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**C1038 – October 27, 2010 – Micah 3:5-8 – Sins Of Deception**

Tonight we come to Micah 3:5-8 and more sins of the leadership of Israel. Last week we saw the sins of the “heads” of the nation Israel. The nation being born out of the womb of Egypt in the book of Exodus had to have law and leadership. A new nation needs law and leadership in order to function with stability, to avoid social chaos. As far as the law was concerned the new nation Israel didn’t have any law and therefore at Mt Sinai God gave them their Law. So God was the legislative branch of the Israeli government. God verbally spoke into history in the Hebrew language Israel’s Constitution. So the first possible source of law is God directly. God can and has spoken law into history and man would do well to pay attention to God’s law. There are wisdom principles embedded in the Law. The second possible source of law is God indirectly. What we mean here is man can make laws based on God’s laws in the OT. If men recognize the wisdom in God’s law then the tendency will be to generate law based on God’s law. An example would be our Constitution. The writers of our Constitution consciously wrote it on the basis of the Israel’s OT law. So first, you can have law sourced in God directly and second you can have law sourced in God indirectly. The third possible source of law is autonomous man. Man starting with himself as autonomous can generate law. The example is France. The aristocracy of France in the late 1700’s tried to produce the freedoms enjoyed by the northern nations of Europe who built on a biblical base but without a biblical base and the result was the bloodbath of the French Revolution. So we have these three possible sources of law so far as I am aware; God directly, the example is the nation Israel, God indirectly, the example is the nation of America, and autonomous man, an example is France.

What’s the best source of law? God directly. Why? Why not man? There are at least two basic reasons man is not a good source of law. One, man is limited

in knowledge and experience and therefore does not know all possible cases in which men will find themselves. And two, man is fallen and therefore the laws man generates will not be righteous, they may approach God's righteousness but as a total package they will not be righteous. God overcomes both of these difficulties because He's omniscient and out of His omniscience He wrote a plan for history and therefore knows all possible cases that men will find themselves needing legislation to resolve. And second, God is perfectly righteous and therefore can write laws out of His perfect righteousness.

What this means is that the most righteous and perfect law ever written was given at Mt Sinai. People say what? That law involved taking people out and throwing rocks on them. That sounds primitive to me. Yeah, well it sounds just as primitive to me to buckle someone in a chair and inject them with toxins while twenty people sit in the next room and watch! Tell me how that's less primitive. The point is capital punishment is the basis for human government and the greatest law ever given has capital punishment for certain crimes at its base. Without that right a human government basically has no control. Now I don't mean to say we should be under Israel's Law or that we, as the Church, are under Israel's Law but I am saying that we ought to, like our founding fathers, consider the wisdom embedded in that law. But today, people, especially in our circles, dispensational circles, don't study the law and this is to our detriment. Even Paul said the law is good and holy and perfect and therefore served a legitimate basis for showing man's sinfulness. So we ought to study the most perfect, holy and just law ever given in history.

Now the second thing a new nation needs is leadership, people who can judge according to the law given at Mt Sinai. And Moses established the judicial leadership in Exodus 18. These men were called the "heads." The heads being a metaphor. The head is the part of the body that leads; it directs the course of the body. So the "heads" of the nation lead, guide and direct the course of the entire nation. And what this means is that the judicial branch of government is critical. If you have problems in the judicial branch the whole nation is going to go caput. So the judicial branch, we should learn from this metaphor, is a very dangerous branch of government and should be severely limited.

Now, by the time of Micah, circa 730BC, the judicial branch of government had abused its privileges. They had failed to love the Lord their God. In Micah 3:2 God said, they hated good and loved evil, whereas they should have loved good and hated evil. They should have loved the word of God. Of all people who should have loved the word of God it should have been the justice department. But they hated the word of God and they distorted justice. And the problem when justice is distorted is not just that the poor person, the widow or the orphan doesn't get justice, although that does happen and that's terrible, but the greatest terror is the fact that whenever the Israeli judge distorted justice he distorted who and what God is. Always the law reveals the nature of the Lawgiver. So if you distort the law you distort the nature of the lawgiver. And so by distorting the law and legislating from the bench these judges were destroying Israel's perception of God.

Now this is always the main problem. Whenever we are cut off from a proper view of who and what God is we get ourselves all in a ball of wax. This is what makes it so difficult to confess sin because to confess sin what has to happen first? You have to be convicted of your sin. You're not going to confess so long as you aren't convicted you sinned. You don't go bumbling around just randomly confessing sin. You confess sin when you're convicted of sin. And so we learn in Micah as we did in Hosea the mechanics of conviction of sin. And the first thing we point out here is that if you don't have a clear view of God you can't confess your sin because you have no standard by which to measure your actions. And therefore the prophets always present a very clear and holy view of God. The nation has to see God correctly and when they do then they can see their sin and be convicted and confess. So the way the prophets do this is they present the law in all its perfection. That reveals God clearly, the nation sees their sin, and hopefully they are convicted and confess.

A second aspect of conviction is that it's very specific. As we go through these accusations against the nation they are very specific. They are all referring back to violations of the law code given at Mt Sinai. Conviction of sin is not based on some vague guilt feelings. People have guilt feelings all the time, Christian and non-Christian.

You may feel guilty for not going to your mom's house on Christmas. But it's not sin that you didn't go. That's not a violation of any commandment. Vague guilt feelings arise for a number of reasons and from a number of sources.

And yet you can't confess vague guilt feelings. You need specifics. So when the prophets come as prosecuting attorneys, what do prosecuting attorney's do in a court of law? Do they get up there and present some vague, general charge against the defendant? No, they're specific. So and so broke statute 9.343. And that's what the prophets are doing to Israel. They are very specific. And this teaches us that when the Holy Spirit is convicting us of sin it will always be very specific, it will not be through vague guilt feelings. Satan can be the source of vague guilt feelings and he'll get you all balled up feeling guilty and you haven't done a thing, but he's knocked you down for awhile and slowed your progress in the Christian life. So just ignore it and move on. When you've sinned the Lord will make it clear to you.

Now the problem here is the nation has been blinded to who God is by the justice department so the prosecuting attorney, Micah, has to come in and try to clear the air so these people can see God, see their violation of code 9.347, be convicted and confess and be restored to fellowship. But as you can see from verse four, they try to confess their sin, they cry out to the Lord, they have a big temper tantrum, but God will not answer them. And the reason is because it's not a genuine confession.

A genuine confession, first of all, recognizes that it is against the Lord and the Lord only. What we mean by that is that it's the Lord who is the standard for what is right and what is wrong. This is His attribute of righteousness. The attribute of righteousness simply means that God is the standard for what is right and what is wrong. There is no standard outside of God for right and wrong. So when we sin we have violated His character. We have rebelled against His Person. Not just code 6.139 in some manual. We have violated a Living Person. And that Person is our Creator. Genuine confession must recognize that the Lord is the standard of righteousness and that our sin has violated Him personally. And the people at this time in the nation who are crying out to the Lord had not recognized this principle. They just saw their whole world crashing around, they saw their wives raped, they saw their children dashed against the rocks, they saw their wealth stolen and they just wanted it all back. They wanted their toys back. And if that's the focus of a person when they try to confess their sin then the Lord will not answer them. They have to come to the point where they recognize that he is the standard and that what is foremost is a violation of His character.

The second aspect of a genuine confession recognizes that other people are involved. We're not denying that other people have been hurt by our sin. And there may be those that we need to go to and confess to them, that is, in this aspect we're admitting we've done something wrong that has caused them pain and suffering and we are asking forgiveness of them. So as we go through this we're not denying that element. Our point is that confessing to other humans is not sufficient in and of itself; other humans are not the standard that has been violated. God has been violated and the reason other humans have pain and suffering is because God has been violated. So, we might say we have two aspects of confession; vertical confession, by which we mean confessing our sins to God

whom we've sinned against, and then we might refer to horizontal confession, by which we mean confessing our sins to humans who have been hurt by our sin, admitting that we were wrong and we hurt them and we're sorry about that. Both are important. But the vertical confession toward God is primary and the horizontal confession to men is secondary. Don't conclude from this that horizontal confession to men is unimportant because if you don't do it you won't be on good terms with your fellow men and that will destroy your fellowship with one another and the effectiveness of your ministry.

But the main point want to get across about last week is that these heads, these leaders of the judicial system, who led the nation, have blinded the nation from this standard, such that the nation was in a position where they were unable to confess their sin genuinely. And therefore God was going to destroy them. Verse 4 describes God turning away while the nation comes under the fifth degree of divine discipline which is Exile.

Tonight we come to Micah 3:5–12. This section can be divided into two parts of four verses each. Micah 3:5–8 deals with false prophets and the sins of deception or lying which is a violation of one of the Ten Commandments. And Micah 3:9–12 is a summary of the sins of Israel's leadership, including the executive branch, the judicial branch and the religious organization. Micah stands in contrast as the true prophet of the living God who is filled with the Spirit of the Lord who gives him the courage and might to declare the sin of the nation.

So let's start verses 5-8 with the false prophets and the sins of deception. In verse 5 he says, **"Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets and lead my people astray; when they have something to bite with their teeth, they cry, "peace," but against him who puts nothing in their mouths they declare holy war."** So tonight we're going to look at the **prophets**.

We've said before that the prophet has three basic functions and the one I emphasize is his role as prosecuting attorney. The reason I do that is because everyone thinks in terms of his function of foretelling the future. So to bring some balance to our idea of the prophet we emphasize his job as prosecuting attorney; he brings God's case against the nation and Micah is doing that in this passage. He's prosecuting the nation. And in v 8 he exalts this function because it is what made him so different from the false prophets in his day. He's also a divine analyst in that he gives a divine view point analysis of historic events. But tonight we're going to emphasize the third function, the one people normally think of, that is foretelling history or telling the future.

Now the idea of the future is always an interest for man. Man wants to know what the future holds. If man can know what the future holds then man can make decisions in the present which will guarantee his future, which will give him power over others. But what's the presupposition underlying the idea that the future can be known? That there is a plan for history; that history is not left up to chance, but that there is an actual sequence of events which have already been set. Man has to have this if there is any basis for knowing the future.

The source of a sequence of events can be boiled down to two positions. There are always two positions at base. One, the idea of the Continuity of Being, the idea that all is one and that the universe is all that exists and everything in the universe is basically the same stuff, everything is an extension of one and the same Being. And in this view the ancient pagans thought in terms of Impersonal Fate, the idea that some mysterious law or force inside of history was somehow controlling history in a deterministic fashion. The modern parallel version being Einstein's Theory of Relativity. Einstein didn't mean that everything was relative. Einstein meant that everything was determined by the physical laws of the universe but that is something from within the universe. So we have Impersonal Fate or Determinism as one claimed source for the sequence of history. You hear this all the time. "We met because of Fate" and all the rest of it. Its paganism attempt to give order to history.

And from there we can predict the future that is already determined. And whoever can make the best predictions rules the world. Throughout history there have been different disciplines people used to predict the future so they could rule. In the ancient world they had diviners, soothsayers and sorcerers. In the modern world we have those same ancient disciplines as well as science based on natural law, market analysts, telekinesis, etc... The problem with all these men is that they are limited, they are inside of history, so somehow they're trying to take that which occurs inside of history and use it as principle or law to proclaim what the future will be. They may appeal to observational experience or extrasensory perception but in any case they are limited because they are inside of history and must project from limited data. But don't ever forget that all of these are depending upon there being an Impersonal Fate back of all things that determines the sequence of history.

Now on the other side is the Creator-creature distinction, that idea that all is two, there are two levels of reality, the Creator and the creation and these are distinct compartments of reality. The creation is not an extension of the Creator, the creation was created out of nothing and into nothing by the Creator so there's an absolute distinction between the Creator and creature. And in the biblical view the Bible thinks in terms of a Personal Sovereign God, the idea that the Creator is a Personal God who sovereignly controls history. History is run by a Person, not impersonal fate and history is therefore personal. Our ultimate environment is a Person, not a force, not natural law. So in the Bible we have a Personal Sovereign God and man as a creature made in God's image is responsible to God. This Personal Sovereign God has written a plan that includes everything from the beginning to the end, but God's way of bringing that plan to pass is not an impersonal, deterministic process. It includes responsible human action, yet the end is certain. Now we don't know how God pulls it off; we only know that since He is the Creator He has means of pulling it off that we're not privy to. His ways are not our ways; His thoughts are not our thoughts. God is sovereign and man is responsible. The Bible teaches this from beginning to end.

When we say God is sovereign over all we mean He doesn't have any competition. If God has competition then maybe tomorrow the competition will knock off God and will himself become ultimate. This is necessary to have a plan that's an uninterruptible one. If God has competition then His plan can be disrupted. Satan is strong but Satan is not equal and opposite to



God. That's a pagan idea of good and evil as equal and opposite. Satan is opposite of God but Satan is not equal to God. God is always greater. So the idea of a guaranteed future is that there is a Personal Sovereign God who wrote the plan and has the power to bring it. That's a biblical idea and paganism has distorted these ideas by saying that it's Impersonal Force or Fate behind the universe and yet also within the universe that is controlling. Paganism must have this to have any hope of predicting the future.

Now, in opposition to the soothsayers, the sorcerers, the diviners, the market analysts and the scientists, the God of the Bible is the only One who can tell the future because he wrote the future and He has no equal. Therefore the plan that He wrote cannot be changed, cannot be unknown to Him, and will come to pass. In light of that what's the first prophecy in the Bible? Gen 2:16 and 17. "The Lord God commanded the man, saying, "from any tree of the garden you may eat freely; <sup>17</sup>but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." Notice the future tense at the end of verse 17, "you will surely die." That's the first prophecy in history and it was given directly by God himself who wrote the plan of history. Now come to Gen 3:4, here we find a counter-prophecy. The serpent comes to the woman. Verse 4, "The serpent said to the woman, "you surely will not die!" Now those are exact reversals in the Hebrew text. What's Satan's challenge? It's a challenge to the question, who controls whatsoever comes to pass? Can a creature control whatsoever comes to pass or does the Creator control whatsoever comes to pass. So right away the Scriptures present the problem of determining true from false prophets.

And we can safely say that in the pre-Flood world there were human prophets, genuine prophets sent from God. Jude 14 says, "Enoch, the seventh from Adam prophesied" of the Second Coming of the Messiah. So you have early, early prophets. But the main man who came to be the archetype of all the prophets is Moses. It was in his time that the prophetic office really got going and the people needed criteria to distinguish between the true and the false prophet. When God prophesies as in Gen 2:17 there are no criteria. When God' speaks it's implicitly true. It's the word of the Creator. And when we hear the word of our Maker it speaks to our heart, there's no external criteria by which to judge. If He says it it's true. But when some human is involved, how do we know he's not just blowing his own horn? There are two tests for the prophet. Deut 13 and Deut 18. God gave tests for determining



this. The first test we'll look at is Deut 18. This is the negative test. Verse 20, "but the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die." It wasn't a thing to be taken lightly. If someone who claimed to be a prophet and wasn't what was the penalty in verse 20? It was a capital offense. You'd take him out and execute him. God took this very seriously; the word of God is a serious thing and thus serious penalties. So the question is raised, how then do we detect the true prophet from the false? Maybe you have a guy running around the country making all sorts of predictions. How do you know his predictions are true? You don't have a lie

detector test in 1000 BC. What you do is ask him a question and take his pulse? There has to be some criteria. These people were not gullible. They weren't primitives. They had the same questions we have. They had rules of evidence for deciding questions and so forth. If anybody's the primitives it's us. Notice verse 21, "You may say in your heart, 'How will we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' Then the answer is given, "When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true," observe, it does *not* come to pass, then that is not what the Lord has spoken. That's a negative test. And the OT was very clear on how to negate a prophet, if it did not come to pass then he was *not* a prophet. Nothing is said here with respect to whether it did come to pass. But if it did *not* come to pass then he was surely *not* a prophet. In other words he had to have 100% accuracy. The guy who could predict 75% of the time... think about it three out of every four things that come out of a guy's mouth about the future come true. Are we going to go after him? We better not. We'd be making a terrible mistake.

Alright, the second test. For this flip back to Deut 13; Deut 13 answers the question, well fine, I get that if the guy prophesied falsely he's a false prophet, but what if he prophesies truly? Doesn't that therefore make him a true prophet? That's why Deut 13 was given. You don't just have one test, you have two tests. And to be a genuine prophet you have to pass both tests, not just one or the other. In verse 1 what do we see? "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, <sup>2</sup>and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you," so now we have a prophet who gives a sign or wonder, some miracle and the miracle comes to

pass. Now surely we're going to go after this guy, right? Let's continue, middle of verse 2, "Saying, 'Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' <sup>3</sup>you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams;" this is a situation where a guy comes along, he predicts the future and he does a sign or wonder and then the sign or wonder comes true, it happens. This is a great thing that happens, this is no cheapo, this is the genuine article but along with that, while you're all mesmerized by the predictive genius of this person he's giving his doctrine, he's talking and the substance of his theology is this, "Let us go after other gods and let us serve them." He doesn't actually say that, it's just a summary of what the guy is saying. It's like in the NT, in John's first epistle he says, "By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;" that's not what they say. They don't walk down the street saying Jesus Christ didn't come in the flesh and die for your sins. Everyone would know that's the false prophet. The point is, you've sat there and listened to him predict, the prediction comes true, but the substance of his message is not directing you to the God of the Bible. In that case what do you do? On one hand, gee, the guy predicted the future and he was right on, maybe I should go after him, maybe what he's saying really is the word of the living God. If you do that you've made a fatal error, do not go after that prophet. False prophets often do miracles, the Book of Revelation says when the antichrist and the false prophet come they will do tremendous miracles, they will delude the whole world, people will flock to these guys because they do great miracles. But miracles are not by themselves an authenticating sign of a prophet. It's very interesting; the content of teaching outweighs miracles. The teaching of the word of God always takes precedence over miracles in Scripture, because it's where you test; the testing ground is what is taught, not what miracles they do. In other words, if a miracle occurs, then it is not a sign *unless* it is accompanied by orthodox teaching. So the Deut 13 test was a test to see whether they really loved the Lord their God. God sent false prophets to see if they'd test the guy's theology. Do you really love Me? That's what it gets down to. Do you really love Me to the point that you test the guy's theology? That's what it gets down to in the NT selection of an elder. Do you love Me to the point you give the guy a test to check his theology? Maybe the guy is great, very popular, parts his hair on the right side, does a wonderful miracle and yet if you listen to the guy and the substance of his theology leads you away from the God of the Bible you walk the other way, don't listen to the guy, he's a

jerk, he's a deceiver, don't listen to him. So we have the two tests, the negative test of Deut 18, failed predictions and the positive test of Deut 13, the truth test, he does a miracle but is his teaching true?

Now come to Micah chapter 3:5 and see if this doesn't have a lot more meaning to you. **Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who lead my people astray;** so who are we talking about here? False prophets. What do they do? They lead God's **people astray**. What test have they failed? Deut 13 or Deut 18? Deut 13. They may have done fantastic miracles, we're not told. But they undoubtedly had false teaching. They did not lead people to worship the one true God. They lead the **people astray**. They lead the people step by step into the worship of idols. It doesn't happen overnight; if it did everybody would stand up and say, hey, wait a minute, that's not right. So instead they do it step by step, they compromise a little bit here a little bit there and piece by piece they dismantle the truth.

Now, in the rest of the verse, observe how they operate. This is a modern text. **When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war.** In other words, what's this saying? If you give me some money, I'll give you a positive message. I'll tell you how great your life is going to be and how God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. But if you don't give any money I'll give you a negative message. I'll tell you how you're going to have problems. I tell you how God is mad at you and how He's going to get you. It's the prosperity gospel. If you give you will be blessed. If you don't give you will be cursed. It's the same old story today. Finally, it's about the money. It's the health and wealth and prosperity gospel where what's really going on is they're getting the health and the wealth and prosperity and you're not even getting the gospel. You can't buy salvation. God doesn't need your money. He created a whole universe out of nothing. You think if He needed some gold bricks He couldn't just make them? But people buy into it. Why? Because part of the fallen man is that man thinks he can do good and appease God. The flesh is going to work it up. What did Adam and Eve do in the garden? After the fall what was the first thing they did? They sewed on fig leaves. Why? Because they thought it would please God. Did it please God? Our works never please God. In no facet at all do you please God. There is nothing good in man. This is a crux in theology.

Your view of man is reflective of your view of God and it's reflected in your view of salvation and how it's attained. If man has even 1 ounce of goodness in him then salvation is by definition a cooperative effort between God and man. He does 99% of the work I do the rest. But if man is totally without goodness in him, then salvation is by definition solely the work of God *for* man and not God *and* man. Those are worlds apart. So we have the prosperity gospel in v 5. This was standard operating procedure for the **prophets** in Micah's day. Obviously they were false prophets.

Verse 6, here are the consequences. They were supposed to be executed, but the whole government was in cahoots with these characters so that's not going to happen. God therefore says, ***it will be night for you—without vision, And darkness for you—without divination.*** What happens at night? You can't see. But when did the prophets usually get their visions? At night. So He says, you'll still get the **night** but you won't get visions. **And darkness for you—without divination.** **divination** is trying to foretell the future independent of God, by reading signs or omens. They had several techniques they used; they got them from all the pagan nations. They were demonic things. They'd throw down some arrows and analyze how they fell, they'd examine the liver of a dead animal, they used all kinds of hocus pocus. The point was it ticked God off because to resort to those things you have to have already decided that the Personal Sovereign God of the Bible is not the Creator and all we're left with then is the sad substitute of some form of the Continuity of Being. Maybe there are gods and goddesses that run the show.

Now because they were using divination and they were ripping the people off God says **The sun would go down on the prophets, And the day would become dark over them.** In other words they're not going to get any more visions; they're going to be blind. Now it's true that God had given them the gift but God is now retracting the gift because they've abused it. They've catered to the people; they've used it to deceive people to line their pockets with money. And we all know what Christ said about that, you cannot serve both God and money. So God says that's it, I'm blinding you to the future.

Verse 7, **The seers will be ashamed And the diviners will be embarrassed.** The **seers** was an old word used of the prophet (1 Sam 9:9). It was still in use but phased out in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. And the **seers** are going to keep on proclaiming the future but since they've become blind

they're just making things up, they're projecting from themselves. Oh, the stock market is going to go up and we're going to enjoy prosperity like we've never enjoyed prosperity before and they were preaching this message to make more and more money. I see a revival coming, I hear the Lord's voice and the Lord pronounces blessing on those who give, etc... all the baloney and then God's going to turn it all against them because none of the baloney they say is going to happen. And they're going to look stupid standing there having made all these great pronouncements and they're getting creamed. So they **will be ashamed**. They'll be humiliated because they projected such grand things and now they're standing in the street looking like an idiot. **Indeed**, Micah says, **they will all cover their mouths Because there is no answer from God**. They won't have any excuses, they'll cover their mouths.

Now verse 8, **On the other hand**, here we have the contrast. We have the false prophets on one side and we have the true prophet Micah on the other. This is Micah talking, **I am filled with power— With the Spirit of the LORD—** what's the source of Micah's message? It's the **Spirit of the Lord**. Observe that true prophets in the OT were filled with the Holy Spirit. People usually say that's for the church, the filling of the Spirit. It's not exclusively for the church. There were three classes of people in the OT who were filled with the Spirit. The prophets, priests and kings (Jer 1:18-19). Now notice that the filling of the Spirit is connected with power, it's always connected with power, power to do something. In the NT, in the book of Acts the apostles were filled with power to witness, to proclaim the gospel and that's why the apostles, especially Peter appeared so differently after Pentecost than they did before Pentecost. Before Pentecost Peter was a weenie. Peter wouldn't even admit he knew the Lord. He denied Him three times. After Pentecost Peter was bold, Peter was courageous and it was Peter who said we will not stop speaking the name of Jesus. What caused this change? What was the difference? They were filled with the Holy Spirit. That's where the boldness and the courage came to proclaim the gospel. And the same difference exists between Micah and the false prophets. Micah was filled with power, here defined as **the Spirit of the LORD** and what was he given power to do? To proclaim the truth of Israel's condition. Notice what he says, **And with justice and courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, Even to Israel his sin**. That's what it means to be filled with power. It means to be able to speak the unbridled truth. It's something you can't do in

your own strength. That's why you need God's power to do this. That's why you need the filling of the Spirit. And you're not going to win many friends doing this. Oh, you're too serious all the time, you're too judgmental, you're just so negative, why not relax, and cheer up some. Sorry, we live in a fallen world and I'm filled with power, I'm filled with the Spirit of the LORD to tell the truth, not skirt around the issues. We've got enough people doing that.

And the sad thing is Micah is the opposite of almost every preacher in America today. Yet this is basically the standard. Today, pastors and teachers want to stay away from certain topics; topics like sin, oh, we can't bring that up, we'd rather just preach God's love and how if you're sincere God will bless you. And that's a sign of a false teacher right away. If you can go sit down and listen to a guy week in week out and you're toes aren't bloody by the time you walk out you're not listening to a true teacher! He's not filled by the Spirit of the Lord, he's filled with own spirit and his own message. They don't love God, they don't love the truth, they are liars and the love of God is not in them. And I don't hesitate for one moment to say that. If a man will not preach topics like sin, man's enmity against God, human rebellion, depravity, discipline and all the other doom and gloom themes in the Bible then that man is at enmity with God, that man is a false teacher and you ought to leave immediately. You ought not ever give a dime to someone like that. I don't care how pretty they are, how appealing their personality is, they hate God.

Now let's conclude with some application. I am no prophet, the prophetic gift ceased to be given with John the Apostle when he penned the Revelation and no man since has had the prophetic gift (1 Cor 13:8-9). Knowledge will be done away and prophecy will cease.

Since it must be done away with before Elijah and the two witnesses come then we gather it passed away in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. But in the meantime God has given pastors and teachers to the Church to "preach the word, to be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction." And I'm here to tell you the truth. And so by application Dr Feinberg says, "All who speak for God in any age do well to measure themselves by this God-given standard. Less than this will never satisfy the heart of our God." And so with Micah, we proclaim with justice and courage, we make known the rebellious acts of man and man's sin against God and the



answer to it; the saving work of Jesus Christ. If man will recognize his separation from God and will humbly hear the true gospel of Jesus Christ and believe in the Lord Jesus he will be saved. It's that simple.

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