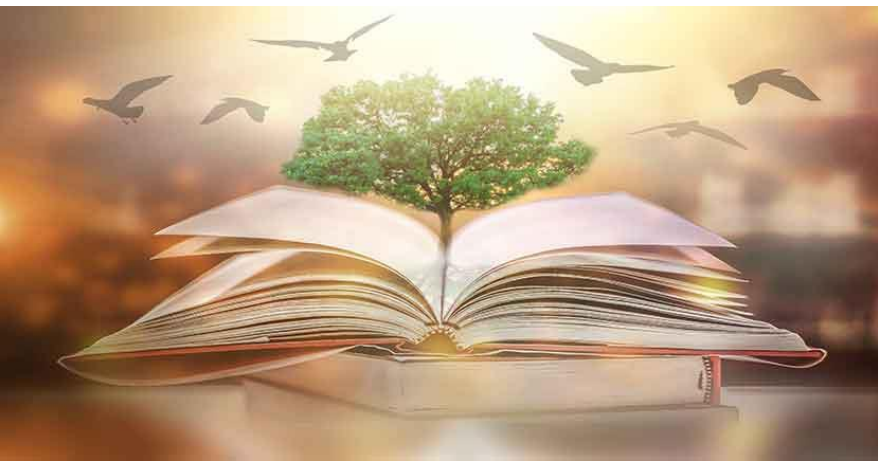


# Micah

MESSAGE OF WARNING,  
MESSAGE OF HOPE

**Peace, Justice, Righteousness**

Micah 3:1 – 4:8




# Common Themes

- Judgement
- Repentance
- Hope



# The Prophets




“They afflict the comfortable  
and comfort the afflicted”

*Stephen Dempster, Micah.*



# The Prophets



Covenantal Lawyers holding Israel accountable to the covenant whilst reminding them of God's unchangeable faithfulness and ultimate triumph.

# Micah 3:1 – 4:8

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Charges against rulers & leaders of the covenant people - injustice

Charges against corrupt prophets (influencers) of the covenant people

Charges of hypocrisy – expecting God’s blessing whilst behaving badly

Consequences – destruction

God’s covenant promise – peace

Using expressive and intensifying language to get the point across

Micah 3:1-3

# Micah 3: 8-11

<sup>8</sup> But as for me, I am filled with power,  
with the Spirit of the LORD,  
and with justice and might,  
to declare to Jacob his transgression,  
to Israel his sin.

<sup>9</sup> Hear this, you leaders of Jacob,  
you rulers of Israel,  
who despise justice  
and distort all that is right;  
<sup>10</sup> who build Zion with bloodshed,  
and Jerusalem with wickedness.  
<sup>11</sup> Her leaders judge for a bribe,  
her priests teach for a price,  
and her prophets tell fortunes for  
money.

Yet they look for the LORD's support and  
say,

“Is not the LORD among us?  
No disaster will come upon us.”



**JESUS!!**



Peace  
(Shalom)



Sin  
(Hamartia)



Injustice



Righteousness  
(tzedeka)



Justice  
(Mishpat)



Peace  
(Shalom)

**Kingdom of  
God**

**Missing  
the Mark**

**Inequity,  
Brokenness  
& Suffering**

**Being Right  
Doing Right  
Declaring Right  
Making things Right**

**Equity,  
Fairness,  
Rightness**

**Kingdom of  
God**

**All  
relationships  
flourishing &  
whole**

**All  
relationships  
flourishing &  
whole**

# The New Covenant

Luke 22:20





# What is the 'New Covenant'?

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Jeremiah 31:31-34

33 "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the Lord.

"I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

34 No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord.

"For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

# The New Covenant

Luke 22:20





# God's Law?

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God's Way demonstrated and taught by Christ & outworked by his covenant people as Image Bearers & Parables of Christ:

Being, Doing, Declaring and Bringing about what is RIGHT



**JESUS!!**



Peace  
(Shalom)



Sin  
(Hamartia)



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# Role of prophets today?

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To hold God's 'New Covenant' people accountable for their participation in the covenant – of being, doing, declaring and bringing about what is right.

To afflict the comfortable & comfort the afflicted

To hold nations and their leaders to account for their destructive systems – regardless of political or partisan leanings

To ***remind us*** of God's ultimate hope – when we won't need to do that anymore – Because Micah 4: 1-5



What would a prophet say today?

To afflict us as covenant people?

To comfort us as afflicted people?

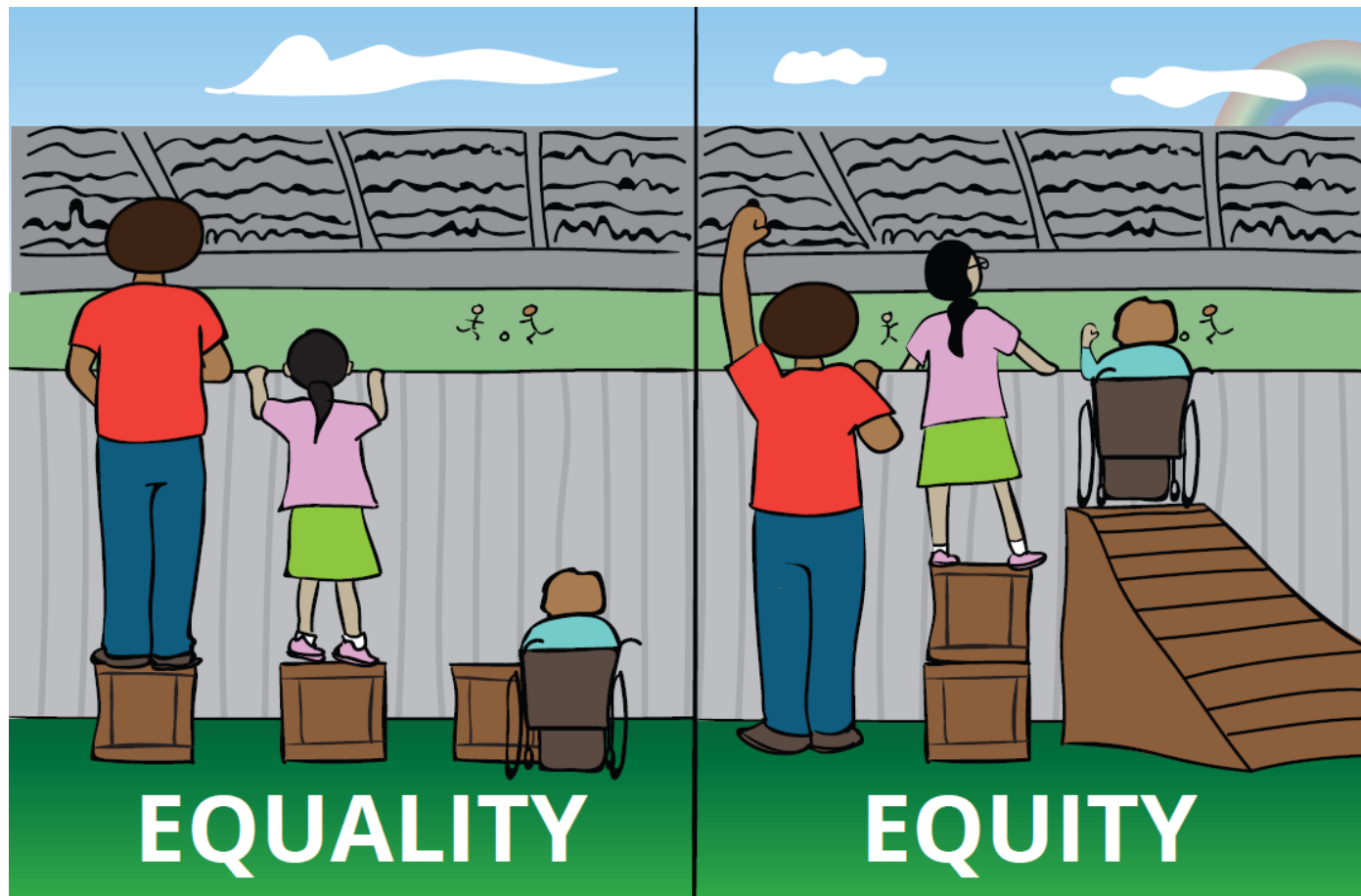
To afflict our society for its injustice?

To comfort those afflicted in society?



The word of the Lord to Adam  
of Rangiora for God's people &  
the nation of New Zealand,  
concerning children who have a  
parent in prison

God is on the side of the poor, the weak, the vulnerable, the oppressed; victims of unjust systems

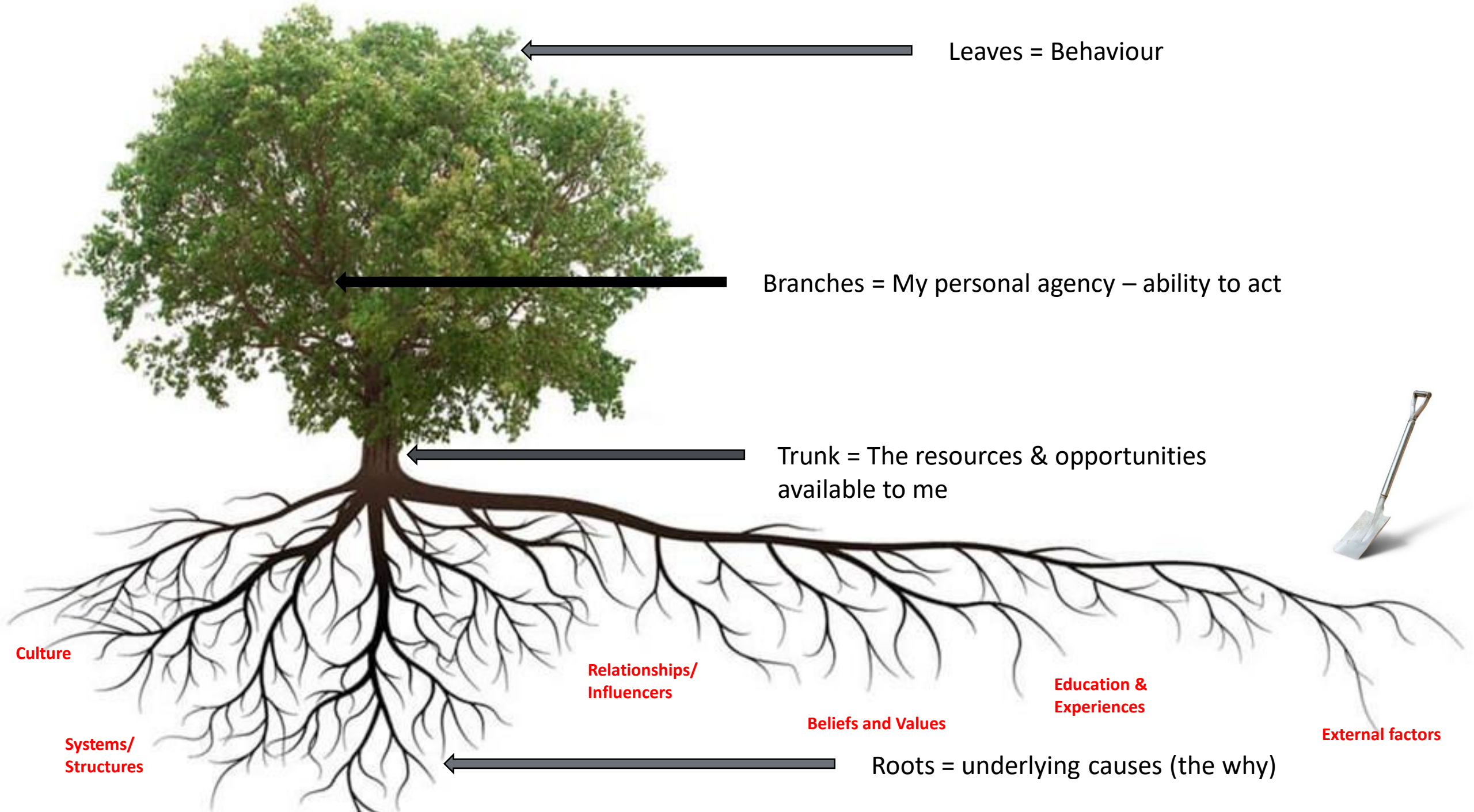




But.... complexity

What we see is often not the real problem – or cause





Leaves = Behaviour

Branches = My personal agency – ability to act

Trunk = The resources & opportunities available to me

Roots = underlying causes (the why)

Culture

Relationships/  
Influencers


Education &  
Experiences

Beliefs and Values

Systems/  
Structures


External factors





What about  
you – what  
about us?

What attitudes do we hold or promote that perpetuate injustice/ inequity?

- Towards other cultures and their place in society
  - Towards Māori and restoring what has been lost
  - Towards those who commit crime, their families, their children
  - Towards those who are economically poor
  - Towards those of other genders
  - To those with disabilities or mental illness
- 

What about  
you – what  
about us?

What are we doing **to** others (or ourselves) or see others doing that we need to stop?

- Are we verbally, emotionally, sexually or physically abusive or exploitative?
- Do we treat people unfairly in our business dealings or work relationships?
- Are we slandering people behind their backs (or to their face)?
- Do we bully people or delight in their discomfort?
- Do we harm our selves through bad habits, distractions, unhealthy choices?

What about  
you – what  
about us?

What are we not doing that we need to start  
.....or continue?

- Do we give generously when we see a need?
- Do we support actions that protect our environment?
- Do we encourage others who need comforting?
- Do we stand up for people who are being mistreated (even if we don't like them or agree with their beliefs)?
- Do we visit or build relationship with those who are isolated, lonely, discarded?
- Do we intentionally seek to accept those that we know need love – but who may be hard to love?

What about  
you – what  
about us?

What systems do we promote or benefit from that harm others?

- Does what we purchase contribute to injustice and societal harm?
- Do we promote sexual exploitation through consumption of pornography?
- Do we support policies that make us feel good or benefit us economically or socially but exacerbate injustice or inequity?

What do we not speak out against when we know we should?

- Individually?
- Corporately?

There is hope – there is a time when pain will end, when all things will be restored under Christ.

**Luke 6:20-23**


# Comfort for the afflicted







# The Prophets



“They afflict the comfortable  
and comfort the afflicted”

*Stephen Dempster, Micah.*



The word of the Lord to Adam  
of Rangiora for God's people &  
the nation of New Zealand,  
concerning children who have a  
parent in prison

What shame belongs to us

That we lock fathers and mothers behind bars

Submit them to abuse and fear

Contain them with wild animals and feed them poison

Lest they heal and become whole.

“Punish! Punish!” We cry, hoping for peace

Then scramble in fear when we see them.

What disgrace is ours

That we hide their children in darkness

Make them blind, we cut off their hands,

Empty their stomachs and deprive them of love.

Lest they become whole and prosper.

“Forget! Forget!” we whisper, our ignorance plain.

Then wring our hands, when grown they come a-calling.

What stupidity is ours to own

That we deprive children of their rights

Starve their mothers, then look away in disgust

In our arrogance we send them away saying, “they are not our problem to bear”

What judgment will come on us

For we make victims of victims but deny our own crimes

“Look away, look away!” we implore

And then look for the next victim to ignore.



But Jesus Christ says this:

I will send out my people

Into the dark places they will go

Seeking and searching until no dark place remains

“Come! Come!” they will cry

As children come crawling with outstretched hands

My people will suffer the pain of healing, they will absorb the loss

Healing will not come easy, but come it will

As with my own hands they open blind eyes and replace absent hands

As they fill up their stomachs, and lift up their heads

When the mothers find hope, and the children find love, and the fathers become whole

Then my people will see my face and feel my peace.

Then I will heal them all, and give them hope

I will banish their anxieties and fears

I will give them the desires of their hearts - for their desires will be mine; I will provide them with purpose

I will meet their every need

I will guide them in the way of righteousness – of making things right.

And the prisons will empty

The houses will emanate light

The children will laugh

And men and women will rest in loving embrace

Darkness will be invaded by light

Until darkness is no more.

“For as long as my people act” says the Lord, “this will be their hope”

Do not get tired of doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest, if we do not give up.