

Micah



Living Right in God's Kingdom

Micah 6:1-16

Sermon given on January 11, 2012

Core Christian Fellowship

Wednesday Evening Service

@ Home of Jeremie and Sheila Curtis

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Micah 6:1-16

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Micah 6**
- Continue series: Living Right in God's Kingdom
 - Verse-by-verse study- **Book of Micah**
- Begin last of 3 sections of Micah
- Contains what might be the most famous verse in Micah
- Micah = prophecy of impending judgment upon Israel
- Judgment coming because they refused to return to God
- Chapters 6 & 7 = courtroom setting
- God will present His case – proving His judgment is right and just

Teaching

- **Micah 6:1-2**
- 'Arise' – Micah acting as the prosecuting attorney
- Mountains/hills
- Can have a couple of interpretations
- Could be calling mountains/hills to be witnesses – there when God made covenant with His people
- Could also refer to humanity
- Mountains = great nations – hills = lesser nations
- Calling all humanity to watch what God is going to do with His own people
- Warning – if God deals this way with His own people – How will He act with unbelieving nations
- 'complaint' = quarrel or dispute – calling them into court to settle the matter
- **Micah 6:3**
- God asking them what He has done to turn them away from Him?
- Almighty God asking sinful mankind what He is guilty of
- 'how have I wearied you? = how have tried your patience?
- This is an amazing act of God's grace that He would even ask such a question
- But He wants them to look at their actions and use the reason and wisdom He gave them to see that they are behaving very badly

- Then goes on to tell them what He has done for them
- **Micah 6:4**
- He rescued them from their slavery in Egypt
- If God hadn't stepped in, they would still be making bricks for Pharaoh
- As Christians we need to regularly be reminded from where we have come *****Revelation 2:5*****

Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

- Living right in God's Kingdom includes not forgetting what He saved us from
- One of the weaknesses of the human mind is that we sometimes have very short memories
- We might even begin to think that we had some part in saving ourselves
- The longer we allow those thoughts to continue, the deeper they send roots down into our lives
- They need to regularly to rooted out by the truth *****Ephesians 2:1-2*****

And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.

- We were absolutely incapable of saving ourselves
- Just like the Israelites were incapable of saving themselves
- Micah says God 'redeemed' – bought out of slavery
- We were redeemed from slavery to sin – cross of Jesus
- Otherwise we would still be lost – just like all those around us without Christ
- Lord then reminds the Israelites of one of the times that He saved them
- **Micah 6:5**
- This comes out of Numbers 22-24
- Israel was making its way to the Promised Land
- Had to go through Moab – King Balak was a little freaked out
- Israel was too big for him to attack directly
- Hired Balaam to curse Israel – then he could attack them

- God had a different plan **Number 23:8**

How shall I curse whom God has not cursed? And how shall I denounce whom the LORD has not denounced?

- Balaam couldn't curse Israel because God wouldn't let him
- Israel didn't even know this spiritual battle was taking place
- The same is true in the life of every believer
- We are not aware of every battle that rages around us
- God is always working
- And if we are living right in His kingdom, then we can rest that He is working behind the scenes to make sure we get to where He wants us
- End of verse says, 'that you may know the righteousness of the LORD.'
- God always does the right thing, even when it seems like He is not doing anything
- Next verses deal with the idea that man can do anything in his own way to please God
- **Micah 6:6-7**
- These are the outward manifestations of religion
- We call these 'works' – "What works will satisfy You God?"
- Verse six is doing the things He told them to do
- Verse 7 takes all those things to the extreme
- Like a rebellious child 'What do you want from me?'
- Like saying, nothing I do ever pleases you
- Asking, 'Are we being judged because we haven't done enough for you?'
- Do we need to do more; sacrifice our children to You?
- God never wanted them to sacrifice their children, called it an abomination
- Pagan god Molech – child sacrifice – sadly Jews fell into this terrible practice
- Living right in God's kingdom is not about what we do
- Living right in God's kingdom is about what we believe
- James spoke about the difference between the two
- Works does not prove faith, but faith without works is dead faith

- God will never be pleased by the things we do, if we don't do them because of our faith
- You can do the most radical good things you can imagine
- But it is not as a result of what you know and believe about God, it is meaningless and useless
- Faith is the pathway to pleasing God **Hebrews 11:6**
Without faith *it is impossible to please Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*
- Without faith = impossible – not possible
- Like Jordan writing a perfect term paper – turning it in the teacher
- Teacher rejects it – Jordan says but it is perfect
- May be – but you are not in this class
- Perfect term paper is meaningless because he is not in that class
- Faith gets us into the class
- Then our works have meaning and value – God will then look at the and value them
- Micah then gives them 3 faith-based works they can do
- **Micah 6:8**
- This is the key verse in the book of Micah
- Book of judgment – coming because they have rebelled against God
- Because they have turned away from God and not done these things, God is going to send judgment upon them
- In Jonah we saw that God sends declarations of impending judgment because He wants people to repent
- When they repented, God relented
- God takes no pleasure in sending judgment, but His righteousness demands it
- If His people refuse to repent and return to Him, His nature requires that He send judgment
- But He always sends warnings first, in the hopes that His people will turn from their wicked ways, back to Him *****2 Chronicles 7:13-14*****

When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, ¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

- Judgment will come to all that will not humble themselves before Almighty God
- Micah gives them three things to do
- Do what is just or right
- To love mercy
- Walk humbly with God
- The Jews could identify 613 specific commands in the Law of Moses
- Here Micah summarizes those 613 into three
- First two have to do with man's actions with other men
- Last one has to do with our actions toward God
- First one - 'to do justly' = do the right thing
- Do justly = living right in relation to other people in all areas of your life
- Later in our text, Micah is going to give them a rebuke from the LORD because they are not doing this
- Doing the right thing is always the right thing
- But it is not always the easy thing or the popular thing
- Sometimes doing the right thing means standing alone with God
- Sometimes it means being ridiculed or attacked by others
- Sometimes it will cost you something, might even cost you everything
- But, doing the right thing is always the right thing to do
- Ezekiel tells us what that might look like *****Ezekiel 18:3-9*****
"As I live," says the Lord GOD, "you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine; the soul who sins shall die. But if a man is just and does what is lawful and right; if he has not eaten on the mountains, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, nor defiled his neighbor's wife, nor approached a woman during her impurity; if he has not oppressed anyone, but has restored to the debtor his pledge; has robbed no one by violence, but has given his bread to the hungry and covered the naked with clothing; if he has not exacted usury nor taken any increase, but has withdrawn his hand from iniquity and executed true judgment between man and man; if he has walked in My statutes and kept My judgments faithfully— he is just; he shall surely live!" says the Lord GOD.
- In any situation, there is always a right thing to do, do that thing and you will be living right in God's kingdom
- The second thing Micah told them to do 'to love mercy'
- This word mercy = kindness, lovingkindness, goodness, faithfulness, love, acts of kindness

- Mercy is sometimes defined – ‘not getting what we deserve’
- Can also be said – ‘giving some good that is not deserved’
- Mercy is one of the attributes of God **Micah 7:18**
Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy.
- Story to illustrate concept of mercy
- Doctor and lawyer are talking at a dinner party
- Woman interrupts to ask doctor about pain in her leg
- He gives her advice, and then leaves
- Doctor asks lawyer, ‘Do I have legal right to bill for the advice I gave her?’
- Lawyer says, ‘Certainly!’
- A couple of days later the doctor gets a bill for \$500 from the lawyer for the legal advice he had given the doctor.
- That is not mercy – neither the doctor nor lawyer were merciful - mercy is about doing good when it is in our power to do so
- Strong statement **James 4:17**
Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.
- What I find fascinating is not that we are called to be merciful, but to love mercy
- I think this is important to us
- Especially in relation to the first thing Micah said, ‘to do justly’
- When we are doing the right things, something can happen to us, we start to think we are closer to God, we are special
- We begin to believe that we are better than others
- We become self-righteous, arrogant, and prideful
- But if we truly ‘love mercy’, it fights against those attitudes
- If you love doing good things to others, it changes your heart
- The more good you do for others out of a motivation of love, the less likely you are to become arrogant and prideful
- Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 13 that love is the greatest of all motivations
- To live right in God’s kingdom, we need to do the right things and learn to love mercy, doing good to others
- Third thing relates to God – ‘walk humbly with your God’

- ‘walk’ = the way you live your life
- Living right in God’s kingdom means every part of your life is submitted to His authority
- Not just about your religious practices, everything
- In your life, marriage, family, home, work, play, school, church?
- Is your life devoted to God?
- Is there evidence in your life that God is real and that he is your God?
- Can others see God as the highest authority of your life?
- Would others say that your relationship with God is the most important thing in your life?
- To walk humbly with God also means He gets to decide what happens in your life
- That’s easy when things are going the way we want them to
- It is a lot harder when things are going contrary to your desires
- Especially if really hard things are happening
- When we experience various trials and tribulations, we sometimes act like we don’t trust God anymore
- We start complaining and whining because life is hard
- When we complain and whine about the hard things in life, we are saying that we don’t want to walk with God during this phase of the journey
- Jesus said difficult times are a part of the Christian’s life with God

John 16:33

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

- Being a Christian isn’t a guarantee of a smooth, prosperous life
- Unless of course, you achieve perfection in this life *****James 1:2-4*****

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

- As soon as you are perfect and complete – no more trials
- Trials, temptations, tribulations prove God is still working to perfect us
- Whining and complaining only proves that we don’t trust God to do His part **Philippians 1:6 NLT**

I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

- Walking humbly means taking both good and bad from God's hand without grumbling and complaining
- Living right in God's Kingdom = do the right thing, love doing good to others, and walking humbly with God
- Micah turns his attention to the rich in the cities
- **Micah 6:9-12**
- The rich are lying and cheating and becoming richer
- 'treasures of wickedness' – illicit profits
- Verse 11 – 'Shall I count pure'
- Bringing their sacrifices from the fruit of their lying and stealing as a sacrifice to God
- God expects His people to be fair and honest
- We should take only what is right and give all that is expected
- As employees – do we give a full day's work? Doesn't matter that we don't think we are being paid enough.
- Taking company resources for our own use is stealing
- And God will not bless the labor of your hands if you are not a person of integrity
- Then gives the consequences of their poor actions
- **Micah 6:13**
- God is planning to strike or smite His people because of their sins
- We don't like to think of God in this way, that God would strike His people
- We would rather think that God will send some enemy, or plague, or tribulation
- We don't like to think of it as coming from His hand
- But God says plainly in His Word that he will punish us if we continue in our sins and refuse to turn to Him
- We should be thankful for that, David was
- He had sinned against God, was given a choice of how God would punish him for his sins *****2 Samuel 24:12-14*****

"Go and tell David, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you.'"" ¹³ **So Gad came to David and told him; and he said to him, "Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or shall you flee three months before your enemies, while they pursue you? Or**

shall there be three days' plague in your land? Now consider and see what answer I should take back to Him who sent me." ¹⁴ And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Please let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man."

- David knew God was merciful, and wouldn't punish him as much as he deserved
- Micah goes on to describe three judgments which would befall Israel
- **Micah 6:14**
- Will suffer hunger, will not be satisfied
- One of the ways that God judges His people is to cause them never to be satisfied, no matter what they have
- Satisfaction is a fruit of a healthy relationship with God
- If you are not satisfied with your life, need to examine your relationship with God **Psalm 34:10**

The young lions lack and suffer hunger; but those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good *thing*.

- Living right in God's Kingdom means being satisfied with what He has given you
- Next Micah turns to their work life
- **Micah 6:15**
- Going to work, and work hard, but you will get no gain from your work
- Haggai said something similar *****Haggai 1:5-6*****

Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways!

⁶" You have sown much, and bring in little; you eat, but do not have enough; you drink, but you are not filled with drink; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages, earns wages *to put* into a bag with holes."

- If we are laboring and everything we make seems to evaporate, maybe we need to 'Consider our ways!'
- It could be that we are doing things the God wants us to
- God can take work miracles in the lives of those who trust Him completely and follow Him humbly
- Final judgment is the worst of all
- **Micah 6:16**
- Omri was a very wicked king – founded city of Samaria
- His son was Ahab – even more wicked – married Jezebel, led him and nation to worship Baal
- Going through the motions of worship, but it was false worship

- God was going to send desolation, complete destruction
- Going to hit the reset button, cleanse the land from the filth of their false worship
- Living right in God's kingdom, not about going to church, giving money to charity, or being a good person
- It is about being in an intimate love relationship with the God who created you
- It is about devoting your life to Him and walking in all of His ways, not because you have to but because He is worthy of all our worship
- Let's ask God to help us to live right in His Kingdom! Amen!
- **Pray!**

Discussion Questions

- **Micah 6:1-16**
- It has been said that the U.S. is no longer a Christian nation. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- Why do you think it is important for us to remember what God saved us from?
- Why is it sometimes hard to do the right thing?
- How did God show mercy to us? And how can we show mercy to others?
- What can we do to prevent complaining about things in our life?
- How can we know if our worship of God is pure and true worship?