

3. For today's study, we'll focus on context. Let's study Micah chapter 5:10-15.
- a. Read the passage repeatedly, using the observation skills you've been practicing in prior weeks. Watch for the Laws of Structure (especially purpose, timing, repetition, and continuity).
  - b. One of the questions of this text is: Why are these things targeted by God for destruction? Do they have something in common?
  - c. Is there anything in the context of the book of Micah that you recall from your previous readings that further explains these?
  - d. Let's broaden to another book from this same time period. Isaiah was likewise ministering in and writing to the southern kingdom of Judah at the same time as Micah. I've handpicked some key passages from Isaiah. Read through these, noting similar words and concerns to Micah. What do you learn from Isaiah about God's concern about these things he has targeted for destruction? How does this enhance your interpretation of the text in Micah?

(1) Isa 17:7-11

(2) Isa 22:5-11

(3) Isa 30:1-3

(4) Isa 30:8-17

(5) Isa. 31:1-3

(6) Isa 47:9-15

# Sermon Notes

"Kicking Out the Props"

Micah 5:10-15

July 15, 2018

**Let's Pray:**

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of 07-15-18

## Getting Started:

1. Without consulting a dictionary, how many different definitions can you think of for the term “trunk”?

After you have wracked your brain, check against a dictionary. What additional definitions did you find?

What determines which definition is to be understood in any given sentence that you find the word *trunk* used?

## Digging Deeper:

### The Rule of Context – Context Rules!

One of the most important principles of handling the Word properly and studying the Bible inductively is to interpret Scripture in the light of its context. Why? Because *context always rules in interpretation*.

The word *context* means “that which goes with the text.” In general, then, context is the environment in which something dwells, the setting in which something exists or occurs. Remember the tadpole in the creek? Context is the creek!

In Bible study, context is the words, phrases, and sentences surrounding a particular word, phrase, or sentence. This context gives meaning to the particular word, phrase, or sentence and helps you understand what the author is saying. Context can also be expanded to paragraphs, chapters, books, and eventually the whole Bible. Because context rules in, or determines, the interpretation of the passage, it is important for you to know the context of any passage that you’re studying.

To illustrate how context gives meaning to words, let’s look at the word *trunk*. Suppose someone were to ask you, “What does the word *trunk* mean?” How would you respond? Well, if you were going to give a helpful as well as an accurate answer, you would first have to ask, “How is the word used?” because the word *trunk* can mean different things.

A trunk could mean the luggage compartment of a car, the flexible snout of an elephant, a large rigid piece of luggage used for transporting clothing and personal effects, the main stem of a tree, or shorts worn for swimming.

Therefore, the only way to know the intended meaning of the word *trunk* is to examine the context in which the word is used. The environment (the surrounding text) in which the word appears will show you which of these possible meanings is intended.

(Kay Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR, 1994, p. 18).

2. Pray first. Psalm 119 is the longest Psalm, and every verse has something to say about the Word of God. Many are prayer requests for enablement as the Psalmist comes to the Word. Notice how 119:34 asks for help in both mind and affections. Paraphrase it for your own prayer.

## Study Hint – Several Kinds of Context

There are several kinds of context. Each one gives a different slant on whatever passage you are considering.

Type of Context	Description
Literary context	The literary context of any verse is the paragraph of which it is a part, the section of which that paragraph is a part, and the book of which that section is a part. And, given the unity of Scripture, the ultimate context of any book is the entire Bible.
Historical context	In other words, when is this taking place? Where does this passage fit in history? What else was taking place in the world at this time? What were some of the social, political, and technological influences on the writer and on those to whom he was writing?
Cultural context	Culture has a powerful influence on all forms of communication, and the cultures in biblical times had a profound effect on the creation of the Bible. So the more you know about ancient cultures, the more insight you’ll have into the text.
Geographical context	Investigating the geographical context answers questions such as: What was the terrain like? What topographic features made this region unique? What was the weather like? How far was this town from places mentioned in the text? What were the transportation routes for these people? What size city was this? What was the layout of this town? What was this location known for?
Theological context	The question here is, what did this author know about God? What was the relationship of his readers to God? How did people worship Him at that point? How much Scripture did the writer and his audience have access to? What other religions and worldviews were competing for influence? Where does this passage fit in the unfolding of Scripture? You see, the Bible was not dropped out of the sky as a finished piece of work. It took thousands of years to put it all together. And during that time, God revealed more and more of His message to the authors.

(Adapted from Howard G. & William D. Hendricks, *Living By the Book*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1991, pp. 227-228).