

MICAH Lesson 03

Micah Chapter 3

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Introduction: Micah continues with condemnation of the cruelty of the princes and the falsehood of the prophets of Israel in the first 8 verses. He then foretells the coming judgment of the captivities at the end of the chapter.

I. Micah Pleads with Heads of the Tribes

Mic 3:1 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?

Mic 3:2 Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones;

Mic 3:3 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.

The prophet directs his discourse to the heads and princes of Israel. His question to them was, was it not their duty to know what was right (i.e., judgment)? The word translated as judgment (jpvw mishpat), among other things, has the thought of 'justice.' Those in leadership had a duty to do justly.

In contrast, the leaders of Israel loved that which was evil. They were utterly cruel in their dealings with their people. The prophet uses the analogy of cannibalism in verse 3 to describe the cruelty and oppression of the heads of Israel against their own people.

Mic 3:4 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.

The day was coming when these same leaders in Israel would cry out to God for help and He would ignore them. God turns His ear from the prayer of those living in flagrant sin.

Isa 59:1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

Isa 59:2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

That day had already come for wicked Israel.

Mic 3:5 Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

Mic 3:6 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.

Mic 3:7 Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.

In addition to the heads of Israel and its princes, mentioned above, God indicted the (false) prophets of the land. God called them on their hypocrisy. They called for peace while at the same time they devoured those under them. These same prophets, if not given their stipend (i.e., food in their mouths), threatened war and calamity against their own people. They were charlatans and corrupt.

As a result of their corrupt practices (in the name of God), Jehovah warned that the darkness of calamities would be their demise. Dark days were ahead for them. In that day, when God judged these corrupt false prophets, they would be ashamed and confounded. For an oriental proud of his mustache, covering it was a token of shame and sorrow. It would be clear in the days to come that these false prophets never spoke on behalf of God. They had no answer from God. Their phoniness and hypocrisy would be revealed.

Albert Barnes in his commentary said this about verse 7.

They shall cover their lips - Literally, the hair of the upper lip . This was an action enjoined on lepers [Lev_13:45](#), and a token of mourning [Eze_24:17](#), [Eze_24:22](#); a token then of sorrow and uncleanness. With their lips they had lied, and now they should cover their lips, as men dumb and ashamed. "For

there is no answer of God,” as these deceivers had pretended to have. When all things shall come contrary to what they had promised, it shall be clear that God did not send them. And having plainly no answer of God, they shall not dare to feign one then. Jerome: “Then not even the devils shall receive power to deceive them by their craft. The oracles shall be dumb; the unclean spirit shall not dare to delude.” “All this is spoken against those who, in the Church of Christ, flatter the rich, or speak as menpleasers, out of avarice, ambition, or any like longing for temporal good, to whom that of Isaiah Isa_3:12 fitteth; the leaders of this people (they who profess to lead them aright) mislead them, and they that are led of them are destroyed.”

II. Micah Points out his Word come from Spirit of the Lord

Mic 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.

In contrast to the false prophets of the land, Micah stood and thundered that he was empowered by the Spirit of God. He was empowered with a spirit of judgment (i.e., justice) and of moral might. He therefore would declare unto Israel their sin. The mention of both Jacob and Israel likely is a double emphasis of the sin of the nation. When a man is empowered by God, nothing can stand in his way. The weakest of Christians can go forth with the power of a lion.

Pro 28:1 The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

Mic 3:9 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.

Mic 3:10 They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

The prophet called out for the corrupt leaders in Israel to listen. It was they who abhorred justice (i.e., judgment) and perverted that which was right. The word translated as equity (yashar) is a basic Hebrew word for 'right' or 'uprightness.'

These wicked and corrupt leaders of Israel built their stately mansions in and about Jerusalem by murdering neighbors and seizing their property. They were not shy about using corrupt practices to get what they wanted. Sadly, Jerusalem, the alleged 'holy city' was utterly corrupt and violent.

The Pulpit Commentary said this about those who perverted equity.

Mic_3:9

The prophet exemplifies his courage by delivering in full the denunciation with which he commenced (Mic_3:1: see note there). **Hear this.** What follows. **Pervert all equity.** Ye, who by your position ought to be models and guardians of justice and equity, violate all laws, human and Divine, make the straight crooked, distort every notion of right (comp. Isa_59:8).

Mic_3:10

They build up Zion with blood. Blood is, as it were, the cement that binds the building together. They raise palaces with money gained by extortion, rapine, and judicial murders like that of Naboth (1Ki_21:1-29.; comp. Jer_22:13, etc.; Eze_22:27; Hab_2:12). In these passages, actual bloodshed may be meant due to the moral condition of Judaea at this time.

Mic 3:11 The heads 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.

Mic 3:12 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.

The various levels of leadership in Jerusalem—the judges, priests, and prophets—were utterly corrupt. Judges took bribes. Priests would only perform their duties for a fee. The false prophets of the land would only utter prophecies upon being paid.

All the while they hypocritically claimed to be trusting Jehovah and proclaiming, was not Jehovah among us? They used Jehovah God as a pretense for their corrupt practices while proclaiming that judgment could not befall their land. Because of the sin and wickedness of the 'holy city,' the day was coming when Zion (i.e., Jerusalem) would be plowed like a farmer's field.

Though there is no record of the Babylonians plowing under the soil of Jerusalem, the Romans certainly did so. Both Babylon and later Rome left Jerusalem as heaps of rubble.

Mount Moriah, upon which the Temple sat, would go back to a wild state. Scrub trees and underbrush would grow where the Temple of God once stood. So utter would be the destruction of Jerusalem. (It is noteworthy that Jeremiah seemingly quoted this verse in Jeremiah 26:18.)

Jer 26:18 Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.

John Gill said this about verse 12.

Micah 3:12

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field,.... That is, for your sins, for the bloodshed, injustice, and avarice of the princes, priests, and prophets; not that the common people were free from crimes; but these are particularly mentioned, as being ringleaders into sin, and who ought to have set better examples; as also to take off their vain confidence in themselves, who thought that Zion and Jerusalem would be built up and established by them, and preserved for their sakes; as well as to show the prophet's boldness and intrepidity in his rebukes and menaces of them: now this was prophesied of in the days of Hezekiah, before the invasion of Judea and siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib; it was deferred upon the repentance and

reformation of the people; and was fulfilled in part at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, when the city was reduced to a heap of rubbish; and more fully when it was destroyed by the Romans, and ploughed up by Terentius, or Turnus Rufus, as the Jews say; so that there was not a house or building left upon it, but it became utterly desolate and uninhabited, especially in the reign of Adrian:

and Jerusalem shall become heaps; not only the city of David, built on Mount Zion, should be demolished, but the other part of the city called Jerusalem should be thrown down, and its walls and houses lie in heaps, like heaps of stones in the midst of a ploughed field:

and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest; Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built; hence called here, the mountain of the house of the sanctuary; the temple upon it should be destroyed, and not one stone left upon another; and the place on which it stood be covered with grass and trees, with briers and thorns, as a forest is, all which have been exactly fulfilled. It was usual with the ancients to mark out with a plough the ground on which a city was designed to be built; so they drew one over the spot where any had stood, which was become desolate, and to signify that the city was no more to be rebuilt and inhabited.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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