



BIBLE IN A YEAR 2020

MICAH



**JUSTICE AND
KINDNESS**

Wednesday 30 December: Micah

Faithfully loving God changes the world Liz Nixon writes:

What did I like about today's reading?

"He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

We tend to use this verse without understanding the context. Yes, it's a useful summary of what God expects of His people generally, but Micah is not using these verses as some cute, catchy saying to be used in screensavers, bags we carry or posters in our homes!

There was so much injustice in their society, and God had made it clear what social justice looks like in His Kingdom, right from the days of Moses and the start of His covenant relationship with the people. But they had been "stripping the robes from passers-by, from those returned from war and evicting vulnerable women" (2 v 8-9).

Micah is saying "you have failed at three basic things that God made clear to you – be just, love faithfully and walk with Him". He is not saying these things to remind people how to live but admonishing them for having not lived in this way, and for having not lived this way for generations!

The second verse is a prophetic promise (5 v 2): "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a king who will be the shepherd of my people Israel". Micah is prophesying about Jesus, who would come and model justice, faithful love and walking with God perfectly. We often hear this verse during the Advent season.

What did it show me about Father God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit?

Throughout the Bible, we have seen God's faithfulness to an unfaithful people. His constant charge against His people is that they have been unfaithful to Him and the covenant they made. Micah affirms this in 6v8.

It's an often-mistranslated verse. Micah uses the word "hesed", often written as "love **mercy**". It is better translated to "faithfulness" or "steadfast love" – the implication that the people were to love faithfully, in the same way God had loved them. The hearers would have immediately remembered the covenant relationship with God and His faithful love to them, which is why Micah then quotes from Deuteronomy to further affirm this. In telling them they have not done these things, he is calling God's people back to those basics once more.

Justice in society is an overflow of our relationship with our heavenly Father, not because of more activism, ministries or programmes. Faithfully loving God changes the world because faithful love changes us – His love changes who we are and how we live. It doesn't mean we do nothing to advance justice, but because we walk humbly with our Father, knowing His heart both for us and for His creation, justice will naturally flow out of our time with Him and our continual state of being renewed within His presence.

What am I going to do differently as a result?

Believe that social justice and reforms in society are God's heart and expect His heart to change mine as I walk with Him.

Who am I going to share this with?

My friend Becky, with whom I love to walk and talk.