

Mikhah – Part 3

Well, I'm back. My medical rehab is going well. I'm receiving Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy after my fall. Actually, this blog is being written for part of my Speech Therapy. Thanks for your continued prayers. I am expected to be discharged on January 27th.

Desire for False Prophets

⁶ "Don't preach!"- thus they preach! "They shouldn't preach about these things. Shame will not overtake us" - ⁷ is this what the house of Ya'akov says? Adonai has not grown impatient, and these things are not his doings. "Rather, my words do only good to anyone living uprightly. ⁸ But lately my people behave like an enemy, stripping both cloaks and tunics from travelers who thought they were secure, so that they become like war refugees. ⁹ You throw my people's women out of the homes they love. You deprive their children of my glory forever. ¹⁰ Get up and go! You can't stay here! Because [the land] is now unclean, it will destroy you with a grievous destruction." ¹¹ If a man who walks in wind and falsehood tells this lie: "I will preach to you of [how good it is to drink] wine and strong liquor"- this people will accept him as their preacher.

Just as the false prophets attacked **Jeremiah** (5:31) and **Amos** (7:10–17) for preaching **God's** truth, so the false prophets attacked **Mikhah** for faithfully declaring the message of **God**. These men espoused a shallow theology that had no place for either sin or repentance. *"We are God's special people,"* they argued, *"and He would never permit these judgments to happen in the land."* As long as the people participated in religious services, they would not incur the wrath of **God**, even if their hearts were not in their worship. The Jews were **Avraham's** children, and **God** would never break the promises He made to **Avraham**. Such were their false premises.

What these counterfeit religious leaders forgot was that **God's** covenants involve precepts as well as promises, obligations as well as blessings. Merely going through the motions of religion isn't the same as worshipping **God** *"in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:23). Anybody can join the crowd and be a part of some popular religious movement; but it takes devotion, prayer, obedience, and submission to worship **God** *"with reverence and Godly fear"* (Hebrews 12:28). "Popular religion" is usually false religion, for the road to life is narrow and lonely (Matthew 7:13–20) and those who walk it are invariably.

Deliverance Promised

¹² "I will assemble all of you, Ya'akov; I will gather the remnant of Isra'el, I will put them together like sheep in a pen, like a herd in its pasture - it will hum with the sounds of people." ¹³ The one breaking through went up before them; they broke through, passed the gate and went out. Their king passed on before them; Adonai was leading them.

The faithful prophet must expose sin and announce judgment, but he must also provide consolation and hope for those who receive his message and turn to **God**. Consolation without true repentance is only giving false hope; it's saying *"Peace, peace!"* when there is no peace. But conviction without hope creates only hopelessness, like performing surgery without providing healing.

Second Discourse

Leaders Rebuked

Mikhah's second message is at the heart of the book and focuses on **Isra'el's** future. First, **Mikhah** rebuked the leaders of the nation for their sinful conduct, which **God** would judge (3:1–12), and he outlined the events

that would usher in the promised kingdom (4:1–5:15). Knowing that **God** has such a glorious future planned for their nation should have motivated the leaders to turn from their sins and obey the Lord. *And everyone who has this hope in him continues purifying himself, since God is pure.* (1 John 3:3). Alas, they didn't even pay attention to the sermon!

3¹ "I said, 'Please listen, leaders of Ya'akov, rulers of the house of Isra'el: Shouldn't you know what justice is?' 2 Yet you hate what is good and love what is bad. You strip off their skin from them and their flesh from their bones, 3 you eat the flesh of my people, skin them alive, break their bones; yes, they chop them in pieces, like flesh in a caldron, like meat in a pot.'" 4 Then they will call to Adonai, but he will not answer them; when that time comes, he will hide his face from them, because their deeds were so wicked.

Leaders should be **just**, putting things into a rightful state and restoring *shalom*." Instead, **Mikhah** saw rulers who hated **good** and loved **evil**. He described their sin in cannibalistic terms (*You eat the flesh of my people*), for such is the impact of false teaching about **God**. Because they offered no justice to others, they would find no solace in the **Lord**, who would *hide His face from them* (see Deuteronomy 31:17).

False Prophets Rebuked

5 Here is what Adonai says in regard to the prophets who cause my people to go astray, who cry, "Peace" as soon as they are given food to eat but prepare war against anyone who fails to put something in their mouths: 6 "Therefore you will have night, not vision, darkness and not divination; the sun will go down on the prophets, over them the day will be black." 7 The seers will be put to shame, the diviners will be disgraced. They will have to cover their mouths, because there will be no answer from God.

False prophets preached **peace** to those who supported them and **war** to those who did not (Jeremiah 23:9–32; 28:1–17; Ezekiel 13:1–9; Zephaniah 3:4). **God** would no longer speak to them in **visions** or otherwise. Having no word from the **Lord**, they would lose their position of honor and *be put to shame*.

Mikhah Has God's Spirit

8 On the other hand, I am full of power by the Spirit of Adonai, full of justice and full of might, to declare to Ya'akov his crime, to Isra'el his sin. ¹

But **God** had left a faithful witness distinctly different from the false prophets. Empowered by **the Spirit of the Lord**, **Mikhah** had a powerful voice of **justice** (see Isa 58:1–2). He preached about **rebellion** and **sin** (cp. 1:5, 13), dealing with issues that would not be resolved until **God's** people confessed and abandoned their sin.

In your workplace, you might experience a culture where honesty is undervalued, reminiscent of the corrupt leaders **Mikhah** critiques. Perhaps colleagues are more focused on climbing the corporate ladder than doing what's right. Combat this by being a voice of ethical integrity. Commit to standing for righteousness in all your dealings, even if it means putting your reputation at risk. Organize a small group of like-minded coworkers to discuss how to uphold Christian values in the workplace, offering support and encouragement to each other to maintain integrity amidst any prevailing dishonesty.

In our next post, we will continue to learn more about the **Prophecy of Mikhah (Micha)**.

¹ Mikhah 2:6 – 3:8.