

Terrace Studies Term 4, 2015

MICAH

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STUDY 1

God's Big Picture - The Context

To better understand Micah's words to us, we need to put the book of Micah in the context of God's plan and God's people.

1. **Opener:** If you think about a well-known fairytale, such as Little Red Riding Hood, we can identify the characters, the plot and the moral to be learnt from the story. So then if we consider the Bible as God's word and story – what is that story about?

Read Genesis 2:4- 9, 15-17, 19-22.

2. What does this story of creation tell us about who God is, who God's people are and where God's place is?

Read Genesis 3:1-7

3. What does the story of the fall tell us about who God is, who God's people are and what has become of their relationship together?

Read Genesis 12:1-3

4. Who is Abraham and how does he fit into God's story? What are the promises that God makes to Abraham?

Remind yourselves briefly of the story of the Exodus, including God's man on the ground Moses. At this stage, the people of God are moving towards once again being His people, in His place, living under His rule and blessing... But they are not quite there yet.

Read Joshua 1: 1-3, 6-7

5. What do these verses tell us about God's faithfulness in keeping his promises? Where do God's people now find themselves?

Read 1 Samuel 8:4-9

6. What did the Israelites want and why?

Read 1 Kings 11:9-13, 1 Kings 11:34-39

7. Why does God not allow the kingdom he has made to remain as it is? What do you think will become of this kingdom and why? What does this tell us about God and about His people?

Currently we live in the time of the “Proclaimed kingdom”; a time when Jesus has come and fulfilled the prophecy, but also a time when we are called to share the gospel with others through the Holy Spirit. We await the “Perfect kingdom” when all will live with God and Jesus in Heaven.

8. **Application:** Do we look forward with great hope and anticipation to the “Perfect kingdom (when Jesus returns)” or do we sit comfortably in the time of the “Proclaimed kingdom”?

Reflect on this great hope and promise as you consider the big picture story of God’s word. What is not to look forward to in that?

STUDY 2

Words of Condemnation

1. **Opener** – Can you recall a time when you were accused of something? How did it make you feel?

Today we are looking at a courtroom scene played out in Micah for the Israelites.

Read: Micah 1:1-7

2. Who is this passage written to and what is the scene that has been laid out before us the readers?

3. Who is the prosecutor and/or judge? Who is the accused? Who are the members of the public viewing gallery?

Read Micah 2:1-11

4. What consumes the waking and sleeping thoughts of the Israelites?

There are 3 groups of people here condemned by God

- The rich (2:1-5)
- The false prophets (2:6-11)
- The leaders (Ch 3).

5. What are some of the crimes the people are being accused of?

6. What seems like a savvy real estate investment is actually condemned by God (v2). Why? Which of the 10 commandments is being broken?

7. The people and their prophets want Micah to keep quiet. What do they want him to stop saying?

8. What are the people of the land doing (v8-10)? What are the consequences for God's people?

Read Micah 3:1-3, 4-12

9. How does Micah describe the leaders of Israel?

10. From reading on in ch 3:8, how does Micah stand out from these leaders?

11. How will God judge these corrupt rich/dodgy leaders/false prophets?

12. After hearing these accusations, if you were an Israelite, what might your response be? How did the Israelites respond? Are we a lot different from the Israelites?

13. **Application:** Given what you have heard the Israelites being accused of, and how this might make them feel, consider accusations against you of your sinfulness (Romans 3:23). How is Micah's ministry a foretaste then of Christ's ministry? Compare this with what we know post Jesus and how Christians have been freed through the saving work of Jesus, Romans 8:31-35. Despite being condemned, and therefore imprisoned, consider how you might rejoice in accusations and turn these around in humility to accept the grace offered through Jesus.

Study 3

Is there hope for God's People?

1. **Opener:** When we use the word "hope" in daily conversation, how do we use it and what does it mean? How do we use it differently with our Christian friends and our non-Christian friends?

Looking back to last week, we discovered that Micah had a number of real, hard and big issues that he was raising on God's behalf. What were some of these issues and what was at the core of them?

In summary, we saw God's people being sinful and falling away from God.

Read Micah 4 and 5. This week, we will see clearly the hope that Micah has.

Micah 4:1-8

2. What is "the mountain of the Lord's temple" that will be established?

3. What is it that entices the nations to come to this mountain?

4. What do you think it may mean when it says the “law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem”?

Micah 4:9-13

5. What is to happen to the “old Jerusalem”? What has happened to the leaders? And the people?

Micah 5:1-2

6. In the midst of the prophecy of doom and gloom and devastation what positive note can you find? Who will Judah give birth to?

Study 4

Is there hope for God's People?

1. **Opener:** Do people around you know that you are a Christian? If they know you are a Christian, how do they know this? Is there anything about you that sets you apart from them and their lives? Discuss.

Read Micah 6:1-8

2. In this first part of chapter 6 we see God again laying charges against his people. What approach does God use this time and why? What does Israel mistakenly try to offer God?
3. What is it that God really wants of his people? (See also Isaiah 66:2-3; Psalm 51:15-17)

4. Does God still require the same of us today? If so, how can we do this?

5. If we jump forward to Jesus day in the New Testament we can try and find out what Jesus says about what God wants from us. *Read Mark 12:28-31.* What is it that He wants from us?

6. There are commonly 2 responses we can have in how we live our lives, based on the hope we have in Jesus.

- *Read Romans 12:1-2*
- *Read Micah 4:2, and Romans 10:14-15*

What are these 2 responses? Do you find either of these easy or challenging?

7. **Application:** How are you going at responding to Jesus so other people know we are God's people? How is this challenging?

Spend some time praying about the challenges you face walking in the name of the Lord.

Final encouragement from Micah 4:5

**“All the nations may walk in the name of their gods;
we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever
and ever.”**



