

THE VOICE OF THE LORD



PART 4 THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS

MICAH

It is advisable first to read the Preface in Part 1, also the Introduction to the Minor Prophets which precedes the Study on Hosea and to read each book prior to studying it. The section on each prophet is a complete Bible Study. Only a brief summary of the words of *The Voice of the Lord* (*red italics*) can be conveyed.

INTRODUCTION

Little is known about the prophet Micah, except that he came from a small place in the south of Judah. He prophesied (750 – 686 BC) during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah of Judah and was a contemporary of the prophets Isaiah and Hosea. In the Book of Jeremiah (26: 18) Micah is referred to as the prophet from Moresheth, who prophesied in the reign of King Hezekiah.

Micah clearly foretold the end of the Northern Kingdom (Samaria 722 - 721). His message also revealed the evil social conditions which prevailed in Judah before Hezekiah's religious reforms. Although these reforms caused Jerusalem to be delivered from capture by Nebuchadnezzar, Micah also predicted the ultimate fall of Jerusalem and exile.

Like all the prophets, Micah prophesied both the Lord's judgement and the hope of final deliverance in the Messianic Age.

Read Micah 1: 1 - 9

The Lord's judgment against the transgressions of Samaria and Jerusalem, (capital cities of Israel and Judah), came to Micah in a vision addressed to all peoples on earth. His prophecies concerning the Assyrian conquest of Samaria were fulfilled during Micah's life; the invading forces even penetrating to the gates of Jerusalem. The nation's shameful ruin and exile had come from the Lord!

Going barefoot, naked, and weeping through Jerusalem, Micah lamented Samaria's utter destruction, the foundations and pagan shrines being reduced to rubble according to *the Voice of the Lord*.

Therefore I (the Lord) will make Samaria a heap in the open country.

Micah 1: 6a

All her carved images shall be broken in pieces.

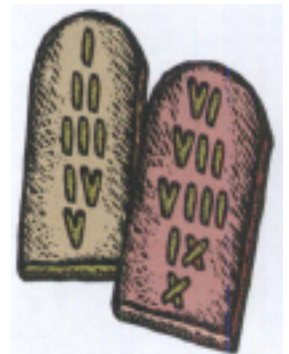
Micah 1: 7a

Read Micah 2: 1 - 3

Micah predicted disaster because the rich and powerful, in stealing and coveting, oppressed the poor and broke the 8th and 10th commandments.
(Exodus 20: 15,17)

Therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, against this family (this people) I am planning a disaster.

Micah 2: 3a



Read Micah 2: 6 - 13

Micah was opposed by the false prophets who preached an acceptable message to the house of Jacob - unlike God's words to those who transgressed His commandments.

Do not My words do good to him who walks uprightly?

Micah 2: 7b

The *Voice of the Lord* to Micah continued to convey a message of hope with the promise that the Remnant of Israel (the nation) would return and God's Messiah would break through the gate and lead them.

The Breaker (the Messiah) will go up before them. They will break through the gate, and their King will pass on before them, the Lord at their head.

Micah 2: 13

Read Micah 3: 1 - 4, 8 - 12

Micah's message continued to rebuke the cruel, unjust leaders and rulers of Israel who hated good and loved evil.

In the Spirit of the Lord, Micah declared the sins of bloodshed, greed and bribery of the priests and false prophets. Therefore, there was no answer from God, although they complacently believed the Lord was in their midst and no evil would befall them.

The false prophets foretold peace.

Micah prophesied God's impending judgement of Jerusalem's destruction.

MOUNT ZION A PLOUGHED FIELD

Therefore shall Zion be ploughed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps (of ruins), and the mountain of the house of the Lord like a densely wooded height.

Micah 3: 12



A century later the prophet Jeremiah quoted these words.

This is the only example in the OT where one prophet quoted another.

(Jeremiah 26: 18)

It should be noted that right up to recent years Mount Zion remained a ploughed field; and the only part of Jerusalem ever ploughed.

Micah predicted this 2000 years before.

In the 16th century AD Jerusalem's walls, destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar, were rebuilt by Suleiman the Magnificent.

Fulfilling the prophecy, Mt. Zion was the only part of the city not enclosed within the walls.

THE LORD'S TEMPLE MOUNT

Read Micah Chapter 4

Again Micah gives a message of hope, for in the last days the Temple Mount shall be the highest. Nations will come to Zion and the *Voice of the Lord* will go out from Jerusalem.

In Messianic times the Lord shall judge between many peoples.

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 any more. Micah 4: 3b

In that day, says the Lord, I will assemble the lame, and I will gather those who have been driven away and those whom I have afflicted. Micah 4: 6

For the nearer times, Micah prophesied the exile to Babylon. The end of the kingdom took place on the fall of Jerusalem in 586BC. This was the Lord's punishment.

Micah continued to prophesy hope after judgement, for the people would return after 70 years and their enemies punished as foretold by Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 25: 11)

In the distant future, a Remnant (God's people) would return for the Lord's plan is to rescue and redeem Israel and restore the monarchy.

RULER FROM BETHLEHEM PROMISED

Read Micah 5: 1 - 5

As the Book of Jeremiah records, Jerusalem's last king, Zedekiah, was taken captive to Babylon. His sons were killed in front of his eyes before he was blinded. (Jeremiah 39: 6, 7)

The *Voice of the Lord*, through Micah, prophesied another King would come from Bethlehem bringing peace and deliverance.



But you, Bethlehem Ephratah, you are little among the clans of Judah; yet out of you shall One come forth for Me Who is to be Ruler In Israel, Whose goings forth have been from of old.

Micah 5: 2

In that day Israel's enemies will be judged and destroyed.

There will be no weapons of warfare, idol worship, carved images, witchcraft and sorceries in the land of Israel.

GOD'S CHARGE AGAINST ISRAEL

Read Micah Chapter 6:

In the Lord's case against Jerusalem, He calls upon the mountains of old as witnesses.

It was the Lord Himself Who brought them out of Egypt with a mighty hand, redeeming them from slavery through Moses and Who led them across the River Jordan into Canaan.

In the Promised Land, the Lord desired from His people obedience from the heart; and not countless animal sacrifices for sin offered as a ritual by so many. Micah stated what the Lord required from the Israelites.



He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, and to love kindness and mercy, and to humble yourself and walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6: 8

The Voice of the Lord calls to the city (Jerusalem) – and it is sound wisdom to hear and fear Your name.

Micah 6: 9

The *Voice of the Lord* made accusation against His people for God's laws have been broken. There was widespread wickedness and violence; also dishonesty in the use of false scales and weights.

In one of the many Proverbs of Solomon, (Proverbs 10: 1 – 22: 16) Honesty is praised and Dishonesty condemned.

A false balance and unrighteous dealings are extremely offensive and shamefully sinful to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight.

Proverbs 11: 1

The *Voice of the Lord* charged Israel with the guilt of many sins causing the Lord to inflict His dire punishment of loss and destruction.

Therefore I will give you over to ruin and your people to derision; you will bear the scorn of the nations.

Micah 6: 16b

MICAH'S LAMENT

Read Micah Chapter 7

In misery for his people, Micah laments the many social evils in the land and impending judgement of Zion.

Finding godly people was like looking for fruit when the harvest was over.

Friends and neighbours could not be trusted. Even family life had broken down.

Micah having foretold the fall of Jerusalem could only watch and wait in certain hope for the God of his salvation.

ZION WILL ARISE

A day would come when Zion would be delivered.

In the near future, the people of Judah returned to rebuild Jerusalem after 70 years.

In the End Times Messiah's reign would fulfil the Lord's plan of deliverance for Zion.

In the day that your walls are to be built, in that day shall the boundary of Israel be far extended and the decree against her be far removed.

Micah 7: 11

The *Voice of the Lord* promised His wonders -

*As in the days of your coming forth from the land of Egypt,
I will show them marvellous things.*

Micah 7: 15

The enemy nations will be ashamed and turn to the Lord in awesome fear.

Micah's name means - Who is like the Lord?

Micah used his name to convey a message of the Lord's forgiveness and loving-kindness.

Who is a God like You, Who forgives iniquity and passes over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retains not his anger forever, because He delights in mercy and loving-kindness. He will again have compassion on us; He will subdue and tread underfoot our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

Micah 7: 18, 19

The last verse ends with Micah's faith in the *Voice of the Lord*, God's promise on oath to Abraham long ago.

(Genesis 22: 16 - 18)

You will show Your faithfulness and perform the sure promise to Jacob and loving-kindness and mercy to Abraham, as You have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.

Micah 7: 20



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