What is the biblical and secular evidence for this?

Personal Application

1. Have you ever been personally ashamed of some comment or action you have done? What do you do with the guilt and the shame?
2. Do you respect God's people? Do you love the church? Do you think you will ever hold people in contempt if you discover you can control them?
3. What is your primary motive for ministry? Are you a hireling?
4. Have you ever been promoted to do something but refused? What was the consequence?
5. It is possible for the rhetoric of a minister not to match his life of reality. Is there any area in your life this is true?

Hiding God's Word in My Heart

Micah 3: 8 But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

Leader's Supplemental Material

3:5-8

- ❖ Pope Honorius reigned from 625 to 638 A.D. He was condemned as a heretic by the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680-681). He was also condemned as a heretic by Pope Leo II, as well as by every other pope until the eleventh century.

- ❖ In 769, Pope Stephen IV came to power with the help of an army that conquered the previous Pope. Stephen gave orders for his papal rival to be flogged, have his eyes cut out, have his kneecaps broken, and be imprisoned until he died. Then Pope Stephen sentenced a second man to die a slow, agonizing death. He had pieces of his body cut off every day until he finally died.
- ❖ Pope Leo V only reigned for one month (July 903). Cardinal Christopher put Leo in prison and became Pope. Then Christopher was put in prison by Cardinal Sergius. Sergius killed Leo and Christopher while they were in prison. He also killed every cardinal who had opposed him.
- ❖ Pope John XII reigned from 955 to 964. He was a violent man. He was so lustful that people of his day said that he turned the Lateran Palace into a brothel. He drank toasts to the devil. When gambling he invoked pagan gods and goddesses. He was killed by a jealous husband while in the act of committing adultery with the man's wife.
- ❖ In the tenth century, a wealthy Italian noblewoman named Marozia (c. 890 – 932/937), put nine popes into office in eight years. In order to do that, she also had to get rid of the reigning pope. Two of them were strangled, one was suffocated, and four disappeared under mysterious circumstances. One of the popes was Marozia's son. Marozia was the alleged mistress of Pope Sergius III and was given the unprecedented titles *senatrix* ("senatoress") and *patricia* of Rome by Pope John X.
- ❖ In 1003, Pope Silvester II was murdered by his successor, Pope John XVII. Seven months later, John was poisoned.
- ❖ Pope Benedict VIII reigned from 1012 to 1024. He kept a private force of "*pope's men*" who were known for torture, maiming, and murder. The Pope personally ordered many assassinations. He enjoyed cutting the tongues out of living men and he had a reputation for blood lust.
- ❖ When Benedict VIII died, his brother seized power and became Pope John XIX. He had himself ordained a priest, consecrated as a bishop, and crowned as pope, all in the same day. John died under suspicious circumstances.
- ❖ Pope Benedict IX reigned from 1032 to 1044, in 1045, and from 1047 to 1048. He became Pope through bribery. He had sex with men, women and animals. He gave orders for people to be murdered. He also practiced witchcraft and Satanism. The citizens of Rome hated Benedict so much that on two occasions he had to flee from Rome. Benedict sold the papacy to Pope Gregory VI. As part of the deal, he continued to live in the Lateran Palace, with a generous income. Benedict filled the Lateran Palace with prostitutes.
- ❖ In 1298, Pope Boniface ordered that every man, woman, child and animal in the Italian town of Palestrina be slaughtered. He was known for torture, massacre, and ferocity.

- ❖ Pope Clement VI reigned from 1342 to 1352. He ordered the slaughter of an entire Italian town. He lived a life of luxury and extravagance. He openly admitted that he sold church offices and he used threats and bribery to gain power. Clement purchased a French palace which became known as a papal brothel.
- ❖ Pope Alexander VI reigned from 1492 to 1503. He was known for murder, bribery and selling positions of authority in the Church. He was grossly licentious. On one occasion he required 50 prostitutes to dance naked before him and to engage in sexual acts for his entertainment. He had cardinals killed so that he could confiscate their property and sell their positions to ambitious men. He died of poison after having dinner with a cardinal. It was rumored that the cardinal suspected that the Pope would try to poison him and he therefore switched wine goblets with the Pope.
- ❖ Pope Julius II reigned from 1503 to 1513. He became Pope through bribery. He was extremely ruthless and violent. He had a reputation for lust, drunkenness, rages, deception, and nepotism.
- ❖ Pope Leo X reigned from 1513 to 1521. He put a statue of himself in Rome's Capitol to be saluted by the public. He had statues of Greek gods and goddesses put in Rome.
- ❖ Pope Gregory VII reigned from 1073 to 1085. He required kings and emperors to kiss his foot. Gregory and his successors used forged documents in order to expand the power of the papacy. Some Roman Catholics tried to expose these forgeries but they were excommunicated for it. However, the Orthodox Church kept records and wrote detailed information about the forgeries. (See Forged Documents and Papal Power by Mary Ann Collins, a former Catholic nun.)
- ❖ Simony was rampant among clerics. It was commonplace for priests to pay money in order to become bishops and abbots. Pope Gregory VII said that he knew of more than 40 men who became Pope by means of bribery.
- ❖ Pope Innocent III reigned from 1198 to 1216. He said that the Pope is the ruler of the world and the father of princes and kings. He claimed that every priest and bishop must obey the Pope even if the Pope commands something evil. Pope Innocent wanted to get rid of the Albigensian heretics who lived in France. He forced the King of France to kill hundreds of thousands of French citizens. The Albigensians lived mingled among the French Catholics. Pope Innocent commanded that every person in the region, including the Catholics, be killed. This was called the Albigensian Crusade, or the Albigensian Massacre. The Pope gave the Albigensian Crusaders a special indulgence which was supposed to guarantee that if they died in battle then their sins would be remitted and they would go to Heaven.
- ❖ Pope Gregory VII wanted to increase the power of the papacy. For reasons of politics and power, he abolished clerical marriage. In 1074 he passed laws requiring that priests be celibate, and he got rid of married priests.

Note. Protestants do not have innocent hands. History is filled with their sins as well.

Doctrine of the Filling of the Holy Spirit

1. The Old Testament speaks of God filling men with the Spirit of wisdom in order to make the high priestly garments of Aaron (Ex. 28:3) and the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 31:3 cf. 35:31,35).
 - *Exodus 28:3 And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.*
 - *Exodus 31:3 And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,*
 - *Exodus 35:31 And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;*
 - *Exodus 35:35 Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.*
2. The *Old Testament* speaks of God's glory filling the Holy Tabernacle (Ex. 40:34) and the earth (Num. 14:21), as well as Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 8:10,11 cp. 2 Chron. 5:13,14; 7:1,2; Isa. 6:1).
3. The Psalmist prayed that the whole Earth be filled with God's glory.
 - *Psalms 72:19 And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.*
4. In Ezekiel's Temple Vision the glory of God filled the structure.
 - *Ezekiel 10:3 Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.*
 - *Ezekiel 43:5 So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.*
 - *Ezekiel 44:4 Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD: and I fell upon my face.*
5. In the New Testament John was filled with the Holy Ghost.
 - *Luke 1:15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.*

- Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. *Luke 1:41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:*
 - Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost. *Luke 1:67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,*
 - The disciples at Pentecost were filled with the Holy Ghost. *Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*
 - Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost. *Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,*
 - A multitude of saints were filled with the Holy Ghost. *Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*
 - Paul was filled with the Holy Ghost in Acts 9:17 and again in Acts 13:9. *Acts 9:17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts 13:9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,*
6. Every Christian is commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18). The command is to be obeyed but what does it mean? *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit”*
- The Pentecostals says it means to be able to speak in tongues.
 - The Dispensationalists says it means to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit and to have no unconfessed sins.
 - The New Testament seems to teach that whenever people were filled with the Holy Spirit they all witnessed for Christ with power so that souls were saved.
 - ❖ John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost with the promise that *"many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord (Luke 1:13-16).*
 - ❖ After Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost she spake with a loud voice and said a word of testimony about the coming Saviour to be born of the Virgin. *Luke 1:41-42 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*

- ❖ When Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit he had great power to witness. *Luke 1:67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,*
- ❖ Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered to begin His supernatural ministry. *Luke 4:1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,*
- ❖ In the book of Acts whenever people were filled with the Holy Spirit, they witnessed with power. Six times the phrase "filled with the Holy Ghost" is used. Five times we are told that witnessing for God took place.
 - At Pentecost people filled with the Holy Ghost began to witness for Christ (Acts 2:4) and souls were saved (Acts 2:41). *Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*
 - Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 4:8) and preached. *Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,*
 - In Acts 4:31 a whole group of disciples were filled again with the Holy Spirit and people were saved (Acts 4:32). *Acts 4:31-32 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. 32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.*
 - Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, witnessed in mighty power (Acts 6:5-8) and souls were later saved. *Acts 6:5-8 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: 6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. 7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. 8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.*
 - Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, began His powerful ministry (Acts 9:17; Acts 13:9-12). *Acts 9:17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts 13:9-12 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, 10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 11 And*

now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

- Barnabas too was filled with the Holy Spirit and won many souls to the Saviour. *Acts 11:24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.*

7. Even the Old Testament passages that teach of God filling Bezaleel, demonstrate the fact that the Holy Spirit was given to testify about Christ for the Ark which Bezaleel constructed was all about Christ.

- *Exodus 31:3 And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,*
- *Exodus 35:31 And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;*
- *Exodus 35:35 Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.*

8. The conclusion of the matter is plain.

- The Bible commands believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to be controlled by Him, and to be under His guiding influence.
- The Bible promises a special filling, an anointment, a power from on high for soul winning efforts. But this filling only comes by believing the promise associated with the Great Commission, praying, supplicating, and waiting expectantly.

MICAH 4

Description of the kingdom

Micah 4:1-5

1 But in the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it [Isaiah 2:2-4].

4:1 **the last days.** Many spiritual blessings are identified with the Messiah in the last days. Turning to the *New Testament* the last days are declared to be fulfilled in Christ and in the church age.

- *Acts 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:*
- *2 Timothy 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*
- *Hebrews 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*
- *2 Peter 3:3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*

2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4:2 The provisions of this passage seems to be fulfilled in the church according to Hebrews 12:22—23. This is expressly stated: '*But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.*' There are two rules of biblical hermeneutics or principles of interpretation to guide the believers understanding of the *Scriptures*.

- ❖ Let the *New Testament* interpret the *Old Testament*.
- ❖ When it does, believe what is said.

3 And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

4:3 The image of a sovereign Judge among the nations and a Prince of Peace are associated with and fulfilled in Christ.

The Sovereign Savior

- *Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

The Ascended Christ

- *Col 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*
- *Acts 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

The Ruler and Judge of the Universe

- *Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*
- *Rev 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

The Prince of Peace

- *Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

4 But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make *them* afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken *it*.

4:1-4 The secular counterpoint to the millennial concept is called “*Utopia*” which literally means, “*Nowhere.*” Another name is “*Communism*”. An alternative to secular Utopia, ungodly Communism or dispensational millennialism is to find messianic promises spiritually fulfilled in Christ and in the church during the present age and in the ages to come.

- *Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*
- *Ephesians 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;*

- *Ephesians 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*
- *Colossians 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:*

When Jesus returns the second time for all who believe according to promise (Heb. 9:28; Acts 1:11) there will be a new heaven and a new earth as time will be no more. Death will be swallowed up in victory and the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our God (1 Cor. 15:1ff). The eternal rule and reign of Christ will be established, not for only a mere thousand years but forever and ever.

5 For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and [or, but] we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

4:5 When Jesus comes every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord to the glory of God.

Establishment of the Kingdom
Micah 4:6-13

6 In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth [is lame], and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted;

7 And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.

8 And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.

4:6-8 When the ascended Lord gave power to His disciples on the day of Pentecost, Jerusalem became the joy of the earth for the gospel was preached to many tongues and nations (Acts 2:1-12).

9 Now why dost thou cry out aloud? *Is there* no king in thee? Is thy counsellor perished? For pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail.

10 Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt *go even* to Babylon; there shalt thou be delivered; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.

11 Now also many nations [Gentiles] are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion.

12 But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel [guidance]: for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor.

13 Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.

4:7-12 Before the Messiah, before the fullness of the Spirit being poured out, before the day of Pentecost, before the gospel would go unto the ends of the earth, before any of these great events the covenanted people must cry out. Jerusalem must be destroyed and the children carried to Babylon. The enemies of the church must magnify themselves against her till the hour of her favor was to come and the Lord Himself was to appear to redeem His own according to the election of grace. With the coming of the Messiah the wealth of the nations would be devoted to Him through whom all joy is found. Their substance would gladly be given to Him. All of this has been realized reflected in the conversion of Zacchaeus and the willingness of the church to give the resources of the world to spread the gospel (Luke 19:5; Acts 20:35).

The Book of Micah
Leader's Study Guide

Micah 4

Review

1. In what other passage are the words of Micah 4:1-3 found?

Answer.

The words of Micah 4:1-3 are also found in Isaiah 2:2-4.

2. Comment on the term "*the last days.*"

Answer.

Many spiritual blessings are identified with the Messiah in the last days. Turning to the *New Testament* the last days are declared to be fulfilled in Christ and in the church age.

- *Acts 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:*

3. What two secular concepts replace the biblical image of the reign of the Messiah?

Answer.

Utopia and Communism replace the biblical image of the glorious reign of the Messiah.

4. What images of the Messiah are presented in Micah 4:3?

Answer.

The image of a sovereign Judge among the nations and a Prince of Peace are associated with and fulfilled in Christ.

5. What had to happen before the Messiah would come?

Answer.

Before the Messiah could come the covenanted people had to cry out. Jerusalem had to be destroyed and the children carried captive to Babylon. The enemies of the church had to magnify themselves against her till the hour of her favor was to come.

Reflection

1. If Scripture is to be interpreted as literally as possible whenever possible as some Bible scholars insist, who and what determines what is possible?
2. Do you believe there is a dramatic distinction between the church of the Old Testament and the church of the New? Explain.
3. Does God have a plan for national Israel that is distinct from the plan of His new covenanted people? What might that plan be? Use Scripture to defend your answer.
4. Do you believe that when Jesus comes the second time for all who believe there is still 1,000 more years of human history filled with bloodshed and violence and death? Why? What biblical passages would you appeal to for such a belief?
5. What percentage of your income do you give to the Lord? What does your income tax statement reflect?

Personal Application

1. What is your view of Jesus Christ? Write out a devotional description as well as a theological one.
2. Would you be willing to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit so that you can have power for soul winning? ***Special note.*** This baptism of the Spirit has nothing to do with speaking in tongues but being endowed with power from on high to see souls saved.
3. What is your attitude towards war? Are you willing to kill for God and country if called upon? Why or why not?
4. Have you ever led anyone to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ? Do you engage in personal soul winning activity? What do you do?
5. Mark your Bible with a chain reference beginning with Romans 3:10.

By Romans 3:10 mark at the end of the verse: see Romans 3:23.

By Romans 3:23 mark at the end of the verse: see Romans 6:23

By Romans 6:23 mark at the end of the verse: see Romans 5:8

By Romans 5:8 mark at the end of the verse: see Romans 10:9-10

Make the following points to the person you are witnessing to.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. There is no one who has not sinned | Romans 3:10. |
| 2. Everyone has come short of the glory of God | Romans 3:23. |
| 3. The wages of sin is death | Romans 6:23. |
| 4. God has a gift, it is the gift of eternal life | Romans 5:8. |
| 5. The way to receive the gift is to call upon the Lord | Romans 10:9-10. |

Hiding God's Word in My Heart

Micah 4: 4 But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.

Leader's Study Notes

Most of Micah 4:1-3 is found in Isaiah 2:2-4 “*And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. “*

Leader's Supplemental Material

4:1 Dispensational authors who take this and other prophecies of poetical language literally believe in a future reconstructed Millennial Temple which will not stand on “*Mount Moriah but on a magnificent table-land, lifted up above all the surrounding hills, after the land has gone through some remarkable topographical changes, caused by a great earthquake, which will occur when the feet of the Lord Jesus stand again on the mount of Olives. See Ezek. 40:2 and 48:8-12; Zech. 14:4*” (Dr. H.A. Ironside, *Notes on the Minor Prophets*). Is this a valid understanding of the Bible? Why or why not?

MICAH 5

Rejection of the King at His first coming Micah 5:1-2

1 Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

5:1 The rejection of the Messiah was foretold by Isaiah and by Micah. Both predicted He would be treated in a violent manner. *“I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting” (Isa. 50: 6).*

When Jesus was taken into the home of the High Priest they *“did spit in His face, and buffeted Him; and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying Prophecy unto us, Thou Christ, Who is he that smote Thee?”* In like manner in the Roman pretorium the *soldiers “spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head” (Matt. 26:67, 68; 27:30).*

*“Up Calvary’s mountain,
one dreadful morn,
Walked Christ my Savior,
weary and worn;*

*Facing for sinners
death on the cross,
That He might save them
from endless loss.*

*Blessèd Redeemer! Precious Redeemer!
Seems now I see Him on Calvary’s tree;
Wounded and bleeding,
for sinners pleading,
Blind and unheeding—dying for me!*

*“Father forgive them!”
thus did He pray,
E’en while His lifeblood
flowed fast away;*

*Praying for sinners while in such woe
No one but Jesus ever loved so.*

*O how I love Him, Savior and Friend,
How can my praises ever find end!
Through years unnumbered
on Heaven's shore,
My tongue shall praise
Him forevermore"*

Avis M. Christiansen, 1920

2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that* is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.

5:2 This text is applied to the Messiah in Matthew 2:5. Seven centuries before the Lord Jesus was born the place of His birth was given. Mark well the *Old Testament* passages that are quoted in the *New Testament* but then remember this: "*It is a small thing how you mark your Bible, but it is all important that it mark you.*"

*Interval between the royal rejection and return
Micah 5:3*

3 Therefore will he give them up, until the time *that* she which travaileth [is in labor] hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

5:3 **give them up.** Because the Messiah would be rejected God would give Israel up to a period of travail. In AD 70 judgment would fall upon the nation. Once more the Jews would be dispersed among all people. They would be scattered among the countries of the earth. And the voices inviting judgment would ring across the centuries, "*His blood be upon us and our children*" (*Matt. 27:25*).

5:3 **the remnant.** In the *New Testament* this remnant is spoken of in Romans 11:5. "*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*"

*The Messiah's second coming
Micah 5:4-15*

4 And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

5:4 When Jesus comes the second time in all of His power and glory He shall *“be great unto the ends of the earth.”* Never again will any one spit on Christ or raise a hand in violence against Him. Never again will unholy hands hurt His holy body or pound nails into His flesh. He shall be great unto the ends of the earth forever and ever.

*“Come, Thou almighty King,
Help us Thy Name to sing,
help us to praise!”*

*Father all glorious, over all victorious,
Come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days!*

*Jesus, our Lord, arise,
Scatter our enemies, and make them fall;
Let Thine almighty
aid our sure defense be made,
Souls on Thee be stayed;
Lord, hear our call.*

*Come, Thou incarnate Word,
Gird on Thy mighty sword,
our prayer attend!*

*Come, and Thy people bless,
and give Thy Word success,
Spirit of holiness, on us descend!*

*Come, holy Comforter,
Thy sacred witness
bear in this glad hour.*

*Thou Who almighty art,
now rule in every heart,
And ne'er from us depart,
Spirit of power!*

*To Thee, great One in Three,
Eternal praises be, hence, evermore.
Thy sovereign majesty
may we in glory see,
And to eternity love and adore!”*

Charles Wesley

5 And this *man* shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal [princes] men.

5:5 Returning to a more contemporary event Micah anticipates an Assyrian invasion of Israel. When it comes the men of Israel will fight. Shepherds and princes will unite in hand-to-hand combat with Assyrian soldiers and shall prevail, if not initially then ultimately. This has proven to be true. Today, Israel is recognized as a nation among others in the world while Assyria has been relegated to the dustbin of history.

6 And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and [even] the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver *us* from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.

5:6 In the day of ultimate victory for the church with Jesus Christ, the Man of Peace as her leader all the enemies of the covenanted people will be defeated. Historically the haughty Assyrians were to be overthrown, and in modern times, by way of application any and all institutions that oppose the church shall be destroyed. This includes socialistic regimes, communism, Marxism, atheism and any other entity that dares to replace or destroy the church of the Living Lord.

7 And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

5:7 Once freed of all enemies, political and spiritual, the church as the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people “*as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass,*” bringing joy and blessing to all at the command of the Lord. The church will tarry for none.

*“We’re marching to Zion,
beautiful, beautiful Zion,
We’re marching upward to Zion,
the beautiful city of God.”*

8 And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

5:8 **the remnant of Jacob.** As salvation is of the Lord so is the preservation of the people of God in time and eternity. The doctrine of the security of the Believer is one of the most precious teachings in *Scripture*. It brings comfort to the heart in times of persecution and hope in days of pain and suffering. The remnant of Jacob “*shall be*”. There is divine certainty in the decrees of the Almighty despite the hardships of life.

*“God hath not promised
skies always blue,
Flower strewn pathways
all our lives through;*

*God hath not promised
sun without rain, Joy without sorrow,
peace without pain.*

*But God hath promised
strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.*

*God hath not promised
we shall not know
Toil and temptation, trouble and woe;
He hath not told us we shall not bear
Many a burden, many a care.*

*God hath not promised
smooth roads and wide,
Swift, easy travel, needing no guide;
Never a mountain rocky and steep,
Never a river turbid and deep.”*

*But God hath promised
strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.*

Annie J. Flint

9 Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.

5:9 **thine hand**. Despite a sad but popular teaching that the church shall end in shame and apostasy the prophetic *Word of God* declares triumph for the church. The church cannot fail. The church remains the most glorious institution on earth. Her glory and victory is assured. Dr. Vernon Grounds, chancellor of Denver Seminary tells of an incident that happened while he was in seminary. Since the school had no gymnasium, he and his friends played basketball in a nearby public school.

Nearby, an elderly janitor waited patiently until the seminarians finished playing. Invariably he sat there reading his Bible. One day my friend asked him what he was reading. The man answered, *'The book of Revelation.'* Surprised, my friend asked if he understood it. *'Oh, yes,'* the man assured him. *'I understand it.'* *'What does it mean?'* Quietly the janitor answered, *'It means that Jesus is gonna win.'* Grounds concludes, *"That's the best commentary I have ever heard on that book. Jesus is going to win. That's the Biblical mind-set."*

10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that I will cut off [destroy] thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots:

11 And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds:

12 And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no *more* soothsayers:

13 Thy graven images [Ex. 20: 4] also will I cut off, and thy standing [statues] images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands.

14 And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee: so will I destroy thy cities [enemies].

15 And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

5:10-15 As evil had a point of origin so it will have a point of ultimate termination and eradication. The prophet shares what the Lord will do to the enemies of the church.

- ❖ **The Lord will cut off their means of waging war.** *"I will cut off [destroy] thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots."*
- ❖ **The Lord will weaken their financial institutions and fortified strongholds.** *"I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds."*
- ❖ **The Lord will destroy false spiritual strength.** The world of the occult will be judged. *"I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers."*
- ❖ **The Lord will destroy ever vestige of false worship.** He will cut off all *"standing [statues] images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands."*

The wicked will be astonished at the judgment that falls upon them as every evil is rooted out.

The Book of Micah

Leader's Study Guide

Micah 5

Review

1. What was predicted seven centuries prior to the birth of the Messiah?

Answer.

Micah 5:2 is applied to the Messiah in Matthew 2:5. The place of the birth of the Messiah was foretold seven centuries before it happened.

2. To whom does the remnant refer?

Answer.

God has promised to preserve a people to Himself. Because not all Israel is Israel those who have the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob constitute the faithful “*Jew*” and a remnant of these faithful few will be preserved to the glory of God.

3. Which mighty ancient empire did Micah predict would be overthrown?

Answer.

Micah predicted the overthrow of the Assyrian empire. *Micah 5: 6 And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.*

4. Comment on the decrees of the Lord.

Answer.

There is divine certainty in the decrees of the Almighty despite the hardships of life.

5. List some of the evils the Messiah will root out on behalf of the church.

Answer.

- ❖ **The Lord will cut off their means of waging war.** *“I will cut off [destroy] thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots.”*
- ❖ **The Lord will weaken their financial institutions and fortified strongholds.** *“I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds.”*
- ❖ **The Lord will destroy false spiritual strength.** The world of the occult will be judged. *“I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers.”*

- ❖ **The Lord will destroy ever vestige of false worship.** He will cut off all “*standing [statues] images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands.*”

Reflection

1. Have you been taught to fear the future and have put your hope in escaping any time of great tribulation to come? Why?
2. Do you believe the church has a glorious future of triumph and victory or do you believe it is destitute to apostatize? Use Scripture to support your answer.
3. What hardships have you suffered in life? Have you ever suffered for the sake of righteousness in that you stood up for a principle or promise of the Word of God? Please share.
4. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is now King and that He rules and reigns as the Messiah over the affairs of the earth? If not, why not?
5. What evidence is there in chapter 5 that the prophet saw not only the first coming of Christ but His Second Advent as well?

Personal Application

1. Is there any specific area in your life that you feel you have been given up to sin because after years of struggling with self mortification of the flesh you find no victory? Name the area.
2. It is possible for a person to think that just because they confess a darling sin time and again they do not have to change. Is this your position?
3. Can the mercy of God be embraced and relied upon at the expense of His holiness and justice?
4. How can a person distinguish between the natural decline in health of the body and God’s judgment?
5. If the Lord visited you and placed you “*under the rod*” of divine discipline, would you be astonished? How can a person know if they have committed a “*sin unto death*” (1 John 5:16)?

Hiding God’s Word in My Heart

Micah 5: 4 And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

MICAH 6

Third Division

Micah 6-7

The people's ingratitude and sin Micah 6:1-7:6

1 Hear ye now what the LORD saith; Arise, contend [plead] thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice.

6:1 **Hear ye now.** Having looked into the future the prophet returns to the present to press home upon the conscience the sins of the people for the Lord has a controversy with His people.

2 Hear ye, O mountains, the LORD's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the LORD hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead [argue] with Israel.

6:2 In biblical poetical language mountains and hills are often used as a simile for the major cities and their adjacent villages. They are called upon to give “*ear*” or to give a hearing to the controversy the Lord has with His people. Communion is no longer possible until the vital issue of sin is dealt with.

3 O my people, what have I done unto thee? And wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me.

6:3 Taking the role of a wounded lover the Lord asks what He has done to deserve unethical treatment by His own. How has He provoked them to the point they can argue they are weary of Him and can justify turning to false lovers in the form of pagan gods?

4 For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

6:4 In self defense and to establish His righteous case Lord goes back into history to remind the people of the covenant how He had brought the fathers “*up out of the land of Egypt.*” God had redeem or purchased His people.

5 O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the LORD.

6:5 In order to bring conviction to their hearts the people of the covenant are called upon to remember how the Lord would allow no one to curse them. When judgment was necessary the Lord administered discipline that they “*might know the righteousness of the Lord.*” The purpose of the chastisements was to turn cursing into blessing.

6 Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, *and* bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?

6:5 Assuming the people desired to repent, the prophet asks a rhetorical question. “*How was fellowship to be restored?*” “*Would it be on the basis of proper sacrifices offered?*”

7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, *or* with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul?

6:7 The answer to the rhetorical questions is, “*No!*” God does not want animal or human sacrifices. What He does want is a righteous life.

8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

6:8 Only when the people bowed low before the Lord, acknowledged their sins and set out in the power of the Holy Spirit to live a holy and righteous life would fellowship with the Lord return. Only by gospel obedience is there a happy sense of the Lord’s favor which exalts the heart and brings inner peace and lasting happiness.

*“Living for Jesus, a life that is true,
Striving to please Him in all that I do;
Yielding allegiance,
glad hearted and free,
This is the pathway of blessing for me.*

*O Jesus, Lord and Savior,
I give myself to Thee,
For Thou, in Thy atonement,
didst give Thyself for me.*

*I own no other Master,
my heart shall be Thy throne.
My life I give, henceforth to live,
O Christ, for Thee alone.*

*Living for Jesus Who died in my place,
Bearing on Calvary
my sin and disgrace;
Such love constrains me
to answer His call,
Follow His leading and give Him my all.*

*Living for Jesus, wherever I am,
Doing each duty in His holy Name;
Willing to suffer affliction and loss,
Deeming each trial a part of my cross.
Living for Jesus through earth's
little while,
My dearest treasure,
the light of His smile;
Seeking the lost ones He died to redeem,
Bringing the weary to find rest in Him.”*

Thomas O. Chisholm

6:8 In Matthew 23:23 Jesus referred to this passage when condemning the Pharisees saying, “*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.*”

9 The LORD's voice crieth unto the city, and *the man* of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.

6:9 The voice of the Lord is the most precious voice that ears will ever hear. It is a spiritual voice but it is just as real as the sound of a human voice. The man of wisdom will listen for it. The man of wisdom will yield to the rod of divine judgment because of the Righteous One who has appointed it. *Psalms 94:12 “Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law; 13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.”*

6:9 **hear ye the rod.** God has reasons for chastening His children.

❖ **Chastening is designed to lead the Christian to repentance.** *2 Corinthians 7: 9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.*

- ❖ **Chastening is designed to restore the heart to fellowship with the Lord.** *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3). Ps 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*
- ❖ **Chastening is designed to make the Christian more fruitful and faithful.** *1 Corinthians 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.*
- ❖ **Chastening is designed to keep the Christian humble.** *2 Corinthians 12:7-9 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*
- ❖ **Chastening is designed to make the believer more spiritually discerning.** *1 Corinthians 11:31-32 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*
- ❖ **Chastening is designed to make the believer more effective in service.** *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58).*

10 Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant [lawless] measure that is abominable?

11 Shall I count *them* pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?

12 For the rich men thereof [of the city] are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue *is* deceitful in their mouth.

6:10-12 The sins of the saints are enumerated so self-judgment can take place.

- ❖ **Covetousness.** Treasures are hoarded.
- ❖ **Extortion.** The lawless take from others in an abominable manner.
- ❖ **Unrighteousness** in business transactions occurs because of false balances.
- ❖ **Violence.** The most ruthless and violent are the richest people in the city.
- ❖ **Deceit.** People speak lies for deceit is in their mouths.

13 Therefore also will I make *thee* sick in smiting thee, in making *thee* desolate because of thy sins.

14 Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied; and thy casting down *shall be* in the midst of thee; and thou shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver; and *that* which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword.

15 Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine.

6:13-15 Apart from repentance the wrath of God would be poured out upon the nation.

- ❖ **Poor health.** Diseases prevail where sin is not repented. The modern AIDS epidemic cannot be dismissed as simply a social problem, it is a spiritual problem.
- ❖ **Malnourishment.** “*Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied.*”
- ❖ **Military defeat.** “*that which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword.*”
- ❖ **Crop failure.** “Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap.” The olives would produce no oil, the vine no wine.

16 For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people.

6:14 The chapter closes with the most serious sin of the saints and that is a fundamental disrespect for the Word of God. While Jehovah’s law was not honored “*the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab.*” God has no choice but is compelled to make the people of the covenant “*a desolation and the inhabitants thereof an hissing*” until their repentance is as deep as the transgression. Those who are determined to self destruct will find God to be just as determined to administer righteous discipline.

Addressing this issue, A.W. Tozer wrote, “*We must face the fact that many today are notoriously careless in their living. This attitude finds its way into the church. We have liberty, we have money, we live in comparative luxury. As a result, discipline practically; has disappeared. What would a violin solo sound like if the strings on the musician’s instrument were all hanging loose, not stretched tight, not “disciplined”?* (Men Who Met God).

Ephraim Repenting
Jeremiah 31:18-20

*“My God, till I receive Thy stroke,
How like a beast was I!
So unaccustom’d to the yoke,
So backward to comply.*

*With grief my just reproach I bear;
Shame fills me at the thought,
How frequent my rebellions were,
What wickedness I wrought.*

*Thy merciful restraint I scorn’d,
And left the pleasant road;
Yet turn me, and I shall be turn’d;
Thou are the Lord my God.*

*“Is Ephraim banish’d from my thoughts,
Or vile in my esteem?”
No,” saith the Lord, “with all his faults,
I still remember him.*

*“Is he a dear and pleasant child?”
Yes, dear and pleasant still;
Though sin his foolish heart beguiled,
And he withstood my will.*

*“My sharp rebuke has laid him low
He seeks my face again;
My pity kindles at his woe,
He shall not seek in vain.”*

Olney Hymns,
by
William Cowper,
from
Cowper’s Poems,
Sheldon & Company, New York

The Book of Micah

Leader's Study Guide

Micah 6

Review

1. In biblical language what do mountains and hills often represent?

Answer.

Mountains and hills are often used as a simile for the major cities and their adjacent villages.

2. On what gospel terms can fellowship with the Lord be restored?

Answer.

Only when the people bowed low before the Lord, acknowledged their sins and set out in the power of the Holy Spirit to live a holy and righteous life would fellowship with the Lord return. Only by gospel obedience is there a happy sense of the Lord's favor which exalts the heart and brings inner peace and lasting happiness.

3. Why does God chastise His children?

Answer.

- ❖ Chastening is designed to lead the Christian to repentance. *2 Corinthians 7: 9*
- ❖ Chastening is designed to restore the heart to fellowship with the Lord. *Ps 119:67*
- ❖ Chastening is designed to make the Christian more fruitful and faithful. *1 Corinthians 4:2*
- ❖ Chastening is designed to keep the Christian humble. *2 Corinthians 12:7-9*
- ❖ Chastening is designed to make the believer more spiritually discerning. *1 Corinthians 11:31-32*
- ❖ Chastening is designed to make the believer more effective in service. *1 Corinthians 15:58.*

4. List some of the sins of the saints that the heart must be guarded against.

Answer.

- ❖ Covetousness whereby treasures are hoarded.
- ❖ Extortion. The lawless takes from others in an abominable manner.
- ❖ Unrighteousness in business transactions occurs because of false balances.
- ❖ Violence. The most ruthless and violent are the richest people in the city.
- ❖ Deceit. People speak lies for deceit is in their mouths.

5. How does God discipline His people?

Answer.

- ❖ Poor health. Diseases prevail where sin is not repented. The modern AIDS epidemic cannot be dismissed as simply a social problem, it is a spiritual problem.
- ❖ Malnourishment. *“Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied.”*
- ❖ Military defeat. *“that which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword.”*
- ❖ Crop failure. *“Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap.”* The olives would produce no oil, the vine no wine.

Reflection

1. Does God have a controversy with you because of sin in your life? Are there any strongholds that dominate your life and break sweet fellowship with the Lord?
2. What specific sins do you struggle with in your soul? Are others aware of these sins are have you kept them hidden from public view?
3. How has God chastened you in the course of your journey in grace? Be specific.
4. Are you afraid of any of the forms of the judgments enumerated? Why or why not?
5. List some modern day signs that God has a controversy with a country and is judging it. Begin with Israel as per Romans 11:25.

Personal Application

1. Have you ever been out of fellowship with the Lord for a prolonged period of time? How were you restored to fellowship? What steps did you take?
2. Do you find pleasure in any particular sin? What sin brings personal pleasure?
3. Have you ever *“eaten”* or partaken of *“forbidden”* fruit but not been satisfied? Have you found this form of divine permission to be true?
4. Do you have a moral right to pass judgment on others as a professing Christian?

5. Self examination.

- | | | |
|--|------------|----------------|
| • Covetousness | Guilty ___ | Not Guilty ___ |
| • Extortion | Guilty ___ | Not Guilty ___ |
| • Unrighteousness in business transactions | Guilty ___ | Not Guilty ___ |
| • Violence | Guilty ___ | Not Guilty ___ |
| • Deceit | Guilty ___ | Not Guilty ___ |

Hiding God's Word in My Heart

Micah 6: 8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

MICAH 7

1 Woe is me! For I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage: *there* is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the first ripe fruit.

7:1 The plight of man engulfed in sin is continually set forth. The mixed message of judgment and mercy must be sounded forth again for the strength of sin is tenacious. Sin never lets the soul go easily. Even in the presence of Jesus the demons shriek and rage and cast the body of their victim one last time before obeying for obey they must. “*O Lord, make sin obey Thy Word. Tell sin to leave my heart alone.*”

*“Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”*

Alexander Pope

The soul of the saints becomes like fruit gathered in summer, it is shriveled up. There is no cluster to eat, there is no spiritual fruit to enjoy. Only by the grace of God is there a lingering desire for spiritual fruit as in days before. “*My soul desired the first ripe fruit.*”

*“Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.*

*Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount! I’m fixed upon it,
Mount of Thy redeeming love.”*

Robert Robinson

2 The good *man* is perished out of the earth: and *there* is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.

7:2 **the good man is perished.** Sin can saturate a society to the point the righteous feel orphaned and alone as Elijah thought he was the last of the faithful remnant.

3 That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge *asketh* for a reward; and the great *man*, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap [weave it] it up.

6: 3 **do evil.** When sin controls the soul there is an eagerness to engage in evil. Both hands grasp at sin in earnest. People in places of power and position are no exception. Bribes are accepted. Clever ways are created to take money from others.

4 The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is *sharper* than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen *and* thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity.

5 Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

7:4-5 When society is characterized by evil people they will enter the church. Friendships cease to exist for no one can be trusted. There is no confidence in any guide. Even a lover is not to be trusted. “*Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.*” Why? She will betray you.

6 For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies *are* the men of his own house.

7:6 This passage is used by Christ in Matthew 10: 21 to show how the enemies of the church will be found among family members. This has proven to be true. In a given family one may follow Christ while others do not.

A Prophet's Prayer of Intercession
Micah 7:7-20

7 Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.

7:7 The voice of hope is heard in this passage for God has granted repentance unto life. The soul that looks unto the Lord, the heart that waits for the God of salvation will not be disappointed. “*Hurry Lord. Do not tarry. Come to Thy church even in this hour. Fly on wings of an eagle. Make haste to come down and visit your people. Praise and glory waits for you Lord. Come.*”

*“Come, Holy Spirit, God and Lord!
Let all your graces be outpoured
On each believer's mind and heart;
Your fervent love to us impart.
Lord, by the brightness of Your light,
You in the faith do men unite
Of every land and every tongue;
This to Your praise, O Lord, be sung.*”

*From every error keep us free;
Let none but Christ our Master be,
That we in living faith abide,
In Him with all our might confide.
Lord, by Your power prepare each heart
And to the weakness strength impart,
That bravely here we may contend,
Through life and death to You ascend.”*

Translated by
Martin Luther

8 Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD *shall be* a light unto me.

7:8 The enemies of the church are warned not to rejoice when wickedness seems to triumph. The righteous shall rise again though they might sit in darkness. The Lord will come to be a light unto the faithful, repentant heart.

9 I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, *and* I shall behold his righteousness.

7:9 The repenting heart will bear the discipline of the Lord because there has been sin in the soul, which cannot be denied. But the good heart will wait for the Lord Jesus to act as Advocate and the Great High Priest and plead on its behalf. Then the Lord will bring the heart forth to the light and the glory and the righteousness of God will be enjoyed.

*“Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready my God, Thy will to see,
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!*

*Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.*

*Open my mouth, and let me bear,
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.”*

Clara H. Scott

10 Then *she that is* mine enemy shall see *it*, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the LORD thy God? Mine eyes shall behold [gloat over] her: now shall she be trodden [trample] down as the mire [mud] of the streets.

7:10 The enemies of Judah underestimated God. In the day of divine deliverance they will be ashamed. One day the church shall rejoice over all her enemies as well and then rise up in judgment against them. Former enemies will be stripped of their power and trampled.

11 *In* the day that thy walls are to be built, *in* that day shall the decree [boundary] be far removed [enlarged from its center in Jerusalem].

7:11 As Micah predicted a period of exile for the Jews so he predicted their return. The walls of the city would be rebuilt and the borders enlarged.

12 *In* that day *also* he [they] shall come even to thee from Assyria, and *from* the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.

7:12 As the Jews shall be regathered so the elect shall be regathered from the north, south, east and west according to promise. *Matthew 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

13 Notwithstanding the land [of Promise] shall be desolate [empty] because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings.

7:13 Before there can be a glorious future, judgment must have her perfect work. Micah takes a final look and sees the Land of Promise will be made desolate. Evil may be repented of but the righteousness of God will not stop the harvest from the seeds of sin sown.

***The Prophet Micah Prays for the People
Micah 7:14-17***

14 Feed [rule] thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily [unmolested] *in* the wood, in the midst of [beautiful] Carmel: let them feed *in* [productive pastoral areas such as] Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.

7:14 Micah petitions God to feed or shepherd His people as in days of old. The Psalmist prayed “Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee” (Psalm 143:8). The shepherd would use his rod to lead the sheep out of the fold, to bring straying members and to protect the flock.

So the church must pray that Christ will shelter, feed and protect her for the elect are the flock of His inheritance.

Deuteronomy 4:20 But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.

Psalms 28:9 Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

The Lord answers the Petition of the Praying Prophet Micah

15 According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous *things*.

7:15 As God delivered His people from Egypt so He can deliver them once more from their enemies. He can perform “*marvelous things*” or great wonders of miracles (Exodus 3:20).

16 The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay *their* hand upon *their* mouth, their ears shall be deaf.

7:16 The enemies of God once questioned His presence and power. Now they will be ashamed at such unworthy thoughts about Him. In a gesture of reverential silence they put a hand upon their mouth.

17 They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of thee.

7:10 **lick the dust.** In a position of ultimate lowliness and humiliation the enemies of the Lord move. They come like worms out of the earth to submit to His will in fear.

7:10-17 The prophet anticipates a restoration of the people of the covenant to their land. Though they shall go under the rod they shall not ultimately or finally perish for God will have mercy. A remnant shall return according to the election of grace. And the enemies of the people of the covenant will be ashamed. They shall also be astonished at the favor the Lord will show to those

on whom He will have mercy. By way of spiritual application the Lord may discipline the church but in the end the church shall know great grace and mercy.

*A Doxology of Divine Glory
Micah 7:18-20*

18 Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth *in* mercy.

7:18 Jehovah is transcendent, splendid and separate.

19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

7:19 Jehovah is holy and demands that sin be judged. Iniquities will be subdued. In the midst of judgment there will be mercy as sins are cast “*into the depths of the sin.*”

*“A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord,
A wonderful Savior to me;
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,
Where rivers of pleasure I see.*

*He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock
That shadows a dry, thirsty land;
He hideth my life
with the depths of His love,
And covers me there with His hand,
And covers me there with His hand.*

*A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord,
He taketh my burden away;
He holdeth me up,
and I shall not be moved,
He giveth me strength as my day.*

*With numberless blessings
each moment He crowns,
And filled with His fullness divine,
I sing in my rapture, oh, glory to God
For such a Redeemer as mine!
When clothed in His brightness, transported I rise
To meet Him in clouds of the sky,
His perfect salvation,*

*His wonderful love
I'll shout with the millions on high."*

Fanny Crosby

20 Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, *and* the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

7:20 Jehovah will keep His covenant promises. Stress is placed upon God's faithfulness and not man's worth.

*"Wonderful grace of Jesus,
Greater than all my sin;
How shall my tongue describe it,
Where shall its praise begin?
Taking away my burden,
Setting my spirit free;
For the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me.*

Wonderful the matchless grace of Jesus,
Deeper than the mighty rolling sea;
Wonderful grace, all sufficient for me, for even me.
Broader than the scope of my transgressions,
Greater far than all my sin and shame,
O magnify the precious Name of Jesus.
Praise His Name!

*Wonderful grace of Jesus,
Reaching to all the lost,
By it I have been pardoned,
Saved to the uttermost,
Chains have been torn asunder,
Giving me liberty;
For the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me.*

*Wonderful grace of Jesus,
Reaching the most defiled,
By its transforming power,*

*Making him God's dear child,
Purchasing peace and heaven,
For all eternity;
And the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me."*

Haldor Lillenus, 1918

A Concluding Prayer by St. Jerome

d. September, 420 AD

"O God, who is a God like unto Thee? Who pardonest iniquity, passest by the transgression of the remnant of Thy people; who retainest not Thine anger forever because Thou delightest in mercy! Thou hast turned us again and hast had compassion upon us. Thou has subdued our iniquities and hast cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Oh, preserve us this Thy mercy forever and ever, so that we may walk in the light of Thy Word and escape all dangers threatening us from Satan and the world, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Redeemer. Amen. Amen. Amen."

The Book of Micah

Leader's Study Guide

Micah 7

1. Describe the heart that is willing to “*do evil.*”

Answer.

When sin controls the soul there is an eagerness to engage in evil. Both hands grasp at sin in earnest. People in places of power and position are no exception. Bribes are accepted. Clever ways are created to take money from others.

2. What are the enemies of the church warned not to do?

Answer.

The enemies of the church are warned not to rejoice when wickedness seems to triumph. The righteous shall rise again though they might sit in darkness. The Lord will come to be a light unto the faithful, repentant heart.

3. How did Christ use Micah 7:6 in His teaching ministry?

Answer.

This passage is used by Christ in Matthew 10: 21 to show how the enemies of the church will be found among family members. This has proven to be true. In a given family one may follow Christ while others do not.

4. Describe the repenting heart.

Answer.

The repenting heart will bear the discipline of the Lord because there has been sin in the soul, which cannot be denied. But the good heart will wait for the Lord Jesus to act as Advocate and the Great High Priest and plead on its behalf.

5. What spiritual application can be made from Micah 7:10-17?

Answer.

By way of spiritual application the Father may discipline the church but in the end the church shall know great grace and mercy.

Reflection

1. Have you ever felt as if all “*the good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men*”? How did you get past the moment?

2. Have you had the experience of being around an enemy of the church who rejoiced at some negative event that happened to God's people? How did you feel?
3. Do you engage in intercessory prayer on behalf of others? Do you pray on a regular basis? Do you have a set time and a sacred place where you seek to meet the Lord? If so, where and when?
4. Summarize the message of Micah in a paragraph.
5. What is your favorite passage in Micah? Why?

Personal Application

1. Have you ever moved into the depths of a particular sin by degrees? Upon reflection what was the step by step process?
2. The human heart can become hardened to sin. On a scale of one to ten with one being the most sensitive and ten being the most hard, where are you in the following areas?

Special note. The higher the number circled the harder is the heart to sin in this area.

My transgression	My sensitivity to this transgression
• Sexual faithfulness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
• Pornography	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
• Profanity	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
• Honesty	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
• Internet sites	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
• Money	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
• Improper movies	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Have you ever secretly rejoiced when you received word that some bad event has occurred to an enemy?
4. Are you a humble person? By that, do you have a proper view of yourself or is it inflated? (see Romans 12:3).
5. Would you be terrified of a possible damnation if your private sins were suddenly exposed or if you died today? Are you prepared to meet God?

Hiding God's Word in My Heart

Micah 7: 7 Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.

Micah 7:18 Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.

Leader's Supplemental Material

7: 14

Carmel, a mountain range in northern Israel reaches a height of some 1,800 feet and extended about 12 miles from the Mediterranean Sea in a direction southeast. It was known for its beauty.

Bashan to the north and **Gilead** marked the eastern boundary of Israel's possession. Bashan was known for cattle (Ezek. 39:18; Amos 4:1) and with Gilead provided a nice land for grazing.