

"A CHAMPION OF THE POOR"
(MICAHA)

I. THE BACKGROUND

A. Historical & Political Conditions:

1. Amos and Hosea were preaching to the North while Isaiah and Micah preached to Judah.
2. It was a period of turmoil, strife, change, and growth.
3. Assyria was rising in power like a big, dark cloud.
4. Israel was in alliance with Egypt against Assyria.
5. Ahaz was king of Judah, but nothing more than a puppet king.
6. Damascus and most of Israel fell before Assyria.
7. Hezekiah became king and made alliance with Egypt.
8. Hezekiah and Isaiah kept Judah from surrendering to Assyria.

B. Social Conditions:

1. All the judges and priests were corrupt and immoral.
2. The preachers were preaching what the people wanted to hear.
3. Fear and hatred made life miserable for all, especially the poor (3:2).
4. The nation was ready to collapse (3:9-11).
5. Callous greed and cruelty marked their ungodly conduct (2:8,9).

C. Religious Conditions:

1. A scornful, reckless type of religion was present.
2. Judah wanted weak, soft, and ear-tickling preaching (2:11)
3. Fortune telling, witchcraft, superstition and idolatry were everywhere.
4. Everyone was selfish, immoral and greedy (7:2-6).
5. The sins of Judah:
 - Oppression of the Poor - 2:2,8,9; 3:1-4
 - Unscrupulous use of power - 2:1; 3:10
 - Lack of integrity - 6:12; 7:2-6
 - Reckless scorn of religion - 3:5-8; 5:12-14
 - False prophets - 3:5-7; 9-11
 - Greedy corruption in church and state - 7:3

II. THE MAN OF GOD

A. His Home:

1. Moresheth - Gath was near the Philistine border, near Tekoa, home of Amos.
2. The main highway passed through his home town.
3. The small community and country folk didn't trust or like city folk.

B. His Equipment:

1. He came from a poor farm family.
2. Micah knew the cunning methods of the rich.
3. He was full of God's power.

C. His Personality:

1. He was ethical, courageous, and spoke the truth unflinchingly.
2. He truly loved his country.
3. He was always seeking to right the wrongs done to the poor.

III. THE BOOK

A. The Outline:

- 1 - 2 : The doom of Samaria and Jerusalem. A small remnant would be saved.
- 3 - 5 : The sins of the prophets and the leaders. There would come, however, restoration and glory after the destruction.
- 6 - 7 : God's controversy with Israel and its ultimate outcome. The claims of genuine religion. The way of salvation given.

B. Predictions by Micah:

1. Samaria, the capital of Israel, would fall (1:6,7).
2. Jerusalem and its Temple would be destroyed (3:12; 7:13).
3. The people of Judah would be taken to Babylon (4:10).
4. God's people would get to come back home from captivity (4:1-8; 7:11; 14-17).
5. The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (4:8; 5:2-4).
6. Universal peace will come when men of all nations learn at the Messiah's feet.

C. Some Teaching Values:

1. God is not asleep (1:2).
2. God will bring judgment (2:1-11).
3. God is merciful and there is still hope (2:12).
4. God will turn His back on corrupt priests and prophets (3:1-3; 9-11).
5. A holy boldness reveals God's true prophets (3:8).
6. The birthplace of the Messiah (5:2-5).
7. God is bringing a lawsuit against Judah (6:8).

LESSONS OF VALUE

1. Elaborate pretensions of holiness and liberal gifts in public cannot replace the lack of true righteousness of the heart.
2. The unscrupulous use of power hurts God's heart.
3. Religion is a matter of the heart and makes the individual behave according to God's leading.
4. One cannot expect God to continue to bless when one is not in harmony with God or His purpose.