

Micah 3:9-12 “Leaders We Don’t Want”

For the Children: Perhaps you have noticed that when you pick a bad leader for a game or sport, he usually drags the whole team down. The same is true with national sports teams – in cricket, rugby, netball etc. It is also true that bad leaders in the church will drag the whole church down. The church needs to be led by men who love His Word and are not afraid to obey it and to stand up for it. **Questions:** What are some of the signs of bad leadership in the church? How can any man lead if he is not perfect? What are some of the problems that can occur in the church when the leaders are not godly?

Introduction:

First Point: Corruption in Leadership

- 1) Perversion of Justice: In the OT both civil and ecclesiastical leaders were part of a theocratic state which points to the church in the NT. Both types of leaders were perverting justice in Micah’s time (Hezekiah’s reign). The guilty were being cleared, the innocent condemned, evil called good and good called evil. This was contrary to the covenant-law (Ex. 23:6-7). See also Amos 5:24
- 2) Greed and Bribery: A lot of the problem was due to greed. Greed gave rise to bribery in the judicial system. Priests gave instruction and prophets foretold the future for pay. The poor who could not afford the price were disadvantaged
- 3) A City Built on Bloodshed: Corruption often leads to violence. Violence lay behind Jerusalem’s wealth, behind the new buildings that were shooting up (v. 10). Office-bearers today, as then, are to be free from the undue love of money, power and prominence. Men must be nominated and chosen who love justice & righteousness, who are impartial, who will not withhold needed discipline, who will stand for the truth no matter what

Second Point: Hypocrisy in Leadership

- 1) Confidence in Outward Forms: Israel in Micah’s time tended to “lean upon the Lord” in a mere outward sense. They trusted in the covenant blessings – God’s presence in their midst, as symbolized by the Temple. They saw the wealth and the new buildings as a sign of God’s favour. But they had little regard for the covenant law. See Rom. 2:17-24 for a similar attitude in NT Israel
- 2) False Security: This confidence led to a false security. The Israelites believed that God would not chastise them for their sins, that no calamity would overtake them (v. 11). Today, too, such presumptuousness and hypocrisy does great damage. Many will imitate their leaders in hypocrisy. Others will cease to trust their leaders, because of their double-standards. Loving the good and hating hypocrisy is reflected in the criteria for office in 1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1

Third Point: Judgement upon Leadership

- 1) Doubly Accountable: Leaders who are corrupt and hypocritical will be held doubly accountable – for their own sins, but also for abusing the office/authority/stewardship God has given them, along with their great responsibility for others in the church. See Heb. 13:7, Mt. 25
- 2) A Church Affected: God warned Israel through Micah that He was going to punish them all because of the leaders (v. 12). All the outward signs of covenant blessing – including the Temple – were going to be removed. The leaders affect their church, and the church is held responsible for tolerating wicked leaders. See 1 Cor. 11:30. The possible eternal consequences are even more of a concern!
- 3) Choose Carefully: Leaders in the church must therefore be chosen with care. They must be men filled with the Spirit and therefore with justice and courage (Mic. 3:8) – godly, wise, mature, committed to the Lord and His church; men who will deal with sin in the right way. See also Ps. 15

Conclusion:

