



Racial Justice Ministry

Micah 6:1-8 Bible Study

— A study for small groups or individuals —

Objectives:

- To understand how important it is to God that we “do justice.”
- To understand the difference between retributive and restorative justice and respond to God’s leading to promote restorative justice.

Watch BibleProject’s *Micah* video (6:39 min)

Read Micah 6: 1-8 (ESV). (Note: highlighted words added.)

(Micah speaks:)

1 Hear what the LORD says:

Arise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

2 Hear, you mountains, the indictment of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations of the earth,
for the LORD has an indictment against his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

(The Lord speaks:)

3 “O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I wearied you? Answer me!

4 For I brought you up from the land of Egypt
and redeemed you from the house of slavery,
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

5 O my people, remember what Balak king of Moab devised,
and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the righteous acts of the LORD.”

(Micah speaks:)

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?

7 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?

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.

Answer these questions:

1. List the things God reminds his people of in verses 3-5. What do these references tell us about how God cared for them? How is this a case (v1) or indictment (v2) against the people?

2. How does complacency, busyness, or lack of gratitude impact the effort you give to remembering and thanking God for the ways he has freed, protected, and guided you? Write down one specific story of how God has cared for you and briefly share it with your small group or a friend.

3. What stands out to you about the difference between the sacrifices and offerings mentioned in verses 6-7 compared to the requirements in verse 8?

4. Circle the five verbs in Micah 6:8 and write down your insights about each of these action words.

5. Review the definitions of the words below, as they are used in the Bible. You may want to refer to a Bible dictionary, look up the meaning in the original Hebrew and read several places in scripture where the word is used in order to develop a fuller understanding.
 - a. **Justice** is rooted in the biblical concept that all humans are created in God's image and have the right to be treated equally, with dignity and fairness. The Hebrew word for justice is *mishpat* and encompasses both retributive and restorative aspects.
 - b. **Mercy** (translated in some versions as kindness) is rooted in the goodness and kindness of God. The Hebrew word for mercy is *racham* and refers to an extension of and expression of love; an act of kindness, compassion or favor.
 - c. **Humility** is rooted in the humility of God, fully revealed in Christ (see Phil 2: 6-8). The Hebrew word for humility is *anavah* and means gentleness or meekness.

How should mercy and humility inform our work as we engage in "doing justice?"

Watch BibleProject's *Justice* video (6:18 min)

Answer these questions:

6. What is the relationship between righteousness and justice? (See *Justice* video @ 1:36.)

7. Review the two ways the word justice is used in the Bible. (See *Justice* video @ 2:06.) What do these two aspects of justice have in common? How do they differ?
 - a. Retributive justice: punishment, consequences for wrongdoing.

 - b. Restorative justice: advocating for the vulnerable, changing social structures to prevent injustice.

8. Which of the two aspects of justice is used more often in the Bible? Considering the context of the book of Micah, what is the primary meaning of justice in Micah 6:8? (See *Justice* video @ 2:10.)

9. Describe the difference between charity and justice using an example of ministry work.

Make it personal:

10. How does remembering the ways God has cared for you prepare you to engage in the action required in verse 8?

11. Share with your small group or a friend one way that God is moving you to align more closely with what he requires of you (v 8).