

Small Group Guide
Who is like Yahweh?
Cleary Baptist Church May 29, 2011 Micah

Micah

Micah continues in the theme established by Hosea and Amos--God will judge his people for their sins. The book takes on the feel of a lawsuit. God's people are in the dock, and God himself will bring about judgment. However, judgment is not the only note sounded in this book. Restoration is also a major theme. God will show his covenant faithfulness by fully and finally redeeming his people.

Study the Text . . .

Micah 4-5: God promises the restoration of a remnant of Israel under the leadership of a Shepherd-King. The book begins with God's indictment against Israel and Judah for their many transgressions. God will destroy all idolatry in Israel, and the people will be sent into exile.

In chapter 2, God indicts the leaders and the wealthy for oppressing the poor by seizing land and power. Micah's prophecy is even more specific in chapter 3 as God condemns the prophets and rulers who have led God's people astray with false prophecy and evil deeds. Because of the evil of the rulers of Judah, Jerusalem shall become "a heap of ruins" (3:12). In chapter 4, the tone shifts to restoration.

- 4:1 – What is being referred to as “the mountain of the house of the LORD”?
- Why will many nations come to “the house of the God of Jacob”?
- Why will nations stop fighting one another?
- 4:7 – With who will God “make the remnant” and build “a strong nation”?

In chapter 5, Micah offers clarity and specifics for how the promises in chapter 4 will come to pass.

- From what little town will the ruler of Israel come?
- How will this ruler reign over the people of Israel?
- In 5:15, God states, “In anger and wrath I will execute vengeance on the nations that did not obey.” What have these nations done that is going to bring the wrath of God upon them?

Group Discussion . . .

Sin and specifically idolatry will be judged. We praise God that Jesus Christ is not only our Shepherd-King but also our substitutionary sacrifice. Because of his death on the cross, God's wrath and judgment for the sins of his people was placed on Christ. For those who do not turn and follow Christ alone, God will execute his vengeance.

- Begin by asking people to share about how they view God. Do you see God as just a loving God? Do you view Him as a wrathful God? Do you see God as both loving and wrathful? How do you hold these two characteristics in tension?
- Idolatry brought swift and harsh judgment against the nation of Israel? Why does God judge idolatry so harshly?
- Today our idols are not pillars, Asherah images, or even fortunetellers. What are the idols that we worship?
- Should we make a distinction in the actual worship of false God's like Asherah and the putting of certain things like material goods or certain people before the true and living God? The answer to this is yes. It is a greater degree of idolatry to actually bow down to false God's like Asherah. It is important to keep this distinction in mind when we talk about our idolatry here.
- We are saved by grace alone through faith in Christ alone. Does this mean it is ok to worship idols?
- If we at times put other things before God can we loose our salvation?
- Do those who are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone ever put things before God in our hearts?
- How does this fact make you even more appreciative of the work of Christ on our behalf?

Study the Text . . .

Micah 6:1-8: God indicts His people and states His expectation for His people. The text now moves from restoration back to judgment. Micah is not going to leave the people dreaming about the restoration yet to come. He will remind them of their sins and coming judgment, and God's expectation for His children.

- How did God redeem His people from Egypt?
- What did Balak king of Moab devise against Israel?
- How did Balaam answer Balak?
- What are some examples of "saving acts of the LORD" that we have seen so far this year in our chronological reading of the Bible?
- Does God desire burnt offerings? Read Isaiah 1:11-17.
- What does God desire and expect?

Group Discussion . . .

God began his indictment by reminding Israel of how he has always been faithful to keep his covenant promises; yet, they were unfaithful. God has and always will be faithful to His children; yet, we so often turn from God and sin against Him.

- Ask a couple of people to share how God has shown His faithfulness in the life of their family?
- Seeing and knowing that our God is always faithful, why do we turn from Him and sin against Him?
- Isaiah 1:16 says, “Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes.” How do we wash ourselves and remove our evil deeds? Can we do this? How are our evil deeds removed? How are we cleansed of all our sins?
- What does it mean to do justice? Provide some practical examples.
- How do we love kindness?
- How do we walk humbly with our God?

Study the Text . . .

Micah 7:18-20: No one is like Yahweh.

Micah ends the book by providing his readers with a description of the character and covenant faithfulness of God. This is not the first time that the character of God has been described to us. In Exodus 33:18, Moses asked to see God’s glory. When Moses went up on Mount Sinai, God passed before him and proclaimed His character.

- List the characteristics of God found in Exodus 34:6-7.
- List the characteristics of God found in Micah 7:18-20.
- There are several other places that also describe God’s character. Can you remember any of them? If so, list the characteristics of God in each occurrence.
- Describe the character of God.

Group Discussion . . .

God’s character never changes, and as we continually see God is always faithful to His promises.

- Knowing that no one is like our God, why do we at times pursue the things of this world instead of worshipping God alone?
- How can you as group continually remind one another of the character and faithfulness of God and stir one another to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God?