



Micah 6:1-8

Week of Sunday, December 6, 2009

MIC 6:1 Listen to what the LORD says:

"Stand up, plead your case before the mountains;
let the hills hear what you have to say.

MIC 6:2 Hear, O mountains, the LORD's accusation;
listen, you everlasting foundations of the earth.
For the LORD has a case against his people;
he is lodging a charge against Israel.

MIC 6:3 "My people, what have I done to you?
How have I burdened you? Answer me.

MIC 6:4 I brought you up out of Egypt
and redeemed you from the land of slavery.
I sent Moses to lead you,
also Aaron and Miriam.

MIC 6:5 My people, remember
what Balak king of Moab counseled
and what Balaam son of Beor answered.
Remember your journey from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the righteous acts of the LORD."

MIC 6:6 With what shall I come before the LORD
and bow down before the exalted God?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

MIC 6:7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousand rivers of oil?
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

MIC 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.

Questions:

- Read Micah 6:1-8
- Micah begins to paint a picture of a courtroom scene. Who is on trial, who is the judge, who makes the opening statement? What is the tone of ‘the judge’” (3-5)?
- In verse 5, Micah cites the failure of Balaam to curse the people (Num 22-24), the failure of Balak to frustrate the progress of the people, the journey from Shittim to Gilgal which witnessed the defeat of Midian, the crossing of the Jordan, and the conquest of Jericho carried out from the base at Gilgal. What is Micah trying to accomplish through this recitation of history?
- How does this heighten the tension of the ‘courtroom’ scene?
- Are there places along your own life’s history that remind you of the good and gracious hand of God?
- Remember Israel’s offenses: The people often exploited the vulnerable, rather than care for them; they embraced violence and war, instead of loving their enemies; and they worshiped idols, not Yahweh alone.
- Read verses 6 and 7. Why is it that we are so naturally compelled towards “religious activity” as a means of righting our wrongs?
- Have you ever had someone in your life attempt to restore a broken relationship with empty or hollow actions? How did it feel on your end?
- Verse 8 suggests the defendant take a different approach to the charge against Israel. What makes it so different from the performing of various religious activities? What does it require of us that religious actions don’t?
- How do justice, mercy, and walking humbly with God an antidote for Israel’s (and our) offenses?
- Do you believe that individuals taking simple acts like this can help to undo the injustice in the world? Why or why not?
- Which of the three things most resonate with your life right now? Which do you need more of?
- Identify ways in which this passage is an appropriate one to read during the Christmas season? Where does it feel like a ‘good fit’ and where does it seem to create some dissonance?
- End with prayer.