



Faith and Love C.O.G.I.C
Sunday School

Lesson 7 July 13, 2025

NO TOLERANCE FOR
CORRUPT LEADERS AND
PROPHETS

SUNDAY SCHOOL CORE VALUES



SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. **Psalms 133:1**

School/Class: But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. **Hebrews 13:16**

Superintendent/Teacher: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**

School/Class: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. **Psalms 119:105**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Philippians 2:4**

School/Class: He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. **Proverbs 22:9**

Superintendent/Teacher: Therefore he says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." **Ephesians 4:8**

School/Class: As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. **1 Peter 4:10**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:12**

School/Class: For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function. **Romans 12:4**

Superintendent/Teacher: By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:35**

School/Class: For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **Gal. 5:13**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

ALL:

But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. **2 Peter 3:18**

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- Bible Basis: Micah 3:5-12
- Bible Truth: God will judge and punish corrupt leaders and prophets.
- Memory Verse: VERSE: "But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgement, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgressions, and to Israel his sins" (Micah 3:8).
- Lesson Aim: By the end of the lesson, we will: EXPLORE how Micah confronted corrupt leaders; REFLECT on reactions to leaders who misled and deceive people; and ADDRESS corruptions in leadership within the church and the broader community.
- Background Scriptures: Micah 3; Matthew 7:15-20 - Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

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Micah 3:5-12, KJV

5 Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

6 Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.

7 Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.

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Micah 3:5-12, KJV

8 But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

9 Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

10 They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

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Micah 3:5-12, KJV

11 The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.

12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The heads of Israel were the heads of families. The elders of the tribe became the judges. This system was based on the cultural custom of the time. During the Exodus, Moses established a system that organized the heads in groups of ten, fifties, and hundreds in order to better manage and give leadership to the people (Exodus 18:13-24). By the time of David, these heads or judges began to be organized as a circuit court with delegated royal authority (1 Chronicles 23:4, 26:29, 28:1). This made it easy for them to become corrupt and dishonest. By the time of the prophets, the heads were known for taking bribes and being partial to the rich. While there were many true prophets in Israel, there were also false prophets.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

These false prophets often offered messages of hope and peace. These messages comforted the people without pointing out their sin and challenging them to repent from their evil ways. The false prophets became rich from the fees they charged for their services. Often they would use pagan methods of divination or fortunetelling, which were strictly forbidden in the Law of the Old Testament. The Lord had given the people of Israel ways to evaluate a false prophet: one was if the message they had spoken came to pass (Deuteronomy 18:21-22), the other if they enticed the people to worship idols (Deuteronomy 18:20).

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON:

AIM: Students will affirm that some leaders are corrupt and lie to the people they are charged to protect.

INTRODUCTION

Deceptive Rulers

The Neo-Assyrian Empire was a very dominant and real threat to Jerusalem at Micah's time. One of many ways Jerusalem prepared for conflict was to strengthen the economy so they would have the necessary resources to fight off both foreign and domestic threats. As today's text suggests, the ways they pursued economic stability were immoral and did not align with the precepts of the Lord. Their stimulus plan was based on greed, exploitation, and senseless taxes, and as a result, moral corruption slowly crept in.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: Students will understand that sins against others affect their relationship with God.

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I. CORRUPT PROPHETS

Oppressive Prophets

Micah 3:5-7

Micah is speaking on behalf of God and unveiling the sinister practices of the prophets in Jerusalem and Samaria. Micah not only classifies them as deceivers, but specifically identifies their transgressions (wrongdoings). War was imminent and the prophets were capitalizing on Jerusalem's concerns by structuring their messages to benefit their paying audience, while those who could not pay received detrimental messages.

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5 Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

After an analogy comparing the leaders of Judah to cannibalistic shepherds, Micah then focuses on Judah's prophets, who are causing the people to err (Heb. ta'ah, ta-AH) or wander. The prophets were causing the people to go astray and wander from God and His truth-the opposite of their true role as spokes-men for God. Instead of speaking for God, they are speaking on their own and drawing people away from God. Micah says that they "bite with their teeth." The word "bite" can also be used figuratively as "to vex" and "to oppress." The prophets were vexing and oppressing the people by offering prophecies for money. This is further confirmed by the next clause.

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The word "putteth" (Heb. natan, na-TAN) is more often rendered "to give." The prophets' message of peace was their selling point; they told the people that everything would be well and received the people's money and applause. However, this was a false peace; those who would not give to them would be the objects of their hostility.

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I. CORRUPT PROPHETS

Oppressive Prophets

Micah 3:5-7

7 Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.

Micah announces the fate of the seers (Heb. chozeh, kho-ZEH) and diviners (Heb. qasam, kah-SAM): they will be ashamed and confounded, and experience the humiliation of lepers by having to cover their lips (Leviticus 13:45). The prophets would be considered unclean like lepers because they had "no answer of God." Their lack of honesty and true relationship with God would be evident. Because their falsehood was on display, they would cover their lips and feel the same shame as those considered outcasts to the covenant community.

II. THE MAN OF GOD

A True Prophet of God
Micah 3:8-10

Amid all of this, Micah stands up for justice. He proclaims his strength and courage so all will know he knows the depth of their corruption. He also informs them he understands the magnitude of the danger that he is in by speaking out. The eighth century B.C. was not very different from today's society as far as the extent of corruption; someone seeking to change the economic and social structure would face social, political, and religious opposition much as Jesus, Medgar Evers, and Martin Luther King Jr. did.

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II. THE MAN OF GOD

A True Prophet of God

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8 But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

Micah declares his distinction from the false prophets. He says that he is full of power (Heb. koach, KOH-akh) by the spirit of the Lord. He is also full of judgment (Heb. mishpat, mish-PAWT) and might (Heb. geburah, geh-voo-RAH). Micah's "judgment" here is the establishment of right through fair and legal procedures in accordance with the will and laws of God. Micah has aligned himself with the cause of justice, and by using the word's power and might, he states that this cause is God's cause and he is equipped to be victorious.

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II. THE MAN OF GOD

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Micah 3:8-10

9 Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

Micah particularly addresses the political and religious groups of Judah. He calls out the heads and princes responsible for establishing the religious and political moral standards for the people. The Lord, through Micah, accuses them of hating or abhorring what is just. The word "abhor," or taab (Heb., tah-AV, to loathe, detest, or make abominable) is a strong indication of how far those who rule over the Hebrews have fallen from God. They are not instructing people with fairness, but seeking their own gain and pursuing personal agendas.

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Not only do these rulers and chiefs abhor justice, they also pervert equity (Heb. yashar, yah-SHAWR, that which is straight, right, or just). This word also denotes fairness and being honest and aboveboard. Those who rule over Judah do not practice such honesty.

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II. THE MAN OF GOD

A True Prophet of God

Micah 3:8-10

10 They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

The prophet continues to personalize the accusation against Judah. In the name of religion and sacrifice to God, the people have erected buildings using perverse and deceitful means. Instead of using tithes and offerings to establish places of worship, the religious leaders have taken from the poor and, in some instances, killed to expand Jerusalem. Archaeology testifies to the building activities underway in Jerusalem during Micah's prophecy. Such capital activities were performed at the expense of the oppressed and less fortunate. Jeremiah makes reference to similar activities, mentioning those who build their homes by unrighteousness (22:13). The prophet Habakkuk (2:12) also records official building with bloodshed.

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The name "Zion" refers to the hill between the Kidron and Tyropean valleys that David captured from the Jebusites (2 Samuel 5:7). After the building of the temple to the north of the hill, Zion became the center of the Lord's activity, since the temple was where Yahweh dwelt. The term "Zion" may refer specifically to the temple vicinity or Jerusalem in general. Thus, Micah's reference to the people building Zion up with blood shows how this holy habitation had been defamed and desecrated.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Misusing the Gifts

Micah explained that the punishment for mis-using their gifts would be to stop hearing from God altogether. Those who continued to communicate these messages would be shown to have no knowledge of God and false. Those who claim to speak for the Lord and only talk of peace in order to gain a profit are not speaking for the Lord but only for themselves.

III. CORRUPT LEADERS

Corrupt Leaders of Judah
Micah 3:11-12

Micah says the leaders are attempting to buildup the city, but at the expense of the poor. There was no respect for justice or righteousness. The false prophets were not the only corrupt citizens in Samaria and Jerusalem; leaders in almost every area of their society had gone astray (vv. 9-12). As a nation and individually for many leaders, the focus quickly became prosperity by any means necessary.

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III. CORRUPT LEADERS

Corrupt Leaders of Judah

Micah 3:11-12

11 The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.

Micah again compels Judah to reexamine its political and social ethics. The rulers who govern civic and state affairs are corrupt. The priests who dictate religious standards practice evil. The prophets who speak the Word of the Lord only do it for money. Micah contends that Judah's leadership have turned away from the Lord. Those in power only want to be compensated by humankind for what God has gifted and instructed them to do. Rulers give judgment for a bribe, priests teach for a price, and prophets give oracles for money. Micah stresses the greed and insatiable materialism pervading Judah.

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These leaders, however, believe that what they do is good and pleasing in the eyes of the Lord. They are convinced that since Zion is the dwelling place of God and that since the Hebrews are God's chosen people, all is well and their transgressions can be overlooked. Speaking rhetorically, Micah states that those in authority did not lean on the Lord. The word "lean" (Heb. shaan, shah-AWN), means to lie, rely on, or rest on, often with reference to God (2 Chronicles 14:11). Isaiah uses another verb for leaning in stating how Judah must depend on God (48:2). Such leaning implies a need to find favor and obtain support. Judah wishes to engage in wrongdoing while depending on the Lord for safety.

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The leaders, despite their unscrupulous conduct, believe that God will protect them because of His faithfulness and promises. The people do not see the error of their ways; they are so obstinate and spiritually blind that they are convinced that because the Lord dwells in Zion, no harm can come to them even when they sin against God.

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III. CORRUPT LEADERS

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12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountains of the house as the high places in the forest.

Because Judah has become prideful and sinful, the Lord, through Micah, predicts its ensuing destruction. The crassness of the leaders will result in the leveling of Jerusalem and its temple. Micah made a similar pronouncement earlier stating that Samaria would be a heap and a place for planting vineyards, i.e., a desolate, open land (1:6). This prophecy is remembered a century later when the people of Israel observe its fulfillment (Jeremiah 26:18-19). Both prophets were foretelling the captivity of Judah by the Babylonians and the exile afterward. Judah, during Micah's time, was already a vassal state of the Assyrians; further enslavement was the next step.

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III. CORRUPT LEADERS

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Micah 3:11-12

12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountains of the house as the high places in the forest.

Again the prophet specifically names Zion and Jerusalem, the center of Israelite worship, as places to be destroyed. No place was beyond God's wrath when evil had been committed. Micah personalizes the message and the plans of God to show Judah's leaders their ill behavior.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

False Sense of Grandeur

Despite the fact that the nation had adopted a culture of cheating, lying, stealing, and marginalizing the poor, they professed that their "growth and success" was due to their dependence on and protection by God. Micah ends by telling people that the city they were working so hard to build would ultimately be destroyed.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: Students will realize that the truth must always be told, even if the message is not a pleasant one.

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BIBLE APPLICATION

It can be very difficult to speak against leadership at any level. Some people naturally believe that if someone has been given a title or responsibility, they have integrity and will maintain the best interest of the people they represent. However, the Bible and life have provided us with many examples of leaders who have ill intentions, succumb to temptation, and take advantage of their positions. As children of God, our instructions are simple: do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8). Every group that we are members of-our country, civic organization, religious institution, or sorority/fraternity - should follow the same statutes.

STUDENT RESPONSES

AIM: Students will find comfort in knowing
that God will bring justice where there is
corruption.

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STUDENT RESPONSES

After reading the Lesson in Our Society, discuss what we should do as Christians if we suspect a political leader is corrupt. Make a list of appropriate and inappropriate response methods. One way to respond is to confront the leader and withhold votes or cooperation with unjust policies and practices. With this in mind, consider your own community and whether this response is needed.

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Prayer

Dear God,

We pray for all leaders. We pray that they will do what You have called them to do. Protect us from those leaders who want to harm us. Give us the courage and wisdom to challenge unjust leadership.

In Jesus' Name we pray.

Amen.

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Next Sunday
July 20, 2025
Lesson 8
Justice, Love, And Humility
Micah 6:3-8