

(To Judah)

Old Testament Survey : **M I C A H**

Author: Micah - His name means “Who is like Yaweh” (7:18 is a play of words on his own name). 1:1 states this to be Micah of Moresheth. Moresheth-Gath (1:14) was about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem on the coastal plains near Gath. His family and occupation are unknown. Moresheth was an agricultural area

Date: 739-686 B.C. 1:1 says, “in the days of Jotham (739-731), Ahaz (731-715) & Hezekiah (715-686). Much of his ministry takes place before the fall of Samaria in 722 - which he predicts in 1:6. His strong denouncements of idolatry and immorality suggest that his ministry mostly preceded the religious reforms of Hezekiah, so the bulk of ministry was between 735-710 B.C.

Biblical Context: 2 Kings 15:32-19:37, 2 Chronicles 27:1-32:23, Jeremiah 8
Contemporary: Isaiah, short overlap with Hosea. Reigns of Jotham to Hezekiah

Theme: *Judgment on Samaria & Judah.* Micah exposes the injustice of Judah and the righteousness and justice of Yahweh. About 1/3 of the book indicts Israel and Judah for specific sins including: oppression; bribery among judges, prophets and priests; exploitation of the powerless; covetousness; cheating; violence; and pride. Another 1/3 predicts the judgment that will come as a result of those sins (cf. Deut. 27,28). The remaining 1/3 is a message of hope and consolation that God’s justice will triumph and the divine Deliverer will come. A “remnant” is mentioned in Micah 2:12; 4:7; 5:7-8; 7:18. The “goodness and severity of God” (see Roman. 11:22) are illustrated in Micah’s presentation of divine judgment and pardon. The book emphasizes the integral relationship between true spirituality and social ethics.

Setting: Jotham continued in his fathers’ ways (Uzziah - died 739). There was economic prosperity, but the high places which were the centers of idolatry were still in use. Outward prosperity was a mask for the social corruption and religious syncretism that had developed. Baal worship was increasing and had become integrated with the OT sacrificial system reaching a peak under Ahaz (2 Chr. 28:1-4). Israel and Syria invaded Judah and took Ahaz captive (2 Chr. 28:5-16; Isa. 7:1,2), but Israel was crumbling inwardly and outwardly. Assyria overthrew Syria and then took Israel into captivity in 722 B.C. Thousands of refugees from Samaria came into Judah, bringing with them their pagan syncretic religion. Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem in 701, but an angel sent by the Lord delivered Judah (2 Chron. 32:21). Hezekiah lead Judah back to true worship. Assyria remained a constant threat, so that Micah’s prediction that Babylon, at that time under Assyrian rule, would conquer Judah (4:10) would have seemed remote.

Key Passages

5:2 “But as for you Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.”

6:8 “He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?”

Micah Outline:

- I. Prediction of Judgment (1-3)
 - A. Judgment on People 1:2 - 2:13
 - 1. Judgment on Samaria 1:2-8
 - 2. Judgment on Judah 1:9-16
 - 3. Cause of Judgment 2:1-11
 - 4. Promise of Future Restoration 2:12-13
 - B. Judgment on Leadership 3:1-12
 - 1. Judgment on Princes 3:1-4
 - 2. Judgment on Prophets 3:5-8
 - 3. Promise of Future Judgment 3:9-12
- II. Prediction of Restoration (4-5)
 - A. Promise of Coming Kingdom 4:1-8
 - B. Promise of Coming Captivities 4:9-5:1
 - C. Promise of Coming King 5:2-15
 - 1. Birth of the Messiah 5:2
 - 2. Rejection of the Messiah 5:3
 - 3. Work of the Messiah 5:4-15
- III. Plea for Repentance (6-7)
 - A. First Plea of God 6:1-9
 - B. Second Plea of God 6:9-7:6
 - C. Promise of Final Salvation 7:7-20