



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Micah 3:1-12

“Micah Against the Establishment”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] The subject for tonight as we turn again to the prophecy of Micah is "Micah Against the Establishment." Micah is the prophet of social protest. But he was not a modern revolutionary. One might think when we think of a man as a prophet of social protest that therefore he would be the man who would organize the oppressed in a movement of resistance, but Micah did not place himself at the head of protest marches or demonstrations. Rather, he spoke directly to the people who were involved in the departure of the nation from the faith that had been given to them through the other Old Testament prophets and through Moses.

He was also a prophet of the love of Yahweh, the love of Yahweh for Jacob and Israel. And he was a prophet of the love of God at the same time that he was a prophet of social protest. We just read in chapter 2, verse 12 and verse 13 in our last time together,

"I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel. I will put them together like sheep in the fold; Like a flock in the midst of its pasture They will be noisy with men. The breaker goes up before them; They break out, pass through the gate and go out by it. So their king goes on before them, And Yahweh is at their head."

So when Micah turns to the third chapter now, against the background of this great love of God for Jacob and for the remnant of Israel, he speaks out against the establishment of his day. He will speak against the judges. He will speak against the prophets. And he will speak against the priests. And he will call them, in essence, time servers. They are pictured like cannibals at a great feast devouring the poor defenseless people.

Someone has said in the light of the fact that Micah prophesied in the same general time as Isaiah, perhaps the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, that Micah lacked the breadth of vision of the prophet Isaiah but he went deeper or saw deeper into the heart of things. And I do believe that that is true. Micah was a man who did not have the influence that Isaiah had, but he was a person who had thought very deeply about the things that he wrote. And if one can think more deeply than Isaiah about things, it would be a man like Micah.

Now the first part of his chapter is a prophecy against the courts of the land. The next of the chapter is a prophecy against the false prophets. And then he concludes with prophecies against all of the leaders including the priests of the land as well.

So we want to look now at chapter 3 of the prophecy of Micah. And in the first 4 verses, we have prophecy against the courts. This is a literary unit, this chapter of three stanzas. And that's why we're taking the entire twelve verses for our subject tonight.

Now as you read through it, you will notice that the key word is the word justice. I'm reading again from the New American Standard Bible, and we read,

"And I said, "Hear now, heads of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know justice?" (And then in the 8th verse and the last verse of the second section we read) "On the other hand I am filled with power— With the Spirit of the Lord— And with justice and courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, Even to Israel his sin."

(And finally in the 9th verse, the first verse of the third of the stanzas he writes) "Now hear this, heads of the house of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel, Who abhor justice And twist everything that is straight."

So Micah is the prophet of social protest. And in this chapter the theme gathers around the word justice. The first section verses 1 through 4, the prophecy against the courts.

Now mind you, he will do this under the same name under which he promised mercy. You notice he says in verse 1, "And I said, "Hear now, heads of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel." But in verse 12 he had said of the preceding chapter, "I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel." So he arraigns the leaders who have to do with the ruler ship of the land under the same name under which he promised them mercy. So it seems very striking to me that he should prophesy that they are going to have mercy but at the same time, using the same name, speak so harshly against them in the 3rd chapter.

Now this first section, verses 1 through 4 contains an accusation and then a word of condemnation. And let's read now the first 3 verses because in these three verses we do have the accusation.

"And I said, "Hear now, heads of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know justice? You who hate good and love evil, Who tear off their skin from them And their flesh from their bones, and Who eat the flesh of my people, Strip off their skin from them, Break their bones Chop them up as for the pot And as meat in a kettle."

Now that is some accusation. The term that he uses for the leaders or heads is a Hebrew word which has as its root idea deciding. So these are the deciders. These are

the individuals who make the decisions for the land. They are the ones who Micah singles out as guardians of the justice of the land.

And notice, too, that as he singles them out, he pits the ideals of the office against their failures. These are the rulers. These are the heads of Jacob. And it is for them above all to know justice. And so he points them to the fact that they hold these offices, but at the same time now he will speak of how they have failed. They pervert, not simply pervert justice, but they pervert the justice that they themselves are the ones who are supposed to uphold, that is, the justice which they are supposed to uphold.

Now we can understand how an individual who was not the upholder of justice might pervert justice, and that would be bad. But how much more worse, or how much worse is it for an individual to pervert the very thing that it is his office to uphold. So, these are the ones who should know justice, and yet at the same time, they are the ones who hate that which is good and love that which is evil.

So what is the justice that they are to uphold? One might ask. Well now, think of the individuals who are here. Here are the children of Israel. They are called heads of Jacob, the house of Israel. What is it that they are to uphold? Well as you think through the Old Testament, of course you would come immediately to a consideration of the Law of Moses. After all, the children of Israel lived under the Law of Moses in Old Testament times from the time of Exodus chapter 19 and the giving of the law at the time of the exodus on through to the time of Jesus Christ. The children of Israel were subservient to and put under the Mosaic Law. So the justice that Micah was speaking about is the justice that is found in the covenantal Mosaic Law.

(Now I said as I began that you look so nice I was going to put on my coat, and this is no reflection, but it is hot in this room for a preacher, so I'm going to take off my coat and I'm also going to undo my shirt. I am not, I will watch my pants here with this thing hanging by the side of me so you need not worry.)

So the justice that they were supposed to uphold was the justice of the Mosaic Law. Now this was the covenantal law. And the archetypal lawgiver is, of course, the Lord himself. They are the watchdogs of the Mosaic Law, but at the same time they are aiding and abetting the criminals of the land.

Does that sound as if it might be something that is relevant to our day? Is it possible that in our day we have individuals who are appointed to uphold the laws of the land, who not only do not uphold the laws of the land, but actually aid and abet the criminals of the land? By, occasionally, their agreements with them? By the bribes that they accept in their office? And by the other things by which they get around the teaching of the laws that are found in our constitution? It seems to me that Micah is very much relevant to our day in which we have so much in our legal system that seems flawed by the wickedness and unrighteousness of men.

Now one of the things that Micah does here is to describe in a lengthy metaphor the savagery of those individuals and what they are doing to those who are helpless. Listen again to what he says about them. "They tear off skin from them, their flesh they tear off from their bones, they eat the flesh of my people, they strip off their skin from them, they break their bones they chop them up as for the pot and as meat in a kettle."

Now these are the individuals who ought to be shepherds, but instead of shepherds they are butchers. This is a typical picture of a person who is a butcher and not a shepherd. Instead of shepherding the flock, they are flaying the flock. And so instead of feeding the flock, they are feeding on the flock and taking advantage of them. They skin and bone the carcasses of the defenseless. And it's no wonder that the prophet in righteous indignation speaks out strongly against them. That's his accusation.

Now his condemnation follows in verse 4, "Then they will cry out to the Lord, But He will not answer them. Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time Because they have practiced evil deeds."

So, the day of reckoning is coming, Micah says. The time is coming when these individuals who are taking advantage of the poor and defenseless, and in their feeding upon the people of the land, take advantage of them, they're going to discover that they're not able to do it any more because the Assyrians and others, the Babylonians, will eventually come. And the time is coming when they're going to cry out to the Lord for help, but God says that he's not going to answer them. Instead he's going to hide his face from them because they have practiced evil deeds. It, of course, is the illustration of the fact that the Bible speaks about so often that for those who are merciless there is no mercy.

The Hebrew word, incidentally, translated here in verse 4, cry out, was a word that was often used of appeals to a judge for help. And so they are individuals who are going to be just like those who appeal to them. They're going to cry out to the Lord, but they're going to discover that the Lord is not listening to the things that they have to say.

Now having spoken about the courts of the land, and you know, really you could find illustration after illustration of this, if you had time, in our country and in our society, of individuals who have been judges, lawyers, the rulers in our country who have taken advantage of our laws and taken advantage of the people. You could find so many illustrations of this that it's almost as if Micah is speaking about our society.

Now he talks about the prophets in verse 5 through verse 8.

"Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets Who lead my people astray; When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war. Therefore it will be night for you—without vision, And darkness for you—without divination. The sun will go down on the prophets, And the day will become dark over them. The seers will be ashamed And the diviners will be embarrassed. Indeed, they will all cover their mouths Because there is no answer from God."

Now here again, in the prophecy against the prophets, there is a charge laid by Micah against those who are false. This is another influential element in the society in Micah's day, not only the heads or the rulers, but the prophets. These are individuals who have betrayed their calling. As Isaiah speaks of them, "Oh my people, they which lead thee, mislead thee."

Now that is something that is again just as modern as nineteen hundred and eighty-two. In our Christianity we have literally thousands and thousands of men who stand in the pulpits as leaders of the professing people of God, but instead of leading them, they are misleading them. They have misinterpreted the word of God. They have misapplied the word of God. They have taught false doctrine. They have denied the fundamental doctrines of the word of God and taught people so. And the result is that they are blind men leading the blind in the way of destruction. As Micah says, "These are the prophets who lead my people astray."

Now notice, these are prophets. And of course the prophet is an individual who is to be a prophet of the will of God. He's a person who is supposed to proclaim the will of God. But these preachers of the will of God are opposed to God's intent. They mislead him. They misrepresent him in his message. It's no wonder that the Lord is angry.

This word "to lead astray" is a very interesting Old Testament word too. It's a word that was often used of wandering about. In fact, that was one of its fundamental forces, to cause to wander about. And so, when a person was wandering about or caused to wander about, he was led astray. But it was also used of 'to cause to be drunk,' that is, to reel from drunkenness. So, it's a word that means to cause to wander about lost or drunk. And thus it's a picture of those who are leading the people astray and causing them to wander about lost and causing them to reel about as if they were drunken.

You remember back in chapter 2 in verse 11 we read, "If a man walking after wind and falsehood Had told them lies and said, 'I will speak out to you concerning wine and liquor,' He would be spokesman for this people." In other words, the person who exalts the partaking of strong spirits is the kind of man, Micah says, who ought to be the leader and teacher of this people. Well, here he says they are individuals who cause the people of the country to wander about as if they were lost or as if they were drunk.

Now I'd like for you just to think for a moment. Think of some of your friends who attend professing Christian churches. And in your conversations with them, have you not noticed that their understanding of biblical doctrine is practically nil? Have you not discovered that many people who've attended a Christian church for ten, twenty, thirty, forty years do not know any biblical doctrine whatsoever?

And when they do speak on biblical doctrine, they generally speak on biblical doctrine falsely. Often it is without any sense of intentionally falsifying the truth of God, but they have been led astray. They do not understand biblical doctrine. If you start with the fundamental facts of the faith, they are not able to follow. They are blind because they have had teachers just like these that Micah is speaking about.

These are individuals who have misled the people of God. They have caused them to wander about lost. They've caused them to reel about as if they were drunken so far as understanding spiritual things is concerned.

Many of you sitting in this audience, as I look out, I remember the times when you came to Believers Chapel. And after you had been here for a little while, you came up and said 'I attended church for many years and did not understand anything about the Scriptures. But I want you to know since I've been coming to Believers Chapel I've come to understand that I do belong to the people of God. I've come to understand something about biblical doctrine. I know that I have become a Christian, and I'm understanding things that are found in the word of God.'

I wish it were possible for all of us to say we understand everything in the word, we don't. But we do know we are on the right way. How terrible it is to be under the ministry of people who lead the professing people of God astray.

Now notice these individuals. They not simply are individuals who are confused themselves, but they are morally derelict. Listen to what he says in that 5th verse, "When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war."

Now, most of the commentators feel that what is meant by this, and I think they're probably right, is that Micah is saying that these men are influenced in the things they say by the gifts that they are given. In other words, when they are given gifts, they transform their message so that it is suitable for those who are giving them the gifts. As he says, "When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war."

They are set apart for opposition and persecution. They feast on the flesh of the poor. They chop them up in pieces for the frying pan because the poor are unable to give them anything. But the rich who are able to give them something, well they will say, they prophesy that everything is going to be alright for them.

Of course this is lack of principle in the matter of the carrying on of the Christian ministry. They reason within themselves: Why not make the message match the customer's pocket? No doubt, the client hoped that by crossing the prophet's palm with some extra silver he might get some prophecies that were suitable to him. You know the Old Testament gives us illustrations of this, of kings who asked for prophecies from prophets, and they got the kind of prophecies they wanted until a true prophet came along. And he said, Oh no, that's not the word of God, the word of God is this. And that prophet was a very unpopular prophet. Today when individuals preach the word of God as it is found in holy Scripture, they often find that they're not too popular with those to whom they are speaking.

Recently in Chicago in a large Presbyterian church an individual who was a Scottish man was asked to preach for them. It was some possibility he was coming to the United States for ministry and was going to live over here. In fact, it was possible that he was going to teach at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, the school at which I've been teaching.

And so this individual came and they asked him to preach in this particular church in the Chicago area. It was a very nice church in an upper-middle class to a wealthy class neighborhood. And so a lot of very nice people were in the congregation. I grew up in a church like this and so I can just picture the kind of congregation. And at the same time they were extremely liberal in their theology.

Well he didn't know a whole lot about them, so he selected as his sermon that morning a sermon on Judas. And those who heard him said that it was really an outstanding sermon on Judas. But he pointed out, of course, that Judas was an individual who was a traitor to our Lord Jesus Christ, and he pointed out the reasons why and also that Judas was a message to the church. Not a message to those outside of the church because Judas was one of the apostles. And how it was possible for individuals who were in a church, and very much a part of it, to be traitors to Jesus Christ. And then he launched into a discussion of the doctrines that one would hold to if he was true to Jesus Christ and the things that they might believe if he were false to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was not asked to come back to preach again.

John Wesley went up and down Great Britain preaching. And if you'll read his journals, this is what he said; this is what he wrote in his journals time after time. And I'm going to give the names of the churches, and these are not historically accurate because it's been a little while since I've read it, but you'll recognize it was this kind of language. He writes or he would write, I preached in St. James; I was told that I should never preach there again. I preached today in St. John's; I was told that I should never preach there again. I preached in St. Jude's today; I was told that I should never preach there

again. It's almost like a hymn. And that's the chorus of the hymn. He said I preached in this church, I preached in that church; I was told, there are his words, I was told that I should never preach there again.

Well, Micah is talking about individuals who do make the message match the customer's pocket. After all, if you line the pockets of the prophets, they will preach things that are true to what you think. Eventually these men were in the prophecy business for what they could get out of it. Micah's main complaint, therefore, is that these prophets let their audience determine their message. The stance the hearers take over against them determines what they are going to say.

That's one of the fundamental mistakes that we make. Let's let the audience dictate to the preachers of the word of God what they shall say. But if the audience dictates to the preachers what they are going to say, the audience frequently will dictate things that are not in accordance with the word of God. It's bad enough for the preachers. They sometimes choose things that are not in accordance with the word of God too. But with a true man of God, the important thing is to listen to what God may say through God's ministers of the word of God.

Here's a kind of model for the pastor who is determined to "get along with his people". I think it was Karl Barth who once said, "In such a case as with any false prophet, God is merely the fifth wheel on the wagon, whereas in the case of a true prophet, God is the wheel that drives all of the wheels." So he speaks out then against the prophets who lead the people astray, who "When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war."

Evidently that meant something like, If you don't give me what I want, then the word is put out that these individuals are in bad standing with Yahweh the Lord God. And so a kind of holy war is carried on against those who are not supporting the prophets with money.

Now God says for prophets, and after all, prophets are supposed to have illumination, aren't they? They're supposed to be individuals who have burdens from the Lord. They're supposed to be able to give us something that is light, something that is truth. Well, what kind of judgment would you give prophets?

Listen to what Micah says. "Therefore it will be night for you—without vision, And darkness for you—without divination." So that night is going to replace the light that they should have had.

Now when Micah comes finally to himself in verse 8, you might think that Micah was a little cocky. But he just speaks out of the sense of the presence of God with him. Notice verse 8, "On the other hand I (now in the Hebrew text that's a very strong adversative expression, *pulan anoki*). "On the other hand I am filled with power— With the Spirit of the Lord— And with justice and courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act."

I like this because what Micah in effect says is these people are leading my people astray. They're carrying on their ministry dependent upon the kind of money and gifts that they receive from the people. If they receive gifts from individuals, then they prophesy in a way that will please them. If they don't, they attack them, carry on a holy war against them.

But for Micah, he says, "I am an individual filled with power—With the Spirit of the Lord—And filled with justice and filled with courage." He's a man who recognizes that he speaks out of the power that comes from the Holy Spirit. His message is a message of justice. And that is reflected in the fact that he attacking the courts, and he's attacking the prophets, and in a moment he will also attack the priests.

And furthermore, he says, I am an individual filled with courage because I have by the grace of God the strength to deliver my message in the face of human power, in the face of human ridicule, in the face of human persecution.

Fortunately down through the Christian centuries we have had some men like Micah. The Apostle Paul was of course one of those men. And he writes in the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians of things that he would like for the Ephesians to pray for him. He says, "And pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." So the apostle prays that or asks that we may pray for him that he may speak boldly. Twice he says, "that he may speak boldly" because he recognizes that that is what is needed in the preaching of the word of God.

Calvin says, and he was another one of that caliber; he said, "Let them not yield to any gales that may blow, nor be overcome by threats and terrors. Let them not bend here and there to please the world." A reason that we still honor John Calvin after several centuries is that he was a man like that. And God blessed his ministry. He was not a man who moved with the breezes of his own day. Those men you never hear again. But Calvin was a man who was faithful to the Lord God.

There are many preachers today unfortunately who are, so far as I can tell, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ but they do not believe that it is really proper to preach all of the word of God. They rather like to go through the word of God and pick out the things that they feel will not be offensive to the congregation.

Now I know what you're thinking. You're thinking I'm going to talk about the doctrine of election now. Well, I'm not. That is one of the things, of course, but that's not what I want to talk about. You know there are many other teachings in the word of God that are just as offensive to people who have not gone very far in the word of God and do not want to go very far in the word of God, who like to think of themselves as Christians and that's about it. They don't want to grow in the things of the Lord because to grow in the things of the Lord may make a tremendous transformation in their daily life.

There are mothers who have designs for their children, and they realize that as they ponder the Christian message that if they're going to become a Christian in a very definite and complete way, it's going to mean a transformation of goals and aspirations and desires for their children. There are men in the business world who will recognize that the claims of the Lord are going to demand some changes in their daily life, in their business.

All of us, as we face the word of God and the claims that are put upon us by the Lord God, realize that the gospel demands a very big change in our lives. And most of us have to struggle for a period of time with the will of God in these respects.

Micah says, "He's filled with power—with the Spirit of the Lord—with justice, with courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, Even to Israel his sin." Oh for some of the spirit of Micah for each one of us in our life.

Now finally, in verse 9 through verse 12, Micah speaks more specifically about those that he calls the "heads of the house of Jacob." But he's already referred to them in verse 1, but now he broadens it out and includes prophet and priest. Listen to what he says, verse 9 through verse 12.

"Now hear this, heads of the house of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel,
Who abhor justice And twist everything that is straight, Who build Zion with bloodshed
And Jerusalem with violent injustice. Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe."

Do we have any bribery in the United States? Well, I dare say there's quite a bit. And I do know that when you go south of the border, and south of the border all the way down, that we have society after society that is the society of the bribe. Nothing is done without the bribe. If I were preaching down there, we'd have probably a great deal more illustration of this than we do in the United States of America. Thank God. But our society is also characterized by this too. Here are the leaders; they pronounce judgment for a bribe.

"Her priests instruct for a price And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the Lord saying, "Is not the Lord in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us."

So Micah widens his attacks now and includes everybody in the society, the leaders, the prophets, the priests. Notice some of the things that they do. Evidently they've built vast buildings with wealth gotten by bloodshed, by immoral means. "Who build Zion with bloodshed."

The fact that the heads are mentioned means that every class is corrupted, the legal head, the religious head, the person to whom you would go with personal problems. You know, if you had a legal problem in this day, you would go to the heads, the judges that were in Israel. And if you had a religious problem, you would go to the priests because the priests, remember, were those who were supposed to have the knowledge of the word of God. And then if you wanted some help and guidance, you would go to the prophets. So if you had a legal problem, if you had a religious problem, if you had a personal problem, these are the kind of individuals you would go to and you would find that they weren't interested in anything other than their own economic standing.

Mr. Pusey, who has written a very good book on the minor prophets, particularly speaking from the standpoint of historical theology, reflected upon the fact that the Aryan bishops in the days of the struggle over the person of Christ with the Athanasians pointed out that these Aryan bishops, who were themselves hirelings by their false exposition of the Scriptures, tolerated the Aryan emperors in the oppression of the faithful. In other words, they expounded the Scriptures in a way that the emperors wished them to expound it in order that the emperors might maintain their authority. They propped up the heresy by human patronage. And then the emperors bestowed on them the benefits that they were able to bestow on them. So they had a nice little system going. And the priests or the bishops prophesied or taught the word in a certain way, and then the

emperors who wanted them to teach it in that way rewarded the bishops with the things that were of benefit for them in a material way.

And yet Micah says, "They lean on Yahweh." And when the time comes when difficulty comes, and someone says 'Wait a minute, this is not right, this is wrong, and there may be some heresy, and there may be some error, and there may be some sin and rebellion in this particular country,' they say, but "Is not the Lord in our midst?" Is not Yahweh in our midst; are we not the covenant people of God? "Calamity is not going to come to us."

So when Micah said, 'The Assyrians one day may come down here and you may find that you're in difficulty or something else may happen. There is going to come ultimate calamity.' They say, 'No, no. We're the people of God. We have eternal security,' in effect of a different kind.

Micah speaks of that as making God a convenience, a cushion. Yes, he's in our midst alright, Micah said, but he's in our midst to punish, because remember this my dear Christian friend, judgment begins at the house of God.

Now in Believers Chapel, we're inclined to think of ourselves as being knowledgeable in the word of God as related to the Lord by covenant grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, the fact that we are makes it incumbent upon us to respond to the things that are found in the Scriptures in a most complete way.

The divine retribution is spoken of in verse 12, "Therefore, on account of you Zion will be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, And the mountain of the temple will become high places of a forest." What a rude awakening from their hypocritical fantasies that they are rightly related to the Lord when they do not have any relationship and are actually sinning and rebelling against him in the ways that he's been speaking about here.

Now we know that in history, when Hezekiah came shortly after this to the throne, there was a repentance that took place on the part of the people. And judgment

under the Assyrians was forestalled. And it was not for a hundred plus years after this that finally the Babylonians came. And ultimately Jerusalem, in seventy AD and following, became a heap of ruins. So, there was a long period of time in which they were delivered from this, and then they were taken into captivity. And finally, centuries later, Israel was scattered to the four corners of the earth. Not a stone was left unturned in the city of Jerusalem. It really did become a heap of ruins, ploughed like a field, cucumbers growing where the great city had once been.

Well, let me conclude by saying this that Micah gives us here a challenge directed toward hypocritical selfishness on the part of those who profess faith in Yahweh. It contains a warning to complacency with covenant grace, thinking that because we belong to the Lord, and we are therefore safe and secure, that we can play fast and loose with the word of God. And further, there is a plea here to make our conduct equal to our creed.

The false are distinguished from the true by those who are filling their mouths. The false have their mouths filled by the people who profess faith in the Lord. In other words, the false are men who're interested in money, in financial return for their prophesying. But the true is the person who is filled with power with the Spirit of the Lord.

John Calvin also said, "Almighty God, shine forth so brightly by Thy word that we be not overtaken by the darkness of avarice." We could also pray, Oh God, shine forth so brightly that we will not be overtaken by the hypocrisy and the self security and assurance that does not come from a walk that is close and vital with the Lord God of the Bible. May God help us to respond to these great things about which Micah is speaking which are true of all of the ages since the beginning.

Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the exhortations and admonitions that come from Micah the prophet to us because we recognize that we are susceptible to the same things, the errors of the heads of the people, the prophets, the priests, only reflect some of the principles with which we have to deal in our daily life. We ask, Lord, that thou wilt make us faithful to the word of God and enable us to serve Thee acceptably. For Jesus' sake. Amen.