



How can we please God? A study of Micah 6:8

How can we please God?
The eternally important question
A study of Micah 6:8



Yvon Prehn, teacher



Background

- Same time as end of Hosea, start of Isaiah
- Approx. 737-690 BC
- Micah of the people; Isaiah to leaders
- Lived in Judah, prophesied there, message to both Israel & Judah




Overview of what we will do

- Background & setting of Micah
- Overview of Micah
- Narrow focus to Micah 6:8
- We'll look at each term
- What the word mean
- Additional verses related to the key terms
- Application, be "doers of the Word"



Summary of message

- Similar to other prophets of the time
 - Judgment coming because of sin
 - Even though a very "religious" time
- Vision of mercy after judgment
 - Unique in emphasis on Messiah, Bethlehem prophecy
 - Micah 5: 2,4,5: But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.



And what does the LORD require of you

To act justly
 & to love mercy and to walk humbly with your

GOD.

M I C A H 6 : 8

From Birth to Future rule of the King

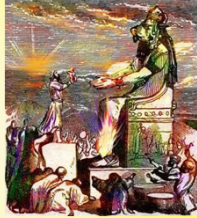
- Micah 4:2-5²
 He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths."³
 He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.⁴
 Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken.⁵
 All the nations may walk in the name of their gods, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.



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Their response

- Micah⁶:6 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? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
- **God's answer**
⁸ He has shown you, O mortal, 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.



Acting Justly—a way of life, not a singular action

- **Contrasted with tsēdaqah usually translated “justice” means righteous**
- **Mishpat in contrast, has to do with ALL God's laws**
- **Leviticus 18:4(KJV)**Ye shall do my judgments, (*mishpat*) and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.
- NIV, translates “my laws”
- Idea of all you do being in accordance with all of God's Laws, not just a specific action
- To obey—do we know them? Idea of an accurate scale.

This is not the way to salvation, but God's people should show they are His

- Israel was God's chosen people, covenant people
- This is how they were supposed to live
- Or he would cast them out
- A Christian is God's child
- He expects us to live according to his standards
- Always a tension and challenge
- **Phil 2:12: Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.**
- Let's look at God's expectations

Some of the big, overall commands

- Micah 6:8—all the following part of “acting justly” in accordance with God's laws
- **Luke 10:27:** And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.
- **Matt 6:33** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.
- **James 1:27** Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.
- **Romans 12:1** beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
- ²And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

To act justly

- **`asah “act” “to do” KJV**
 - 1) to do, fashion, accomplish, make
 - 2) a) (Qal)
 - 1) to do, work, make, produce
- **משפט “justly” mishpat**
- 1) judgment, justice, ordinance
- b) justice, right, rectitude (attributes of God or man)
- c) ordinance d) decision (in law)
- e) right, privilege, due (legal)
- f) proper, fitting, measure, fitness, custom, manner, plan
- **Application**
 - Beyond thinking it is a good idea, actually doing something—all actions in line with God's laws

New Living translation:

Micah 6:8
 No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

To love mercy

- **1) אהבה love'ahabah**
 - a) human love for human object
 - 1) of man toward man
 - 2) of man toward himself
 - 3) between man and woman
 - 4) sexual desire
- 2) God's love to His people
- **חֶסֶד mercy checed**
 - 1) goodness, kindness, faithfulness



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Other places used

- **Genesis 29:20** So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.
- **Deuteronomy 7:8** But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

To walk humbly

- **1) *ahabah* to go, walk, come**
 - 1) to go, walk, come, depart, proceed, move, go away
 - 2) to die, live, manner of life (fig.)
 - b) to lead, bring, lead away, carry, cause to walk
- ***tsana' צַנֵּעַ* Humbly**
 - 1) to be humble, be modest, be lowly
 - a) to show humility
 - 2) modest



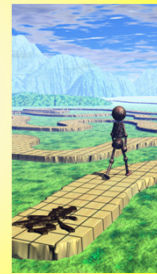
How we are to love mercy, kindness

- With the same intensity that Jacob loved Rachel and served 7 years for her.
- With the same passion the Lord loved his people and redeemed them.
- Loving mercy in this way goes far beyond tolerating the sins and irritations of others.
- From passive to active actions for their good.



Walking is active, intentional, continual—with consequences

- **A way of life toward, away from or with God**
- **Negative examples**
 - **Ps 78: 10** They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;
 - **Psalm 89:30-33** If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;³¹ if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; (results of that walk)
Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.
Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.



Verses on Mercy

- **Characteristic of God: Deuteronomy 7:9** therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;
- **A source of our help: Psalm 59:16** I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.
- **Part of wise living: Proverbs 3:3** not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

Walk, continual obedience of justice and mercy

- **Genesis 5:22** And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:
- **Genesis 6:9** These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.
- **Genesis 17:1** And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.



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A Walk that pleases God

Psalm 1

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (to finish well)

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.



After salvation it matters what we do

- Phil 2:¹²Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.
- 1 Cor 3: ¹¹For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.
- Matt 25, parable of the talents—Jesus does not say “Well Done” to everyone, but those who invested their God-given gifts into a return pleasing to Jesus.

Remember Micah 6:8 is not the gospel

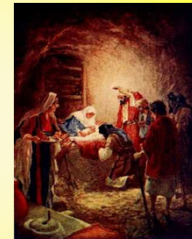
"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." In him we meet the requirements of the law, first, by what he has done for us; and next, by what he works in us. He conforms us to the law of God. He makes us, by his Spirit, not for our righteousness, but for his glory, to render to the law the obedience which we could not present of ourselves. We are weak through the flesh, but when Christ strengthens us, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Only through faith in Christ does a man learn to do righteously, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God; and only by the power of the Holy Spirit sanctifying us to that end do we fulfil these three divine requirements." Spurgeon

Ephesians 2:8-10 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Like the incarnation

- Always a flesh and blood aspect
- Christ divine and human
- Bible God inspired, written by men
- People soul and body
- Good works—impossible without Salvation—yet responsible for our actions
- When we do the things God wants, we incarnate, we make our faith flesh and blood
- Ultimately if we do what God wants people will see Jesus in us.



Active godliness a distinctive of the Christian faith

- **In contrast: Deepak Chopra** “Saintliness becomes realistic by seeing it as a state of higher consciousness. ‘Higher consciousness’ isn't a religious term, even if Christ does point to the kingdom of heaven being within.”
- Micah 6:8
 - **KEY on all –not just that we understand the word, but we live it**
 - “act justly” act in line with ALL of God's law
 - “love” mercy—as intensely as romantic love
 - “walk” humbly—a way of life, understanding who God is and walking worthy in response to it

Questions

- Share your name and what is your favorite dinners?
- What do you think it means in practical, everyday ways (come up with specific situations) to:
 - Act Justly
 - Love Mercy
 - Walk Humbly with God?
- How do you explain what is God's responsibility and what is ours in these actions and in our growing in Christian maturity?