

Middle District Missionary Baptist Association
Vacation Bible School
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Lula Gainey, President, Congress of Christian Education
Dr. Roosevelt Baxter Jr., Facilitator
13 July, 2021 - Day One

MICAH

INTRODUCTION

- Micah, name means "who is like God"
- There is nothing extraordinary about his birth or his death. He is from the agricultural village in the foothills of Palestine.
- He had a strong concern for the lowly and less fortunate; the lame and outcast and the afflicted - **Chapter 4:6**. He was so passionate about his message that he was willing to strip himself naked to get his message across

Micah prophesied at a time when there was widespread greed, oppression, exploitation of the poor, selfishness and idolatry was out of control. Message is directed towards the powerful leaders of Samaria and Jerusalem. The leaders hated what was good and loved what was evil. Micah predicts tragic fall of Israel - **Chapter 1:1, 6**. Micah gives one of the most significant prophecies of Jesus Christ - **Chapter 4:2-4; 5:2; 5:5**

LESSONS FROM MICAH

- Their relationship with God
- Their relationship with the Word of God
- Their relationship with One Another

THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD - Chapter 6:1-5

- "*O My People*" - this phrase appears six times in Micah. God is addressing His own people "my people." He has not rejected them from being His people even though they have not obeyed and are living in rebellion.
- **Verse three** - "*what have I done to you? And how have I wearied you? Testify against me.*"
- they had grown tired of God. Instead of being grateful, passionate and full of worship they have distanced themselves from God. Worship was burdensome, God's Word was neglected, and everything was an effort. Because of a backslidden, heart they started to worship idols

THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WORD OF GOD - Chapter 2:6-7

- "*Prophesy ye not*" - this means "do not preach." They didn't want to hear what God was saying. They wanted someone to tell them what they wanted to hear. Refer to **II Timothy 4:3-4**
- God speaks through Micah - the purpose of the Word that God sends is to do them good. Refer **II Timothy 4:2; II Timothy 3:16**

THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO ONE ANOTHER - Chapter 2:8

- "*My people is risen up as an enemy*" - the state of being actively opposed or hostile to someone or something. That should never be the spirit of God's people! Refer to **John 13:35**
- God's people had done bad! **Chapter 2:1-2**
- God's people should never be known for hostility, strife, animosity, antagonism, frictions, dissensions, conflict, discord or contentions
- God's people should be vigilant to live out the values of God's Kingdom. Refer to **Romans 12:17-18; James 3:16**
- We have an enemy - the devil not people - **I Thessalonians 3:14-15**
- **Verse 8** "*...you pull the robe with the garment from those who trust you.*" There is not greater pain than the betrayal of a trusted friend. Anyone can expect hostility from enemies but the wounds of a friend are the most devastating - **Micah 7:6b** "*...a man's enemies are the men of his own house.*"
- God confronted the betrayal He saw among His people. God's people should pursue values like unity, loyalty, and commitment to the welfare of others. Betrayal should never be the spirit of God's people
- **Verse 8** "*as men averse from war.*" Like men returning from war. They returned from war but there was still war in their hearts. There was war in their words and violence in their actions
- Peace is a value of the Kingdom of God; war, violence, aggression should never be the spirit of God's people - **Matthew 5:9; Hebrews 12:14; Proverbs 26:21; I Corinthians 11:6**

APPLICATION

This lesson teaches the importance of nurturing a passionate relationship with God; the importance of God's Word in our lives, the importance of upholding and living out the values of the Kingdom of God. It begins with Repentance - Determine to live as God desires. **Micah 6:8** "*to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.*"

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14 July 2021, Day Two

HOSEA

INTRODUCTION

In spite of the glamorous lifestyles we see and hear from these so-called modern day prophets, fulfilling the prophetic call of God can be harsh and lonely. Of all the prophets we encounter in the scriptures, Hosea in my opinion holds the title of having the most unique and difficult calling.

- Hosea was instructed by God to minister to a confused and unfaithful people who were in a state of moral decline. He was to marry a prostitute and remain faithful to her in marriage even while she continued in her lifestyle of prostitution
- The life of Hosea served as an illustration of God's faithfulness and endless love for His people in the midst of their unfaithfulness towards Him.

HOSEA

- Prophesied to the Northern Kingdom (10 tribes of Israel) around the same time as Isaiah and Micah was prophesying to the Southern Kingdom (Judah & Benjamin)
- Married a woman named Gomer, the scriptures call her a prostitute - **Hosea 1:2**. The implication is that he knew she was a prostitute when he married her. **Chapter 3** reveals that after marriage, Gomer continued as a prostitute and even left Hosea becoming enslaved by one of her many lovers. Hosea eventually buys Gomer back as his bride. This reflects the redeeming nature of God's love for Israel
- **Leviticus 20:10** indicates that adultery could carry a penalty of death and at the very least it would have been a social disgrace. Hosea's action shows a great outpouring of grace and mercy.
- Hosea displays the heart of a man who was compassionate, committed to God and his wife. His tragic marriage mirrored the tragedy of Israel's infidelity towards God. Hosea understood God's love through his own pain

ISRAEL'S CONDITION

At time, Israel had experienced a period of economic prosperity and growth. However, they had become corrupt, morally decrepit and adulterous. They had broken their covenant with God and turned to idolatry

- **Hosea 10:13** the people had "plowed wickedness, "reaped injustice," "eaten the fruit of lies," and trusted in their own ways.
- **Hosea 4:12; 7:11** says they had turned to other gods for answers and others nations for assistance instead of God.

- God sends Hosea with a warning but also a call to repentance and an invitation to return to the relationship God has initiated and was both willing and eager to restore

LESSONS FROM HOSEA

- **Lesson #1 - *Sin Leads to Confusion, Forgetfulness and Destruction***
 - **Hosea 4:1, 6, 11, 14**
 - Not only had the people walked away from God but they had also forgotten Him entirely. The people forgot God's faithfulness, his many miracles how good He had been to them down through the years
 - **Hosea 8:4; 4:10; 5:4**
 - The people forgot God's laws and instructions. Once separated from God and the knowledge of their first love, the people quickly turned to their own ways, the gods of other nations and soon discover they could not satisfy or save them. The people's sin left them blind, confused and trapped in a cycle of sin. Worst of all, sin had caused them to forget their God and the knowledge of His love
- **Lesson #2 - *Personal and Private Sin Does Not Stay Personal and Private for Very Long***
 - **Hosea 4:15**
 - God spoke through Hosea to warn Israel to repent, lest their sin destroy them and grow to infect their brothers to the south (Judah)
 - Hidden sin does not stay hidden forever, and sin we think we can cover up will eventually be exposed - **Hosea 2:10**
 - Sin that festers on the inside smells on the outside. The things we do in secret often hurt those closest to us, including God. Gomer's adultery hurt more than just Gomer. It broke Hosea's heart as well. The same is true of God, who sees and feels the things we do in secret - **Hosea 7:2**
- **Lesson #3 - *God is Faithful Even When We are Not***
 - **Hosea 11:9**
 - How many would choose to jump into a marriage knowing their spouse would regularly cheat on them? Who would remain in such a one-sided, adulterous relationship? Who would want to be God or even have the strength or will to remain faithful to such an unfaithful wife as Israel? That is who God proved Himself to be repeatedly
 - Hosea is gracious when it is undeserved, faithful when His wife was unfaithful and loving even when His love is not returned. Israel just as Gomer proved they were unfaithful, God like Hosea demonstrated His love for a wife by remaining faithful even when Israel was not.
- **Lesson #4 - *Only God Can Redeem and Restore***
 - God was and is willing to go to extreme lengths to buy back his bride - **Hosea 3**. God chases after His runaway bride and is eager to restore and renew the relationship. The gospels declare that the good shepherd searches for his lost sheep. That's the message of Hosea and fulfilled through Christ's redeeming work on the cross
 - Many are too stubborn, too afraid or too prideful to admit when we need help. The truth is we all need rescuing and it is an eternally good thing when

we know who is coming to our rescue. Despite Israel's spiritual adultery, God's invitation was clear - **Hosea 12:6**. Not only will God receive His lost bride when she returns: **Hosea 2:19-20; 14:4, 2**

• **Lesson #5** - *God is Committed to the Good of His People*

- God is so committed to his people that he will use the life of one of his own (Hosea) to illustrate and draw his people unto himself. There is no love that can compare to the unshakable love God has for his people - **Romans 8:38-39**
- Hosea was loyal to his God, as he was to his wife because he understood something about the heart of God. God is faithful, God is good, God is loving, and God is just, and if God is faithful, good, loving and just, His plans for us are the same, even when they don't make sense, aren't fun or easy
- **Hosea 14:9**
- In God's love, He chased after His people and in God's love, He disciplined His people to steer them away from the things that brought them harm, back into His loving arms. This is the same God we serve today, and His love remains the same

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15 July 2021 - Day Three

AMOS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the prophet is to deliver the Word of God not their own word or personal opinion. The prophet did not bring new instruction but sought to bring the people back to the instruction their ancestors received - Love God and love one another. Refer to **Matthew 22:37-40; Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18**. The prophet is a voice for his times, called by God with a conviction and a powerful message

AMOS' CALL

- **Chapter 1:1-2; 7:12-14**
- From a small town of Tekoa near Jerusalem. He is not from a family of prophets nor did he attend the School of the Prophets. The time of his birth and death are unknown
- He was a grower/pruner of fig/sycamore trees. He was also a shepherd
- "the Lord roars from Mount Zion" it speaks of God's zeal and love, not His anger. God holds up a mirror so His people may see what they are doing to themselves and began to see and shun evil. Refer to **Matthew 16:26**

AMOS' MESSAGE

- He had a heart for the oppressed and voiceless. His prophecy was to the northern Kingdom (10 Tribes) of Israel and the surrounding nations. His prophecy was directed against the privileged who had no love for their neighbor and took advantage of others and were only looking out for their own concerns.
- **Amos 2:6-8; 3:10. 4:1; 5:11-12; 8:4-6**
- Amos holds God's people accountable for their ill-treatment of others, their failure to fully embrace God's idea of justice, selling people for goods, using women immorally.
- The people were drunk with economic success and intent on strengthening their financial position that they lost the concept of caring for one another. Amos rebuked the people because of their attitude and lifestyle proved that had forgotten God. The people used Amos' status as a foreigner as an excuse to ignore his message of judgment for multiple sins.
- The High Priest were disturbed by Amos's message, accused him of treason, and expelled him from the sanctuary. People are thrilled at hearing prophecy against others but resent the prophecy when the divine light exposes their own dark motives
- **Amos 4:4-14; 5:21-27**

- Even though obedience to the Lord was at a low point, God uses Amos seeking to improve or lift the quality of His children. Amos was chosen to reveal serious spiritual disorders, fear, predictions of doom and hard saying.

The book is not about anger, revenge and loss of God's patience, it's a love story, a story of the Lord's great love and concern for both heaven and earth. It is a book of what Amos sees as wrong and what Amos sees as the coming judgment and a book of promise. The Lord will triumph over hell's quest to dominate, destroy us and the gift of salvation. It's about God's protection of us and the angelic heavens and the coming of the church.

AMOS' LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

- **Courageous** - Amos confronted Israel's leadership with God's message, withstanding even the challenge of the High Priest
- **Dependable** - Amos' dependability is seen when he was willing to leave his occupation and travel to Israel to deliver the message and remain there until the assignment was completed
- **Endurance** - Amos endured the pressure of delivering an unpopular message; the threats from the High Priest. An effective leader is able to endure opposition. Obstacles are almost a constant part of a leader's life
- **Enthusiastic** - He spoke with the power of God without complaining or any hesitation.
- **Integrity** - Amos did not compromise the message to appease the rich or powerful. He told them the truth and did not hold back
- **Knowledgeable** - Amos was aware of the problems of the poor and oppressed. He was fully aware of the political and social problem of Israel and surrounding nations. Amos was "in the know."