



Lesson 4 March 21st, 2020

Corrupt Leaders – Lesson for Juniors

Study Scripture – Micah 3:1-3, 9-12; 6:6-8

Background Scripture – Micah 1-2

Key Verse:

“He has told you, O man, what is good
And what does the Lord require of you
But to do justly,
To love mercy
And to walk humbly with your God?”

Micah 6:8

INTRODUCTION

We are going to remind ourselves of some of the things that our parents require of us and the rules that they have set down for us in the house in which we live. To make your life orderly our parents require us to brush our teeth, take baths every day, keep our room tidy, help keep the house clean, help to set the table, and maybe even help to prepare meals among other things. Doing these things and treating each other right and not quarrelling would make life pleasant for everyone in the home.

Every parent has rules. These rules are set up to make us feel comfortable and to guide us so that when we grow up we will know how to make the right choices in setting up and arranging our life for our benefit.

We have a heavenly Father who is faithful and who has gone to great lengths to make the world beautiful for us. We were supposed to keep the world looking nice and pretty but unfortunately sometimes we do not and have not live up to our responsibilities. But God is faithful and He has been faithful to keep looking after us even though we have not always done things to please Him. When we do things to please Him we would always benefits a lot.

Some people who lived a long time ago in the nations of Judah and Israel had been given Commandments from God as to what they should do and how they should behave. But many times they forgot the things that they should never forget. Even the leaders tended to forget the rules that they should follow in looking after the interests of the people that depended on them for leadership.

The prophet Micah had to join with other prophets and take a message from God to these **leaders** reminding them about what God wanted. Many of them have gotten so bad that what **they** did was incredibly awful. They were corrupt. The Dictionary tells us that to be corrupt meant having

or showing a willingness to act dishonestly in return for money or personal gain. This meant that the leaders were changing the rules through improper conduct such as bribing or selling favours to whoever had money to give them. This was totally against what God had commanded. God had forbidden those practices.

What made it worse was that one such king in the nation of Judah named Jotham had a well behaved and faithful father named Uzziah and he tried to follow some of the rules that his father had taught him but he did not follow all the rules. Then he had a son that was completely terrible and that son ignored all the advice that the Lord had told the prophet Isaiah to tell him. As a result the nation got into bad trouble and an enemy nation came and captured them. This enemy nation then also attacked the sister nation to Judah which was very large and which was called the Northern Kingdom.

It was in this time of trouble long before the birth of Jesus that the prophet Micah was sent by God to preach and tell the leaders in no uncertain terms their behaviour was so bad that they had caused to develop in the nation many social evils. He described them using plain and unpleasant language as

“Leaders who hate the good, and love the evil; who tear off the people’s skin and their flesh from off their bones “.

Some people even had the nerve to ask the prophet what God wanted from them since they were offering sacrifices to God. They wanted to know how much was enough for God. But that was all talk for the heart of the people was not in good shape. They thought that giving God “material things” was enough to please God.

The answer Micah gave them helps us to know what kind of decisions we should make and how we should spend our time. The prophet gave them the rules that God wanted them to follow so that their life would turn out to be happy and they would not be captured and treated brutally and beaten up by the enemy nation.

So if you are not exactly sure what God is asking of you, you can go and look at what Micah said. We know that we must begin with love and mercy, begin with caring about others and showing them compassion, in making decisions about how we behave to make the world a better place.

Our choices are very important. But Micah made sure to remind the people of what God wanted from them. The three rules were simple.

The first rule from the heavenly Father who had always faithfully looked after the children of Israel and Judah, was to be just, to act justly.

This means that they were to be fair to everybody and to use the same rules for everyone. They should not behave in such a way that they won everything for themselves and other people got very little to live on or even in many cases nothing.



The leaders very well knew the difference between right and wrong and they knew that when they were making many choices every day they should remember to be fair and to do the right thing. They were not to steal from the people and treat them as if they were nothing.

So we can ask you how you would feel if you went to a friend's house to play a game and the friend changed all the rules so that he or she would win every game. If the friend set up the rule that he or she would only need maybe five points to win every game when you would have to make 100 points to even win one game that would not be fair at all. The friend would be corrupt and would not be a friend for he or she would only need to get only a small amount of points to win everything and you couldn't win.

These leaders that Micah attacked had been setting up rules so that they would get all the benefits and wealth in the country for themselves and their friends. The ordinary people were left out and would remain poor forever.

We know that we should never behave like that. We must always be fair.

The second thing that God wanted from them and from us is to ***“love mercy”***. This meant that they were to always be looking for the kind of things that they could do to help and show mercy. They were not just to do kind things because somebody was watching them. God wanted them to love doing kind things to others. This means that we should be sympathetic, ready to help, tender-hearted, caring, gentle, helpful, thoughtful, considerate, loving.

God knew that it was not always easy to be kind when somebody says or does something that hurt us but God wanted them and He wants us to show love for others by the simple act of being kind. This of course meant that we would not treat badly the people who could not defend themselves. They should not do violence or bully others. They were to remember that God had always been kind to them and had taken them out of bondage or slavery in Egypt and protected them from their enemies.

The third thing God wanted was that they were to stay close to God. This meant that they should behave properly and listen to God because they don't have all the answers to the problems of life. They should respect God's wisdom and look to God for guidance and direction and thank Him for everything that He had given them. Being humble meant that they remembered that they were not God and that they were no better than anyone else.

These leaders were corrupt. This meant that there was something badly wrong with them. They were not prepared to obey God.

So as we study this Lesson we should be prepared to

1. Do what is right.
2. Be kind.
3. Respect God.

If we do with these things and keep them in our hearts we cannot go wrong!

