

MICAH week 1

Chapter 1 and 2.

Reading this prophet took me down some rabbit holes because I realised that there were concepts that I didn't really understand. I have found preparing for these discussions have made me think my previous study has been very superficial.

I do not know who listens to these recordings, but I hope I don't offend or concern anyone with my searchings. I don't want to get anyone into trouble by my questions about prophecy.

Until the recent study of the OT the 66 books of our Bible were a list I learnt in Pathfinders, then years later learned a verse from Micah and finally read thru (skimmed more like) in my year of reading cover to cover about 5 years ago.

I am a sensory learner meaning listening, music, smell and feel all help me to make sense and remember better. I realised that much of the old Jewish text was in fact sung and that is my first striking memory of Micah and it has stuck with me. I am going to ask you to slow your mind now and listen.

HOW DID YOU FEEL JUST NOW?

I have realised the impact of that and wonder why we are not taught more about these prophets but I think we can be spiritually immature at any age and I think that may be why I have missed some of these complex themes.

COMMENTS PLEASE?

Micah was from an agricultural family in the southern kingdom of Judah. He was around with other prophets (usually outcasts or eccentric people apparently) and was in the time of king Jotham (a good guy), Ahaz (a bad guy) and Hezekiah (a very good guy). God was allowing the Assyrians to punish the people of God. We will look closely at Micah 1 and 2 this week due to the natural break in the text and more preamble this week. There are several overlaps with the discussion Steve led but I think there are differences in tone and material.

Micah presents three warning statements and then gives striking hope. We will look at those in detail over these two weeks. My takeaway is how God wants us to be and how that looks if we do. Micah 6:8 and 4:2-5. READ.

So, we can discuss history, literary style, covenant and prophecy as a lead into this amazing book. I would like to look at these now in a little more detail.

History – People were being led by a mix of leaders some were good and followed God's leading others were influenced by the tribes around them. They lost sight of God and didn't ask Him.

IS THIS THE PEOPLE'S FAULT? HOW MUCH AUTONOMY DID THEY HAVE?

God was using the Assyrians to punish.

WHY WOULD HE USE SUCH A BRUTAL NATION? SURELY THERE WAS ANOTHER WAY? COULD THE PEOPLE HAVE AVOIDED THIS BY ACTING DIFFERENTLY?

Literary style – Poetic and using couplets as we found last week. 33% of the Bible is written in poetic form. The couplet is a dramatic tool; the first line is basic and the second develops it further. We have two very clear examples of this with the crossing of the Red Sea Ex 14:21 and Ps 5:1,2

READ MICAH 1:2 is a clear example of the power of a couplet.

The warnings and then the striking contrast of hope mirrors this pattern. The central theme is Jesus the shepherd, Sovereign Lord and discerning God's voice.

The repetition of phrases causes us to slow down and linger on a thought; it allows us to savour and ponder.

IS THIS YOUR EXPERIENCE WHEN YOU READ MICAH?

Covenant—Mt Sinai was where God said I will be your God and you shall be my people. Moses was the first prophet. Micah refers to Mt Sinai and shows how that covenant was damaged due to the people's sin. Amos referred to Mt Carmel. Two historically significant events. The Bible is like a mosaic with each piece building a unified picture.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE REFERENCES?

Prophecy—according to a commentator "these books assume a lot of the reader" they are not linear, they cause us to pause and ponder, they give warnings and hope, often outsiders but chosen by God to be his human partners. They represent God's interests and are His covenant keepers. They gave God's word but often it was messy and they were not accepted by people until their words were proven correct. Future predictions were only a small and

occasional part. It was also hard for them to say what they had to. Jeremiah says "the words burned him up" because he didn't want to say them, however, he had to, so they didn't destroy him. That's powerful. Prophets mostly spoke God's word in warnings to people of their time, but we can use them for our time.

HOW WOULD WE FEEL IF WE HAD TO SAY SOMETHING IMPORTANT?

DO YOU THINK THE READING OF MICAH IS A LOT FOR THE READER TO TAKE IN?

I think I have misunderstood prophecy or had it interpreted incorrectly. There seems to be huge gaps with only the Catholic Church being discussed but what about the many other aspects like Islam and Sharia law, AI, ???

DOES ANYONE HAVE ANY THOUGHTS ON THIS?

Let's look at Micah 1 and 2 now.

Micah states his authority and credentials in 3:8 (read)

Micah has three main warnings we will look at the first. Each one is introduced with the word "Hear" or listen.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU READ OR ARE TOLD TO HEAR?

These chapters highlight the root of rebellion, the problem and consequences of poor leadership, social injustice, idolatry and ignored warnings.

Micah not only talks about it, but he has an emotional response to it 1:8-9 (read)

DOES HIS EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TEACH US ANYTHING ABOUT SIN IN OUR DAY?

DO YOU KNOW WHY THE CITIES WERE MENTIONED IN 1:10-15?

God is referred to as Lord and Sovereign Lord. 1:2,3,8. 2:3,7 WHY

People ask Micah not to speak, read 2:6-7

ARE THEY COMPLACENT AND ARE WE RESISTENT TO CORRECTION LIKE THEY SEEM?

There is so much in these two chapters. The warnings are strong, heartbreaking and emotional and we could just read the whole passage. But, in the end it is the hope that Micah brings in after each section of warnings that I think is powerful. Read 2:12-13.

I would like to end on this imagery and Micah's pleading, simplicity in explaining false teaching and his closeness to God and His leading. I feel he really was a human partner with God and keeper of His covenant.

