

Micah

MEANING “Who is like Yahweh”

AUTHOR: Micah

TIME WRITTEN: Uncertain, but most of Micah’s prophecies ranged from about 735 B.C. to 710 B.C.

POSITION IN THE BIBLE:

- 33rd Book in the Bible
- 33rd book in the Old Testament
- 11th of 17 books of Prophecy
- 6th of 12 Minor Prophet Books
- 32 have preceded it. 33 to follow it.

CHAPTERS: 7

VERSES: 105

WORDS: 3,153

KEY WORD: The Judgment and Restoration of Judah

TWO KEY PASSAGES:

1. **Micah 6:8** - “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”
2. **Micah 7:18** - “Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy.”

TWO KEY CHAPTERS: 6 & 7

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT MICAH:

1. Micah, called from his rustic home to be a prophet of God, leaves his familiar surroundings to deliver a stern message of judgment to the princes and people of Jerusalem.
 - a. Burdened by the abusive treatment of the poor by the rich and influential, the prophet turns his verbal rebukes upon any who would use their social or political power for personal gain.
 - b. One-third of Micah’s book exposes the sins of his countrymen.
 - c. Another third pictures the punishment God is about to send.
 - d. And the final third holds out the hope of restoration once that discipline has ended.
 - e. Through it all, God’s righteous demands upon the people are clear: “to do justly, to lovemercy, and to walk humbly with your God” (**6:8**).
2. Micah’s hometown of Moresheth Gath (1:14) was located about twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem on the border of Judah and Philistia, near Gath.
3. Like Amos, Micah was from the country. Moresheth was in a productive agriculture belt. It still is.
4. Micah’s clear sense of prophetic calling is seen in **3:8** - “But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.”
5. The first verse of the book indicates that Micah prophesied in the days of Jotham (739-731 B.C.), Ahaz (731-715 B.C.), and Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.)—kings of Judah.
 - a. Although Micah deals primarily with Judah, he also addresses the northern kingdom of Israel and predicts the fall of Samaria (1:6).

- b. Much of his ministry, therefore, took place before the Assyrian captivity of Israel in 722 B.C.
 - c. His strong denunciations of idolatry and immorality also suggest that his ministry largely preceded the sweeping religious reforms of Hezekiah.
 - d. Thus, Micah's prophecies ranged from about 735 to 710 B.C., a period of some 25 years.
 - e. He was a contemporary of
 - 1. Hosea in the northern kingdom.
 - 2. Isaiah in the court of Jerusalem in the southern kingdom.
 - f. After the prosperous reign of Uzziah in Judah (767-739 B.C.), his son Jotham came to power and followed the same policies (739-731 B.C.) He was a good king, although he failed to remove the idolatrous high places.
 - g. Under the wicked King Ahaz (731-715 B.C.), Judah was threatened by the forces of Assyria and Syria.
 - h. Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.) opposed the Assyrians and, with God's help, successfully withstood an Assyrian siege. He was an unusually good king who guided the people of Judah back to a proper course in their walk with God.
6. During the ministry of Micah, the kingdom of Israel continued to crumble inwardly and outwardly until its collapse in 722 B.C.
7. Threats loomed on the horizon.
- a. The Assyrian Empire reached the zenith of its power and became a constant threat to Judah. This was done under the leadership of four of its strong kings.
 - 1. Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.)
 - 2. Shalmaneser V (727-722 B.C.)
 - 3. Sargon II (722-705 B.C.)
 - 4. Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.)
 - b. Babylon was still under Assyrian domination and would be until:
 - 1. It would rebel against Assyria in 626 B.C., some 96 years after the northern kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C.
 - 2. Then sixteen years later in 612 B.C., Babylon would overthrow Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrians. (Approximately 150 years after God had spared the city of Nineveh at the preaching of Jonah.)
 - 3. Thus, Micah's prediction of future Babylonian captivity for Judah (4:10) must have seemed so unlikely at the time of his message.
8. Micah exposes the injustice of Judah and the righteousness of Yahweh.
- a. About one-third of the book indicts Israel and Judah for specific sins including:
 - 1. Oppression
 - 2. Bribery among judges, prophets, and priests
 - 3. Exploitation of the powerless
 - 4. Covetousness
 - 5. Cheating
 - 6. Violence
 - 7. Pride
 - b. Another third of Micah predicts the judgment that will come as a result of those seven sins.
 - c. The remaining third of the book is a message of hope and consolation.
 - a. God's justice will triumph and the divine Deliverer will come.
 - b. True justice and peace will prevail only when the Messiah reigns.

9. The “goodness and severity of God” (**Romans 11:22**) are illustrated in Micah’s presentation of divine judgment and pardon.
10. Micah emphasizes the integral relationship between true spirituality and social ethics.
 - a. Micah 6:8 summarizes what God wants to see in His people: justice and equity tempered with mercy and compassion, as the result of humble and obedient relationship with him.
11. The closing section of Micah describes a courtroom scene.
 - a. God has a controversy against His people, and he calls the mountains and hills together to form the jury as He sets forth His case.
 1. The people have replaced heartfelt worship with empty ritual, thinking that this is all God demands.
 2. They have divorced God’s standards of justice from their daily dealings in order to cover their unscrupulous practices.
 3. They have failed to realize what the Lord requires of man.
 4. There can be only one verdict—guilty.
 - b. Nevertheless, the book closes on a note of hope. The same god who executes judgment also delights to extend mercy (7:18).
 - c. No wonder the prophet exclaims in **Micah 7:7** - “Therefore I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my god will hear me.”

SUMMARY OF MICAH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Micah is the prophet of the downtrodden and exploited people of Judean society.
 1. He prophesies during a time of great social injustice and boldly opposes those who impose their power unto the poor and weak for selfish ends.
 2. Corrupt rulers, false prophets, and ungodly priests all become targets for Micah’s prophetic barbs.
 - a. Micah exposes judges who are bought by bribes.
 - b. Micah exposes merchants who use deceptive weights.
 3. The pollution of sin has permeated every level of society in Judah and Israel.
 4. While the three major sections begin with condemnation, they all end on a clear note of consolation.
 5. After sin is punished and justice is established, **Micah 7:19** says, “He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast our sins into the depths of the sea
- C. There are three major divisions in the book:
 1. The Prediction of Judgment. (1-3)
 2. The Prediction of Restoration. (4-5)
 3. The plea of repentance. (6-7)

THE PREDICATION OF JUDGMENT. (1-3)

- A. Micah begins his book by launching into a general declaration of the condemnation of Israel (Samaria) and Judah (Jerusalem).
 1. Both will be overthrown because of their rampant treachery.
 - a. Israel was overthrown by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.
 - b. Judah was overthrown in 605 B.C. by the Babylonians.

2. In Micah 1:10-16, Micah uses a series of wordplays on the names of several cities of Judah in his lamentation over Judah's coming destruction.
3. This is followed by some of the specific causes for judgment:
 - a. Premeditated schemes
 - b. Covetousness
 - c. Cruelty.
4. Nevertheless, God will gather a remnant of His people (2:12-13).
5. Then the prophet Systematically condemns:
 - a. The princes (3:1-4)
 - b. The prophets (3:5-8)
6. He concludes with a warning of coming judgment.

THE PREDICTION OF RESTORATION. (4-5)

- A. Micah then moves into a two-chapter message of hope, which describes:
 1. The reinstatement of the kingdom (4:1-5).
 2. The intervening captivity of the kingdom (4:6 - 5:1).
 3. Concluding with the coming ruler of the Kingdom (5:2-15).
- B. The prophetic focus gradually narrows from the nations to the remnant to the King.

THE PLEA FOR REPENTANCE. (6-7)

- A. In His two controversies with His people, God calls them into court and presents an unanswerable case against them.
- B. The people have spurned God's grace, choosing instead to revel in wickedness.
- C. Micah concludes with a sublime series of promises that the Lord will pardon their iniquity and renew their nation in accordance with His covenant.