

Micah

“Behold the Lord is Coming”

I. Introduction to Micah

“The Word of the Lord that came to Micah . . .”

This is the thirty-third book of the Old Testament and the sixth of the Minor Prophets. Micah, meaning “who is like the Lord”, was a common name in ancient Israel. At least seven Old Testament characters were named Micah or Micaiah. Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah and prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. His prophetic ministry can be dated between 735 – 700 B.C. He prophesied in Israel until its fall in 722 B.C., and then continued his ministry in Judah.

Micah is quoted one hundred years later in Jeremiah. This indicates that his teaching played an instrumental role in the reforms of Hezekiah. These reforms resulted in Jerusalem being spared when attacked by Sennacherib in 701 B.C.

Micah 3:12:

“Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed *like* a field,
Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins,
And the mountain of the temple
Like the bare hills of the forest”.

Jeremiah: “Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“Zion shall be plowed *like* a field,
Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins,
And the mountain of the temple
Like the bare hills of the forest.””

It is possible that while Isaiah was a prophet to the cities, Micah may have spent much of his ministry in the smaller towns. He seems to have been something of an itinerant prophet in that he mentions Jerusalem, Samaria, Gath, Moresheth and a host of other towns; some whose locations are no longer known.

Micah was from Moresheth, a town 21 miles southwest of Jerusalem that bordered the Philistine city of Gath.

Moresheth was a “frontier town” that bordered Gath. As a result of its location, Moresheth would take the brunt of the enemy attacks on Judah.

Micah is an example that small towns can produce large men. Although we know very little about Micah, it seems likely that his name (“who is like the Lord”) indicates that he had parents who were committed to the Lord.

Micah’s message was directed at Judah and Israel, but the truths were designed to be heard by all people and nations. Micah’s God was no provincial deity. He considered Him to be the King to whom all nations must give account.

“Hear all you peoples! Listen, O earth, and all that is in it!” Micah 1:2a

Micah

“Behold the Lord is Coming”

Micah was similar to John the Baptist; a voice crying in the wilderness. He stood against the rising tide of immorality and called the nation to return to the Lord.

Will you heed the message?

Will you turn from the course of?

The world and trust in Christ as King?

Micah explains the source of the energy of his ministry and what fueled the engine:

Micah 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.”

Effective ministry is always empowered by the Spirit of God. How does it work?

We must recognize our need for the Spirit.

Mark 14:38 “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.”

Peter learned this after attempting things in his own strength.

We ask for the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:13 “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”
The context of this is Jesus explaining the need for continual asking until the answer comes.

We are given the gift of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12 lists many of them

We step out in faith.

The power comes when we need it. No reason for the gift of evangelism until we open our mouths and begin to share.

The main theme of Micah is that *God is coming*. Micah speaks of God in three ways:

• ***He is coming to judge the sin of Israel and Judah.*** This would be through the Assyrian invasion. Since Judah heeded the warning, they were spared. The following passage from the Tyndale Bible Dictionary explains the political and historical setting.

The Assyrian Problem

During the reigns of Jeroboam II and Uzziah, Israel and Judah were relatively free from outside intervention.

- But in 745 B.C. Tiglath-Pileser III became king of Assyria and set out to create an empire. He captured Damascus in 732 BC and made vassals of the small states of Israel, Judah, and Philistia.
- Tiglath-pileser III died in 727 BC and was succeeded by Shalmaneser V. In 724 BC Hoshea, the last king of Israel, withheld tribute from Assyria and incurred the wrath of the Assyrians.
- Shalmaneser V began his siege of Samaria in 724 BC, but the people were not subdued until 722 BC. By that time, Sargon II was the king of Assyria. Many of the wealthy and influential people of Samaria were carried into captivity to Assyria (2 Kings 15:29–30; 17:1–41).¹

Micah

“Behold the Lord is Coming”

Sennacherib's Prism, details the events of Sennacherib's campaign against Judah

- The text of the prism boasts how Sennacherib destroyed forty-six of Judah's cities, trapped Hezekiah in Jerusalem "like a caged bird."
- It goes on to state that the Assyrian king returned to Assyria where he later received a large tribute from Judah.
 - This explanation to an extent is incompatible with the one in the Bible. The validity of Assyrian records is not reliable due to the common Assyrian propaganda of their own invincibility.
 - However, the Hebrew Bible's suggestion that Jerusalem was victorious rather than defeated, is corroborated by the Jewish historian Josephus.

¹ Elwell, W. A., & Comfort, P. W. (2001). *Tyndale Bible dictionary*. Tyndale reference library (890). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

•*He is coming to establish His kingdom.*

Micah 4:1 “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it”.

•*Before this happens He is coming as Savior*

Micah 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

II. Outline of Micah

J. Sidlow Baxter offers the following outline for Micah

Section 1	Chapters 1 – 3	Judgment Declared
Section 2	Chapters 4 – 5	Blessings Promised
Section 3	Chapters 6 – 7	Repentance Pleaded

Section 1 Chapters 1 – 3 Judgment Declared

Chapter 1

Micah 1:2 “Let the Lord be a witness against you.” Micah will declare the charges Heaven has brought against them because of sin.

We do not need to have God witness against us; instead we can have Him as our defense

I John 2:1 “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

Micah 1:3 – 5 God is coming to judge sin. Sin, “chata”, means to miss the mark. Israel and Judah were failing to live up to God’s moral standard.

Micah 1: 6 – 7 Result is, Samaria will fall.

Micah 1:8 – 15 Micah’s Response

Micah

“Behold the Lord is Coming”

Much can be learned from how the prophets of old responded to the moral condition of their times.

Micah was Grieved, Wailed, Howled, and Mourned. This may be a picture of personal repentance. Micah 7:1 “Woe is me! For I am like those who gather summer fruits, like those who glean vintage grapes; *there is no* cluster to eat of the first-ripe fruit *which* my soul desires.”

Micah Prayed. “Wailed, howl. . . “This was no doubt done before the Lord, as Micah interceded for the people.

Micah Preached Unwilling to remain silent; Micah exposed the nation’s sins for what they truly were. You can find examples in Micah 2:2, 2:9, 3:9, 3:11, 6:17

Micah Pleaded His messages were intended to cause a response in the people. Although Israel ignored his warnings, Judah (King Hezekiah) responds and brings about change.

Micah became quite creative in his preaching. In Micah 1:16 “Make yourself bald and cut off your hair, because of your precious children; enlarge your baldness like an eagle, for they shall go from you into captivity he calls upon the people to a public commitment to the Lord.

Matthew 3:8 “Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, . . .”

Chapter 2

Chapter 1 announces judgment and Chapter 2 explains the reason.

Micah 2:1 – 5 Those who devise evil.

Psalm 6:6 “I am weary with my groaning; all night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears”. David used his bed as a place to repent and cry out for forgiveness.

Sadly, they used theirs to plan out ways to sin. How do you use yours?

Micah 2:6 – 13 They sought to silence those who proclaimed God’s Word.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 is a plea. Micah seeks to expose the folly of the false prophets who were proclaiming a culturally sensitive message while ignoring the plain truth of God’s Word. Those prophets were more like butchers than shepherds.

Section 2 Chapters 4 – 5 Blessings Promised

2 Timothy 2:13 “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself”.

Many of the promises of God are unconditional. Micah promises what it will be like in the latter days. Latter days: from the birth of Christ until the return and reign of Christ.

Micah

“Behold the Lord is Coming”

Chapter 4

Micah 4:1 – 5 Christ will return to set up His kingdom and reign in righteousness.

Micah 4:3 is also found in Isaiah 2:4 and describes the reign of Christ.

Isaiah 2:4 “He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” (This verse is written on a wall of Ralph Bunche Park in New York City’s United Nations Plaza. However, it will only be fulfilled during the reign of Christ).

Luke 17:20 -21 “Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ for indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” The kingdom is within you. While we must wait until Christ returns for the complete Fulfillment of this promise, it is possible to have a life ruled by the Prince of Peace. Joy, peace, love, righteousness are the characteristics of those governed by Christ.

Micah 4:6 – 13 Micah explains the consequences of turning from YHWH. It will be a period of difficulty, but all will be restored.

Micah 5:2 Micah promises the birth of our Lord.

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, from everlasting.”

Section 3 Chapters 6 – 7 Repentance Pleaded

Chapter 6

Micah 6:1 – 3 God’s complaint against Israel and Judah. “What have I done to you?”

Micah 6:4 – 5 What has He done?

Redeemed them and us.

Protected them and us.

Micah 6:6 – 8 Proper response

How can we know what is pleasing to God? Micah 6:8 tells us.

“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?”

God sets the standard and it is our responsibility to follow it.

Micah

“Behold the Lord is Coming”

Chapter 7

Micah 7:1 Micah is saddened by the lack of men who will stand up and follow the Lord.

III. Why Study Micah

Micah gives insight into the final days of Israel and God’s heart for a dying nation.

A picture of God using many men to declare the same message: Isaiah, Micah, etc.

It gives a beautiful portrait of the kingdom age.

Helps complete the prophetic picture for Israel’s Messiah.

Micah 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

Micah 7:8 “Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD *will be* a light to me.”

Contains great and precious promises:

A picture of pardon.

Micah 7:8 – 9 “Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD *will be* a light to me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case and executes justice for me. He will bring me forth to the light; I will see His righteousness”.

Who is like God?

Micah 7:18 – 19 “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. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea”

IV. Christ in Micah

Promises concerning His first coming.

Micah 5:2 was fulfilled in Matthew 2:6 from ancient times, scribes believed Bethlehem would be the birth site of the Messiah.

Micah 7:6 was fulfilled in Matthew 10:34 – 39

Promises of His second coming.