

The Books of Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah

Lesson 6: Hear, You Peoples: Judgment Announced -- Micah 1:1-2:13

Imagine a courtroom so vast that the witness stand is the whole earth and the gallery is filled with every nation that has ever lived. A voice rings out: "Hear, you peoples, all of you; pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it." This is how the book of Micah opens, not with a gentle invitation but with a summons. God is taking the stand, and the case is against His own people. The God who lives in His holy temple is coming down to walk on the high places of the earth, and where He treads, the mountains melt like wax.

Micah was a country preacher from a small town, a contemporary of the great prophet Isaiah, and he saw two things at once with painful clarity. He saw the glittering, religious, prosperous society around him, and he saw underneath it a rot that the comfortable did not want to name. Samaria in the north and Jerusalem in the south both wore the costume of devotion while their hearts ran after idols and their hands grabbed whatever they could from the weak. Micah refused to pretend.

So the first two chapters thunder with judgment, and they are specific. God names the idols that have seduced His people. He names the land-grabbers who lie awake at night scheming how to seize a poor family's field, and who rise in the morning to do it because they have the power. He names the preachers who would only prophesy if you paid them, who told the rich exactly what they wanted to hear. This is not judgment in the abstract; it is God refusing to look away from real cruelty dressed up as normal life.

And yet, just when the darkness seems total, the chapter ends with a sudden shaft of light. "I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob; I will gather the remnant of Israel." God promises that judgment will not be His last word. A remnant will be gathered, a flock brought back to their fold, with their King passing on before them and the Lord at their head. Micah will not let us forget that the God who judges sin is the same God who gathers and saves. Before we ever reach Bethlehem in chapter 5, this promise of a gathered people under their King is already pointing forward to Christ and His church.

Group Discussion: Micah saw a society that looked religious and prosperous on the surface but was corrupt underneath. Why is it so easy for outward religion and real prosperity to coexist with deep injustice, and how can we keep our own faith from becoming mere surface?

Personal Reflection: Micah named specific sins that the comfortable preferred not to discuss. Is there an area of your own life where you have grown comfortable with something God would name as sin? What would it mean to let Him name it honestly?

Read Micah 1:1-2:13

Study Questions

1. The book opens with a cosmic summons: “Hear, you peoples, all of you... For behold, the Lord is coming out of his place” to judge (1:2-3). What does it reveal about God that He calls the whole earth to witness, and that He holds His own covenant people accountable rather than excusing them?
2. Micah declares that the Lord comes down and “the mountains will melt under him” (1:4) at the revelation of His holiness. When you consider the holiness of God before whom even mountains melt, how does that shape the way you approach Him and the way you regard your own sin?
3. God identifies the root of the judgment as idolatry: the “high places” and carved images in which Israel trusted (1:5-7). What forms do idols take in our own culture, and why does God treat the worship of false gods as such a fundamental betrayal?
4. Micah is so grieved that he says he will “lament and wail” and go “stripped and naked” (1:8) over his people’s sin. When was the last time someone else’s sin, or the brokenness of the world, actually grieved you rather than merely annoyed or entertained you? What would it look like to share God’s grief?
5. In 2:1-2, God condemns those who “devise wickedness” on their beds and then seize fields and houses because “it is in the power of their hand.” What does this teach us about how God views the misuse of power and the oppression of the vulnerable, even when it is technically legal?

6. The land-grabbers of Micah's day used their power simply because they could (2:1). Where do you have power, influence, or advantage over others (at work, at home, in relationships), and how can you make sure you use it to bless rather than to take?
7. The people did not want to hear Micah's hard words; they said, "Do not preach" and preferred prophets who would promise them wine and strong drink (2:6, 11). Why are people, then and now, so drawn to preachers who tell them only what they want to hear, and what does this reveal about the human heart?
8. Micah confronts a culture that silenced uncomfortable truth and rewarded flattery. How open are you, honestly, to hearing hard truth about yourself, whether from Scripture, from godly friends, or from your own conscience? How can you cultivate a teachable heart?
9. After all the judgment, chapter 2 ends with sudden hope: "I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob; I will gather the remnant of Israel," with their King passing before them and "the Lord at their head" (2:12-13). How is this promise of a gathered remnant under their King fulfilled in Christ gathering His church, the spiritual Israel, rather than in a future political restoration of national Israel, and why does that matter?
10. Look back over these two chapters, from the courtroom summons to the gathered remnant. Name one specific way Jesus is using this passage to make you more honest about sin, more grieved by injustice, and more grateful to belong to the flock He has gathered.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Isaiah 5:8, woe to those who join house to house and field to field; Amos 5:21-24, I hate your feasts, but let justice roll down like waters; 2 Timothy 4:3-4, the time when people will not endure sound teaching but accumulate teachers to suit their passions; John 10:11-16, the good shepherd who gathers one flock; Galatians 3:26-29, in Christ you are all sons of God and heirs of the promise.

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