

Mr. ADA - Micah 1:1
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

We are beginning a new series this week, preaching through the Old Testament prophetic book of Micah. It's easy to overlook the prophets. These books are ancient, often speaking in ways that are difficult to understand. They address people who are strange to us, in situations that are so different from ours, in cultures that see the world in vastly different terms. Yet, these books are important in the grand story of Scripture and they have so much to say to us. While they are set in time speaking to God's people in a specific moment, they are also divinely inspired and therefore timeless. Furthermore, we need to hear the prophets as they speak to people in their moment because, while situations and cultures can change, the core issues for God's people really do not change. God's people still struggle with lack of faith, idolatry, drifting into sin, and failing to do justice. So, this week, we want to jump into Micah as a way to introduce us to these prophetic books.

Micah begins by telling us that the Word of the LORD (Jehovah) came to Micah of Moresheth. This is one of the over 400 times the prophets use the phrases "The Word of Jehovah," or, "Thus saith Jehovah." This leads us to the first thing we need to understand about these books. They are the very word of the True and Living God, spoken through the prophets in their time. The prophets are sent as God's spokesmen, and more so, as God's covenant prosecuting attorneys sent as an act of Love to warn the Hebrews. They speak on behalf of God. Now, this is a tall claim, and it must be taken seriously. For someone to claim the role of a prophet means that the words they speak are equal to the words of the living God. If this is true, to reject their words is to reject God, to disobey equal to disobedience to God, and to lack belief is to disbelieve God. There is a lot of danger to this role, as anyone could claim to be a prophet, and therefore manipulate people. This sort of nonsense still goes on in our time, charlatans claiming to be God's prophetic spokesmen and women claiming to be proclaiming the very word of God. Worse, rulers and people in power often gathered "prophets" for themselves who would proclaim nothing but blessing and victory for the people who were guilty of the injustices other prophets condemned. How do we know if the claim is true or not? In Deuteronomy 18 God gives Moses a two pronged test to prove the authenticity of a prophet. First, prophets speaking in the name of the Lord will make predictions. God says that if He sends a prophet He will protect what they say so that every prophetic prediction they make will come true. One mistaken prophecy is proof that the person is not a prophet of God, and therefore, must be rejected. The second test is faithfulness to God and His message. Prophets already had the Torah (first 5 books of the Bible). Their message must be consistent with what God had already said and point people to the God revealed in Israel. As we read these books the first thing to remember is that no prophet gets a book without a lifetime of faithful service as a prophet, fulfilling consistently the two tests. In Micah's case, about a hundred years later the prophet Jeremiah confirms Micah as a prophet (see Jeremiah 26:18-19).

Another thing we need to know about the prophets are that they are covenant books. The case they are making on God's behalf are to the Hebrew people. God has already rescued them, brought them to Himself, and formed a relationship of love and promises with this nation. They are God's people, He is their God. And He has made Himself known through His Word and His acts in their history. They were due God's justice, but instead He has given them mercy and grace. They deserved God's rejection, but He has brought them near. Yet, their response to this for generations has been to claim the promises and enjoy God's gifts while at the same time rejecting faithfulness to God and embracing the idolatry of their neighbors and falling into all kinds of awful and immoral practices. By the time we get to Micah this nation was deeply involved in sexual slavery and child sacrifice in the name of the gods of other nations. Yet, they still wanted Jehovah's blessings and protection. Rather than being a living example of God's glory and holiness they were slandering holiness. Yet God was patient, giving warning after warning through the prophets while sending moments of crisis with the threat of ultimate judgment on the nation. For seasons the nation turns, but they are like Pharaoh in Egypt,

turning just long enough to get the things they want, and then going right back to their idolatrous lives. So the sending of the prophets is actually an act of love by a loving Father who knows that the trajectory of this nation is disastrous for them and worse, their failure defames the glory of God.

But finally, the prophets are books of hope and promise. They realize that the nation is a failure, but the word they receive from the Lord comes with promises of a single person who would come from Israel, a king in the line of David who would restore the hopes of the nation, who would bring deliverance and rescue, and who would be a light to the nations. Micah will tell us about a great king born in Bethlehem. The prophetic books remind us that the nation of Israel is not the hope of the world, but there is a Messiah coming from Israel who is, and we should look for and to Him.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Ezekiel 13	Ezekiel 14	Ezekiel 15	Ezekiel 16	Ezekiel 17	Ezekiel 18	Ezekiel 19

Reading from this past week: Micah 1:1

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Micah 1:2-16

Family Worship

Song - *Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly*

<https://youtu.be/dk7llf2LkKc?si=QFxlcsfZ7ejojrUi>

Gospel Project

Unit: The Warnings of Jesus

Story: Jesus warned about not acting

Big Picture Question: How is Jesus the Prophet?

Answer: Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

Scripture: Matthew 25

New City Catechism

Question #39: With what attitude should we pray?

Answer: With love, perseverance, and gratefulness; in humble submission to God's will, knowing that, for the sake of Christ, he always hears our prayers.

Verse: Philippians 4:6

Scripture

Micah 1:1

- How do you picture a prophet in your mind? What was their role for God's people?
- What do we know about the prophet Micah? When did he preach? What is happening in Israel and the world at his time? How does this shape his message? (Look this up in the study guild Mike published if you need help)
- How is the message of the prophets actually an act of divine love if the prophets came as God's prosecuting attorneys proclaiming messages of judgment?
- Where can we find ultimate hope in Micah and the other prophets? Why are their predictions of Jesus so important for our understanding of these books?

Prayer

Pray that God would shape our church in the coming months through the message of the prophet Micah.

*Pray over the most significant problem in our world, the lostness of people. Ask God to save people in our city and in the world.