

A sunset over the ocean with a large white circle in the center. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of pink, orange, and blue. The water below is calm and reflects the colors of the sky.

MICAH

Study Guide

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Micah

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Chapter 1

Prophecy, normally, begins with the fact that G-d is not pleased with His people. Within prophecy we find that there are messages of hope and redemption, but, by and large, prophecy is given in order to reveal to people their sin - in the hopes that they will repent and turn back to G-d. In the prophecy of Micah, we see that G-d is displeased because the people are, once again, engaging in idolatry. This idolatry (false religion) began in the Northern kingdom, however, slowly but surely, it began to infect the tribes in the South – the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Micah began to prophesy prior to the exile of the Northern kingdom (these ten tribes were exiled around 721BC). Although he addressed both the Northern kingdom and the Southern kingdom his emphasis was on Judah. He warned the kings of Judah not to follow the same error of idolatry that their Northern brothers did.

Verse 1: *“The word of the L-rd which was to Micah of Moresheth -in the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah- a vision concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.”*

The word of the L-rd: There is an inherent relationship between Scripture (the truth of G-d) and being able to repent. When we sincerely encounter the truth of G-d, not only hearing it but also wanting to implement it in our lives, we have the potential to bear fruit worthy of repentance (Matthew 3v8).

Micah: The name Micah means ‘Who is like G-d?’. It is a name that refers to the uniqueness of G-d. G-d is compassionate, merciful and He redeems, but He is also a righteous Judge.

Moresheth: This word speaks of heritage – possession or inheritance. There is a connection between the heritage of G-d and His prophetic (covenantal) promises. If we want to inherit what G-d has promised then we need to be people who respond to His truth – recognising and demonstrating His authority in our lives.

Jotham: 2 Kings 15v32-38

Ahaz: 2 Kings 16

Hezekiah: 2 Kings 18 -20

Kings of Judah: While these kings were ruling in the South there were kings ruling in the North. The fact that they are not mentioned tells us that G-d had ceased to recognize that Northern kingdom. (The Northern kingdom, called Israel, had been initiated in rebellion and was apart from the purposes and plans of G-d. They established their own kingdom and made Samaria their capital).

Note: When we reject the truth of G-d and begin to behave rebelliously (against the commandments of G-d) we will soon fall into idolatry.

Idolatrous people are vessels of unrighteousness - worshiping and submitting to influences that do not come from the G-d of heaven.

Vision: Usually refers to a heavenly revelation.

Samaria: The capital of the Northern Kingdom

Jerusalem: The capital of the Southern Kingdom (the capital that G-d recognized, and the capital where G-d's kings ruled, and will rule!, from).

Verse 2: *"Hear O peoples, all of you! Listen land and its fullness! For it will come about that the L-rd G-d, who is among you, He will be a witness - the L-rd from His Holy Sanctuary."*

Listen: It is not enough to just hear. The purpose of prophecy is to hear in order to respond.

Peoples: Can refer to the twelve tribes of Israel.

Land and its fullness: Many of the rabbinical scholars say that this is not just referring to the land of Israel. This has implications for all of humanity.

L-rd: "Adonai". This word speaks of G-d's rule. He is the master overall.

Among you: G-d did not create and then step away from His creation. He is still intimately connected to it and is the ruler over it.

A witness: The language here is reminiscent of a court room. G-d summons a heavenly court to judge the people. There is only one witness, and that witness is G-d. He does not need any other testimony in order to make His judgment. This speaks of His sovereignty.

Holy Sanctuary: The Holy of Holies.

Verse 3: *"For behold the L-rd goes forth from His place, He will come down and tread upon the high places of the land."*

Tread: Step upon

High places: In one sense this can be understood as 'high' in the sense of pride. G-d is going to move against pride, and its manifestation, in the world.

High places were also known as places of idolatry. G-d totally rejects those who are involved in idolatry. Idolatry will bring the judgment of G-d down upon His people and also upon the world.

Verse 4: *"The mountains will melt underneath Him. The valleys will be split as wax is before fire, as water which is poured out upon a ramp."*

Melt: G-d's hot anger causes things to melt or dissolve. These mountains are reduced back into their original form – the form they were in before G-d moulded and shaped them.

Wax is before fire: When wax is placed near a fire it cannot be stopped from melting.

Water which is poured out upon a ramp: Water poured down a slope runs quickly and cannot be stopped. Nothing in our power can change these laws of nature. When G-d's judgment comes no man will be able to stop it. Yet, even in judgement, G-d will extend mercy and grace toward those who will respond to Him.

Verse 5: *“With the transgression of Jacob is all of this, and with the sin of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? What is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?”*

Transgression: Transgression is not just simply, in ignorance, sinning by missing the mark. At the core of transgression is the desire to wilfully rebel – knowing what is right but choosing what is wrong. This wilful choosing of wrong is what brings G-d's judgment.

All of this: All of what G-d is upset about. G-d is not pleased with His people and it can all be attributed to their rebellious spirit or attitude.

Samaria: The capital of the Northern kingdom where the kings of Israel (excluding Judah) resided. It was the capital of idolatry and the chief high place for the nation of Israel. This idolatry caused an incorrect rule (government) that did not reflect the character of G-d. Wrong worship leads to corrupt government.

Samaria... Jerusalem: Micah is using the Hebrew poetic law of parallelism (lumping Samaria and Jerusalem together in the same basket – so to speak) in order to enhance the reader's ability to gather revelation. To be compared to Samaria would have been shocking to the people of the South. They knew it was because of rebelliousness that this kingdom had broken up. They knew of the spiritual and the governmental corruption, and they did not think of themselves as being anything like their Northern brothers. Micah is saying that G-d is as displeased with Judah as He is with Israel.

Verse 6: *“And I will set Samaria as a heap of rubble in the fields, a place that is worth nothing more than for the planting of a vineyard. I will pour out -as a heap of stones- that valley, and I will uncover her foundations.”*

A heap of rubble: Samaria would be destroyed. Under the kings of the North, Samaria had become a city of great prosperity and splendour. G-d told them that, as an outcome of His judgment, all they had so carefully built up, in order to manifest their wealth, was going to become nothing more than a heap of rubble in the fields.

Pour out -as a heap of stones - her valley: G-d is going to take the very foundations of that valley and scatter it like stones.

Uncover her foundations: He is going to reveal that Samaria is corrupt at its very core.

Verse 7: *“For all of her statues are going to be beaten to pieces, and all of her wages as a harlot shall be burnt up with fire. All of her idols I will make a desolation. For the income of the harlot will be gathered up, and this income of the harlot will return.”*

Wages as a harlot: Samaria received an income for her sexual immorality.

Note: There is a link between idolatry and sexual immorality. The harlots served idolatrous purposes. Men would come and worship idols, but, in order to end their worship experience, they would have immoral relationships with the temple prostitutes and would then pay the required fee. The government also benefitted from this. They received payment for turning a blind eye to these practices (They legalised it, so to speak).

This income of the harlot will return: Micah is prophesying that this wage would no longer benefit the leaders (nor those who engaged in idolatry) but would return back to the harlot.

Verse 8: *“On account of this I will lament, and I will cry. I will go stripped and naked; I will make lamentations as a jackal, and also mourning like an ostrich.”*

Naked: Whenever nakedness is mentioned in the Bible it conveys shame.

Note: The outcome of idolatry is weeping and lamentation. Ultimately it brings shame upon the people. Instead of having a G-d-pleasing testimony, and being a light to the nations, they are going to be an emblem of shame. Instead of knowing the joy of the L-rd they are going to be weeping.

Jackal: A jackal howls when it is night-time – in a time of darkness.

Mourning: A word that describes an intense sadness; a great sorrow that brings about emotional pain.

Ostrich: An ostrich puts its head in the ground to hide itself. This conveys an image of shame.

Note: G-d is going to bring mourning and shame upon the people. These were not words that people wanted to hear, but they were words that they desperately needed to hear. Only words like this can penetrate the hardness of our hearts and produce the kind of repentance that will be acceptable to G-d. There is a close connection between repentance and prophetic revelation. Without prophetic revelation the people would continue in their sin.

Verse 9: *“For fatal is her blow. For it has come unto Judah. It is coming unto the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem.”*

Fatal: A word that speaks of someone who is still alive but there is nothing more that can be done to save them. It is only a matter of time until they die.

Her: Referring to the nation of Israel (the Northern kingdom).

Coming unto: Or touching. This is a word that can be used to refer to a plague – either a physical plague (a disease, e.g. leprosy, that renders a person unclean and therefore unacceptable to G-d) or a spiritual plague.

Gate: Gates were related to a place of judgment (Ruth 4v1-11). This verse informs us that G-d's punishment is also going to touch (arrive at, strike) the people of Judah. It is going to render the people unclean before Him. It is going to bring a critical, or fatal, situation upon the people.

Verse 10: *“In Gath do not declare it; weeping do not weep. In the house of Aphrah roll yourselves in the dust.”*

Gath: An enemy city belonging to the Philistines.

Do not declare it: Their enemies would not have been able to rejoice over G-d's judgement if they did not hear of it.

Aphrah: There is a play on words in this verse. The name of this town “House of Aphrah” literally means “House of dust”. This town is, literally, going to be reduced to dust.

Roll...in the dust: This is a form of repentance; a way of showing humility and mourning.

Verse 11: *“Go forth, you who dwell in Shaphir, naked and in shame. For you will not go forth, O dweller of Zaanan; (there will be) weeping of the house of Ezel, your status will be taken from you.”*

Note: The places mentioned here were places of significance and would have been well known at that time. However, they were places that did not survive, and nor were they rebuilt when the people returned from exile.

You will not go forth: They would not be able to go where they wanted to go, and nor would they be able to do what they wanted to do.

Weeping: Lamenting. Their tears are going to go unanswered.

Taken from you: Their spiritual weakness led to what they had being removed from them. The conclusion we can draw from this is that idolatry leaves us empty, ashamed, full of sorrow etc - the exact opposite of what true worship brings about. Those who practice idolatry have no fruit of the Spirit. They have shame, defeat, and a poor testimony among the nations.

Verse 12: *“For there was a hoping for good among the dwellers of Maroth, but evil came down from the L-rd to the gate of Jerusalem.”*

There was a hoping for good: The people did not know G-d. In the midst of their rebelliousness, they had a misplaced hope that G-d would relent. Their hope was not based upon the truth of G-d, but was based upon the fact that they thought that they could sin and not suffer the consequences of it.

Maroth: A city of Judah.

Evil: This was manifested to the people through exile. Exile is not only the punishment of G-d, but it is also a removal from the land of promise. The people became slaves to their enemies. They were not able to worship according to Torah worship. From the beginning G-d wanted to place upon His people His good will – life, love, blessing. They, however, chose poorly and experienced death and the curse (evil).

Verse 13: *“Fasten to the chariot the swift horse, O dweller of Lachish – the beginning of sin. Did it not make its way to the daughter of Zion? For in you is found the transgression of Israel.”*

Swift horse: They wanted to sin/transgress and do what their flesh desired, in the hope that they could outrun and escape the judgment of G-d.

Lachish: A border city in the Southern kingdom. Some say it was a city close to the Philistines.

The beginning of sin: The idolatrous practices (the fulfilment of a rebellious heart - going after other gods as a means of trying to legitimize sinful desires) of the Southern kingdom began in this city of Lachish. G-d is aware of where it began, and these people were not going to escape.

Make its way to the daughter of Zion: Zion is another word for Jerusalem. Their sin had implications that attacked the very promises and the purposes of G-d for His people.

Verse 14: *“Therefore give gifts unto Moresheth Gath; the house of Achzib shall be a lie to the kings of Israel.”*

Give gifts: They offered a bribe (made a treaty) with the Philistines in an attempt to escape judgment, but they were unsuccessful.

Moresheth Gath: The city of the Philistines.

Achzib: There is again a play on words. Achzib means to lie or to deceive. The Philistines received the bribe and made promises, but they spoke deceptively. Their promises turned out to be false. In the time of calamity there was no response from the Philistine people.

Kings of Israel: These kings made alliances with Assyria and with other individuals. In time they found out that these alliances were of no profit to them. The surrounding nations were not trustworthy. They did not help Israel to accomplish her own purposes.

Verse 15: *“Another heir I will bring to you O inhabitant of Mareshah, unto Adullam comes the glory of Israel.”*

Heir: Inheritor. They were not going to inherit the blessings of the covenant in the short term. Someone else (another heir) was going to inherit these things.

Mareshah: Another city in the Southern kingdom.

Adullam: An obscure place. David went there when he was hiding from Saul (1 Samuel 22v1-2) Even those who dwell in obscurity will experience G-d’s judgement.

Verse 16: *“Make your head bald. Shave off your beard concerning the sons of your delight. Make wide your bald heads as an eagle - for they are going into exile, departing from you.”*

Bald: This was a sign of shame.

Shave off your beard: This was a sign of humility.

Sons: The next generation. Scripturally when we think of the next generation we should be thinking of Kingdom fulfilment - we want our children to experience the goodness of G-d. These children, their next generation, are not going to experience the goodness of G-d. Instead, they will experience mourning, shame, and humility.

Going into exile: They are departing from the land of promise and inheritance.

Departing from you: They are going to be separated from their loved ones.

Chapter 2

When we think rightly, in light of Scripture, G-d will change us, so that what He desires becomes our desires. Proper desires manifest themselves in proper behaviour. When we serve G-d (doing those things that are right in His eyes) it impacts our ability to worship Him. In this chapter G-d reveals to the people why they are going to go into exile.

Verse 1: *“Woe thinkers of wickedness, those who act evilly upon their beds. In the light of the morning they do it, because they have the power in their hand.”*

Woe: This word foreshadows something that is going to be disastrous if no change occurs.

Wickedness: Wicked desires are unrestrained and rooted in the sinful nature. They cause us to think carnally – i.e. not to have the mind of Messiah (1 Corinthians 2v16). How we think is going to influence how we behave (whether we grow in righteousness or whether we increase in wickedness).

Note: The measure that we use will be measured out to us (Matthew 7v2). One of the spiritual laws is that when we think and act wickedly against others G-d responds accordingly. If we do not repent He acts adversely toward us.

Act evilly: While they are in bed they plan out and mull over how they can fulfil their wicked deeds for the next day.

Morning: Light is related to the revealing of something/revelation. The morning light reveals the true intent of these people.

They do it: What we think in our minds we will do. This is why it is so important to think according to the truth and righteousness of G-d.

Power: The word translated “power” comes from the Hebrew word “El” (אֱלֹהִים). “El” is the root word that is used in many of the names of G-d. What this verse is literally saying is that the people carry out their wicked plans because they have G-d in their hands, so to speak. They want G-d to be in the palm of their hands so that they can control Him, so that they can be in charge and make the rules etc – this is idolatry and leads to wickedness. The enemy, who loves to accuse, gives them the means to carry out the plans they have planned.

Verse 2: *“They covet the fields and steal them by force. They lift up homes and oppress a man and his household, a man and his inheritance.”*

Fields: The implication is that these fields are the inheritance, or possession, of other people.

Lift up homes: They take possession of homes that are not rightfully theirs.

Oppress a man and his household: They like to see other people suffer. They not only take material possessions, but they also oppress (possibly enslave) the man, and those close to him, so that they can achieve their own ambitions.

Note: Those who are ambitious for the things of G-d (His will) are going to be a blessing to others. Those who are ambitious to fulfil their own desires will cause injury to others.

His inheritance: Alludes to the next generation.

Wicked actions may harm an individual, may have an adverse outcome on his family, and may even harm those in the next generation (his grandchildren and great grandchildren). Likewise, we know that blessing can have long-term, even eternal, consequences.

Verse 3: *“Therefore thus said the L-rd: “Behold I am thinking, concerning this family, evil. Which you all will not be able to remove your necks from there. And you will not walk in an exalted way, for the time is evil.”*

Said: Many times, in prophecy, we see that what G-d says is written in the past tense. This should remind us that G-d is transcendent -He is not bound by anything, including time. He is the G-d of the past, present, and future. He can see and know what will be. When He speaks in the past tense about something that has present or future implications He is saying that this is assured and is surely going to happen.

This family: His covenantal people. Israel -in the broadest sense of the word.

Evil: This word means ‘that which is contrary to G-d’s will’.

Note: G-d desires that all people repent and find life (1 Timothy 2v3-4). His laws are applied equally to all individuals (He did not create some so that the opposite of His will would be placed upon them – He is not a respecter of persons and has no favourites, Romans 2v11). Within this context, G-d had a desire/purpose to use Israel to be a blessing to those around them. As they blessed others they too were going to be blessed. This was G-d’s perfect will for them. However, their rebellion (incorrect thoughts and ways) led the Holy And Righteous G-d to do to them what had not been His will from the beginning – to punish their sin.

Necks: This reveals a slight hint of G-d's mercy. He is displeased with the people. As a Righteous Judge He punishes sin. These people will not be able to remove themselves from His judgement. However, this judgement is to their necks. This means that it is not all-consuming. The people will not experience a complete outpouring of G-d’s wrath.

Exalted: Full of pride, a haughty spirit.

The time is evil: Israel is not going to experience G-d's will, what He created her to experience. Instead, they are going to experience the opposite of His will. They are not going to remain in the land that He promised them, but they are going to go into exile.

Verse 4: *“In that day this parable will be lifted up unto you. And he spoke lamenting, utterly lamenting: ‘For we have been plundered, and the portion of my people will be exchanged. How will this be taken from me? To the mischievous one our fields will be divided.’”*

In that day: The words used here (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא) are words used to refer to judgement day. Most scholars believe that Micah wrote this prophecy about 2800 years ago - before the Northern kingdom went into exile and so, therefore, approximately 200 years before the Babylonian captivity. G-d was patient with Judah and gave her many years to repent. However, in all that time, G-d saw no desire from the people to embrace His will.

Parable: A proverb. Usually a short statement, or teaching, full of wisdom. Parables teach us spiritual truths or principles. These truths should govern or rule our lives. When we submit to truth we manifest those qualities which are pleasing to G-d. In that day G-d is going to manifest His wisdom to the people through discipline (sending the people into exile).

Utterly lamenting: They were going to enter a time of great sorrow because they were going to lose everything. Jerusalem and the temple were going to be ruined and everything of value carried away.

Plundered: Destroyed

Exchanged: It is a word that has to do with a transfer. Value that belonged to one will be changed and there will be a new possessor of it. What G-d gave to the Southern Kingdom was going to be given into the hands of someone else.

Mischievous one: The word used here has to do with an enemy, an oppressor.

Verse 5: *“Therefore there will not be to you a caster of a rope, in your lot, within the congregation of the L-rd.”*

Caster of a rope: This speaks about a time when someone would receive an inheritance (a plot of land). People would go to the border of the land with a rope. They would throw/cast that rope and where it landed would mark the boundary of their land. Where the rope was thrown from would be the start of the land, and where the rope landed would mark the end of the boundary. Not having anyone to perform this task meant that there would be no future inheritance for this people.

Lot: This word can mean future.

Verse 6: *“Do not preach O preachers. Do not preach to these. For not will overtake (us) this shame.”*

Do not preach: The people did not want to hear what was being said. They did not want others to preach these revelations.

Preachers: Preachers learnt revelation from the prophets. They would then take their words and preach them to others.

Not will overtake (us) this shame: The people believed that they would not experience shame or embarrassment.

Verse 7: *“Will it be said to the house of Jacob that the L-rd is short spirited? Are these His deeds? Surely my words will do good if you in uprightness walk?”*

Short spirited: Impatient. They wanted to know if Micah was saying that G-d had run out of patience. They believed in a god who was forever patient, always loving, and gracious.

However, this is not the nature of the Biblical G-d, who loves righteousness and judges sin.

Are these His deeds: They wanted to know if this is how the G-d of Jacob behaves. These people did not want to hear prophecy, because prophecy did not connect with their wrong understanding of the nature of G-d.

My words will do good: This is what the response is from the true prophet.

Uprightness: Straight. These people were not interested in that which is straight (upright or fitting). They rejected the commandments of the L-rd and therefore His anger was going to fall upon them. G-d has a good word, but it is only for those who live in an upright manner.

Verse 8: *“Recently my people have become an enemy; they have risen up against a garment of splendour, they have stripped it from those who pass by, like the returners of war.”*

Recently: Micah is speaking about a current situation.

My people have become an enemy: The implication is that they have become an enemy to G-d. G-d has absolute standards and we need to submit to His authority. When we do not we set ourselves up against G-d.

Stripped: Stolen

Those who pass by: These words speak of a traveller who trusts that he is safe because he is in the land of Israel. He expects it to be a land of justice and righteousness and does not expect it to be a dangerous location. He travels with a false sense of confidence and assurance.

Returners of war: When victorious armies returned from battle they went through the enemies land. They would take the spoils of war from every enemy town or village that they went through. The people of Israel and Judah were treating the travellers like those whom they had conquered. They would see something that they liked (e.g. a costly garment) and they would strip it off the person. They did not behave with G-dly hospitality (Leviticus 19v33-34).

Verse 9: *“The women of my people you are divorcing from the house of her pleasant ones. From upon her children you take My Glory forever.”*

Divorcing: Casting away. The family was in disarray and dysfunctional. The men were devaluing women. They had departed from that which was good to something that was not good (another name for this is apostasy).

Her pleasant ones: Context tells us that this is referring to her children.

You take My Glory: G-d had a purpose for these children. G-d's purpose was in family - a family that consisted of a father and a mother. Men casting women aside (divorce) has eternal consequences. Divorce is not something that is insignificant. A family is supposed to manifest the glory of G-d. These families cannot. They are attacked and weakened spiritually.

Verse 10: *“Rise up and go, for this is not My rest. For on account of this (defilement) you will experience terrorism, a very intense harm.”*

Go: Live. A word for lifestyle. We should live under the purposes (will) of G-d.

Rest: This word is a Kingdom word that is also related to the Sabbath. The Sabbath rest is a foretaste of Kingdom rest. Micah is telling that the people that the way that they are living (their lifestyle) is not producing rest. This is another reason why G-d is displeased with the people.

(Defilement: That which is unclean.)

Terrorism: Hardship

Intense harm: G-d is going to place upon the people a strong blow, a strong destruction.

Verse 11: *“For will a man walk spiritually and lie and deceive? And will he say, ‘I preached to you wine and strong drink’. Such preaching is fitting for these people.”*

Walk spiritually: This man professes that he is walking spiritually, but he is a hypocrite.
Wine and strong drink: Relates to those who want to experience folly. They are happy with a manufactured happiness/satisfaction that comes through alcohol. This false joy, however, wears off quickly and is not based on reality. These people want a preacher that makes them feel good – they are not looking for reality or basing their lives upon truth. They want to escape into a fantasy world that makes them feel good.

Verse 12: *“I will gather gather up Jacob, all of you. I will assemble assemble the remnant of Israel together. I will place them as a flock in a sheep pen, as a herd in the midst of the fold. And a humming from man.”*

Note: Very few verses up to this point have spoken of hope or good news. This verse ushers in an encouragement. G-d is a keeper of covenant! He will keep covenant with a remnant of Israel. Despite the fact that the people have not changed, G-d is going to keep covenant with them based upon His grace, mercy, love, and compassion.

Gather: This word for gathering together (קָבַץ) is repeated twice – this emphasises the fact that G-d is going to gather up His people completely or totally.

Assemble: This word (אָסַף) is also repeated twice, emphasised. G-d is absolutely and completely going to assemble the remnant of Israel (Matthew 24v31).

Note: Based upon who He is, G-d is going to gather up and assemble all of the remnant. His faithfulness brings about a true repentance from the people.

Flock (of sheep): These sheep are not literal sheep, but are human beings. In John 10 Yeshua (Jesus) tells us that He is the Good Shepherd. A good shepherd gathers the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15v24). Messiah gathers up the remnant – this verse hints of a Messianic prophesy.

The midst of the fold: A place where they will be safe.

Humming: A great noise coming from men. This could mean that there will be much talk (buzz) from the world because of what G-d does in bringing the people back to the land (This could be in a positive or in a negative sense).

Verse 13: *“He is going to go up and burst forth before them, and they are going to burst forth and pass through the gate. They are going to go out with Him. And their King will pass before them, with the L-rd at their head.”*

He: This is a reference to Messiah.

Going to go out with Him: They are going to go out from exile in Him or with Him.

Their King: Another reference to Messiah.

At their head: He is leading them.

Note: These last two verses are full of parallelism. We have seen that to gather up was related to assemble, that a flock was related to a herd, and a sheep pen was related to a fold. This verse now shows us that the King (Messiah) is related to the L-rd (G-d). All this parallelism demands that, by this, we understand the divinity of Messiah (Yeshua). He is L-rd G-d.

Chapter 3

When Messiah spoke about the prophets He told of how they were abused, persecuted, and even put to death (Matthew 23v34-36). In Revelation 10v7 the prophets are called the servants of G-d. One of the things we see consistently in Scripture is that true prophets were men of integrity. They spoke what they heard, regardless of the consequences. The people, however, did not revere the prophets, and nor did they see them as speaking for the L-rd G-d Almighty. Micah revealed truth, but this truth was not embraced. He was not heard in a way that led to true repentance.

Verse 1: *“I have spoken. Listen please, O heads of Jacob and O officers of the house of Israel: Surely to you to know the justice?”*

Heads: Leaders. In this chapter there is an emphasis upon the corrupt leaders. They are not interested in the commandments of G-d, nor in worshipping Him in a way that is pleasing to Him. They are not interested in their responsibilities to guide and lead the people in the ways of G-d. They are extremely selfish, and this (together with their desire for profit) has brought idolatry into the nation.

Officers: Biblically this word speaks about one who might be a cabinet official in the government.

Surely: Something that they should obviously understand.

To know the justice: Micah reminds them of their primary responsibility. The definite article in front of justice makes it specific – their role is to know the justice of G-d. When G-d's glory is present His power is also there. When injustice is common there is no manifestation of G-d's glory or power. This is an invitation for the work of the enemy to be present in that place, or in that person's life.

Verse 2: *“You hate good, and you love evil. You steal their skin off them, and their flesh you take from their bones.”*

You hate good: These leaders are not ignorant, but they are rebellious. They know what is right and what is wrong, and yet they choose to reject the way of G-d (His will). They hate the will of G-d because it is in opposition to their own wills.

Evil: This word simply means that which is contrary to G-d's will. These leaders love acting in a way to defy G-d. They love the things that are in conflict with the purposes of G-d.

Steal their skin off them: An idiom for murder.

Verse 3: *“They eat the flesh of My people, and the skin from upon them they strip off. Their bones they break, and they divide up just as one would put into a pot - just as meat is in the midst of a cauldron.”*

Eat the flesh of My people: These leaders feed themselves at the expense of others. It is the exact opposite of what the Torah teaches - loving our neighbour as we love ourselves (Leviticus 19v18, Jude 1v12).

Verse 4: *“Then they will cry out to G-d, but He will not answer them. He will hide His face from them in this time when they make their deeds evil.”*

Note: This verse explains to the people why the enemy is coming to take them into exile. *He will not answer:* They will cry out. G-d will hear them (He always hears), but He will not respond to them.

Hide His face: This is an idiom, and it relates to G-d’s blessing (Numbers 6v24-27). G-d is not going to respond to these people and nor is He going to bless them. They are not going to know G-d’s activity in their lives.

Make their deeds: Wilfully they went against G-d’s good and perfect will. With full knowledge of what they were doing they acted contrary to Him.

Verse 5: *“Thus said the L-rd concerning the prophets who caused My people to go astray. For they bite them with their teeth, and they proclaim ‘peace’ which He did not place upon their mouth. They are inviting Him to make war.”*

Said: See explanation for Micah 2v3. He is prophesying about a future exile.

Prophets: False prophets

Caused My people: The grammatical construction shows that it was done with intent. It was a purposeful desire to lead the people astray.

Bite them with their teeth: The objective of the false prophets was to devour the people. These prophets told the people what they wanted to hear. Their false words were used to exploit and injure the people for the own personal, financial, and material gain of the false prophets.

They proclaim ‘peace’: The people wanted to hear that everything was going to be okay. The false prophets were teaching the opposite message to what Micah was proclaiming – they were refuting that the people were going to go into exile but instead gave them the false hope of peace.

He did not place upon their mouth: G-d did not give them this revelation, and nor did He tell them to proclaim peace.

Inviting: This is the same word used for something that is sanctified or made holy - set apart for a purpose (שָׁדָד). The people, by their false actions and ungodly behaviour, are inviting G-d to make war against them – instead of being set apart for a holy purpose they will be set apart for destruction.

Him: G-d Himself.

Verse 6: *“Therefore, night will be unto you from (without) a vision. Likewise, darkness unto them from their sorcery. The sun will come upon the prophets and it will be darkness unto them in the day.”*

Note: G-d acts in a way that ensures the false prophets are silenced and their prophecies are proved false.

Night will be unto you from (without) a vision: These false prophets are not going to receive any visions, at night, from G-d. They are going to come out publicly to say that they have heard nothing.

They are going to stop practicing prophecy because everything that they have told the people was proved false.

Sorcery: Divination

It will be darkness unto them: They will have no revelation to share with the people.

Verse 7: *“The one who has visions will be ashamed. The one who makes divination will be disgraced. They are going to cover their moustache, for there is no answer from G-d.”*

Divination: Sorcery

Moustache: Many English Bibles say ‘lips’ but it is literally the word for moustache. Facial hair, in this culture, was a sign of respect. Mature individuals had facial hair. To cover up their moustache showed that they were going to be humiliated. This verse, therefore, means more than just having to be quiet. They are going to be humiliated when G-d shows that their prophecy is false and that they are lying, deceiving individuals.

No answer from G-d: Once more they are turning to G-d, but He is not going to receive them and nor will any more revelation be given to them. When we walk in disobedience, and have selfish objectives, it causes us to live devoid of revelation.

Verse 8: *“However, I have been made full of power with the Spirit of the L-rd, with justice and might to declare to Jacob his transgression and to the house of Israel their sin.”*

However: This shows a contrast. Micah was very different to the false prophets.

I: Referring to Micah.

Full: That which is complete. Micah operates in a complete way, in the full stature that a G-dly prophet should.

Spirit of the L-rd: The Holy Spirit brings order into our lives. When we walk according to our own desires and imaginations our lives will be disordered. When we are under the authority of G-d, and have a desire to obey for the sake of being used by G-d and accomplishing His purposes, He will make us a recipient of His power. The source of that power is the Spirit of the L-rd.

To declare to Jacob his transgression: One of the chief purposes of the Holy Spirit is to bring conviction. He convicts us of those things in our lives that are against the will of G-d and against His righteous standards. All believers have a ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5v18). Part of that ministry is to manifest the righteousness of G-d. When we violate His righteous standards, the Holy Spirit is faithful to convict us and point out that what we are doing is wrong.

Note: Micah brought to the forefront the violations of G-d's standards – the sinfulness of the people. If there is going to be true repentance the first thing that the Holy Spirit points out to us are those areas in our lives (those things in society etc) which are displeasing to G-d.

Verse 9: *“Hear please **this**, O heads of the house of Jacob, O officers of the house of Israel, the ones who abhor justice and also that which is upright they work actively against.”*

This: When this word stands alone it refers to the primary thing that G-d wants to share with the people.

Abhor justice: The leaders are not ignorant. They know exactly what they are doing, and they are functioning with intent. The word 'abhor' speaks of a strong or intense feeling of repulsion. They hate justice so much that it makes them sick.

They work actively against: A word of absolute disobedience, stubbornness, working in opposition to.

Verse 10: *"Who want to build up Zion through bloodshed, and Jerusalem with injustice."*

Want to build up Zion: They are trying to make their own kingdom, as they are not interested in the Kingdom of G-d. They do not want a kingdom that reflects justice, righteousness and the character of G-d.

Bloodshed: The word is in the plural. It shows an abundance. They are willing to shed much blood in order to build their kingdom (Matthew 24v9)

Jerusalem: The capital of that kingdom.

Verse 11: *"And its leaders make judgement for a bribe; and for a price the priests teach; and her prophets, with silver, they do sorcery; concerning the L-rd they lean on saying, 'Surely the L-rd is in our midst, and it will not come upon us evil.'"*

Leaders: The leaders of Jerusalem

The priests: One of the primary responsibilities of a priest is to teach. These priests taught based upon how much the people were willing to pay.

Concerning the L-rd they lean on: They give a false impression. They pretend to be people who trust G-d with their words and actions, and they give off the impression that they have His support.

It will not come upon us evil: What they are calling evil is the prophetic revelation of Micah. This simply confirms that these people were not interested in the truth or purposes of G-d.

Verse 12: *"Therefore, on account of you, Zion will be a ploughed-up field, and Jerusalem will be a great heap of ruins, and the temple mount is going to become a high place within the forest."*

You: Speaking to the leaders, false prophets and priests who do not teach the truth of G-d.

Zion: Speaking of a Kingdom hope/promise. The people wanted it to be a reality, but it will not be.

A ploughed-up field: A field is ploughed up because it is being prepared for the next season's harvest. What Micah is saying is that for this season, in the lives of these people, there will not be any harvest. The Kingdom promise is ploughed up and is not going to be realized in this generation.

A great heap of ruins: This foreshadows that the enemy is going to come. G-d is going to bring the enemy because He is righteous.

Within the forest: The temple mount was going to become like a plateau made bare, rid of trees. People preferred to practise idolatry in elevated/high places. Micah is telling the people that Jerusalem was going to become a place of idolatry. Today we see this fulfilled.

On the temple mount there is a pagan structure - built in the name of a false, Islamic, god.

Chapter 4

After G-d has given a prophecy of His judgment, He frequently speaks a message of hope. This shows that His promises (although they are distant) are still a possibility. The second coming of Messiah, to establish His Kingdom on Earth, is not going to happen until there is a change in Israel's spiritual condition. He will only return when Israel says, "Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the L-rd" (Matthew 23v39). This chapter shows us what that change is going to look like (Verse 1-3 is very similar to Isaiah 2v2-4).

Verse 1: *"And it will come about, in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the L-rd will be made correct, the head of all mountains. It is going to be lifted up above every hill, and peoples are going to stream into it."*

Last days: When we speak of the last days or end times we could be speaking about a few different time periods:

1. Peter, in Acts 2v16-18, used a Scripture from the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2v28-29) to say that they were (in a very broad sense) living in the last days.
2. Some people narrow the end times down to an unknown period of time spoken about by Yeshua – birth pangs, persecution etc (Matthew 24).
3. Some narrow it down even further to the last seven years spoken of by Daniel in Daniel 9v27.
4. In this chapter when the term "the end times" is mentioned it is not speaking about any of these periods of time. Rather, it is speaking about the millennial Kingdom.

Mountain: In prophetic terms a mountain speaks of a seat of government, a place of administration. It can be thought of as where an empire is based (see Daniel 2v35 and 2v45).

The mountain of the house of the L-rd: The Kingdom government is going to be based in the temple. Messiah is going to dwell within this temple during the Millennial kingdom (Numbers 7v89 – G-d is omnipotent and sovereign. He is everywhere. However, in a unique way, G-d dwelt in the Holy of Holies. This is the same place that the antichrist goes into in order to set himself up to reign – 2 Thessalonians 2v3-4, Matthew 24v15)

Correct: In the last days, G-d is going to bring the temple into a place of being right or proper. He is going to do this by the presence of His Son. Yeshua is going to sit in that place where the glory of G-d had been.

Head: The chief. It is going to be the government over all governments.

Lifted up: Exalted in a glorious manner.

Hill: A synonym for a mountain.

Peoples: In the plural. Many different people - people from different backgrounds, different cultures, different languages, different colours of skin, etc.

Stream: In the noun form (it is a verb here) this word means "river". In Revelation 17v15 John speaks about many waters. He is not literally speaking about water but is speaking about many, diverse people groups.

Verse 2: *“And many nations will say, ‘Go, let us come up to the mountain of the L-rd, to the house of the G-d of Jacob; and He will teach us from His ways, and we will walk in His pathways. For from Zion will go forth the law, and the Word of the L-rd from Jerusalem.”*

Nations: Many different ethnic groups.

The G-d of Jacob: The name Jacob means ‘one who follows after with a purpose. One who is pursuing a reward’ - that reward is inherently related to the will of G-d.

Note: In the Bible, we never see ‘the G-d of Abraham’ or ‘the G-d of Isaac’ standing alone. They are always referred to in the form of: “The G-d of Abraham, the G-d of Isaac and the G-d of Jacob”. “The G-d of Jacob”, however, frequently stands alone, and should remind us that we are to pursue the purposes of G-d – and that pursuit of Him ends with reward.

He will teach us from His ways: We are going to be taught based upon how the L-rd behaves. He wants us to behave like He behaves.

Zion: This is a Kingdom word. In Hebrew prophecy and poetry Zion is parallel to Jerusalem. We can define Zion by simply speaking about Jerusalem in her redemptive state – after she has experienced that redemption which is brought about by the return of Messiah.

The law: When Messiah rules and reigns from Jerusalem, His administration is going to be based upon the law, the Torah, the commandments (Romans 8v3-4 - the law is not the instrument that makes us righteous, but it defines what righteous, and unrighteousness, is).

The Word of the L-rd: In the same way that Zion is parallel to Jerusalem so, too, is the law parallel to the Word of the L-rd.

Verse 3: *“He will judge between many peoples and reprove strong nations, even those that are far away. They will beat their swords into gardening equipment, and their spears will become pruning shears. Nation will not lift up against nation a sword, nor will they be taught any more war.”*

Judge: Messiah is going to judge based upon the commandments of G-d. His Kingdom is going to be a Kingdom of righteousness.

Reprove: He will convict those who are against the character of G-d. Through His commandments we learn about His character. Messiah never sinned. Throughout His life He manifested the character of His Father. Although He was tempted, He never violated the commandments of G-d. This fact meant that He could be the perfect sacrifice for our sin.

Gardening equipment: Shovels or spades

Pruning shears: Pruning shears are an instrument that cut unhealthy or dead leaves off a bush etc. This same word is used in regard to worship. When we worship G-d properly (taking His Word and applying it to our lives) worship acts as a pruning shear. Worship helps us to get rid of those things that hinder us. G-dly worship changes us so that we are better able to serve G-d (John 15v1-8).

Nor will they be taught any more war: It will be a time of true peace. There is only one way for peace to be established - and that is according to G-d's plan – through Messiah (Romans 5v1).

Verse 4: *“And a man will dwell underneath his vine and under his fig tree, and no one will make him afraid. For **the mouth of the L-rd of Hosts has spoken.**”*

A man will dwell underneath his vine and under his fig tree: This is an idiom for rest. Rest is an outcome of peace. When G-d's righteousness is established, when His ways are embraced, we experience peace.

No one will make him afraid: There will be nothing that hinders us from functioning according to the will and purposes of G-d.

L-rd of Hosts: An idiom meaning that G-d is completely mighty and powerful to carry out anything that He wants to do.

Spoken: This word relates to the revelation of G-d.

Note: It is the Word of G-d that brings this (righteousness, peace etc) all about. G-d's Word, His truth, brings change.

Verse 5: *“For all the people walk in the name of his god, but we walk in the name of the L-rd our G-d - forever and ever.”*

Name: Name is synonymous with character

His god: People choose a god according to the character of that god - what they want that god to be.

But: In contrast

L-rd (יהוה): The sacred, holy name of the unique G-d who transcends everything.

Forever and ever: Because of who G-d is there will never be a need to change. Idol worshipers were constantly changing their gods. We, however, understand that there is only **One** G-d (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), and He stays the same forever.

Verse 6: *“‘In that day,’ declares the L-rd, ‘I will gather up the one who limps, and I will assemble the outcasts and the one whom I have done evil to.’”*

In that day: Again, referring to that day of judgment.

I will gather: This is how His administration will function when He has set up His throne, in this world, and when He judges.

I have done evil to: G-d is holy and only does what is right. Sometimes, because of our disobedience, He has to punish us. That is not His will from the beginning. His will (from the beginning) is to bless us so that we experience abundant life. However, when we are rebellious G-d does not do what He desired to do (bless, comfort, heal, etc) He has to do just the opposite. He is talking here about those who have not experienced His blessing but who have experienced His punishment.

Verse 7: *“And I will make the one who limps into the remnant, and the one who is an outcast I will make into a mighty nation. The L-rd will reign over them in the mountain of Zion, from now and forevermore.”*

Limps: Cannot walk properly

Reign: Rule

From now: He is talking about from the time that Messiah takes up His rule in Jerusalem.

Forevermore: Throughout the time of the Millennial Kingdom, and on into the eternity of the New Jerusalem.

Verse 8: *“And you, tower of the herd and the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto you it is coming the government, as the first government, and the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.”*

Note: To understand the second half of this chapter we have to remember that Micah is speaking about events that were going to take place during the Babylonian captivity. These events can teach us about what is also going to happen at the end of days, when G-d comes to establish His Kingdom.

You: He is speaking to Israel collectively.

Tower: A strong tower

As the first government: He is prophesying about a restoration. G-d’s original purposes are going to be bought about.

Verse 9: *“Now why do you shout a shout? The king is not among you? Has your counsellor perished? For will seize you (labour) pain as a woman who is giving birth.”*

Now: This word speaks to the people of Micah’s day – those present at that time or in their near future.

Shout: A term for lamenting.

Note: In this verse Micah is, in a sense, mocking the leadership. They had a king and they had counsellors. They had exactly what they had wanted – according to their own ways and choices (1 Samuel 8). However, despite having those leaders, bad things – like labour pains - were going to come upon them.

Verse 10: *“In pain break forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman who gives birth. For now, you will go forth from her city. You will dwell in the field and you will come to Babylon. But there I will deliver you. There the L-rd will redeem you from the hand of your enemies.”*

In pain break forth: When Israel transitions into becoming the Kingdom of G-d it is going to be a very painful transition (Jeremiah 30v7 – those last 3 ½ years of Daniel’s 70th week -Daniel 9v27).

Her city: Jerusalem is going to go into exile.

In the field: Those who live in the city have walls of protection around them. Those who live in fields are in a very vulnerable position -they have no walls to surround and protect them.

Note: Micah prophesies about the near future of the people of Israel going into the Babylonian captivity. In the same way, that time of trouble is going to resemble the time of trouble that Israel is going to experience in the last days (although it is going to be a lot worse for Israel at the end). The message of hope is this: The G-d that redeemed, rescued, and delivered the people out of Babylon can be trusted to do that in the last days too.

Verse 11: *“Now there shall be gathered unto you many nations. And they will say, ‘Let you be defiled, let our eyes have a vision for Zion.’”*

Now: Micah goes back to the present time.

Defiled: There are going to be many who do not want the promises of G-d to Zion to be fulfilled. These nations will not have a Kingdom vision. They want to see the destruction of Zion as they are opposed to it.

Zion: Kingdom

Verse 12: *“They do not know the thoughts of the L-rd, they do not understand His counsel. I will gather them up like one gathers wheat onto the threshing floor.”*

They: These enemies

Gather them: G-d is going to gather His people.

Gathers wheat: A picture of harvest time.

Verse 13: *“Rise up and thresh, O daughter of Zion. For your horns I will set as iron, and your hooves I will make bronze. I will grind into powder many nations. All their profit will be dedicated to the L-rd, and their wealth will be to the Master of all the earth.”*

Rise up and thresh: It is time for the people to get to work – they need to do what G-d wants them to do.

Thresh: Getting rid of the chaff in order for the grain to be received (Israel needs to learn what is right and what is wrong, what is permissible and what is impermissible).

Bronze: Could also be translated copper or brass.

Grind into powder: Through Messiah, G-d will thin out many nations.

Profit: Assets, resources

Their wealth will be to the Master: G-d is going to inherit everything, because He is the King of kings and the L-rd of lords.

Verse 14: (Chapter 5v1 in English Bibles): *“Now be a battalion, O daughter of the battalion; a siege is going to be set upon you. With a rod they will strike the cheek of the judge of Israel.”*

Be a battalion: Get ready to go to war.

Note: Micah is not speaking about the Babylonians here. He has turned his attention to Messiah.

A siege is going to be set upon you: During the Roman rule over Israel, Rome laid siege against Jerusalem. It was also in this time period that Messiah was struck.

Judge of Israel: Speaking about the Messiah. Yeshua, being struck (Matthew 27v30, Luke 22v64), has great significance in this whole prophecy about being redeemed, the Kingdom being established, and this King of kings and the L-rd of lords ruling forever and ever.

Chapter 5

This chapter is a clear, and agreed upon, Messianic prophecy.

Verse 2 (Verse 1 in the Hebrew Bible): *“And you, Bethlehem of Ephrathah, small to be among the thousands of Judah, from you (Bethlehem) of Me a ruler of Israel. His origin is from before, from the eternal days.”*

Bethlehem: The place where it was prophesied that Messiah would be born (Matthew 2v1-6). Bethlehem means ‘house of bread’. Biblically, bread is seen as sustenance. It is a source of life. It is not by accident that Messiah Yeshua called Himself the “bread of life” (John 6v31-35). At the time of King David, Bethlehem was an important city. People, who travelled long distances, would pass through Bethlehem in order to stock up on provisions. At the time of Yeshua (2000 years ago) Bethlehem had lost some of its prominence among the Jewish people, as they were not traveling back and forth so much anymore.

Ephrathah: Comes from a Hebrew word which speaks of fruitfulness (fruit is visual proof that something good is going on).

Small: Insignificant. Bethlehem was not seen as a place of significance.

Of Me: This expression teaches us that Messiah comes from G-d. There is unity between G-d and Messiah (As the only begotten Son – John 3v16 –Yeshua is tied to divinity. He is G-d).

Note: The birth of a child does not speak of its beginning (It began to live long before it was born). A birthing speaks of a manifestation or a revealing of who that child is, what he looks like etc. Likewise, the birth of Messiah does not speak about His beginning (He has always existed). His birth simply speaks of His manifestation to the world. This prophecy reveals to us that the manifestation of Messiah was going to begin in Bethlehem.

Ruler: (**מוֹשֵׁל**) This term is not too common in the Scripture. It is a word also used in Genesis 45v8 to speak of Joseph when he was ruling and making decisions for Pharaoh in Egypt. Joseph is a typology of Messiah, meaning this: as we study the life of Joseph we can learn a great deal about Messiah.

Origin: Related to the beginnings of. Messiah is eternal. He was not created, and there was never a time when He did not exist.

From before: He was there before the days of creation. Messiah has the same origins as G-d.

Note: This verse ties Messiah not only to the promise of the Son of David (2 Samuel 7v12-14 -by telling us that He is going to be born in Bethlehem i.e. David’s hometown -1 Samuel 17v12), but it also emphasizes the identity of Messiah as G-d among us. Micah emphasizes the eternal aspect of Messiah.

Verse 3: *“Therefore He will give them up, until a time where the one who bears has borne, and the rest of His brothers will return, the sons of Israel.”*

Note: Although there is a Messianic hope the fulfilment of it is not going to happen in the days of Micah. We do not see a renewal (a spiritual change that is pleasing to G-d) taking place here.

He: Most likely G-d.

Give them up: G-d is going to put Israel into very difficult circumstances because of their disobedience and rebellion.

The one who bears his burden: Messiah taught about being born again (John 3v1-21). This new birth talks about a transformation – what many theologians refer to by the word ‘regeneration’. The intent of this Scripture is to reveal to us that G-d is going to give Israel over for a period of time. They will experience a new birth (transformation, regeneration) at the end – when this world transitions into the Kingdom of God (Matthew 23v37-39).

His: Referring to Messiah

The rest of His brothers: The remnant of the Jewish people.

Sons: Children. When the Bible uses the word for ‘son’ (heir) it often wants to convey to us an understanding of inheritance.

Verse 4: *“And He will stand, and He will rule with the power of the L-rd and in the majesty of the name of the L-rd His G-d. And they will dwell. For now He will be great, until the ends of the earth.”*

He: The King who is going to come from Bethlehem, the One who is of G-d.

He will stand: He will manifest Himself.

Rule: This is a word of shepherding. It speaks about Him being that great or chief shepherd (John 10v11, 14).

Name: Synonymous with character

Dwell: In this context this word speaks of stability and security.

Note: This verse foreshadows a Kingdom reality. Messiah will manifest Himself; He is then going to rule over them with power and majesty.

For now: Can be understood as “at that time,” i.e. when this all happens. This word has a sense of urgency attached to it.

He will be great: He is going to have dominion and rulership over all creation, all of G-d's workmanship.

Verse 5: *“And this One will be peace. Assyria will come into our land and he will step upon our palaces. There will rise up against him seven shepherds and eight princes of man.”*

Peace: (שָׁלוֹם) This word does not simply mean that there is going to be no war, but it is a word that speaks of completion - the will of G-d being fulfilled. Messiah will fulfil the will of G-d which will lead to Biblical peace. When G-d's will is not being fulfilled, peace is not established.

Assyria: From a Biblical perspective, the largest and most powerful empire. In this prophecy Assyria represents the enemy – an empire that is against the things of G-d and against the Jewish people.

Our land: The land of Israel.

Step: Tread, cause destruction

Upon our palaces: The enemy will seek to destroy the leadership.

Seven: A number of holiness. Holiness is connected to the purpose of G-d.

Eight: The number eight speaks about redemption; it speaks about change.

Note: Seven shepherds and eight princes speak about two types of rule. Under the leadership of Messiah, the enemy is going to be defeated. That defeat leads to a change. Holiness and righteousness will be established. This will lead to true worship.

Verse 6: *“They will rule the land of Assyria with a sword, and the land of Nimrod at their entrances. He will save (His people) from Assyria, for He has come to our land, for He has treaded upon our borders.”*

They: Those seven shepherds and eight princes. This is not speaking about a literal seven shepherds and eight princes. It is symbolic language - talking about what the rule of Messiah is going to bring about (holiness and newness).

Sword: Sword is synonymous with war.

Nimrod: Relates to Babylon (Genesis 10v8-12)

Entrances: Gates. In Judges 16v2-3 Samson was victorious over the city because he took its gates. Capturing the entrance into the city was a way of expressing victory.

Save: Deliver. Those people who are in bondage to the enemy are going to be delivered through the victory/rescue of Messiah.

Verse 7: *“And there will come about the remnant of Jacob in the midst of many peoples; they will be as dew from the L-rd, as abundant showers upon the grass, which will not be hoped for by man and not hoped for by the sons of man.”*

Remnant of Jacob: In the last days, a remnant of the Jewish people will be right with G-d and obedient to Him.

Many peoples: Many nations

Dew...showers: These words are references to water. Biblically speaking, water is synonymous with blessing.

Not hoped for: Dew or rain (seen as a blessing) does not fall dependant upon the desires or hopes of man. Nothing we do can make it rain. G-d is not obligated to send rain, but because of who He is He does send it. When it rains we do not thank individuals for it - we praise G-d. In the same way, Israel becoming this fulfilment (a blessing to the nations – Genesis 12v3) is not dependent upon man. G-d will get the glory for it.

Verse 8: *“And it shall come about that the remnant of Jacob, among the nations, in the midst of many people, will be as a lion among the animals of the forest, as a young lion among the herds of the flock of sheep. Who, if they pass, trample and tear – there is no saviour.”*

Note: Like the dew or the rain, Israel can be a source of blessing if she responds faithfully to what G-d is doing. If, however, Israel rejects what G-d is doing, in order to establish His Kingdom, then what she does will turn into a disaster (she will be like a lion in the midst of domesticated animals).

Animals: The word used here (בְּבֵהֵמָוֹת) usually refers to domesticated animals. These are animals that are not aggressive and do not cause harm. They are not good fighters.

Young lion: A strong lion

If they pass: If these young lions pass through the area where the domesticated animals are they thwart (work in opposition to) the things of G-d.

There is no saviour: There is no deliverer for those people who stand in opposition to the plans and purposes of G-d.

Verse 9: *“And you will raise up your hand against your enemies, and all your opponents will be cut off.”*

Cut off: In Hebrew it is improper to say that you are ‘making a covenant’. A covenant is not made, a covenant is cut. (Daniel 9v26 tells us that Messiah is going to be “cut off, but not for Himself “. Most scholars understand that this refers to the crucifixion of Yeshua. The night before He died Yeshua, knowing that His blood was going to be shed on Passover, said: “This is my blood of the new covenant” – Matthew 26v28. The covenant that G-d establishes is either a covenant of blessing or it is a covenant of curse. The world is opposed to the purposes of G-d, so they are not going to find blessing. This covenant is going to be an instrument that cuts them off eternally.)

Verse 10: *“‘And it shall come about on that day,’ declares the L-rd, ‘That I will cut off your horses from your midst, and I will cause to be destroyed your chariots.’”*

On that day: Whenever this term is mentioned it is a reference to judgment - more frequently than not it refers to that final judgment.

I will cut off: A covenant has terms and conditions attached to it. Based upon G-d’s covenant promises, He is going to take His people and make them into a treasured people, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. G-d moves in a way to get rid of wrong thinking and actions. He brings about a change in order to purify His people.

Verse 11: *“I will cut off the cities of your land, and I will destroy all your fortresses.”*

The cities of your land: These cities have great resources – they have stored up the wealth of the people.

Destroy: G-d is going to destroy everything that people have trusted in (more than Him).

Fortresses: Symbolizes the strength of the army.

Verse 12: *“I will cut off those who practice sorcery from your hand, and also fortune-telling there will not be.”*

Sorcery... fortune-telling: G-d is going to get rid of all wrong religious practices.

Verse 13: *“I will cut off your statues and your sacred pillars, and no longer will you worship anymore the works of your hand.”*

Statues...sacred pillars: G-d is going to destroy idolatry and idolatrous practices.

Verse 14: “*And I will uproot your Asherim from your midst, and I will destroy your cities.*”

Asherim: One of the great sins of Israel was that they practiced a pagan form of idolatry which celebrated the sexual act. These sacred pillars and wooden images were constructed in memory of these gods of immorality.

Cities: Places of wealth. Nations practiced idolatry because it was a source of income or wealth.

Verse 15: “*And I will make, with hot anger, vengeance upon the nations which did not hear.*”

Make: Can also be translated “do”. It is a word of action.

Hot anger: Great wrath

Note: This verse confirms prophetically for us that G-d’s Kingdom will not be established until His wrath is first manifested (1 Peter 4v17). G-d is going to get rid of every unclean, ungodly, idolatrous thing in the nation of Israel (Ezekiel 37v23). When G-d’s judgment begins we need to realise that it is going to be for the sake of purifying His people and bringing them to repentance.

Vengeance upon the nations: In Judges 6v25-28 G-d commanded Gideon to destroy the idolatrous things among the people of Israel. This was not a popular or easy thing to do. It was only after getting Israel back to spiritual correctness that G-d then moved against her enemies (Judges 7) - the nations (as has been prophesied in this verse).

Did not hear: Faith comes by hearing (Romans 10v17). In the last days G-d is going to move, in a mighty way, against those nations who have rejected the message of the gospel. He is going to bring them to nothing and cast them into their eternal state of condemnation – into the lake that burns with fire and has no end.

Chapter 6

Verse 1: *“Hear now please what the L-rd is saying, ‘Rise up and contend with the mountains. Listen O hills for your voice.’”*

Hear: This word is not just about physically hearing. It is a word that demands an obedient response.

Now: In the Bible, by and large, the Hebrew text is written in the future tense (called imperfect) or in the past tense (called perfect). The present tense is seldom used. When it is used it should remind us that this is rare and, therefore, we need to pay special attention to what is being said or revealed to us. This verse speaks about a time of opportunity (It reveals the same intent to us as what is read in Psalm 95v7-8 - **“Today** if you hear His voice do not harden your heart”)

The L-rd is saying: This chapter gives us insight into the mind of G-d – what He is thinking when He looks at His creation. Before His Kingdom is established He will, first and foremost, deal with the remnant of Israel. They must be brought to faith in order for the Kingdom of G-d to be established.

Contend: Have conflict

Mountains: Government, authority. G-d is displeased with the leaders (He has a contention) and He wants people to hear this.

Verse 2: *“Hear O mountains the contention of the L-rd, you strong foundations of the earth. For the contention of the L-rd is with His people. With Israel He will argue.”*

Contention: A word of conflict. G-d is going to make His displeasure known to the world.

Foundations: G-d’s displeasure goes right back to the foundations, the very basic things, of this world. When G-d brings a change, it will be complete/holistic. Yeshua taught us that a time is coming when all things (of heaven and of earth) will pass away (Matthew 24v35). Revelation 21v5 tells us that all things are going to be made new when Messiah returns (a type of second creation). This Kingdom change/transition, to Israel and to the world, is going to be brought about through G-d’s anger and judgement. Over and over in prophecy we see that at the end of this age G-d is not pleased with His people. Romans 11v25 tells us that a time is coming when the time of the Gentiles is going to be complete and come to an end. G-d is then going to move, quickly, to fulfil His covenantal responsibilities to Israel. He is going to turn His attention back to Israel and is going to move rapidly to bring about a spiritual change among the people. This is ultimately going to bring about the Kingdom of G-d (Matthew 23v39).

Verse 3: *“My people, what have I done to you? How have I wearied you? Answer Me!”*

My people: G-d is addressing them personally.

What have I done to you: G-d wants to know if He has done anything improper, anything to show that He has not been faithful to His covenantal responsibilities or obligations.

How have I wearied you: G-d wants to know if He has required so much from the people that this is now why they are living in disobedience.

Answer Me: He is asking the people to respond to Him.

Verse 4: “For I have brought you up from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery I have redeemed you. And I sent before you Moses, Aaron and Miriam.”

Brought you from the land of Egypt: The first Passover, a physical redemption with spiritual implications, was a very significant event in human history. It gives us the lens (the perspective) to understand the work of Messiah, our Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5v7) The Passover of Messiah Yeshua was spiritual, but it has physical implications as well.

The exodus from Egypt should always remind us of G-d’s redemptive work - what He has done in order for us to become His people. G-d has done **everything** necessary for redemption. The question is whether we will receive it and submit to Him, by faith, or not.

Redeemed: Biblically there are two words that are used to describe redemption.

1. The payment or work needed in order for redemption to take place. This is the word used here (פְּדִיָּה). A sacrifice had to be made in order for freedom (the second form of redemption) to be purchased.
2. The outcome of redemption – i.e. salvation, freedom, or kingdom victory. The freedom that comes from redemption is freedom to serve G-d.

Moses, Aaron, and Miriam: A family who were used by G-d in a mighty way.

Verse 5: “My people, **remember** please the council of Balak, the king of Moab, and how answered him Balaam the son of Beor. I was with you from Shittim to Gilgal, on account that you might know the righteousness of the L-rd.”

Remember: This is a covenantal word. When the word ‘remember’ is used in the Scripture it is in regard to remembering a covenant obligation - usually G-d remembering His covenantal obligations despite our faithlessness.

Balak: Balak wanted the people of G-d to be cursed (Numbers 22-24) He did not have the mindset of G-d.

Balaam: Jude 1v11 tells us that Balaam rushed greedily for profit. Balak wanted to pay Balaam to put a curse on the Jewish people. Balaam was not saying anything good when he said that he would only do what the Word of G-d told him to do – even if Balak gave him his house full of silver (Numbers 24v13). The New Testament teaches us that what Balaam was actually saying was that he was going to be obedient to G-d unless he was paid a lot of money.

According to Revelation 2v14 Balaam taught Balak how to bring destruction on the Israelites by causing them to sin - enticing them with sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols (See Numbers 25). This disobedience followed the people of Israel through the wilderness, from this place -Shittim (Acacia Grove)- until they got to Gilgal (Joshua 5v2-10).

Gilgal: On the Israeli side of the Jordan river – close to Jericho.

Know the righteousness of the L-rd: The generation in the wilderness were judged and died in the wilderness because of their sin, but nevertheless there was a remnant (Caleb, Joshua, and the next generation) that experienced G-d's faithfulness and were brought into the land of Israel – the first point of entry being Gilgal.

Verse 6: *“With what will I approach before the L-rd? And how will I bow before this exalted G-d? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings? With calves that are a year old?”*

Approach: To go before. To draw near to G-d. This is an idiom for worship.

Exalted: High

Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings: Is this the way to approach Him?

Verse 7: *“Will the L-rd be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of the womb for the sin of my soul?”*

Pleased: Satisfied

Thousands...ten thousand: The question being asked here is if G-d wants and delights in extremely large offerings.

Give my firstborn: Some nations did give their firstborn children to their gods. Israel was guilty of this as well.

Verse 8: *“He will tell you, man, what is good. This is what the L-rd desires from you rather - to do justice, and do the love of grace, and walk humbly with G-d.”*

He will tell you: This is a verse of revelation. G-d reveals what we can do in order to be pleasing to Him as well as how to have a G-dly testimony.

Good: The will of G-d.

Desires: A word of strong passion. It speaks of an absolute obligation.

Rather: In contrast to what was said about burnt offerings, calves, rivers of oil and thousands of rams.

To do: It is a word of lifestyle. G-d wants us to live like this –not one day a week, but every single day of our lives. This is the testimony that He wants us to have.

Justice: We are called to be an executor of justice. Whenever there is injustice we are called to act. We need to walk in a way that demonstrates a commitment to G-d's standards of justice - not this world's standards of justice.

Do the love of grace: Committed to the fulfilment of G-d's will.

With: This is a word of redemption. The first two letters in the word ‘Immanuel’ (one of the redemptive names of Messiah found in Isaiah 7v14) is what we have here. Immanuel means “With us, G-d”. It is only through redemption that we can be with G-d.

Verse 9: *“The voice of the L-rd to a city is proclaimed. Wisdom is one who will see Your name, and hear the staff and who is designating it.”*

Proclaimed: His message is going forth. Hearing it is going to give us a different perspective. This voice is going to teach us the character of G-d.

Wisdom: Understanding. Discernment.

See Your name: Those who are wise see and demonstrate the character of G-d.

Hear: A word that requires a response.

Staff: A staff shows G-d's authority to do the miraculous for the purpose of His will.

Who is designating it: Who is controlling it? We know the answer to this: G-d. G-d is in charge, and He is working miraculously to bring about the fulfilment of His will (His Kingdom).

Verse 10: *“Will there be any more, in the house of the wicked, treasures of wickedness? Will there be a lean measurement that is an abomination?”*

Note: When the Prince of Peace takes His place (when G-d’s rule is in force) changes are going to take place. Wickedness will not have a reward. When G-d moves there will be no profiting from sin. There will be no deception!

Lean: A false, short, measurement.

Verse 11: *“Will I purify the scales of wickedness? In the pockets are there going to be stones of deception?”*

I: G-d speaking

Wickedness: Injustice

Stones: They measured with these stones. The measurements were false and cheated the people.

Note: When Messiah rules there will be no unrighteous scales. There will be no stones of deception. Everything will be based upon truth and righteousness.

Verse 12: *“Who, the wealthy ones, are full of violence, and her inhabitants speak lies. The tongue of deceit is in their mouth.”*

Wealthy ones: The wealthy ones in the nation of Israel.

Violence: (כֹּחַ) This is violence for the sake of violence. These people enjoy inflicting pain and suffering upon other people.

Tongue of deceit: They speak falsehood.

Verse 13: *“Also I will make sick with the beating on account of your sin.”*

I: G-d still speaking.

Make sick with the beating: He is going to judge, punish, and make desolate.

Verse 14: *“You will eat but you will not be satisfied. You will have hunger in your midst. You are going to possess, but you will not be able to bring it forth. And that which you do bring forth I will give to the sword.”*

Note: When we are living in sin we will not be contented or satisfied. Nothing good comes from injustice. When we are walking in faith (in a covenantal relationship with G-d), living under the authority and truth of G-d's word, we will know contentment and will have a peace that passes all understanding. Joy will be our strength (Nehemiah 8v10). Righteousness pays eternal dividends (Hebrews 6v10-12)

Hunger: Emptiness

Possess: Bring something into your possession in order to have it.

Will not be able to bring it forth: Meaning this: Although they might have money in their pockets they will not be able to benefit from it.

Give to the sword: What they do have will be taken away by force.

Verse 15: *“And you will sow but you will not harvest; and you will tread the olive, but you will not anoint with oil. You will tread about the grapes to get grape juice, but you will not drink wine.”*

Tread: This is an expression for putting pressure on olives in order to extract the olive oil (or treading upon the grapes to get juice to make wine.)

You will not anoint: The desired outcome will not be achieved.

Grape juice but ... not drink wine: The difference between grape juice and wine is time. These people will not have time to enjoy the fruit of their labour.

Wine: Synonymous with joy. They will not experience joy.

Verse 16: *“He keeps the statutes of Omri, and all the work of the house of Ahab, and goes in their counsels. On account (of this) He will give you over to desolation. And her inhabitants for whistling. And you will bear disgrace.”*

Omri: Omri was a very wicked king of the Northern kingdom (Israel) - not of Judah (the Southern kingdom).

The work of the house of Ahab: Related to Jezebel. G-d is saying that His people have embraced a wrong way of living (see Revelation 2 and 3. G-d repeatedly says “I know your works...” - our performance (works) does not play any role in our salvation, but, having received grace through faith, G-d judges our works for reward – 1 Corinthians 3v14-15)

Goes: Walk or travel

Counsels: In this context it is speaking of following ungodly counsel. These people have no fear of G-d and have departed from the revelation of Scripture.

Note: Micah was warning the children of Judah that they were not being a representative of the living G-d. They were behaving as those who had no covenantal responsibility.

Desolation: Destruction

Whistling: This word is wrongly translated ‘hissing’ in many translations. It is an expression used to convey shock. When something surprising happens many people are taken aback, and they emit a whistle in astonishment. This is what this is referring to here. People are going to be shocked when G-d brings destruction to His people. Zechariah 13v8 tells us that 2/3^{rds} of the Jewish people are going to die. Jeremiah refers to this time as a time of trouble for Jacob (Jeremiah 30v7).

Bear disgrace: All people will be in one of two positions eternally: Either in a glorious state of perfection, by the grace and work of G-d, or they are going to be in reproach and disgrace.

Chapter 7 Part 1

Note: Anything good that takes place happens because G-d has brought it about (James 1v17). Messiah spoke about a parable of a vineyard and how it related to Israel (Matthew 21v33-45). Isaiah also spoke of the people of G-d as a vineyard (Isaiah 5v1-7). Grapes produce wine. Wine is synonymous with joy, worship, love - those things that are pleasing and bring satisfaction. This is all related to G-d's covenant purpose - which is to bring blessing into His creation.

Verse 1: *“Misery is to me. I was as those who gather up summer fruit, as the ones who glean among the vintage and there are no clusters to eat. My soul desires the first fruits.”*

Misery: This is not the same word as the word “woe” found in Micah 2v1. On the contrary, this is a word that speaks about a great sorrow and emotional disappointment. It has to do with expectations that do not seem to have any possibility for fulfillment.

Misery is to me: Micah could have been speaking about:

1. **Himself** and the discouragement that he felt because his prophetic words had not been embraced, and nor had his words brought about change.
2. **God** – G-d is inspecting His people and finding them unready and unwilling for His Kingdom to be established (possibly similar to how Yeshua felt in Matthew 23v37-39)

Summer fruit: The context is this: When the farmer started to harvest his grapes, at the beginning of the harvest, he would find that some grapes were not ready to be picked. He would leave them on the trees so that he could pick them later in the harvest – at a certain time in summer. The grapes picked later were known as the summer fruits. Even though the grapes were not ready at the proper time the farmer hoped that before the end of summer, before the heat destroyed them, they would ripen and be ready and acceptable for use.

Vintage: The grape harvest

No clusters to eat: A vineyard is supposed to produce good fruit - that which is able to make wine. In this context there is nothing to partake of. There was a degree of grace – G-d waited and came back a second time -but He saw that there had been no change.

Desires: A word of intensity, what one truly longs for or wants.

First fruits: Those who harvest have an opportunity to choose the very best – the first fruits of the harvest. (as an aside – the first fruits also relate to the resurrection of Messiah – 1 Corinthians 15v20-23)

Verse 2: *“The gracious man has perished from the earth, and the upright one among men there is not. For all of them lie in wait for blood, a man his brother he hunts with a net.”*

Note: There is an abrupt change in this verse. Micah gives the first illustration as relating to a vineyard and the frustration, the sadness, the unmet fulfillment of his/G-d's expectations. In this verse we see it is no longer set in the context of a vineyard but in relation to human conduct in the world.

Gracious: (חַסִּיד) This word represents the grace of G-d.

The grace of G-d works in order to produce the will of G-d. The people that G-d has revealed Himself to, those that He has entered into a covenant with, have perished. In the same way that the harvesters were looking for fruit, and were dejected when there was nothing to partake of, G-d is saying the same thing here: when He looks at the world He sees a lack of fruitfulness - the gracious man has perished from the earth.

Gracious... upright: Grace is parallel to that which is upright or straight. If grace is working in a person's life it will produce fruit that is acceptable to G-d and meets His expectations.

Lie in wait: This is a military term. It is used, for example, in the context of laying an ambush. It is not simply a word of waiting, but it is waiting with the purpose to bring harm to another.

Blood: Written in the plural. This speaks of an abundance of blood being shed. They are not a gracious people, but they have become a blood thirsty people.

Hunts: Can also be understood as fishing. The word 'net' here is usually related to a fish net that traps fish. There could also be a play on words. The same word that could relate to a fishnet is also the identical word used to describe the booty from war that was to be utterly devoted to G-d, and therefore meant to be completely destroyed (see Deuteronomy 7v2).

These people are seeking (hunting) for that which belongs to G-d - that which is forbidden. In other words, they have misappropriated the things in this world. They have failed to understand the distinction between that which belongs to G-d and that which belongs to man. This is another example of how far removed the people are from the purposes of G-d, the knowledge of G-d and obedience to the will of G-d.

Verse 3: *"Upon the (palms of the) hands is evil. The prince asks, the judge (seeks) for payment, and the mighty one speaks of the (evil) desires of his soul. They scheme together."*

(Palms of) the hands: These were meant to be lifted up to G-d to show humility. Hands, symbolically are related to deeds – Ecclesiastes 9v10.

Evil: Instead of showing a commitment to the instructions of G-d, their hands show that they are in opposition to the things of G-d. They are doing things in order to bring about their own success. These people are pursuing what they think is right, but in G-d's eyes what they are doing is evil (Judges 21v25).

Prince: A high government official.

Asks: Demands a bribe. They make their leadership decisions based upon bribes.

The judge (seeks) for payment: The judge renders a decision not based upon the law or upon evidence but based upon the payment that he receives.

Mighty one: He has the ability, and is in a position, to accomplish what he desires.

(Evil) desire: Our desires, apart from G-d's revelation and truth, are never pleasing to Him.

Scheme together: They make plans in order to carry out their own agendas - even if it means that others go into bondage. They delight in seeing others in bondage. This is the exact opposite of what Israel is called to be. Israel is called to be a blessing and a light to the nations. It is meant to be a nation that teaches others the truth of G-d. However, this verse tells us that they are exploiting their position and benefits - not to be a blessing, but in order to enslave others.

Verse 4: *“The good ones (of the people) are like a thorn. The upright are like a prickly bush. On the day of your watchmen, when comes your punishment, they shall be embarrassed.”*

Thorn: Not pleasant.

Bush: A dangerous hedge with sharp spikes on it.

Note: What G-d is saying is this: His covenant people are not kind, gracious, and merciful when they come in contact with the nations. Instead, they are like thorns which injure and cause pain. They do not invite others into a covenant relationship with G-d. In other words, they are a poor witness.

Watchmen: Most scholars think these watchmen are related to those who are prayerfully watching and waiting for G-d to act - to bring about the outcome of His redemptive work.

Punishment: The exile. The people were unwilling to hear, humble themselves and believe the Word of G-d through the prophets. Therefore, He punished the Northern kingdom. Some years after that He sent the Southern kingdom into exile where they suffered greatly at the hands of their enemy.

Embarrassed: Feel ashamed

Verse 5: *“Do not believe in a friend, and do not trust in a general; and the one that lies at your chest do not do the openings of your mouth.”*

Do not believe in a friend (spouse): Someone who is usually considered a great and trusted companion.

A general: Someone, competent and capable, who has risen to a place of leadership. Normally someone who can be relied upon, who can be given responsibility and has earned trust over the years.

One that lies at your chest: i.e. Wife.

Do not do the openings of your mouth: No one can be trusted. Not even one's spouse. What the prophet is telling us is that the nation has become utterly corrupt. They are not people that display any faithfulness - not to G-d and not to one another.

Verse 6: *“For a son dishonours a father. A daughter rises up against her mother, a bride against her mother-in-law. The enemies of a man will be the people of his house.”*

A son dishonours: This had become the normal situation at that time. Dishonouring speaks of an individual who does wretched things to his own father.

Rises up: In this context a word of rebellion or defiance.

The enemies of a man will be the people of his house: (Matthew 24v10, Mark 13v12, Luke 21v16) When Messiah spoke about the last days He said that there were going to be those who betrayed one another (the implication is to turn people over to those in governmental authority). The word 'betray' implies that there is some degree of commitment to one another before the betrayal occurs (This betrayal could occur within a family context, or even within a body of believers). The same ungodliness and character that is going to characterize the time of the antichrist is also being demonstrated here.

Verse 7: *“But I in the L-rd will wait, I will hope for the G-d of my salvation. My G-d will hear me.”*

But: We see a contrast. Although the people are behaving in this way Micah, who hears and is influenced by the Word of G-d, behaves differently.

In the L-rd: The word order emphasises this phrase. This term (“IN the L-rd”) calls our attention to the benefits of being in a covenantal relationship (It is a term mentioned frequently in the new covenant writings e.g. Romans 8v1, Ephesians 2v6 etc).

Wait: A word of expectation.

I will hope: He is waiting with a confidence that His G-d (The covenant keeping G-d) will bring about his salvation.

He will hear me: The problem is that most people are not crying out to G-d. Micah is different. He has an expectation that G-d will save and that He will fulfil his covenantal obligations.

Hear: We hear so that we can act/respond. Micah has an expectation that G-d is going to respond to his prayer.

Verse 8: *“Do not let my enemy rejoice over me. I have fallen but I have gotten up. For when I sit in darkness the L-rd is a light unto me.”*

Have fallen but I have gotten up: This is a future event but is written in the past tense. This shows a surety that it is going to happen. What G-d has said, G-d will do. The church should look at this and rejoice. G-d is going to fulfil His covenant to Israel. If He is faithful to fulfil His promises to Israel we can rest assured that He will fulfil all of His new covenantal promises to the body, the church, of Messiah.

Darkness: This is the spiritual condition of the people. They are in darkness.

The L-rd is a light: This is written in the present tense. It reminds us of the fact that G-d is a present G-d. It is not just about a future hope. Even now, G-d is at work in His covenant people.

Verse 9: *“The wrath of the L-rd I will bear, for I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case, and will make my justice. He will bring me out to the light. I will see His righteousness.”*

Wrath...I will bear: G-d is going to take Israel through a time of wrath [This is not true for the church. We will be removed before G-d's wrath falls (1 Thessalonians 5v9)] In the midst of His wrath (the time known as “Jacob’s trouble”), G-d is going to show Himself faithful to Israel.

Until: This word speaks about a change or a transition. G-d is going to do something new and different.

Pleads my case ... make my justice: The One who judges us is also the One who saves or justifies us. Justification allows us to become recipients of His promises.

Bring me out: The same word that relates to the exodus (redemption) from Egypt. It is speaking about a transition. G-d, through His salvation and justification, is going to bring us out of the darkness of this world.

Light: This is a reference to the Kingdom light (Zechariah 14v6-7)

Righteousness: By the light that He brings us out into, we will be able to see His righteousness.

Matthew 6v33 tells us that when we seek G-d's Kingdom and His righteousness we will have Kingdom hope. That hope is not going to be cancelled out. We should remain hopeful that G-d is going to bring about His Kingdom.

Chapter 7 Part 2

In the last days G-d is going to bring about a change in Israel. That change is going to come about as an outcome of G-d's redemptive work. The nations are going to see G-d's holiness, faithfulness, and integrity to His covenant in regard to Israel. A remnant of the nations, at that time, will come to faith. When this has been completed the wrath of G-d, in its full measure, is going to be poured out.

Verse 10: *"And my enemy she will see, and shame will cover her - the one who says to me: 'Where is the L-rd your G-d?' My eyes shall see her destruction, and now she shall be trampled on as the mud in the streets."*

Enemy: The word 'enemy' can be written in the masculine or feminine. Micah, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote it down in the feminine. One interpretation, of why this could be so, is that in the last days we read about a harlot empire and beast (also written as a feminine word) that is going to rise up (Revelation 17). Many scholars believe that this enemy is the empire of the antichrist.

See: She is going to witness what G-d is up to.

Shame: When people do not submit to the prophetic word of G-d the outcome is shame.

Where is the L-rd your G-d?: The enemy doubts the reality of G-d (2 Peter 3v3-7)

My eyes: G-d's people are going to see the destruction of their enemy in those final days.

Now: At that time

Trampled on as the mud: An image of dirt, filth, and rejection. If something is trampled in the mud it shows that it has no significance or value. This is what happens to those who demonstrate no regard for the Word of G-d.

Verse 11: *"A day for building your fence will come, and the edict will go far" (OR "On the day of building your fence, the law is going to be expanded")*

Note: In this verse we see, once more, a time of change, a time of building.

Fence: Some commentators see this as a reference for the border of Israel.

Edict: Statute

Go far: Meaning there will be expansion (Genesis 15v18. The borders of Israel today are going to have to be expanded in order to agree with the promise of G-d – these will be the borders for the millennial kingdom)

Verse 12: *“On that day unto you they will come from Assyria, and from the cities of Egypt unto the river, and from the sea to sea and the mountain of mountain.”*

They: This is a prophecy of the Jewish people returning to the land. This is going to increase greatly in the last half of Daniel's 70th week.

From the cities of Egypt unto the river: This is the fulfilment of Genesis 15v18.

From the sea to sea and the mountain of mountain: G-d is going to faithfully bring people back from all places (Matthew 24v31 – ‘the elect’ are a reference to Israel being brought back to the land)

Verse 13: *“And the Earth shall be a desolation for her inhabitants, because of the outcome of their deeds.”*

The Earth: Those lands which are outside these new boundaries of Israel.

Outcome: Fruit

The outcome of their deeds: Revelation 22v12. G-d is going to judge the inhabitants of the Earth for their evil, faithless deeds.

Verse 14: *“Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, those who dwell in solitude in the forest in the midst of Carmel. And they will feed in Bashan and Gilead, as the days of old.”*

Shepherd: The prophet is proclaiming the will of G-d the Father in regard to His Son Messiah

Dwell in solitude: An idiom meaning they will dwell securely or safely (Psalm 23 – When the L-rd is our shepherd we lack and fear nothing. When we enter into that covenant with the Good Shepherd we can have security).

In the forest in the midst of Carmel: G-d is going to lead them into a forest in a plentiful land. These are all symbolic words that speak to a Kingdom reality.

Note: In this passage G-d is speaking about judgment to the nations and His salvation to a covenant people. At this time, the remnant of Israel are going to be brought into a new covenant (gospel) faith. They are going to recognize their deliverer and accept Yeshua as their Messiah.

They will feed: When sheep are in a good pasture they are able to feed.

Bashan: The Golan Heights

Gilead: Modern day Jordan – all these places are going to be part of Israel in the millennial kingdom. This is simply an act of restoration.

Verse 15: *“As the days that you were brought out from the land of Egypt and I will show him wonders.”*

Brought out from the land of Egypt: Whenever this is mentioned in the Bible we need to remember that it is speaking a message of redemption. The blood of Messiah purchased for us eternal redemption – Hebrews 9v11-15.

Him: Israel

Wonders: Redemption leads to a supernatural and wondrous work of G-d.

Verse 16: *“The nations will see and be ashamed of their might. They will put their hand over their mouth and their ears will be made deaf.”*

Nations: Referring to those who have no covenantal relationship with G-d.

Ashamed of their might: They took pride in the power of man. They are going to be ashamed of their might, realizing that -compared to G-d - they are nothing.

Their ears will be made deaf: Faith comes by hearing. They do not want to hear, and they do not want to speak/confess that Yeshua is L-rd. They do not want to confess their sins, and nor do they want to say: “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the L-rd”.

Verse 17: *“They will lick the dust as a serpent. They will crawl upon the ground and be made angry about their lifestyle. To the L-rd our G-d they will fear, and they will be afraid from you.”*

Lick the dust as a serpent: This is how satan was described in the garden of Eden (Genesis 3v14). This shows that these people have a connection with satan. They do not want to be associated with the seed of the woman – Messiah, who came and humbled Himself in order to bring redemption. Because they did not humble themselves G-d will bring them down and humble them.

Made angry: They are going to be angry because they are not interested in the coming of Messiah. They do not want the establishment of His kingdom and nor do they want holiness and righteousness.

Lifestyle: These people do not want their lifestyles to change. They do not want the Kingdom changes that are coming. They do not want what G-d wants, and therefore they are angry because G-d is changing how this world functions.

The L-rd our G-d they will fear: These nations are going to be afraid of G-d.

They will be afraid from you: The nations are going to fear Israel because Israel is going to be in unity with G-d.

Verse 18: *“Who, G-d, is like you? He lifts up iniquity and He passes over transgression for the remnant of His inheritance. He will not hold on to forever His anger, because He delights in grace.”*

Who.. is like you: The meaning of the name ‘Micah’. Micah emphasizes the uniqueness of G-d. This book helps us to understand that our G-d is different. He is the solution; He is our help, and He is our only Saviour.

Lifts up: Takes away.

Remnant of His inheritance: This phrase is written in very broad terms [passing over transgressions is not just for the remnant of Israel or the remnant of Jacob. It is for the mixed multitude (Exodus 12)] Everyone who is in the Kingdom of G-d has experienced the forgiveness of their sins. G-d has passed over their transgression.

He will not hold on to forever His anger: Because of redemption G-d's anger subsides.

Delights in grace: He gives us grace because He loves us. It is also through grace that G-d's will is done. G-d fulfils His covenantal obligation because He delights in grace. Those who have received G-d's grace will be interested in the will of G-d.

Verse 19: *“He will turn, and He will be gracious to us. He will conquer our iniquities. You will cast, into the depths of the sea, all of our sins.”*

Turn: G-d turns and does what He always said He would do.

Conquer our iniquities: He will have dominion over sin. The resurrection is proof that God, through the death of Messiah, has conquered sin! In the cross the power of sin was broken. We, now, will not experience death but will have eternal life.

The depths: The deep waters.

Cast, into the depths of the sea, all of our sins: This is the outcome of redemption. This is what Messiah accomplished for us. Messiah became sin for us. He took our sin. That sin did not have dominion over Him. He died but He rose and therefore He can cast our sins into the depths of the sea. G-d has provided for life. This is a New Testament message found right here in the book of Micah.

Verse 20: *“You will give truth to Jacob and grace to Abraham, which you swore to our fathers from the days of old.”*

You will give truth to Jacob: The order is significant. After we have been forgiven of our sins we have a desire for the truth of G-d.

Note: The patriarchs remind us of faith – faith to receive the promises of G-d. G-d's grace, His truth, positions us so that we can receive His promises.