

## Micah 3:1-12 “Misleaders”

**For the Children:** Some people think that nothing bad will ever happen to them. They will never have a serious accident or fall seriously ill. Even God’s children might feel that way at times. We might think that God would never let anything bad happen to us. Israel in Micah’s time had forgotten about God’s justice and holiness, which His people are to follow. They thought that God would never punish them for their sins. They forgot that He had already told them of the things that would happen to them if they rebelled against His laws. God’s Spirit gave Micah the courage to point out their sin and warn them of what the Lord would do if they did not repent. King Hezekiah did repent, but after that, Israel returned to their sins. The Lord therefore sent them into Exile in Babylon to help them learn to uphold His justice and righteousness. **Questions:** What is “justice,” and how can you uphold it? How should justice be seen in the church today? How do we see justice in the ministry of the Lord Jesus?

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### Introduction:

#### First Point: The Misleading Judges

- 1) The Courts of the Land: The “heads and rulers” in v.1 are court officials. The system was instituted under Moses (Ex.18, Dt.1), who warned against injustice and partiality. Jehoshaphat had to remind the judges of that in 2 Chron.19:6-7.
- 2) The Courts Corrupted: The judges had begun to hate good and love evil (v.2). They are described as butchers and cannibals in v.3. They were being bribed to find against the weak and poor. The punishment will be that the Lord will not answer them when they cry to Him for help (v. 4) – unless they repent. There was repentance and reform under Hezekiah (Jer.26:18-19), but when the corruption returned, the Lord sent Israel into exile in Babylon.
- 3) The Application Today: The main application is not to the modern legal system, but to the church – for Micah addresses the OT church here. The church today should practice justice and righteousness in its discipline and other decisions, without partiality or man-pleasing. All members, as “kings” in Christ, should uphold God’s standards of justice and righteousness – as the Lord Jesus did perfectly.

#### Second Point: The Misleading Prophets

- 1) Doctoring the Word for Pay: The false prophets were telling the judges and other leaders what they wanted to hear – “peace, peace” – for money and/or food (v.5,11). On the other hand, they were proclaiming God’s opposition (“holy war”) to the weak and poor who could not pay. See 1 Tim.6:5-6. The fitting punishment will be that God will not give them any prophecies (vss.6-7).
- 2) The True Prophet Contrasted: Like Micah, the true prophet is filled with power from the Spirit, aware of God’s justice and has the courage to expose sin and warn of judgement (v. 8). The Lord Jesus was THE True Prophet. See Mt.23, for example. But as “prophets” in Him, we are all called to speak the truth in love, without doctoring God’s Word.

#### Third Point: The Misleading Rulers

- 1) The Whole System Corrupted: “Heads and rulers” in v.9 this time refers to all those in authority – prophets, priests, judges and governing authorities (v.11). They had all come to abhor justice and twist the truth – driven by the love of money and popularity.
- 2) A Dangerous message: Micah sees a whole city built on bloodshed and injustice (v. 10). That city would be reduced to ruins (v.12). Filled with the Spirit and the knowledge of God’s view of justice, the prophet takes on the whole establishment of the OT church at this point. He is concerned also about their presumptiveness – in assuming that God would never judge His city and His covenant people or desert His temple. Those who are presuming on God’s grace do not generally take kindly to such challenges! But presumptiveness needs to be challenged, or we hinder our spiritual growth – our ability to hear warnings and to understand our need for God’s grace.

### Conclusion:

