

Good Living With God¹

(Micah 6:1-8)

Proposition (Thesis): The Lord requires justice, mercy, and humility.

Purpose: To motivate offerings to God, not of self-willed externals, but of God-willed righteousness.

Introduction:

1. As God called Israel to trial for their apostasy and declared what was expected of them, so also he calls people today from their error, and restores them to Himself.
2. ***Micah 6:1-8*** may be divided into four parts, as follows:
 - a. ***The Lord to Micah***, Hear now what the LORD says: “Arise, plead your case before the mountains, And let the hills hear your voice. ²Hear, O you mountains, the Lord’s complaint, And you strong foundations of the earth; For the LORD has a complaint against His people, And He will contend with Israel (6:1-2).
 - b. ***The Lord to Israel*** “O My people, what have I done to you? And how have I wearied you? Testify against Me. ⁴For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of bondage; And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. ⁵O My people, remember now What Balak king of Moab counseled, And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him, From Acacia Grove to Gilgal, That you may know the righteousness of the LORD” (6:3-5).
 - c. ***Israel to Micah*** “With what shall I come before the LORD, And bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old? ⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” (6:6-7).
 - d. ***Micah to Israel*** “He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?” (6:8).

I. God’s People Have Gone Astray

A. The Moral and Spiritual Condition of Israel in Micah’s Time

1. Israel appeared deaf to the Lord (2:6)
 - a. Even if the people would not hear, the hills would testify of Micah’s voice (6:1)
 - b. The mountains were unchangeable, even when people departed from the Lord.
2. Israel’s decadent society, as described by Micah
 - a. Materialism abounded,
 - 1) ***Prophets were mercenary***, - “Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets Who make my people stray; Who chant “Peace” While they chew with their teeth, But who prepare war against him Who puts nothing into their mouths: ... Her heads judge for a bribe, Her priests teach for pay, And her prophets divine for ... money. Yet they lean on the LORD, and say, “Is not the LORD among us? No harm can come upon us.” ***Micah 3:5, 11.***
 - 2) ***Rich people coveted fields and defrauded neighbors*** – “They covet fields and take them by violence, Also houses, and seize them. So they oppress a man and his house, A man and his inheritance” ***Micah 2:2.***

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Good Living With God

- 3) *Judges perverted justice for bribes* – “And I said: “Hear now, O heads of Jacob, And you rulers of the house of Israel: Is it not for you to know justice? ²You who hate good and love evil; Who strip the skin from My people, And the flesh from their bones; ³Who also eat the flesh of My people, Flay their skin from them, Break their bones, And chop them in pieces Like meat for the pot, Like flesh in the caldron.” **Micah 3:1-3**; “Now hear this, You heads of the house of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel, Who abhor justice And pervert all equity, ¹⁰Who build up Zion with bloodshed And Jerusalem with iniquity: ¹¹Her heads judge for a bribe, Her priests teach for pay, And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD, and say, “Is not the LORD among us? No harm can come upon us.” **Micah 3:9-11**; “That they may successfully do evil with both hands; The prince asks for gifts, The judge seeks a bribe, And the great man utters his evil desire; So they scheme together” **Micah 7:3**.
- b. True godliness had perished from among the people – “The faithful man has perished from the earth, And there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; Every man hunts his brother with a net. ³That they may successfully do evil with both hands; The prince asks for gifts, The judge seeks a bribe, And the great man utters his evil desire; So they scheme together. ⁴The best of them is like a brier; The most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge; The day of your watchman and your punishment comes; Now shall be their perplexity. ⁵Do not trust in a friend; Do not put your confidence in a companion; Guard the doors of your mouth From her who lies in your bosom. ⁶For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; A man’s enemies are the men of his own household” **Micah 7:2-6**.
- c. Harlotry & idolatry were evident – “All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces, And all her pay as a harlot shall be burned with the fire; All her idols I will lay desolate, For she gathered it from the pay of a harlot, And they shall return to the pay of a harlot.” **Micah 1:7**.

B. The Moral and Spiritual Condition of God’s People in America Today

1. Recent Gallop poll indicates that while 90% of Americans believe in God, only 12% live in keeping with religious convictions.
2. Materialism, worldliness, secularism, hedonism, etc. undermine Christian dedication. Humanism has caused a growing anti-Christian sentiment to swell in American today.

II. God’s People Have Received His Care

A. Micah defended God’s care of Israel

1. Israel should not have strayed from God because...
 - a. God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage - “when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; **Deuteronomy 8:14**; “You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this thing today. **Deuteronomy 15:15**; “And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes” **Deuteronomy 16:12**.
 - b. God guided Israel through the wilderness.
2. Israel was exhorted to remember God’s saving acts...
 - d. God turned intended curses of Balak upon Israel into blessings through Balaam (Numbers 22:1 – 24:25)
 - e. God guided Israel from Shittim to Gilgal, which included

Good Living With God

- 1) Overcoming Midianite plot (Numbers 25:1-18)
- 2) Crossing Jordan at flood stage (Joshua 3:1 - 4:24)
- 3) Circumcision at Gilgal – “At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time.”³ So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.⁴ And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: All the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt.⁵ For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised.⁶ For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people who were men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD; to whom the LORD swore that He would not show them the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, “a land flowing with milk and honey.”⁷ Then Joshua circumcised their sons whom He raised up in their place; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way” **Joshua 5:2-7.**

B. We can also defend God’s care for mankind today.

1. People today should not stray from God because...

- a. God has delivered us from sin through Christ – “who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, **Galatians 1:4**; But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **Galatians 4:4**; and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.²¹ And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled²² in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight; **Colossians 1:20-22**; There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” **Romans 8:1-2.**
- b. He guided the early church through Apostles & Holy Spirit, and he guides us today through his written word.

2. People today must remember God’s blessings -

- a. He grants victory over Satan through Christ – “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.²¹ For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.²³ But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.²⁴ Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.²⁵ For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.²⁶ The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.²⁷ For “He has put all things under His feet.” But when He says “all things are put under Him,” it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.²⁸ Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all” **I Corinthians 15:20-28.**

Good Living With God

- b. He has promised many other blessings – “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
Romans 8:28; No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it”
1 Corinthians 10:13.
- c. He will guide us, too, across the ‘river of death’ to ‘Canaan’s fair and happy land.’

III. God’s People Must Live Righteously, as He Has Revealed

- A. God’s people cannot serve him through self-willed external forms
1. Israel’s questions betrayed their desires for self-willed service through external forms. They asked, “With what shall I come before the LORD, And bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old? ⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” **Micah 6:6-7.**
 2. Our prevalent questions relating to doing God’s will also indicates a too frequent desire to pay homage through self-willed external forms, e.g., How little can I give? With what frequency must I attend congregational assemblies, etc.?
- B. God’s people have been shown what goodness he demands of them.
1. Israel had received God’s requirements through the law – “then beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. ¹³You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name”
Deuteronomy 6:12-13.
 - a. They were to ‘do justice - “You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. ²You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice. ³You shall not show partiality to a poor man in his dispute ... ⁶“You shall not pervert the judgment of your poor in his dispute. ⁷Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked. ⁸And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous.” **Exodus 23:1-3, 6-8**; ‘You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. ¹⁴You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the LORD. ¹⁵You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. **Leviticus 19:13-15**; “And you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, who are within your gates. ¹⁵Seven days you shall keep a sacred feast to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD chooses, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice. ¹⁶Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. ¹⁷Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you. ¹⁸You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with just

Good Living With God

judgment. ¹⁹You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. ²⁰You shall follow what is altogether just, that you may live and inherit the land which the LORD your God is giving you. **Deuteronomy 16:14-20**; If there is a dispute between men, and they come to court, that the judges may judge them, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked, ²then it shall be, if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down and be beaten in his presence, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows. ³Forty blows he may give him and no more, lest he should exceed this and beat him with many blows above these, and your brother be humiliated in your sight. ⁴You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain” **Deuteronomy 25:1-4**.

- b. They were to ‘love kindness’ - “You shall not see your brother’s ox or his sheep going astray, and hide yourself from them; you shall certainly bring them back to your brother. ²And if your brother is not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until your brother seeks it; then you shall restore it to him. ³You shall do the same with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment; with any lost thing of your brother’s, which he has lost and you have found, you shall do likewise; you must not hide yourself. ⁴You shall not see your brother’s donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him lift them up again” **Deuteronomy 22:1-4**.
 - c. They were to ‘walk humbly with God.’ – For the day of the LORD of hosts Shall come upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up; And it shall be brought low;” **Isaiah 2:12**.
2. We, too, have received God’s requirements of us, but through Christ – “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; **Hebrews 1:1-2**; Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” **Matthew 22:37-40**.

Conclusion:

1. Micah, through Hezekiah, brought about reformation – “Then certain of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying: ¹⁸Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, And the mountain of the temple Like the bare hills of the forest.”’” ¹⁹Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah ever put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and seek the Lord’s favor? And the Lord relented concerning the doom which He had pronounced against them. But we are doing great evil against ourselves” **Jeremiah 26:17-19**.
2. Can his message influence us also? Will we be just, love mercy, and walk humbly before God?