

## The Book of Micah

<b>There's Just Something About That Name</b>	The name "Micah" means: "who is like the Lord?" The book answers this question. There is no one like the Lord.
<b>The Idyllic Prophet</b>	Micah is a perfect book for understanding how the prophets of the Bible functioned in terms of their message. In the Book of Micah, there is a <i>perfect balance between judgment and hope</i> that occurs throughout the book.
<b>How Judgment and Hope Work in Micah</b>	Each major section of the book of Micah begins with judgment and ends with hope. Because God is just, He must confront and judge evil among his people. But because God is merciful, God's love and promises are more powerful than human evil. Wielded together, both concepts leave the reader with one thought: "there is no one like the Lord."
<b>Introducing Micah</b>	Micah tells us that he was from Moresheth and prophesied during the reign of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. That makes him a prophet of Judah and a contemporary of Isaiah. But also tells us that his prophecy concerns "Samaria" and "Jerusalem." Samaria was the capital of the Northern Kingdom. Jerusalem was the capital of the Southern Kingdom. Thus, Micah's prophecy is for <u>both</u> Israel and Judah.
<b>The Prophet Who Had an Interesting Call to Ministry</b>	In ch. 1, Micah tells us that Samaria "has gathered her gifts from the wages of prostitutes" (1:7). And then tells us that "because of this I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and naked. For Samaria's plague is incurable; it has spread to Judah" (1:8-9).  Unlike Hosea, God didn't tell Micah to marry a prostitute. But he does preach as if God gave him an incurable disease that mirrors the type of diseases that developed from solicitation of prostitution. It paints a picture of why God will judge: the Northern and Southern Kingdom are both guilty of playing the chasing after what is false and must suffer the consequences that come from it.
<b>The Big Idea of Micah</b>	God is just, yet merciful.
<b>The Most Important Verse</b>	<i>"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).</i>
<b>The Way He Preaches</b>	Micah delivers three messages, all of which begin with the word "hear" (1:2; 3:1; 6:1). Each "hear" begins a new section of judgment that God brings in the form of an indictment that is followed by hope.

### God Comes to Judge His People and Then to Deliver Them (1-2)

<b>How He Appears</b>	God appears over Israel the same way he appeared at Mt. Sinai. There is fire, smoke, and an earthquake. But this time he doesn't come to make a covenant with <u>all</u> of Israel. He comes to judge them because of rebellion.
<b>Reason #1 for Judgment and the Consequence</b>	<b>The leaders of God's people have become wealthy through theft and greed. He alludes to the story of Ahab stealing a family vineyard from Naboth in 1 Kgs 21:</b> <i>Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it. <sup>2</sup> They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them. They defraud people of their homes, they rob them of their inheritance. (2:1-2)</i>  <b>Both Israel (North) and Judah (South) will be destroyed and have their fields taken from them the way they have taken them from others. This is a prediction of Assyria destroying Samaria (722 BC) and Babylon destroying Jerusalem (587 BC):</b> <i><sup>3</sup> Therefore, the Lord says: "I am planning disaster against this people, from which you cannot save yourselves. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of calamity. <sup>4</sup> In that day people will ridicule you; they will taunt you with this mournful song: 'We are utterly ruined; my people's possession is divided up. He takes it from me! He assigns our fields to traitors.'" (2:3-4).</i>
<b>Reason #2 for Judgment and the Consequence</b>	Israel prophets are also corrupt. They are glad to offer promises of God's protection to anyone who can afford to pay them. "No," Micah says. God has withdrawn his protection from Israel. <i>"Do not prophesy," their prophets say. "Do not prophesy about these things; disgrace will not overtake us." (2:6)... Get up, go away! For this is not your resting place, because it is defiled, it is ruined, beyond all remedy (2:10).</i>

<p>The Hope that Comes After:</p>	<p>After prophesying Israel and Judah's destruction, he now tells them that a remnant will return to the land. This happened in 539 BC. He also prophesies that a King will come when they return to their land once again. Jesus came during this time in their land, 539 years later.</p> <p><i><sup>12</sup> "I will surely gather all of you, Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people. <sup>13</sup> The One who breaks open the way will go up before them; they will break through the gate and go out. Their King will pass through before them, the Lord at their head." (2:12-13)</i></p>
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<p>The Leaders and Prophets Are the Reason God Will Judge Israel (3-5)</p>	
<p>The Charges</p>	<p>The images here are similar to chs 1-2 but further defined. The reason leaders exploit people is because they love evil. The reasons prophets are corrupt is because they peddle the Word of God for profit and threaten those who call them into question. Serious stuff here.</p> <p><i>Then I said, "Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of Israel. Should you not embrace justice, <sup>2</sup> you who hate good and love evil; who tear the skin from my people and the flesh from their bones; (3:1-2).. "As for the prophets who lead my people astray, they proclaim 'peace' if they have something to eat, but prepare to wage war against anyone who refuses to feed them. (3:5)</i></p>
<p>The Consequences</p>	<p>Because of the leadership corruption, Zion will be flowed like a field (3:12). But what he says about the false prophets is haunting. When Samaria and Jerusalem is destroyed, false prophets will be disgraced:</p> <p><i>Therefore night will come over you, without visions, and darkness, without divination. The sun will set for the prophets, and the day will go dark for them. <sup>7</sup> The seers will be ashamed and the diviners disgraced. They will all cover their faces because there is no answer from God." (3:6-7)</i></p>
<p>The Hope that Comes After:</p>	<p>Micah sees a vision of a New Jerusalem in the future. One that all nations flock to and brings peace to the earth. It's a vision that John uses in Revelation to describe a Heavenly Jerusalem:</p> <p><i>"In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. <sup>2</sup> Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. <sup>4</sup> Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the Lord Almighty has spoken. <sup>5</sup> All the nations may walk in the name of their gods, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever" (4:1-5)</i></p> <p><b>And he sees a Messiah born from Bethlehem who isn't corrupt:</b></p> <p><i>"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." (5:2)</i></p>

<p>The Summary Judgment and Hope (6-7)</p>	
<p>Summary Judgment and Consequence</p>	<p>These two chapters are essentially a combination of the previous ones. Micah's main reason for judgment is laid at the feet of the leaders and prophets for their unjust economic practices. But in this message he tells them what God required of them and what they didn't do:</p> <p><i><u>"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).</u></i></p> <p>As a result, Samaria and Jerusalem will be destroyed.</p>
<p>But There is a Place Called Hope Because Who is Like the Lord?</p>	<p><i><sup>18</sup> Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. <sup>19</sup> You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. <sup>20</sup> You will be faithful to Jacob, and show love to Abraham, as you pledged on oath to our ancestors in days long ago. (7:18-20)</i></p>