**The Book of Micah**

**“Who is like Yah?”**

Chapter 3

**Micah 3:1-2a**

● Justice:

**False prophets named in the bible**

**Balaam** (Numbers 22-24): A prophet hired by Balak, king of Moab, to curse the Israelites. Instead, Balaam prophesied blessings upon them, despite his initial intentions.

**Zedekiah**, son of Chenaanah (1 Kings 22:11): A prophet who falsely prophesied the defeat of King Jehoshaphat and the destruction of Jerusalem.

**Hananiah** (Jeremiah 28): A false prophet who claimed that God would soon restore the Babylonian exile and allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Jeremiah, a true prophet, refuted Hananiah’s claims.

**Bar-Jesus** (Acts 13:6-12): A Jewish false prophet who opposed the spread of Christianity in Paphos. He was blinded by God as punishment for his deceit.

**Job’s friends** (Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar, Job 4-27): While not explicitly called false prophets, their words were misguided and unhelpful to Job, leading to a false understanding of God’s justice.

(1) Love good and hate evil.

(2) No favor to the rich or to the poor.

(3) Tempered with mercy.

**Political abuses in Micah 3**

● Hate the good and love the evil (2).

● Exploit (devour) people’s wealth (3).

● Pervert their actions (4).

● Revolt against biblical teaching (8).

● Hate justice, misuse law (9).

● Commit murder and other crimes (10).

● Judges who take bribes (11).

**Micah 3:2b-3**

● Metaphor? Or cannibalism in a seige?

**How to ‘eat’ others’ wealth**

● Direct & hidden taxes, fees, charges.

● Borrow fiat money, indebt the people.

● Bribes, kickbacks, favors, donations.

● Lending at excessive usuary rates.

● Exploitive housing, health & heat costs.

● Insider trading and selling ‘short’.

● Market manipulation (gold certificates).

**Micah 3:3-4**

● Time: Coming invasion and exile.

● Evil: Desire for power, privilege, money, revenge, respect, repression.

**When God will not answer prayer**

● Leaders who exploit their people.

● To spend it on our ‘lusts’.

● When he provided it, and we wasted it.

● Ask him to kill lost folk.

● Ask him to give life to Christ deniers.

● Ask for healing while self-poisoning.

● Pray in the name of a false god/dess.

**Micah 3:5**

● Pagan prophets were required to bless kings and approve their plans.

**Prophetic abuses in Micah 3**

● Mislead the people (5).

● Announce peace for a price (5).

● Announce war if not paid (5).

● Foretell the future for a salary (11).

● Leverage theological beliefs (11).

● Deny God’s immanent judgment (11).

**Micah 3:6-7**

● Vision: Foreseeing events.

● Secrets: Revealing hidden events.

● Prophet: Hears and repeats messages.

● Seer: Describes visions.

● Diviner: Interprets omens and signs.

**Pagan divination**

● Subjective guesses while peering into a cup of wine, or viewing viscera.

● Consult witches who call on spirits or ghosts of the dead.

● Receive thoughts while worshiping gods or making blood sacrifices.

● Drug-induced hallucinations.

**Micah 3:8**

● Micah may not have been a member of the prophets’ guild.

**True OT prophets (Deut. 18)**

● Designated spokesmen of God.

● Receive messages from God.

● Meet criteria:

 1) An Israelite.

 2) Speaks in Yahweh’s name.

 3) Conforms to earlier revelations.

 4) Foretells the near future.

 5) May perform a miraculous sign.

**How to prophesy, 1 Cor. 14:26-40**

● All may prophesy (31)

● Follow NT guidelines (37).

● Listen for a ‘revelation’ (30).

● Keep control of yourself (32-33).

● Await your turn (29-30).

● Build up and encourage (4, 26, 31).

● Let others evaluate (29).

**Micah 3:9-12**

● The prophets spoke to government.

● Power may not corrupt, but money certainly does.

● Plow: Overturn weeds to plant useful crops.

● High place: A pagan worship site.

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| **Jerusalem was captured 22 times, including:** 586 BC Babylonians, Nebuchadnezzar II. 198 BC Seleucid Greeks, Antiochus III. 63 BC Romans, Pompei. 70 AD Romans, Titus.1917 AD British, Edmund Allenby.1967 AD Zionists, Moshe Dayan2024 AD? Iranians? Pezeshkian? | **Temples in Jerusalem, completed**1 The wilderness tabernacle. 13th cent BC2 Solomon’s ‘first’ temple. c. 960 BC3 Zerubbabel’s temple. 515 BC4 Herod’s ‘second’ temple. AD 635 Jesus’ physical body. c. 2 BC – AD 336 Ezekiel’s millennial temple. AD 2030?7 God himself in a new Jerusalem. 3033? |

**Paid or voluntary clergy**

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| **Arguments for a paid clergy**● Allow them to serve full-time.● Reward for work done well.● Maintain performance standards.● Can be hired and fired.● Motivate the gifted into ministry.● Provide for their own retirement.● Honor God with members’ income. | **Arguments for a volunteer clergy**● Appoint the most gifted to office.● Appoint the highly motivated.● Share authority and opportunity.● They learn dependence on God.● This keeps new churches affordable.● Devote more to evangelism & mission.● Eliminate clergy-class privileges. |

**Historical development of paid clergy**

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| **Early church (1st to 4th centuries)**● Fixed salaries for clergy did not exist.● Clergy sustained themselves.● Clergy often supported poor believers.● Itinerate preachers depended on gifts.● Clergy were recognized by their gifts, maturity     and generosity. | **Medieval church (5th to 15th cents)**● Emperor decreed duties & incomes.● State made land grants with tithes.● Bishops received land and privileges.● Church and state mutually supportive.● Clergy appointments were subject to approval    by both church and state. |
| **Post-reformation (16th onwards)**● Protestants rejected church hierarchies.● Coined ‘the priesthood of all believers’.● The clergy funded by gifts & offerings.● Coined the concept of a ‘living wage’.● Temporary use of gentry-owned land.● Clergy adopt a theological system. | **Modern (18th century to the present)**● Formal systems for paying clergy.● Standard salaries.● Paid by denominational funds.● Amounts vary by region & tradition.● Other benefits (housing & health).● Evangelicals paid by congregations. |
| **Recent (mid-20th century to the present)**● Rapid multiplication practices.● Volunteer evangelists & ‘shepherds’.● Believers give to meet urgent needs.● Movements are led by visionary clergy.● Sponsors subsidize trainers & coaches.● Reproductive leaders supported by   ‘upstream’  contributions. |  |