

Mic. 3:1 And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment?

The prophet is making specific address to the leaders of Israel at this point, those who are in positions of leadership and judgment. His question for them (my paraphrase): Aren't you supposed to be able to discern right from wrong, good from evil, moral from immoral, honest from dishonest, truth from a lie?

Mic. 3:2 Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones;

Mic. 3:3 Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron.

These are words of indictment against those very leaders. They are the ones who choose evil over good, who take advantage of the people and rob them of what little they have. He pictures these so called "leaders" as cutting their own people up as they would meat to make stew.

Again, I can't help but think of those in the "church" today who take advantage of the poor and needy to support their own lavish lifestyles—all in the name of Jesus. Somehow, my picture of a true follower of Jesus would be of one that gives more than he receives, that serves more than he is served, that is more concerned about others than self. "Father, please help me to live my life as I know you would have me live it. Please help me to die to self. Whatever it takes, Lord, this is my prayer."

Mic. 3:4 Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

In spite of their wickedness, these same people will have the audacity to cry out to YHWH in their day of trouble. The solemn truth—God will refuse to hear them. In fact, He will "hide His face from them." Why? Because of how they have treated others.

This seems to be a life principle. I can't help but think of my recent study on the Sermon on the Mount. The Lord taught from the beginning that we should treat others in the same way we would wish to be treated.

Lev. 19:18 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.

Jesus taught that we should forgive others if we expected forgiveness.

Matt. 6:14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

Matt. 6:15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

It's also the principle behind sowing and reaping.

Gal. 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Gal. 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Mic. 3:5 Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

In this verse YHWH is speaking directly to these false prophets that are leading His people into error, out of the way of righteousness. After reading several translations, it seems to be saying that they tell those that feed them what they want to hear; those that don't feed them can expect to be attacked. I equate that to the false prophets today who promise blessing if you contribute to their coffers, but refuse to minister to those who don't support them regardless of their need.

Mic. 3:6 Therefore night *shall be* unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.

Mic. 3:7 Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for *there is* no answer of God.

The warning from God—The time is coming when you'll be walking about in the dark as far as direction from the Lord is concerned. He is going to withhold vision and not commission new prophets. The seers (those who prophesy from visions) and diviners (those who foretell the future) are going to be left without answers. There will be no true prophets in Israel.

We know that happened during the 400-years after the prophecies of Malachi before John the Baptist came on the scene.

Mic. 3:8 But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

Micah, however, is a true prophet of God. He declares himself full of power by the spirit of YHWH; in other words, he is energized by and strengthened by God's Holy Spirit in his ministry. By God's Spirit his judgment is righteous and true and he is without fear in declaring the sins and deliberate rebellion of his people before God.

This should characterize every believer today. We are privileged to have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us.

Rom. 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

1Cor. 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

We should declare God's word with boldness and in love according to the direction and empowerment of the Spirit.

2Tim. 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

2Tim. 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord...

Eph. 4:14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
Eph. 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ....

Mic. 3:9 Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

Mic. 3:10 They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

Mic. 3:11 The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.

Again, indictment and warning to the leaders of Israel. These leaders are identified as those that hate righteous judgment and distort the truth. They are responsible for Jerusalem becoming a city of murderers and wickedness. The judges hand down verdicts based on bribery. The priests will only share their knowledge for a price. The prophets will look into your future for a price. These same wicked leaders then presume that they can claim YHWH as their Lord and protector. This is just another form of taking God's name in vain.

I can't help but think of the mindset in our world today that wants to blame God when bad things happen, but refuse to acknowledge Him as Lord when things are going well. They want blessing without accountability. They want to hold Him to a standard that they are not willing to live by.

Mic. 3:12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed *as* a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

"Therefore" – Because of your wickedness...

The day is coming when Zion is going to be completely destroyed; Jerusalem will be ruined; and the temple mount will be overgrown with trees and bushes.

Joe Focht quote: "All inspiration without perspiration is irresponsibility. All perspiration without inspiration is B.O."