

- I) V1-3 INTRO: And I said Hear now O *heads of Jacob* and you *rulers* of the house of Israel
- II) IN THIS THIRD MESSAGE: Micah begins to speak against the leaders of Israel for their sins
- III) WE NEED TO REMEMBER: That Israel was a theocracy
 - a) THEOCRACY: A system of government where God is recognized as ruler, and priests govern
 - 1) It is a system that derives all of its authority from the god that it serves
- IV) BOTH THE KING: And the priests and prophets were subject to God and His word
 - a) The kings of Israel and Judah were believed to serve as God's agents to rule the nation
 - 1) They were expected to observe his covenant and laws
- V) PRINCES, PROPHETS AND PRIESTS: Were all subject to God's Word
 - a) The king was to have a copy of the Law and to keep it and rule by it
 - 1) Dt 17:18 When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the Levitical priests.
 - 2) 1 Ki 2:3 Keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.
- VI) PROPHETS: That were genuine were subject to God's Word, and declared it to the people
 - a) The prophets of the Old Testament were called by God to speak for Him -- and often lead on His behalf -- during a chaotic and often violent period of Israel's history
 - 1) They were to speak God's word to man, even as we have seen here in Micah
- VII) THE PRIESTS: Were also subject to the Word of God, and were to serve under its declarations
 - a) They had various duties in the Tabernacle/Temple and in the worship of God
- VIII) KEY: They also had the responsibility of teaching the people the word of God
 - a) Lev 10:11 And that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.
 - b) Dt 33:10 They shall teach Jacob your judgments and Israel your law
- IX) ALL OF THIS: Shows that they were to be thoroughly acquainted with God's word, and to lead by it
 - a) This all brings them under stronger judgment
 - 1) Jas 3:1 Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged by God with greater strictness.
- X) IN THIS PASSAGE: Micah brings a word to the leaders of Israel and Judah, calling them to *hear*
 - a) It is a call for them to hear, and to obey the word of correction and warning
 - 1) Mk 7:16 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!
 - 2) Jas 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.
- XI) V1 IS IT NOT: For you to know justice

a) You are to be judging the people according to the Law, but you yourselves are violators of the law

- 1) You are not administering judgment impartially because you do not live by it yourself
- 2) You have found people guilty, but in fact you are guilty also

I) V2 YOU: Who *hate* good and *love* evil who strip the skin from My people and the flesh from their bones

a) The leaders of his day loved evil, and because of this they did not judge righteously

1) Dt 16:18-19 You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with just judgment. You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous.

2) It is difficult to judge righteously when your standard is unrighteous

II) V2-3 WHO: Strip the skin from My people and the flesh from their bones Who also eat the flesh of My

a) This speaks of robbing the people of everything that they have

1) Ps 14:4 Do all these evildoers know nothing? *They devour My people* as though eating bread; they never call on the Lord

2) The good leader is to shear the sheep, not to skin them!

III) THEY WERE: To judge impartially and to render true justice but instead, devoured the poor

a) Amos 8:4 Hear this, you who *swallow up* the needy, And make the poor of the land fail

IV) V4 THEN: They will cry out to the Lord but He will not hear them He will even Hide His face from them

a) When judgment comes and the land is invaded, God will not intervene on their behalf

1) Is 1:15 When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.

2) Ezek 8:18 Therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them.

3) Ps 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.

V) QUOTE: Just as those oppressed by them had cried for mercy, and they would not hear so shall their prayer shall be rejected. It is rejected because it is the cry for deliverance *from pain*, not that of repentance for deliverance *from sin*.

VI) V5 THUS SAYS THE LORD: Concerning the prophets *Who make my people stray* Who chant Peace

a) They caused them to stray because they did not call the people to live holy and righteous lives

1) They did not call them to repentance, did not correct their sins, and did not confront unholiness

2) Is 3:12 O My people! Those who lead you cause *you* to err, And destroy the way of your paths.

VII) **THE FALSE PROPHETS:** Were like vicious animals who destroyed, but did so using deceit and lies

a) They calmed the people by telling them that good times were on the horizon, giving false peace

1) Jer 8:11 For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace!' *When there is no peace.*

2) Lam 2:14 Your prophets have seen for you False and deceptive visions; They have not uncovered your iniquity, To bring back your captives, But have envisioned for you false prophecies and delusions.

VII) **V5 THESE FALSE PROPHETS:** Were actually making the people stray, instead of repent

a) Assyria was preparing to invade the north, but the people were being lulled into a false peace

1) They had the longing for peace, but not the heart to repent from the evil they practiced

2) This would keep them from experiencing any true peace

3) Is 57:21 There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked

I) **PEACE:** Cannot be experienced as long as man is at war with God

a) Peace can only come when man is first reconciled to God, and then with others

1) You cannot have peace with man until you are first at peace with God

2) Ro 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

II) **V5 NOTICE:** While they chew with their teeth but who prepare war against him who puts nothing into

a) False prophets bite with their teeth (speaks of snakes injecting poison) into the other prophets

1) The true prophets were at war with the false, and did not give in or cater to them and their lies

III) **V6 THEREFORE:** You shall have night without vision and you shall have darkness without divination

a) False prophets will have night (judgment) without vision (prophetic revelation)

1) The false prophets will be judged, and God will not communicate to them

2) They will not receive light from God, but will be kept in the dark as God withholds from them

IV) **QUOTE:** They prospered for a while, causing the people to err; but they shall also be carried into captivity, and then the sun of their prosperity shall go down for ever

V) **V7 SO:** The seers shall be ashamed and the diviners abashed indeed they shall all cover their lips

a) **SEERS:** Are prophets, but the word can be used to speak of those receiving visions

b) **DIVINERS:** Speaks of false prophets

VI) **THE FALSE PROPHETS:** Will make fools of themselves as they go about making their false prophecies

- a) They will become ashamed in front of the people instead of prospered by them
 - 1) Amos 8:11 Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD

VII) V8 BUT: Truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord and of justice and might To declare to Jacob

- a) In contrast to the false prophets who prophecy by false spirits and their flesh, he is a true prophet

VIII) HIS MESSAGE: Was not popular, and was not welcomed by he knew it was a true message from God

- a) This was often true of God's prophets
 - 1) Jer 7:27 When you tell them all this, they will not listen to you; when you call to them, they will not answer.
 - 2) Stephen: Ac 7:52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers

IX) IN SPITE OF THIS: He remained faithful to his call and spoke with urgency and certainty

- a) He declared transgression and sin, informing the nation that it was coming under judgment
 - 1) Jer 1:4-8 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations." Then said I: "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak, for I *am* a youth." But the LORD said to me: "Do not say, 'I *am* a youth,' For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, For I *am* with you to deliver you," says the LORD.

X) THIS REMINDS ME: Of the call of the prophet Amos

- a) Amos 7:14-15 Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: "I was no prophet, Nor was I a son of a prophet, But I was a sheepbreeder And a tender of sycamore fruit. Then the LORD took me as I followed the flock, And the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'

I) V9-10 NOW HEAR THIS: You heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel

- a) After declaring his confidence in his calling, he speaks with boldness to the authorities
- II) V9 WHO: Abhor justice and pervert all equity
- a) You should love justice and judge with impartiality, but you do not
 - 1) Instead of doing what was right and just you perverted justice and condemned the innocent
 - 2) Under you, the guilty have been declared innocent and the innocent have been mistreated

III) V10 WHO BUILD UP ZION: With bloodshed and Jerusalem with iniquity

- a) Speaking to the southern kingdom, he condemns their greed
 - 1) They built mansions on the wealth obtained through the condemnation of the innocent
 - 2) Jer 22:13 Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice, making his countrymen work for nothing, not paying them for their labor.

- IV) V11 HER HEADS: Judge for a bribe her priests teach for pay and her prophets divine for money
- a) Every class was corrupted by greed, from the rulers to the ministers
 - 1) They were all doing everything they could for personal profit
- V) THIS EXISTED: During the time of Jesus
- a) The Pharisees were guilty of profiting from their positions
 - 1) Mk 12:40 But they shamelessly cheat widows out of their property, and then, to cover up the kind of people they really are, they make long prayers in public. Because of this, their punishment will be the greater.
- VI) THIS: Continues to this day and can be found in the church
- a) 2 Pe 2:1-3 But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach their destructive heresies about God and even turn against their Master who bought them. Theirs will be a swift and terrible end. Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of them, Christ and his true way will be slandered. In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction is on the way.
- VII) PAUL: Gave us insight into his ministry and we use it as an example of genuine ministry
- a) 2 Co 2:17 For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.
 - b) Ac 20:33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel.
- VIII) IN THE CASE: Of the false prophets, they claimed to be relying on the Lord
- a) This meant that they did not believe that Micah's promise of judgment would harm them
- IX) V12 THEREFORE: Because of you Zion shall be plowed like a field Jerusalem shall be plowed like a
- a) The destruction did take place under Nebuchadnezzar, and later more completely by Rome
 - 1) The Roman army reportedly plowed up the foundations of the temple with a plowshare
 - 2) Complete judgment fell upon them
 - 3) Mt 24:1-2 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."