

Micah 6:6-8

Micah (whose name means “who is like Yahweh?”) was a contemporary of Isaiah, Amos and Hosea and prophesied to the southern kingdom of Judea around the 8th century BC. Like many 8th Century prophets, Micah attacked the idolatry that had crept into Israel’s worship and reserved much of his condemnation for the social injustice and inequality he saw in the community life of Israel. Micah is also an incredibly Messianic book, and many of his prophecies concern the coming Messiah and God’s restoration of a remnant. For Micah, true religion was not simply about inner religious beliefs or religious sacrifices but had to also include godly outward actions and right relationships with others.

Pray as you start your time together and share with each other what particularly stood out or challenged you from the message on Sunday?

Israel brought before the Lord

Re-read Micah chapter 6. To help make the passage clearer get 1 person to read out Micah’s voice (start of verse 1, verses 6-8, start of verse 9) and someone else to read the words from the Lord (everything else in inverted commas).

The scene here is a legal scene of Israel being summoned, charges against them being lodged and a judgment then pronounced.

- Even though this scene is just one that Micah is painting with words, can you imagine how powerful this image would be for Micah’s original listeners?
- Can you imagine a modern day response to such an image?

What are charges against Israel that the Lord lists in this chapter?

How does the faithfulness of God (v3-5) only compound Israel’s unfaithful response?

How have the actions of the people (v10-12) violated what God requires of them (v8)?

Read Deuteronomy 28:38-48 and compare with God’s pronouncement of judgment in Micah 6:13-16. How, even in judgment, is God being faithful to his covenant with Israel?

There is a strong parallel between Israel in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament – both have received revelation of who God is, what he requires, and are in a covenant relationship with Him based on grace. So, if it were us in this scene, what do you think are some of the charges that could be brought against us and our church?

What does the Lord require?

In verses 6-8 Micah responds to God's opening statement on behalf of the people, with the *proper* response to God.

- Since God was the one who required the Israelites to sacrifice in worship, why does God seem to be so against it in verse 6-7?
- Can you think of modern equivalents where our acts of worship can be rendered worthless by either our improper motives or by glaringly obvious hypocrisy in other areas of our lives?

Micah 6:8 is well known for a reason! It succinctly captures what it is that the Lord truly requires of us. If we do these things we can know that we are walking in obedience to God!

'Act justly'

- Try to define what it means to act justly? What areas of your life in particular does that cover?
- In what ways does acting justly, properly reflect who our God is and how he has treated us and the world?
- What is one act of justice that you can commit to doing this week that you weren't before?

'Love mercy'

- Why does the Lord require us to *love* mercy, not just do merciful things?
- Remind yourselves of Matthew 18:21-35. We are those to whom mercy has been showered upon. Who this week do you need to forgive or show mercy towards?
- How can you make loving mercy a pattern and everyday attitude as part of your worship of God?

'Walk humbly with your God'

- What does it mean to walk humbly with God?
- Where in your life are you tempted towards pride or arrogance or self-dependence or self-exaltation or self-centeredness? What can you do to help stay humble in your walk with God?

Who is like our God?

As Christians, we can sometimes feel the burden of what is required of us and end up feeling guilty or condemned when we fall short. Is that the point of Micah 6:8?

Finish by reading together Micah 7:18-20 and celebrate that the requirements for our salvation have been fully met in Christ. Thank God for his forgiveness and mercy, and pray he would help empower us to worship him in the ways laid out in Micah 6:8!