

Message #5**Micah 2:6-13**

When it comes to religion and life, people can talk a good game. This is especially true when it comes to religious people who are not after truth. They love to go to some place of worship that will tell them about how prosperous they will be and how happy God is with them.

When it comes to religion, many people will listen to false ministers and teachers and think it is educational and entertaining. But let's check the Biblical record on this:

According to Romans 16:17-18; I Timothy 6:3-5; II Timothy 3:1-3; Titus 3:9-11; II John 10-11 God says in no uncertain terms that we have a responsibility to separate ourselves from false religious teachers. These are deceitful people who will lead people away from God, away from truth and lead them into judgment.

There are five reactions we should have to false religious teachers and ministers:

(Reaction #1) - We are to spot them. **Rom. 16:17**

There are two ways we may spot them:

- A. They live godless lives and promote and justify godless things.
- B. They proclaim things contrary to the written Scriptures.

(Reaction #2) - We are to turn away from them. **Rom. 16:17; I Tim. 6:3-6; II John 10**

Just as Paul says in **II Timothy 2:16-17; 3:5**, "Avoid such men as these." Their teaching has a gangrene effect on people.

(Reaction #3) - We are to expose them and warn others about them. **II Tim. 4:14-15; Acts 20:28-31**

(Reaction #4) - We are not to support them. **II John 10**—if we do we participate with them

(Reaction #5) - We are not to listen to them. **Titus 2:9-10; II John 10-11**

The existence of false teachers and false prophets is not new to our time. There were false teachers and prophets in Micah's day who were not only proclaiming false teaching, but they wanted to stop the true teacher from proclaiming truth.

These teachers tickled the ears of the people and the people loved what they were hearing. What they don't want to hear for the most part was the truth. So when Micah showed up with his message from God, and started presenting the true word of God, the false prophets didn't like it and neither did some of the people. So Micah addressed that here. What Micah says is this:

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE PRONE TO BELIEVE LIES PROCLAIMED BY FALSE MINISTERS, BUT GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE HEARING AND KNOWING TRUTH AND HE WILL BLESS THE REMNANT WHO ARE COMMITTED TO TRUTH.

There are a series of eight truths Micah communicates here:

TRUTH #1 – The false ministers want true ministers to stop speaking. **2:6a**

What these false ministers were doing was trying to stop and prevent Micah from preaching. They were warning him not to speak out so they could promote their own false messages to the people. Micah says they were telling him not to speak out, but they speak out.

Micah is mourning and warning and the false ministers of his day did not like it. The false ministers wanted to speak their phony religious messages, but did not want a true prophet of God to speak.

The phrase “do not speak out” is in a plural in Hebrew, which means more than just Micah was being targeted. The verb “speak out” is used three times in this verse and it is a word that means they were accusing him of being some frenzied or emotional prophet who just let words drip out or ooze out of his mouth. In fact, the word “speak out” (natap) means to drip words from their lips. **The false ministers want Micah to close his mouth so they can drip words out of their mouths.**

They were certainly not inviting him to speak at their chapel services. They were not inviting him to speak at their conferences or meetings. Micah was not invited to be a guest speaker at their religious rallies. He didn't say the right kind of things they liked to hear.

The truth is, it is the false ministers who should shut their mouths. They are not helping people see the truth of God or accurately know the truth of God. They are running their mouths and hurting people by not telling them the truth. They are doing far more damage than good.

These true men of God were considered to be troublemakers because they were preaching powerful messages from God and it was striking a nerve. So they were trying to shut them up by discrediting them.

People right with God love truth. They love to see it and hear it. Those not right with God can't stand it and wish the one presenting truth would go away.

TRUTH #2 – If true ministers do not proclaim the truth, there is no possibility that people will turn from sin and turn back to God. **2:6b**

Now this may mean they are telling Micah that his messages have absolutely no effect on them. They will not listen to what he has to say and the people will not respond to his message.

But the truth is if someone does not proclaim the truth of God, there is no chance for people to respond to the truth. They will not turn away from sin because they don't realize this is heading them into judgment.

It is so important that someone proclaims the truth of God to the nation because if there is no one to do that, there is no chance of people seeking to get right with God and stopping the pending judgment of God.

Now Micah, we may recall, had a proclamation ministry during the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. His preaching during the days of Jotham had no or little effect. His preaching during the days of Ahaz had no effect. But his preaching in the days of Hezekiah did have an effect and the people turned from the evil back to God and judgment was postponed (Jeremiah 26:18-19).

If Micah had not been preaching, the people would have listened to the false prophets and marched right into judgment.

TRUTH #3 – God's people were being told by false prophets that God's patience never runs out.
2:7a

Notice Micah addresses "house of Jacob" which means all Israel, both north and south.

Micah was warning the nation that they were heading to the judgment of God and it was coming soon. So the false prophets were telling the people, we are the people of God and God always loves us and is patient with us. You have nothing to fear.

The primary message false ministers communicate is God always loves you and is always patient with you. You are the people of God and have nothing to fear even though Deuteronomy 28:15-68 specifically warned against this kind of thinking the false teachers promoted. He is always patient and his patience never runs out.

These false prophets were telling the people, it doesn't matter how you live your life, God is happy with you just the way you are and He is pleased with you and patient. He understands your failures and sin and because you are His people, you have nothing to fear.

So have your idols and have your porn and have your immorality and have your greed and have your lust and have your distortions and have your pride. Don't worry about having to change because God is patient with you and His patience never wears out.

Obviously when you look at what happened to Israel, that was a lie.

There are many people who go to church and the reason they like their church is that it lets them live just the way they want and never confronts sin. It does not warn the people that if they don't turn from sin they will experience the chastening, severe judgment of God.

TRUTH #4 – God’s true word is good to those who truly walk uprightly. **2:7b**

Many of these people had delusionally promoted the fact that they were right with God, but they did not want to hear truth.

Here is the truth of God. People who are truly right with God love truth. They love the whole counsel of God. They understand that God does good things for obedient people (Deut. 28:1-14).

People who were right with God were not trying to shut Micah up; they wanted to hear what he had to say. The word of God is good to those who walk uprightly. They love to study the word, hear the word and learn the word.

God’s word is offensive to those who aren’t right with God. If one is living a life that is contrary to God and His word, that one will not love the word and ways of God.

TRUTH #5 – God’s people had risen up and were becoming as God’s enemy. **2:8-9**

God’s people were not listening to or serious about the word of God. They had become more like God’s enemies than His family. If you have ever had a family member turn against you because they are doing what is wrong, you can relate to this.

By listening to these false ministers, God’s own people had become God’s enemies. They were not living their lives governed by the word of God; they were living their lives as an enemy of God.

That is where the false teaching of the false ministers had led them. The proof that they were now enemies of God is by what was happening that was contrary to God and His word. They were robbing people and stealing from people.

They were acting as a reverse Robin Hood, robbing the poor to give to the rich. There are three specific charges God brings against His people:

(Charge #1) - Ruthless leaders took their clothes. **2:8**

When we went through Exodus we saw that it was possible to borrow some money and use one’s coat as collateral. But the coat was to be given back to the person before night. These corrupt people were taking people’s garments and keeping them. They were telling people they were right with God.

The word “strip” (pasat) is often used to refer to a raid that is made against an enemy. For example, in I Samuel 23:27 the text says, “the Philistines have made a ‘raid’ on the land.”

So the corruption of these leaders is that they were raiding their own people.

(Charge #2) - Ruthless leaders evicted people from their houses. **2:9a**

These were probably widows and the ruthless leaders were evicting them from their homes and taking the properties for themselves.

These were money hungry people that were so greedy they were forcing people out of their own homes.

(Charge #3) - Ruthless leaders took the inheritance from the children. **2:9b**

In Israel, it was important that the land stay in the family. That did not matter to the leaders. They oppressed the people and took it anyway.

These men were telling people they were right with God and they were doing these horrible things. They did not want Micah speaking up or out against them.

TRUTH #6 – God says get away from these people and away from this corrupt place because it is heading to destructive judgment. **2:10**

The language Micah uses here certainly describes what would happen. It was unclean and heading to destruction.

We may recall in the book of Esther that Haman made a gallows for Mordecai, and in the end he was hung on his own gallows. That would be what would happen here. These false teachers were proclaiming false messages to the people and God says get out of there and get away from them for they are heading to destruction.

God says the thing that you have done to the people will be done to you. You leaders will pay a very high price for your greed and corruption.

TRUTH #7 – God's people would rather listen to a false minister who lies and promotes prosperity and pleasure, rather than have a minister who tells the truth. **2:11**

In the midst of living unclean lives, the people would go to worship to hear ministers tell them God would always prosper them so they could enjoy pleasure.

Micah gives a job description of the kind of minister the people love. He will tell them about the good, party, pleasurable, plush life. Wine is the drink that came through fermentation and liquor was the drink that came through distillation.

If a man came to the people and said God is going to always bless you so you may enjoy the pleasures of wine and liquor, the people would love it. If they were to proclaim a prosperity gospel that would mean they would have more affluence and prosperity, they were all ears.

But if one came who would speak out the word of God, he would be hated. Micah's message of pending judgment did not go over well with these people.

You take a minister who will speak to the things that people really want to hear and he will be loved and highly esteemed. People will drive miles to hear him talk about the latest things concerning society.

They would rather listen to a lying prophet who gave them alcohol to drink in a party type way than one who would tell them the truth of God.

TRUTH #8 – God will always preserve and bless a remnant of people who love Him and love Truth and follow the King. **2:12-13**

God was going to judge, but there was hope in this and one day He would deliver the remnant of His people who loved Him and loved the word and the truth.

Micah did not find his hope in the leaders; he found his hope in the future and what God would do.