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MICAH 3:1-12

UNGODLY LEADERS



THIS WEEK'S **focus**

Sometimes we think that holding a certain position, title, or office automatically makes us a good leader, but that's not quite true. True leaders are proven, not elected. Effective leadership isn't about holding or wielding power over others. It's about serving people and setting a good example for others to follow. If the decisions a person makes benefits those who depend on them, they are good leaders. If the decisions a person makes mislead or harm those who depend on them, they are not good leaders. Because God is the one who allows people to hold positions of authority (see Rom. 13:1), He takes the issue of leadership very seriously. When we use our influence in a way that honors Him, God is pleased, but it angers Him when we use it to serve ourselves.



CENTRAL **truth**

When we lead others in a self-centered way, we anger God.



EXPLORE

scripture

MICAH 3:1-12

MICAH 3:1-4

1 Then I said, “Now listen, leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel. Aren’t you supposed to know what is just? 2 You hate good and love evil. You tear off people’s skin and strip their flesh from their bones. 3 You eat the flesh of my people after you strip their skin from them and break their

bones. You chop them up like flesh for the cooking pot, like meat in a cauldron.”

4 Then they will cry out to the LORD, but he will not answer them. He will hide his face from them at that time because of the crimes they have committed.

MICAH 3:5-8

5 This is what the LORD says concerning the prophets who lead my people astray, who proclaim peace when they have food to sink their teeth into but declare war against the one who puts nothing in their mouths. 6 Therefore, it will be night for you — without visions; it will grow dark for you — without divination. The sun will set on these prophets, and the daylight will

turn black over them. 7 Then the seers will be ashamed and the diviners disappointed. They will all cover their mouths because there will be no answer from God. 8 As for me, however, I am filled with power by the Spirit of the LORD, with justice and courage, to proclaim to Jacob his rebellion and to Israel his sin.

MICAH 3:9-12

9 Listen to this, leaders of the house of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel, who abhor justice and pervert everything that is right, 10 who build Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with injustice. 11 Her leaders issue rulings for a bribe, her priests teach for payment, and her

prophets practice divination for silver. Yet they lean on the LORD, saying, “Isn’t the LORD among us? No disaster will overtake us.” 12 Therefore, because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become ruins, and the temple’s mountain will be a high thicket.

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE MICAH 2:1

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

MATTHEW 5:3-10

DWELL

In His famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught His followers about the kinds of people who are blessed in the kingdom of God. But what He taught isn't what most of us tend to think of when we hear the word "blessed." It's not the wealthy, the comfortable, the tough, or even the happy. No—the "blessed" in the kingdom of God are the people who, to be honest, probably make us a bit uncomfortable. The people who are mourning. The people who don't have much. The people who are suffering severe persecution for their faith. But when we begin to follow Jesus and we enter His "upside-down kingdom," we start to see the world the way He does and value things the way He does.



Which of these verses do you think made Jesus's followers most uncomfortable? Why?



Which of these verses makes you the most uncomfortable? Which one gives you the most hope? Why?

MEMORIZE

Add reminders to your phone, computer, or calendar to read Micah 2:1 every morning and night this week.

PRAY

Thank God for understanding "blessing" differently than we often do. Thank Him for blessing us with the gift of His Son, even when we didn't deserve it.

day 2

MICAH

2:1-5

DWELL

Micah had a severe warning for the oppressors in his time. These wealthy, greedy Israelites were so evil that they started plotting wickedness before they had even climbed out of bed in the morning! Instead of spending time with God, they spent their time finding ways to take property from others to benefit themselves. So God would judge them with a disaster that would completely ruin them and would give their land to their enemies.



Why was it a fitting punishment for God to take land away from the wealthy landowners and give it away to their enemies?



How do you spend the first moments of your morning? What is a way you could spend some of this time with God?

MEMORIZE

Write Micah 2:1 on a sticky note and place it on your bathroom mirror. Read it to yourself each time you brush your teeth or wash your hands.

PRAY

Ask God to protect you from greed and envy.

day 3

MICAH

3:1-4

DWELL



How does the way the leaders were behaving compare to the way they should have been treating their people?



How does God teach you what is just, right, and wrong? Who can you go to for help when you're not sure what's right?

Good leaders pursue justice for their people—these leaders know the difference between good and evil, and they do what is good to the best of their ability. The leaders of Israel should have been like this, but instead, they were doing evil. God had been telling Israel how they should behave for hundreds of years, but these leaders didn't care. The way Micah describes their behavior toward the people was more like the way an animal would treat its prey or the way a butcher prepares meat. For these leaders, their people were less important to them than meat for their dinner.

MEMORIZE

Pick a song you enjoy and read or sing Micah 2:1 aloud to the beat of that song. Read the verse this way throughout the week, trying to recite more of it from memory each time.

PRAY

Pray that God would teach you to treat others justly at school, in your community, and at home.

day 4

MICAH

3:5-8

DWELL

Prophets are supposed to be messengers of God's word. But these false prophets weren't listening to God—they were inventing whatever message would benefit them most. If the people fed them, the prophets told them what they wanted to hear: there would be peace. If the people didn't feed them, they shared a message of war. Micah explained the difference between himself and the false prophets: while they were inventing their false messages on their own, he prophesied by the power of the Holy Spirit. His authority was from God Himself; the false prophets had no such authority.



Why was it wrong for the false prophets to tell people what they wanted to hear? What were the prophets motivated by?



What motivates you to talk about God with other people? What should motivate us to talk about our faith?

MEMORIZE

Write Micah 2:1 on the center of a sheet of paper, then add drawings or doodles around the edges that relate to the verse. Hang it somewhere you will see it every day.

PRAY

Pray that you would have the correct motivation to share your faith with others: love for God and love for your neighbor.

day 5

MICAH

3:9-12

DWELL

The leadership of Israel was corrupt inside and out. They twisted "justice" to suit their own needs: government officials accepted bribes; the priests who were supposed to teach the law only did so when there was payment in it for them; the prophets also only prophesied when they were paid. This meant that only the rich could get "justice" in the courts or in the temples. But because Israel was God's "chosen people," the corrupt leadership believed that God was still on their side. God was going to show them just how wrong they were!



How was this corrupt system of government and faith actually preventing true justice and worship from being done?



How can we be sure that everyone has equal access to learn about God and worship Him, regardless of money, social status, popularity, or anything else?

MEMORIZE

Write each word of Micah 2:1 on a separate note card. Shuffle the cards and try to put them in the correct order. Do this throughout the week until you can do it without checking the answer.

PRAY

Pray that God would give you a heart for making sure everyone can experience justice, worship God, and learn about Him, no matter who they are.