Introduction:

Albert Schweitz is quoted as saying, “Example is leadership.” People follow more what you do than what you say, therefore anyone who mimics your actions or journeys your path does so because they saw it in you first; they saw your example. They look to you as a leader whether you are one by title or not.

Micah, in today’s lesson, was addressing leadership. Their corrupt example and ways not only devastated many of lives but they also caused many to follow down that same path of destruction as well. They should have used their influence of leadership to lead people closer to God instead of further away.

Jesus reminds us of our influence in this world. He said,

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,” (Matthew 5:13-16).

Whether a leader or not, we are all responsible for how we influence others.  

**Corrupt Leaders Corrupt People**

**Micah 3:5** “Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouth, they even prepare war against him.”

“If you don’t feed me you don’t please me,” could have very well have been the motto of the false prophets to whom Micah was addressing in today’s lesson. They acted like the fake carnival wizard game that would spew out a wonderful prophecy or fortune if you popped enough of the right change in their machine.

God’s word is not to be treated so. It is not a trading commodity. It is not to be sold for favor to the highest bidder and used as a war weapon against those who didn’t support the false ways. God’s word is a treasure that is to be hid in the heart of man to work as an effective sin prevention program.

The problem with those Micah addresses is how they judged and delivered God’s word, or His proposed word. It was predicated on what kind of monetary support they would get in return: a verdict of peace for those who were willing to pay (who bite with their teeth/keep them fed and taken care of through monetary support). At the same time, these shady prophets would declare war against some who refused to pay.

This is not a good steward of God’s word. Leaders, by definition, are people who are in authority to guide others. That’s why they are often referred to as shepherds in the Bible, for they have the responsibility of going before the people as Jesus did to direct the path of the flock (see John 10:4).

But, when the path is determined by the pay – GOD HAS A STRONG ISSUE WITH THAT!
Leaders are ordained by God to draw people toward a closer relationship with Him and not further away. Because they made their “prophecies” based finances and payment for their services, they caused God’s people to err, leading them down the path of destruction.

Corrupt leaders corrupt people. They work like an infestation that comes in and contaminates all it touches. They are more concerned about the food in their mouth then if the word was truly from God or not. These are not true prophets of God.

In Jeremiah the warning was, “Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you . . . ,” (29:8, emphasis mine). Notice the word “your” in that verse for they were their prophets that they got for themselves and not men sent by God.

God’s strong warning in Deuteronomy says, “But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die,” (18:20). God will deal with harmful and false leaders that specialize in leading His people astray, especially those who do it for profit.

No Answer from God!

Micah 3:6-7 “Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.”

There will be no word from God. Amos tells us, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD,” (8:11). God will shut up all divine communication from above like rain being withheld in the time of drought.
Depending on a word from man will lead one to the place of destitution to where they wish they could hear from God. Spiritually they would be as one who had a blanket over his head and cannot see anything; no hope, no future. Rather, darkness will prevail.

Since false words had been their trust the time will come when the false prophets will be confused and **confounded** and **cover their lips** for they are without a word from **God**; they are too **ashamed** and embarrassed and inept to speak in His name any longer because their false prophesies had not panned out the way they proclaimed. Judgment was coming for them. Their mouths were supposed to be used to declare the justice of God, not to satisfy their own bellies. Therefore, they shall all **cover their lips**.

They will not **have a vision** for the times will be **dark** for them. Darkness for them is not only a time of being covered and prevented from seeing, but it is also a time of depression and discouragement as they reap the rewards of their false ways. Their time is going to be up!

You can’t play with God’s word and expect to get away with it. One can’t mishandle any office over God’s people and not expect to be penalized for it. God’s judgment will fall on all who dare to proclaim the false in His name; the sun shall go down over the prophets. Their perversion of their office will lead to their demise.

**Micah Stands Out!**

**Micah 3:8** “But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.”

Declaring God’s truth will cause you to stand out from the false.

Micah was not like the other prophets who cashed in the word for profit. God empowered him to speak against the **transgression** and **sin** of His people, and he
did. The other so-called prophets peddled God’s word as if it was some marketable product, but Micah declared judgment and what thus saith the LORD!

He did that because he was full of power by the spirit of the LORD. Any leader of God’s should seek to be spirit-filled and not belly-filled, meaning their hunger for God’s true and right word should surpass their hunger for the material possessions of this life.

**Note:** The Bible tells us, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled,” (Matthew 5:6). We are also told, “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you,” (Matthew 6:33). We don’t need to hunger after the things of this world. All we have to do is to have that sincere yearning within us to do that which is right for Him and He will fill us! We shall be satisfied because we have found out where our real value lies: in Him!

It’s all about what are you looking for in life. What’s your goal? Who are you trying to please? Jesus exhorts His followers to travel down the real road of success. He teaches them, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” This message of instruction comes on the heel of a message teaching one what not to worry about in life, which in turn follows the message that, “No man can serve two masters . . .” (Mt. 6:24).

The false prophets were following the master of money.

A leader who is filled with God’s Spirit is a true superhero for they don’t rely on themselves, but on the only true power that comes from Him. A leader who is full of the power by the spirit of the LORD knows that “the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord,” (Ps. 37:23). He has an assurance of His anointing guiding him through the days. He seeks His guidance, direction and Word to empower him.

God’s true prophesies only come via His Spirit. Leaders need His spirit; they need His power! The mouthpiece of God, His prophets, is to be full of power by the spirit of the LORD, of which Micah was.
“Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts,” (Zechariah 4:6). This is a verse that I have personally repeated to myself. A prayer, if you will, to be led by His Spirit.

A Kingdom Built on Sin Cannot Stand!

Micah 3:9-11 “Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.”

Being a people of God does not exonerate one from the consequences of sin. This seemed to be a problem amongst the people of God. Even Jeremiah had to speak against this false trust, saying, “Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these,” (7:4). At that time the false prophets declared nothing could happen to them because the “temple” of God was with them.

Wrong! Any kingdom built on sin cannot stand, even if it is God’s people who are doing the building.

The builders of Zion that Micah was addressing are the leaders of the land that were in cahoots with evil and perverted practices. The princes, heads, priests, prophets all were seeking personal gain and advantage instead of delivering the true messages of God leading the people away from destruction. Their ways were marked by a path of blood and iniquity.

They should have had the mindset to pray as the psalmist when he said, “Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word,” (Psalm 119:36-37, NIV). Paul writes to Timothy that, “Godliness with contentment is great gain,” (1 Timothy 6:6). When you follow God’s path you don’t have to worry about
swindling people, God will take care of you. But, if you build your empire on the **blood and iniquity** God will not be their sure foundation.

The leaders are accused by God of tipping the scales of **equity** in their favor to the point where there was no justice or equity in the land. There was no fair and impartial judgment; rather, everything was done for **reward**.

"**PLOWED!**"

**Micah 3:12** "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest."

The time of plundering one’s fellow man will come to an end and they shall be plundered themselves. They will no longer be known as the great city they are. In its stead, ruins and rubble shall replace their once owned prosperity.

In Lamentations, Jeremiah bemoans the foolishness of the leaders in not directing the people away from the path of sin and destruction. He said, “Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment,” (Lam. 2:14). Because of it the people fell to ruin and became the mockery of their enemies (Lam. 2:15-16).

God will do as He said. They will know destruction. They will no longer be the beautiful city they once were. They will be PLOWED! Leveled. Brought to nothing will be their future.

They sought to have bellies filled off of that which was false and through the thorough mistreatment of others. Now, as Proverbs so plainly puts it when it speaks of the wicked, “Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices,” (1:28), and what they filled up on was perverted justice and equity, and now they too shall reap the rewards thereof.

All the consequences of their corrupt lifestyles are coming back onto their own heads. God will not forget or overlook the atrocities they committed. They
thought that God was with them in the midst of their continual sinful lifestyle and that He would somehow overlook or that they were okay the way they are. No! Devastation was on the horizon. They will be PLOWED! Nothing that resembles their prosperity will be left.

**Conclusion:**

Follow God’s true Word spoken by His true leaders.