

# MICAH

## INTRODUCTION

1. AUTHOR – Micah – The name means "Who is like Yahweh?" The book claims to be the prophecies of Micah, son of Moresheth.
2. DATE – The date of the prophecies is clearly given as during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah in 1:1, placing it around 730-700 BC. This makes him a contemporary of Isaiah.
3. READERS – The book claims to speak to both Samaria and Jerusalem in 1:1 though it speaks primarily to Judah.
4. THEME – The Lord is both the Judge and the leading witness in the court case of Judah's sins. Judah will be punished but her hope is in God's grace.
5. KEY VERSES – 2:3, 4:10, 2:12-13, 5:2, 6:8, and 7:18

## OUTLINE

Micah is a series of long pronouncements of judgment broken up by short prophecies of hope.

1. The invasion of Israel is described. Ch1
2. God gives his reasons for punishment (2:1-11) and for promise (2:12-13).
3. The leaders will be destroyed for their sins. Ch3
4. Israel's remnant will be raised to blessing again. Ch4:1-5:15
5. God's goodness and mercy are contrasted with the sins of his people. Ch6-7

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MICAH

1. Micah is best known for his specific prophecy of the place of the birth of the Messiah. Compare Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:3-8.
2. God is again seen as the "Lord of all the earth" (4:13), who controls kingdoms and empires for His purposes.
3. Micah appeals to God's people as His covenant people. See 1:5, 2:12, and 3:1. Then he appeals to them on the basis of what God has done for them. We know that our response to God is because of what He has already done for us. "We love because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19
4. Micah's purpose seems to be to make the comfortable uncomfortable while comforting the uncomfortable. The God who destroys is also the God Who delivers. That should also be the purpose of any preacher of God's Word.
5. The God of great mercy (7:18-19) only asks His people to treat one another with the mercy He has shown them (6:8).

## MICAH

1 – God called Micah to preach a message of the sin of the people and God’s judgment. Even though Micah is from Judah and prophecies primarily to Judah, he has a message for the whole earth and all the nations. V2 “Hear, you peoples, all of you; pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it, and let the Lord God be a witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.” The judgment of the Lord on Samaria will bring a result of weeping and mourning. V3 “For behold, the Lord is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.” The people are called on to mourn for their sin and its consequence. V16 “Make yourselves bald and cut off your hair, for the children of your delight; make yourselves as bald as the eagle, for they shall go from you into exile.”

2 – The theme continues. Note that the people called out for the prophet not to prophecy the word of God. They did not believe it and preferred a different message. Humans plan disobedience and God plans judgment in the form of disaster. We cannot be too hard on the people the Lord speaks against because we know that our hearts are just as sinful and bent on evil. We need to take heed to the warnings of the Lord on this. May we never take the approach that the people take in rejecting the message and ministry of the prophets who tell them that God will judge them! V7 “Should this be said, O house of Jacob? Has the Lord grown impatient? Are these his deeds? Do not my words do good to him who walks uprightly?”

3 – Meanwhile all other prophets and seers were drawing blanks when it came to any word to speak. How sad is their state in V5. “Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who lead my people astray, who cry ‘Peace’ when they have something to eat but declare war against him who puts nothing into their mouths.” The same is true of the other leaders in V11. “Its heads give judgment for a bribe; its priests teach for a price; its prophets practice divination for money; yet they lean on the Lord and say, ‘Is not the Lord in the midst of us? No disaster shall come upon us.’” May V7-8 be true for us! “The seers shall be disgraced, and the diviners put to shame; they shall all cover their lips, for there is no answer from God. 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 and to Israel his sin.” Sometimes representing the Lord means we need to deliver bad news of sin and judgment.

4 – This chapter begins with verses of promise. V1-2 “...the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains... For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” However, only the Lord’s judgment will be permitted to happen. When other nations surrounded the city to take advantage of the situation, the Lord intervened to protect and set the limit on what will happen. V11-12 “Now many nations are assembled against you, saying, ‘Let her be defiled, and let our eyes gaze upon Zion.’ But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord; they do not understand his plan, that he has gathered them as sheaves to the threshing floor.”

5 – This chapter promises a deliverer for Israel, one who is referred to as a shepherd. V4-5a “And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace.” At the same time the nations that invaded will be destroyed. V15 “And in anger and wrath I will execute vengeance on the nations did not obey.” The Lord promises a remnant of Judah will not only survive but will overcome. V7-9 “Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the Lord, like showers on the grass, which delay not for a man nor wait for the children of man. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, which when it goes through, treads down and tears in pieces and there is none to deliver. Your hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off.”

6 – In this chapter, God calls on the hills and mountains to act as witnesses as he pleads his case against his own people. He has rescued them from slavery in Egypt and gave them Moses, Aaron and Miriam as leaders. That is V1-5. In what may be the most important question ever asked, in V6-8, someone responds by asking, “What shall I do? How shall I respond to God?” The Lord answers in V8, “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?” Then it seems that the Lord goes on with his accusations or rather

his outline of the punishment that will come upon them. Here is the expression of life without God in a similar vein to that expressed in Ecclesiastes. V14-15 "You shall eat, but not be satisfied, and there shall be hunger within you; you shall put away, but not preserve, and what you preserve I will give to the sword. You shall sow, but not reap; you shall tread olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil; you shall tread grapes, but not drink wine." How hopeless is this kind of life and the only answer is that which is given in V8 as quoted above.

7 – The situation around seems so hopeless. The nation is filled with wickedness and evil people. All those around have turned against or might betray. V7 "But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me." In spite of how evil things appear, and how serious is God's punishment, the book concludes with total hope in the Lord. This is one of the great promises of the Old Testament. So much of it is true for us as followers of Jesus. V18-20 "Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgressions for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us; he will treat our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old." Let us respond in worship to our God!