

Sunday, July 17, 2022
“Minor Prophets: Eternal Questions”
Summary of the ‘Message of Micah: What Does God Want?’
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(Focal: 6:8)

“Tolerant, changing, accommodating, and indefinable – Is that what you look for in your own spiritual renewal and religion?” asks, Mark Dever. If so, you might be interested in the next minor prophet we come to in our series of ‘Eternal Questions.’ Micah wrote in a day not too unlike our own. Prophesying around the same time as Isaiah (8th century BC), Micah found the nation of Israel in deep trouble with God, as God’s people had fallen to terrible moral depths. He lived in a period of economic revolution, which was proving a mixed blessing. Unfortunately the influx of material prosperity had spawned a selfish materialism, a complacent approach to religion as a means of achieving human desires, and the disintegration of personal and social values. Wealth was invested in land, with the result that the traditional system of agricultural small holdings collapsed with the growth of vast estates, and material and emotional distress ensued. Age-old sanctions associated with the divine covenant were shrugged off, and social concern was at the bottom of the list of priorities of national and local government officials. Even religious leaders – priests and prophets – did little more than echo the spirit of the period, buttressing the society that gave them their livelihood.

Truly, the human situation, like the situation in Micah’s Israel, is grim. Yet Micah was not hopeless. He watches in *‘hope for the Lord,’* he waits for *‘God his Savior.’* He says, *‘my God will hear me’* (7:7). Micah’s hope in this terribly difficult situation was based on something more than himself or even God’s people. It was based on God! *‘Yes, the situation is grievous, but God will hear me,’* notes Micah (paraphrase of 7:7). In this situation in which Micah finds the southern kingdom of Judah in the years just before and after the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel – a situation full of sin and evil abhorred by the Lord – what is it that Micah says the Lord wants? Is God basically tolerant, changing, and mysterious? What does God desire?