

# UNABANDONED

## A Study in the Book of Micah

### Week 1: Messy, perfect redemption

#### Introduction:

This week, we begin our study of the book of Micah, one of the minor prophets who wrote during the reigns of the Judean kings Jotham (750-735 B.C.), Ahaz (735-715 B.C.), and Hezekiah (715-687 B.C.). In this ancient text, the prophet brings God's 'lawsuit' against his covenant people in both Israel (the Northern Kingdom, the capital of which was Samaria) and Judea (the Southern Kingdom, which had Jerusalem as its capital). We learn of the charges of which they stood accused, and of the imminent judgment and sentence that God would pass (conquest and exile at the hands of the Assyrians and the Babylonians).

The book of Micah shows us the holiness and righteousness of God, and we see him as the just judge of all the world, who will not allow sin to go unpunished – even his own covenant people would not be spared punishment for their unrepentant sin. But in all the ignominy and darkness of sin, we also see that God does not abandon his people. In his mercy and compassion, he extends to them the hope of redemption and restoration, which he himself will bring about, for his glory.

As we progress in our study of Micah, we will look in greater detail at these themes of judgment and redemption, darkness and light. We will also see, as we look at the portrait the prophet sketches of the rebellious people of ancient Israel and Judah, that we are in fact looking at a reflection of ourselves – as far as sin is concerned, we are just the same; and just like them, we are incapable of fixing ourselves. But also, just like them, God has not abandoned us! We have a Shepherd-King who redeems us from sin, who gives us hope and new life, and who restores our relationship with our holy God.

**This week's Text: 2 Kings 17:16-19; Micah 1:2-9, 2:1-13, 7:18-20**

#### Sermon Points To Discuss:

##### ***1. The world is a mess***

We don't need anyone to tell us how messed-up the world is – we can see it for ourselves every time we open a newspaper or log on to social media, and we experience it for ourselves in all the struggles, hurts, dangers and frustrations of our everyday lives. We look at the injustice, relational conflict, immorality, greed, and selfish hedonism around us, and we call on God to change it, to fix the situation – but do we ever stop to consider that the world is a mess because we are a mess, that it is unjust because we are unjust, selfish because we are selfish, and immoral because we desire to set our own standards of right and wrong? The truth is that the root of the world's problems lies within each of us, and that we are powerless to do anything about it. But God...!!

##### ***2. God redeems all things***

**ACT JUSTLY | LOVE MERCY | WALK HUMBLLY**

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Although the Jews were carried off into slavery, God never abandoned them, and at the right time, he did what they could not do for themselves, and restored them to the land. The book of Micah gives us the wonderful assurance that God has not left us as exiles but has sent his Son to be our Redeemer. We could never achieve righteousness by our own efforts or free ourselves from sin, but by the work of Christ, God has given us righteousness and redemption from sin as a free gift of his grace. The glory is his alone!

### ***3. We are to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly***

As we are reminded of what God has done for us in Christ, what should our response be? How should we, as the church, be set apart and differentiated from the world around us? In Micah 6:8, we are told that what the Lord deems good and requires of us is 'to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with [our] God.'

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read 2 Kings 17:16-19 and Micah 2:6-11.
  - Which people are these accusations being levelled against?
  - What forms of sin are being referred to here?
  - What are some of the ways in which these sins are still manifest in our society today?
- Re-read 2 Kings 17:16-19 as well as Micah 2:12-13 and 7:18-20. What do these passages reveal to us about God's character and his ways?
- How did God show patience with the people of Israel? How has he shown patience with you in your life?
- What does it mean to 'act justly', 'love mercy' and 'walk humbly'? Why do you think that this is what God says he requires of us?
- How can you practice justice, mercy and humility this week?

**ACT JUSTLY | LOVE MERCY | WALK HUMBLY**