

Micah: The Preaching We Despise (But Desperately Need)
Micah 2

A Difficult Message (vv. 1-5)

- A recap:
 - Micah was prophesying to a people on the doorstep of judgment.
 - They assumed that God would judge the nations; they didn't see they were *that* nation.

All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? (Micah 1:5)

- The sins of the people were twofold:

- Idolatry. (1:6-7)

You shall have no other gods before me. (Exodus 20:3)

- Covetousness and oppression. (vv. 1-2)

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's. (Exodus 20:17)

But godliness with contentment is great gain.... But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. (1 Timothy 6:6, 8)

Every abuse of power has a whiff of self-deification about it. (Richard Bauckham)

- The wanna-be gods meet the real God in judgment. (vv. 3-5)

While you are thus busying yourselves on your beds, while you are revolving many designs, ... you think me to be asleep, you think that I am all the while meditating nothing; nay, I have my thoughts too, and those different from yours; for while you are awake to devise wickedness, I am awake to contrive judgment. (Richard Phillips)

- Application: our hearts are just as important as our hands.

Here is a God who can see it—what you ponder in your bedroom (2:1), the secret plans you make and the raging discontentment at the core of your life that drives it all. The fact that you have done nothing like the thugs in the text does not mean you are virtuous, but only that you may lack opportunity to sin in this way. (Dale Ralph Davis)

But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone. (Matthew 15:18-20)

A Defiant Spirit (vv. 6-11)

- We can avoid a difficult message by rejecting the message.

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation." (Exodus 34:7)

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace. (Jeremiah 8:11)

- We can avoid a difficult message by purchasing a "better" messenger.

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions,⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

A Day of Deliverance (vv. 12-13)

- The announcement of good news is surprising at this point in Micah.
 - Some have seen vv. 12-13 as a further pronouncement of judgment.

For I see not how the prophet could pass so suddenly into a different strain. (John Calvin)

- But good news is apparent in the use of the word "remnant," the image of a shepherd, and the promise of a King representing the LORD.
- Micah was not a preacher of cheap grace, but he was a preacher of true grace.
 - The people of God would be judged, just as Micah predicted.
 - A remnant would be saved, just as Micah predicted.

And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶ But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷ To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (1 Timothy 1:15-17)