

## 240616pm Sermon Transcript

James Midwinter

Micah 1:1-16

*(This sermon transcript is an extract of a video recording of the full service. The numbering is auto-applied and reflects the number of minutes into recording that the transcript relates to.)*

35:03

Well if you could open the Book of Micah back up for as I wonder whether you had the same feeling as I did when I read chapter one, as I did on Wednesday. I

35:16

read the whole of Micah on Wednesday. Then I reread chapter one a few times

35:21

and perhaps the biggest thought in my mind was,

35:26

wow, this is gonna be hard.

35:30

Hard because

35:32

of all the distance that separates us in Leamington in 21st century Britain

35:38

from the time period that we're gonna be reading about.

35:42

Hard because as Sam did a great job reading all of these different names. There are so many of these place names that we don't even know.

35:51

And hard because

35:53

so much of MICA is about judgement

35:57

and that is always heart to hear.

36:01

God willing, over the next six weeks or so as we work through this book, we're going to be able to answer some of the questions that you may have. We're going to engage with some of those issues,

36:11

but I thought before we jumped straight into the book, it'd be helpful to do 2 things. One would be just to quickly remind ourselves where Micah fits in Bible history. And secondly, then to think about how we should approach a prophetic book like Micah.

36:25

So where does Micah fit? We've just finished. If you are new to our church family, we've just finished a very long series in the book of Exodus.

36:33

We finished with all of the wonderful things that we saw as the Tabernacle was built and God's glory descended into it. We are now five to 600 years later. Ish

36:45

And God has been faithful to his people. All of those promises that he made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and then to Moses have now been fulfilled. The people have been brought to the promised land. What was a temporary place of worship in the Tabernacle has now been replaced by a permanent temple. And actually, as God's people have established themselves in Israel, God has not only given them all of the judges to rule over them, he's now appointed David to be the first king over a united

37:16

the Kingdom of those 12 tribes. And you might see on a map there something of the extent of the Kingdom. When David was king, it was his son Solomon who was the one charged with the responsibility of building that very first temple. And as all of that was established in all of the the breadth of that Kingdom, you could see that God had been faithful to his covenant promises.

37:40

But for all God's faithfulness, his people didn't remain faithful.

37:47

For all of those commandments that they had promised to keep as they'd entered into the covenant with Moses, they had chosen not to keep God's promises.

37:59

They had started worshipping the false gods of the nations around them who did not worship the one true living God. And they started bickering between themselves. So what was once a United Kingdom with Rea Boem leading a charge ended up, sorry, with Jeroboam leading the charge, ended up having a divided Kingdom. So now there is a northern Kingdom of Israel with a capital city in Samaria with its own temple. Think S is Israel, Samaria,

38:31

and in the South the Kingdom of Judah still had its capital city in Jerusalem. Think of the Jays. You've got a divided people, and over time the northern and the Southern kingdoms turned further and further and further from God.

38:50

You read through the list of the kings of the Northern Kingdom, and not one of them

38:55  
was faithful.

38:57  
Things were not markedly better in the South,

39:01  
and over time the southern Kingdom followed the Northern Kingdom in turning further and further away from God more and more and more.

39:12  
That is not a pretty picture, but that is the context for Micah

39:16  
in the 8th century BC. We don't know anything about Micha's family. We don't really know a great deal about him at all apart from what he tells us in the beginning. We know where he came from in Morris Chef, and we know when he was born, or at least when he ministered during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah.

39:36  
What we need to understand from those three names is Micah lived through a time of crisis.

39:43  
He lived through a time when God's people had been running away from him for so long

39:49  
that God was about to judge his people.

39:53  
But look at verse one

39:57  
despite all of that.

40:00  
God still cared for his people. The word of the Lord came to Micah.

40:09  
Despite all of that wickedness,

40:12  
God is still speaking to His people, longing that they would hear him and respond to Him.

40:20  
Now hopefully that gives you something of a context for Micah in redemptive history. But as we're stepping into a prophetic book and all of us will have been thinking as we are reading through it

comes. This is very different to Exodus as very different to Romans. And it may help us, I think, to just spend a few minutes reminding ourselves of how we should read prophetic literature like Micah. So I want to give you 6 quick principles to help us read and understand Mica as we go. First one is profits were real

40:50  
historical people

40:53  
might sound like a very unnecessary place to begin because most of you are very happy taking that as Red Mika tells us where he was born and when he ministered. So surely he was a historical person.

41:08  
But many professing Christians today refused to believe that the prophets could have been real historical people.

41:16  
Their problem rests with the fact that they don't believe that any person could ever know what would take place in the future.

41:26  
Fundamentally, they're doubt is either that God himself doesn't know the future and you're into a whole world of open theism, or

41:35  
that he does, but he doesn't communicate it to people. But either way, so the argument goes, no man or woman could possibly know anything that's gonna happen in the future. So if the Book of Micah purports to describe things that haven't yet happened, what really happened, they say, is after those events took place,

41:56  
other people came up with a fictional character in the past and wrote the story of what had then taken place.

42:04  
Now, that's not what the Bible teaches. God inspired real historical people like Micah to speak to his people. And that gets us to the second principle. Profits were called to be proven as covenant prosecutors.

42:21  
Profits were called to be covenant prosecutors. Profits said what God told them to say. We all know that. But what God told them, He didn't tell them in a vacuum.

42:34  
These were a people under a covenant. God's people were living in Mike's time under the Old Covenant that he had given to Moses at Sinai.

42:48

And when God entered into that covenant with God's people, he, God, and the people made promises to one another.

42:56

God's people made promises to God to obey the commandments that he had given them, to only worship him in the way that he had commanded them.

43:05

And so Micah's role, like any covenant profit,

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was to lift up that covenant that they'd forgotten, remind them of all of those laws, and show them the ways in which how they were living in Michael's day today

43:22

was breaking the covenant promises that they had made.

43:25

And Micah did that on God's behalf,

43:28

which is why, as we're going to read through the book of Micah, you're going to see time and time again that the person standing behind the pronoun I changes

43:38

because Micah is either speaking on behalf of God. So if you look at verses 245,

43:45

here is Micah speaking in, in one sense, in the first person. He is sharing God's message on God's behalf. He's summoning all people to come and hear that everything that God has got to say, God's gonna be the one who's the prosecutor, the witness, and the judge. He's the one in one sense, running the whole courtroom,

44:04

but then the pronouns change verses 6 and seven. The I then becomes God himself

44:12

explains how powerful and devastating His judgement will be. And then verse 8, the I goes back to Micah and you get a glimpse into Micah's reaction to this judgement of God. And all of those changes take a little bit of getting used to. What we need to remember is that Old Testament prophets were covenant prosecutors. They communicated the judgement of God by reference to the Old Covenant, and they did so on God's behalf.

44:39

So who's speaking changes? Third thing, prophetic ministry was both 4th telling

44:48  
and four telling.

44:51  
4th telling in the sense that this wasn't Mickey's message. First one, the word of the Lord came to Micah.

44:59  
That's the only ministry that Micah was sharing. He was telling forth God's Word,

45:06  
but part of that message concerned the future. He was foretelling what would happen to the Israelites. And that is the all important litmus test when it comes to profits.

45:18  
The key distinction between a true and a false prophet was not that one of them could stand up and say, Thus sayeth the Lord. Anybody could say that

45:27  
false prophets foretold things that didn't happen.

45:32  
True prophets always told things that did happen,

45:38  
which means fourthly, profits used symbolic language.

45:45  
Look at verse four. Mountains melt and valleys split in mica. That is,

45:53  
that is significant language

45:56  
that we might say that's apocalyptic language. And if anything really, I suppose there's a tendency in our kind of circles to downplay some of that language and say, well, it's just symbolic.

46:07  
I'm sure some of it is, but what's it's symbolic of?

46:13  
It's symbolic of a judgement so profound

46:18  
that the creation that we know and live in is going to be rent asunder

46:24

thereafter. Davis has a lovely caution about writing off this kind of dramatic language. He reminds us that. But biblical writers, he says, often use symbolic language because normal descriptions were utterly inadequate for impressing the truth upon their readers.

46:40

Incidentally, I don't know if you know this, but that's why JRR Tolkien and CS Lewis wrote so much in fiction, because what they were trying to wrestle with is they communicated the grand story of what God is doing in the world. They felt it easier to describe another world where characters could do things that perhaps we would find difficult to believe in this world and show something of God's action in this world through their story. And there's a sense in which,

47:06

in an in infallible and inspired way, this is infinitely greater. But the same kind of thing,

47:12

enormous language is being used to describe

47:16

what God is gonna do.

47:19

And part of that's connected to the Twin Peaks that the prophets looked forward to. If you've been with us for any time, you'll have heard us talk about the fact that in the Old Testament we need to think of what is sometimes being said as a hiker on a journey, walking towards what looks like a big peak in the distance. And all they can see as you go on one of those walks is one peak. But if you've been on one of those walks, you know that all too often you get to the peak and discover that there's another peak beyond the peak that you thought was the only peak that you had to climb.

47:49

Well, it's a similar kind of thing in the Old Testament. And we often talk about that in the way that the Old Testament looks forward to the coming of the Messiah, don't we? We often describe the way that the prophets were looking forward to a day when then the Messiah would come and everything would be done and dealt with there and then.

48:09

Now we know in the New Covenant

48:12

that what they were looking forward to was their first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we're now living between the first coming and the second coming. You can use the same analogy way of thinking about the judgement of God.

48:28

So some of the descriptions in Profits, like MICA, include judgments that sound end of the world apocalyptic,

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and sometimes that is because they are looking forwards to the Twin Peaks, seeing only one,

48:43

and seeing something of the eternal judgement

48:46

of all things.

48:49

So one writer I read this week put it this way. Ultimately,

48:53

the scene of creation melting at God's approach belongs to the last day. But the final judgement is anticipated in every prior intervention of God in the judgement of the affairs of men.

49:08

That judgement

49:09

of God's old covenant people helps us remember, fifthly, that profits were uniquely relevant to specific people.

49:18

Micah wrote

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to Israel and Judah when they were under the theocratic rule of an Old Covenant nation.

49:28

That's nice,

49:30

but it was them. Michael was writing to people who were bound by the the conditions of the Mosaic covenant.

49:38

They had things they needed to do and not do, and in doing so they knew that God would bless them because of everything that he had promised to do in that old covenant. Micah is a real historical prophet who 4th told and foretold to specific people with a specific message.

50:00

Which means

50:01

over the next six weeks, if we are to together understand what micro is all about,



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we're gonna have to put some hard yards in

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because we need to understand what is going on in Mike's day to understand that specific instruction that was given to those particular people.

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But

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sickly and finally, profits are universally relevant to all people.

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Because Micah is not the only author of Micah.

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God is the ultimate author of every book in His Word,

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and He is still speaking to us today through Micah.

50:46

Not that doesn't mean that we can draw straight lines

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because we're not living in a theocracy and we're not afraid of the Assyrians or the Babylonians today. That's not our world,

51:01

but we do still serve the same holy God,

51:05

and we are still wrestling with the same serious sin. That's what Matthew was explaining for us from Romans 2 this morning. And we know from God's Word in the old and the New covenant that our holy God deals with sin by punishing it, for he is a holy God.

51:23

So all of these messages that we are seeing together are describing a relevance for us from the book of Micah. We need to distinguish those things that are particular to a particular people. But remember that micro is also the living Word of God,

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and His Word is as relevant for us today as it was for the people in Michael's day.

51:45  
OK,

51:46  
now we're ready for Mika.

51:49  
If you turn to the book and Justice flick forward, you will see that in our translation we have 7 chapters.

51:58  
But when Micah originally wrote his book, there's an outline on the screen for you and there are essentially 3 big prophecies that are his structure to the book. So we've got 7 chapters. Mike actually wrote it really with three specific prophecies. And the way that you know, that is partly the pattern of judgement and restoration or judgement and hope, which is what I've tried to set out very briefly in those boxes below. But also because of the repeated worth use of the word

52:28  
here, which gets a bit lost in our translation in verse chapter one and verse two, it's the word here in chapter 3 and verse one, our translation is translated the same word, listen. And then in chapter 6, verse one, the same word again is translated listen. So there's, there's a vocabulary clue for when these specific prophecies are beginning and ending. And then there's the thematic clue. You begin with judgement and then there's a glimmer of hope. Begin with judgement, beginning of hope,

52:59  
which means if you're looking at that screen, ideally we would cover chapters 1:00 and 2:00 tonight,

53:05  
but we don't have time, so you'll have to come back next week for the hopeful ending to the first prophecy. This evening we are just going to look at the first half of Micha's first prophecy, and I want to focus on two things from the text.

53:21  
1st it's

53:23  
my car, explains this seriousness of sin

53:27  
that will lead to judgement.

53:29  
The seriousness of sin that will lead to judgement. Look at how chapter one begins.

53:35

Micah summons not just Israel and Judah. Verse two, he summons all of creation to come and listen to what the Lord has to say.

53:46

Remember that covenant prosecutor way that the prophets of old functioned? Well, this is God as prosecutor, witness and judge, calling all people into His cosmic courtroom.

54:01

And if you try to put yourself in the shoes of Micha's first hearers, the first time they would have heard verses 2:00 to 4:00,

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they would probably have thought,

54:13

great,

54:15

here we go again.

54:17

We are being called to turn our eyes to the skies and see that our Lord is descending from the throne room of heaven, and He is going to destroy

54:27

those people.

54:30

Because as you work through the Psalms and various other sections of the Old Testament, you will know that that's a pattern that God's people have gone through. They've been in a situation of need or position where other nations were threatening them, and they've cried out to their gods and God has wonderfully come down and intervened.

54:49

And I'm sure that the first time Mika communicated all of this, all of the Jews were thinking

54:55

woo.

54:59

And then you get to verse 5

55:02

and God is not coming to judge the sinful Gentiles.

55:07

God is coming to judge his own people.

55:11

Why would God judge his own people? Well, in one sense the whole of Micah answers that question. Because there are a number of massive sin issues going on in Mike's day, one of which was

55:26

that these leaders of the day,

55:30

we're leading the people so sinfully. I think that's why the capital cities are what Micah refers to in Samaria and Jerusalem. Rather than referring at the beginning to the nations of Israel and Judah, I think Micah is focusing our attention on the fact that a significant responsibility for all of the sin that is spreading throughout both the northern and the southern kingdoms

55:54

is as a result of failed leadership,

56:00

man who should have been faithfully protecting vulnerable people and also the teaching of God's Word. And they were doing neither.

56:09

We're also going to see that Israel as a whole, North and South,

56:14

is suffering with abuses of power from the rich.

56:18

They've been a period before the divided Kingdom of great wealth and prosperity. And what the rich had done was steal more land and more wealth from not only the poor but also the middle class. So is this vast disparity in wealth

56:36

and that's why one of the reasons why one of the most famous verses in Micah is chapter 6, verse eight. He has shown you, ohh mortal, what is good and what does the Lord require of you To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

56:53

We're gonna dig into all of those problems as we go,

56:58

but none of them are the foundational problem.

57:02

The foundational problem is that God's people had turned to spiritual idolatry.

57:10

They turned their backs on their covenant relationship with God, and they had started worshipping other gods too. Not only instead,

57:21

but two, they've added on the worship of other gods

57:26

to the worship of Jehovah.

57:28

We found evidence in archaeological digs that shows us something of this. And in the ancient world, if you wanted to write a note for something, a scrap piece of paper, you would often use a piece of broken crockery or pottery. And, and, and this one, which wasn't found in Samaria, basically is pleading with a local official for help in finding a stolen cloak.

57:51

It's written on that

57:52

they've done similar digs in what is ancient Samaria now ruins

57:58

and found broken pottery from the same. When Micah was ministering

58:04

and written on some of those broken pieces of pottery are receipts for goods, things that people are bought in the city. So you know, you, you've bought your Bali or your oil or your wine or whatever it is in Samaria and, and full names were written down on the receipt just like we would do today.

58:24

Full names of Jewish purchases and sellers

58:28

that included the name Ball.

58:33

Jewish Parents

58:35

had adopted the name of one of the most vile and wicked Pagan gods

58:41

and given it to their children

58:45

is how pervasive this idolatry had become. And you see more of that in our text. You've got the same idolatry as Micah describes Jerusalem. So in verse five he cries out, what is Judah's high place?

58:58

Is it not Jerusalem?

59:00

Now? Some description about some debate. Sorry about exactly how Micra is using the term high places here. But consistently throughout the Old Testament, high places are a description of where Pagan sacrifices are set up. That's why as you go through, faithful kings cleared the high places from the land.

59:23

And here is Micah saying

59:25

so. Pervasive has become the idolatry in the southern Kingdom in Judah

59:31

that it's high place

59:35

is Jerusalem.

59:37

The holy city of God has been so infiltrated by all of this idolatry that to the majority of Jews living around,

59:46

it's considered place of Pagan worship.

59:51

And that is often how sin grows.

59:55

It grows by the addition and the inclusion of the worship of other things as idols and gods alongside God. At Tim Keller's got a really helpful quote on how powerful this is. He he, he says this the greatest danger.

1:00:12

Because it's such a subtle temptation which enables us to continue as church members and feel that nothing's wrong. The greatest danger is not that we become atheists,

1:00:20

but that we ask God to coexist with the idols of our hearts.

1:00:26

That's what's going on

1:00:29  
in my chest day.

1:00:31  
But God will not share His glory with another,

1:00:36  
and God will judge

1:00:39  
the wickedness of His people. He warned them when he entered into the covenant with Moses

1:00:45  
that if they broke any of those covenant promises that they had made, he would judge them. Which means as Mike has steps in as this covenant prosecutor here, what he's not doing is saying to the people, you know what God's about to go nasty on you and do things you would never have otherwise expected.

1:01:04  
That's not my story.

1:01:07  
My case story is the faithful God who has blessed you and kept you and provided for you for all these centuries, who at the very beginning warned you exactly what would happen

1:01:19  
if you chose to let go of the Giver of life and pursue idols of death,

1:01:25  
is going to do exactly what He promised but has not yet done. Because he is not vengeful or shocking or surprising. He is patient

1:01:33  
and forbearing

1:01:35  
and goods,

1:01:37  
but he's also just.

1:01:40  
And now that judgement is gonna come, and you look at verses 6 and seven. It will be

1:01:45  
devastating. Therefore, I will make Samaria a heap of rubble,

1:01:50

a place for planting vineyards. I will pour her stones into the valley and lay her foundation, lay bare her foundation. Samaria was a great city.

1:02:01

It seems that it was built about 300 feet up above the valleys all the way around it.

1:02:07

So this description of God destroying those city walls, those defensive, we're safe as long as we're behind them walls and just brushing all of those stones away up. I pictured the wheat Crofts trying to clear a section of their farm and just getting rid of all those stones that would prevent them from sewing the next crop.

1:02:26

That's what God is going to do with Samaria,

1:02:31

and everything Micah prophesied here

1:02:34

came true

1:02:36

is Syrians sieged and conquered. Samaritan 722

1:02:42

attacked it again in 701 BC and John Haqqanis levelled it completely to the ground in 108 BC.

1:02:52

Because Mike is a true prophet

1:02:55

who only says the word of God and every word he says

1:02:59

comes true.

1:03:02

Sin is so serious that when God says He will judge it, He really will.

1:03:09

And when God judges sin, he doesn't go after the godless nations out there.

1:03:17

Judgement began begins with a household of God.



1:03:23

Our God is not biased or prejudiced.

1:03:27

He doesn't turn a blind eye to the sins of His people.

1:03:32

He is perfectly and unprejudiced, equally

1:03:37

just.

1:03:40

And that prepares us for Mika's response,

1:03:44

because the right response to judgement is to lament.

1:03:49

Look at verse 8

1:03:51

might because of this I now Micah, I will weep and wail.

1:03:57

I will go about barefoot and naked. I will howl like a Jackal and moan like an owl.

1:04:06

I know that sounds over the top to us.

1:04:10

This is how you grieve when your heart is broken

1:04:14

in the Middle East.

1:04:17

This is Micah, as it were, standing at the funeral of the Northern Kingdom,

1:04:23

distraught.

1:04:26

And it's not only the northern Kingdom that he is so broken about. You look at verse 9. He's fearful that this incurable plague of the north has spread all the way to the gate to the very border, the

entrance of Jerusalem. And he is grieving because he fears that God's judgement against the Northern Kingdom is also going to come against the Southern Kingdom.

1:04:47

And all of that breaks Mickey's heart.

1:04:51

Not just at a personal level because he's sad, not just at a societal level because he looks at his his ethnic brothers and sisters and of all the judgement that is going to come.

1:05:01

But also at a redemptive historical level because he knows that he is looking at the chosen people of God through whom God is working his promises through all the generations to get to the great Redeemer. And here is Micah looking at the judgement of God over all of those people thinking

1:05:22

God, they deserve your judgement,

1:05:25

but how will you work out your purposes in the world?

1:05:30

Hold that thought,

1:05:32

because of what we're gonna get to later in Mica.

1:05:36

All of that is at the heart of the shame and sadness in verses 10 to 16, and Micah uses a lot of Hebrew word plays that it's a bit hard for us to understand here. Hopefully you've got a Bible in front of you. You can either tap on some of those letters with a little italicised indices, or you can look at a footnote and you can see that there's lots of attempts to try and translate what some of these place names mean. If Michael was pronouncing this for the very first time, all of his readers would have spoken Hebrew and they would have understood exactly what

1:06:07

all of these descriptions are doing. Mike has either saying this is what your name means,

1:06:14

go and live it out, or this is what your name means and the opposite is going to happen to you.

1:06:20

Now, my Hebrew is not good enough to try and translate something like this in a kind of looser translation that gives us a sense. But I've cribbed Darragh Davis's translation and and this is kind of what's going on. OK, This is

1:06:32

Southern American translation of

1:06:35

what's going on in the Hebrew.

1:06:37

I'm not gonna do the accent. Don't gab about it in gas.

1:06:43

Don't go weeping at all in Dust Town.

1:06:47

Roll yourself in dust.

1:06:49

Pass on for yourselves. Resident of Beauty Berg

1:06:53

in shameful nakedness. The residents of Marshville

1:06:59

do not. March 4th,

1:07:01

Lamentation and Beth Hazel, it's standing place will be taken from you. To be sure, the resident of Bitter Town longs for goods,

1:07:10

but disaster has come down from Yahuah to the gate of Jerusalem and on and on it goes. You see what Michael is doing?

1:07:16

He's taking the description of the town and describing the shame of everything that is going to happen because of God's judgement on his people. So here's Micah

1:07:27

fearing how God's enemies are gonna boast at God's destruction of God's people

1:07:33

in the in the city of Lachish, which was an affluent city that was very heavily fortified with all of these horses and Chariots that were ready to go on into battle. Mike has fear is that the only thing these horses are gonna get used for is by people fleeing God's judgement.

1:07:48

And as they do so, he's anticipating God's people giving tribute to the Assyrians, the money that you

pay the people that are taking everything from you in his home place of of more chef gaffe and fleeing to Adullam. Now, if you were here yesterday afternoon, this is one of those quiz questions that the students might have asked us and not one of us would have known.

1:08:09

But Adam is the place where David fled

1:08:13

when Saul chased him.

1:08:16

Is the description of all of the the desolation that is to come

1:08:21

have got people

1:08:24

now when you when we read this this cultural way of lamenting

1:08:30

feels very foreign, right? No, nobody is assuming that this is what we're gonna do during the course of this week.

1:08:36

You're the biggest lesson that hit me as I worked through this this week.

1:08:40

I've forgotten, and perhaps we have forgotten

1:08:46

how to lament

1:08:51

because do we not have as many reasons as Mika did

1:08:56

to be broken by the world that we live in?

1:09:00

Our circumstances are very different,

1:09:03

but we still worship the same God. Our sin is just as serious, and we know from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ

1:09:13  
that God will judge. Sin

1:09:17  
is not our greatest difficulty actually,

1:09:21  
that we have forgotten what it is to be broken

1:09:25  
entitlement.

1:09:28  
We live in a day

1:09:30  
when professing Christian churches

1:09:34  
are now standing before God and blessing relationships that He calls sinful.

1:09:43  
We live in a day in our nation

1:09:47  
where we have legally protected the killing of 10 million boys and girls in the womb

1:09:56  
since 1967.

1:10:02  
Things were bad in Micha's day, but are they any better

1:10:06  
in ours?

1:10:11  
I have been challenged this week

1:10:14  
that perhaps the biggest thing I need to learn from Mika at this point

1:10:19  
is that my heart is not as broken for the world as it should be.

1:10:27

Now. If we had time, we would get through into chapter 2 and see the hope that Micah reminds the people of in verses 12 and 13.

1:10:37

And I want you to know that there's hope coming because there are three big prophecies in Micah and judgement comes, but then there is a message of hope. But we haven't got time to do chapter 2 tonight,

1:10:48

so sticking within chapter one.

1:10:51

I too want to send you out with hope.

1:10:54

And I'm very thankful for a man called Steven Umm, who I have never met, but he has written a very short and helpful commentary on Micah

1:11:03

and he spotted something that I would not have spotted.

1:11:08

The hope from Michael One

1:11:11

comes in the contrast between Micah

1:11:15

and Jesus.

1:11:18

Now if you look through Michael One, in all of the sin of God's people, in all of the holiness of God, and in all of the judgement that is to come, the only thing that Micah can do in chapter one

1:11:34

is lament

1:11:36

in nakedness, in shame, in despair,

1:11:42

because he knows his people are guilty and he cannot do anything about it.

1:11:49

One of the most helpful things that we need to remember for the rest of our lives about the book of

Micah is what Micah means. The name Micah hopefully will appear on the screen means who is like the Lord

1:12:06

and for out the whole of the Old Covenant.

1:12:10

And indeed today the answer is and has always been

1:12:15

no. No one.

1:12:17

No one is like the Lord. We're gonna see that in the extent of His judgement, which is completely fair. We're gonna see it in the wonderful hope that He offers to His people. No one is like the Lords.

1:12:33

But when Jesus

1:12:35

enters that cosmic courtroom,

1:12:39

he can take the answer further.

1:12:43

The answer is still that no one is like the Lord.

1:12:48

But now one has come who says,

1:12:51

But I'm he

1:12:56

and I can do more

1:12:59

than lament

1:13:02

the great hope that you were looking for. When the contrast between Micah and Jesus is that on his ministry in our world, he says, I am the Lord who became naked so that you can be clothed by my righteousness.

1:13:17

I am the Lord who was rejected by all of men, but also the Father, so that you can be embraced and welcome back. I am the Lord who became unclean and contaminated so that your sinfulness could be taken from you to me

1:13:36

and you would be forgiven.

1:13:39

Amen. Indeed,

1:13:42

we've got more hope to look forward to.

1:13:45

But there is the gospel writ large in Michael One,

1:13:50

for all the limitations that Micah was struggling with that left him only lamenting and waiting for judgement. God has not left us there.

1:14:00

The Son of God has come

1:14:02

to the moment need not be the end of the story.

1:14:08

If you're a Christian here this evening, holding on to the Lord Jesus Christ is your only hope. And you're all sufficient hope in the face

1:14:18

of that lament and that fear of judgement.

1:14:22

Hope as we work through the series,

1:14:25

for each and everyone of you who do not yet know

1:14:29

that Jesus is your great hope,

1:14:31

you'll find him



1:14:33

to become so.

1:14:36

That's going to be the theme of our closing song.

1:14:40

Each of us was just as lost in our sin and deserving of judgement as the Israelites in Micha's day. Our only hope is that God looked upon our helpless state and LED us to the cross. Let's stand and sing together. I once was lost in darkest night.