

Session 15 The Forerunner Message in Micah 4-5 and 7

I. INTRODUCTION TO MICAH

A. Micah 4-5 and 7 describe Jesus' return to deliver and restore Israel to the fullness of His purposes after she is transformed in context to enduring the Lord's discipline for her persistent rebellion. Micah emphasized how the Lord would release great glory in and through Israel in the end times.

B. Outline of Micah 4-5 and 7

Micah 4

- 4:1-5** Jerusalem's glory in the Millennium
4:6-8 The Lord will rescue and transform a remnant
4:9-13 The travail of Zion and her deliverance

Micah 5

- 5:1-6** The greatness of the coming Ruler
5:7-9 The restoration of the remnant of Israel
5:10-15 The purification of Israel

Micah 7

- 7:1-7** Micah's lament over the evil in his generation
7:8-10 A psalm of trust in the Lord
7:11-13 Israel's future restoration
7:14-17 A prayer for future restoration
7:18-20 The uniqueness of God's love

II. JERUSALEM'S GLORY IN THE MILLENNIUM (MIC. 4:1-5)

- A. Jesus will rule over all the nations from Jerusalem (4:1-5). Micah 4:1-3 is similar to Isaiah 2:2-4.
¹...in the latter days...the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains...and peoples [nations] shall flow to it. ²Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD...He will teach us His ways..." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ³He shall judge between many peoples and rebuke strong nations afar off...and nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. ⁴But everyone shall sit under his vine and fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid...⁵we will walk in the name of the LORD...forever. (Mic. 4:1-5)
- B. ***In the latter days***: This phrase usually refers to the Great Tribulation and/or the Millennium.
- C. ***Mountain of Lord's house***: The millennial temple is Mt. Zion on Mt. Moriah (Ps. 48:1-3).
- D. ***Peoples***: *Peoples* is synonymous to *nations*. Multitudes will flow like a river toward Jerusalem.
- E. ***He shall judge***: Jesus as supreme Judge will settle all disputes between the nations.
- F. ***Everyone shall sit under his vine***: The vine and the fig tree are a symbolic picture of the security, prosperity, and contentment in the kingdom (1 Kgs. 4:25; Zech. 3:10; Isa. 11:6-10; 35; 65:20-25).

III. THE LORD WILL RESCUE AND TRANSFORM A REMNANT (MIC. 4:6-8)

- A. Jesus will rule the restored remnant and strong (populous) nation in Mount Zion.
***⁶In that day...I will assemble the lame. I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted;
⁷I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation; so the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever.” (Mic. 4:6-7)***
- B. ***In that day***: Here this phrase refers to the beginning of the Millennium when Jesus restores Israel.
- C. ***Whom I have afflicted***: The Lord afflicted them because of their continual rebellion.
- D. ***I will assemble the lame***: Jesus will gather the unsaved Jewish survivors of the Great Tribulation who are lame or outcast and transform them into a strong nation over which He reigns forever.
- E. ***I will gather the outcast***: The outcast are those who would be driven out of the nation or taken captive in context to the Great Tribulation. Jesus will gather these people when He returns.
1. Earlier, Micah prophesied the Lord would gather a Jewish remnant in the end times (2:12-13). The phrase, “*sheep of the fold*,” is a Hebrew word translated as “Bozrah” depending on the Hebrew manuscript and the vowels assigned to it.
¹²“I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold [Bozrah]...they shall make a loud noise because of so many people. ¹³The one who breaks open will come up before them; they will break out, pass through the gate...with the Lord at their head.” (Mic. 2:12-13)
 2. ***One who breaks open***: Jesus will break through obstacles to lead His sheep out of captivity.
 3. ***They will break out***: Jews in captivity will break out of their place of confinement.

IV. THE TRAVAIL OF ZION AND HER DELIVERANCE (MIC. 4:9-13)

- A. Micah asked why the Jewish people were crying out like a woman in labor pains (4:9-10). He describes their national condition during the captivity as having no king to lead and counsel them.
⁹Now why do you cry aloud? Is there no king in your midst? ...For pangs have seized you like a woman in labor. ¹⁰Be in pain and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in birth pangs. For now you shall go forth from the city, you shall dwell in the field, and to Babylon you shall go...there the LORD will redeem you from...your enemies. (Mic. 4:9-10)
- B. ***In pain***: Micah pictures the Jewish people as being in pain and lamenting the loss of their nation. Their pain, in particular of their captivity, is compared to a woman in labor, giving birth (Jer. 4:31). Zion’s ultimate travail in the Great Tribulation will result in the deliverance of the Jews who fled to Babylon (some of the same territory as Assyria) after they were forced to leave Jerusalem (Mt. 24:16). The Lord will deliver Israelites “ready to perish” in Assyria in the end times (Isa 27:13).
- C. ***Babylon***: Some of the remnant will flee to Babylon. Zechariah prophesied Babylon would be the place from which Jews will flee in the end times (Zech. 2:6-7). Babylon had already been judged by the Persians, and the remnant of Israel was already back in the land of Israel by a Persian decree.

- D. Micah prophesied that many nations will gather against the Jews (Joel 3:1-3; Zech. 12:1-3; 14:1-2).
¹¹Now also many nations have gathered against you... ¹²But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD, nor do they understand His counsel; for He will gather them like sheaves to the threshing floor. ¹³Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hooves bronze; you shall beat in pieces many peoples [nations]; I will consecrate their gain to the LORD, and their substance to the Lord of the whole earth.” (Mic. 4:11-13)
- E. *They do not understand the Lord’s counsel* (4:12): The nations who gather against Jerusalem will not understand the Lord’s plans to use their rage to refine Israel, but then actually destroy them.
- F. *Arise and thresh*: The Lord described the people of Jerusalem in the end time as a threshing ox commissioned to arise and thresh the nations in line with the imagery in 4:12 (Isa. 41:15).
- G. Israel will be the Lord’s instrument to thresh wicked nations and submit their wealth to Him. This will be fulfilled when Jesus returns. The Lord will anoint and empower Israel’s military in the end times—in the 43rd month (Isa. 11:14; 41:15; Obad. 18; Mic. 4:13; 5:8-9; Zech. 9:13, 15; 10:3-5; 12:6-8; 14:14). The Israeli army will be strengthened by God to resist the armies of the Antichrist in context to Jesus returning to Jerusalem. This will be the greatest military reversal in history.

V. THE GREATNESS OF THE COMING RULER (MIC. 5:1-6)

- A. After hearing the promises in 4:13, Israel is told to expect an enemy to lay siege against Jerusalem (5:1). Jerusalem is to gather her troops or mobilize her army to defend herself from an enemy.
¹Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; He has laid siege against us [Jerusalem]; they will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek. (Mic. 5:1)
- B. Jerusalem gathered her troops for war in context to *Assyria* in 701 BC, *Babylon* in 586 BC, *Rome* in AD 70, and eventually will against the *Antichrist*. Assyria did not enter Jerusalem to smite her judge, and the Lord told Jerusalem not to resist Babylon. Thus, I do not see Assyria or Babylon as the best fulfillment of this. The primary idea emphasized here is that Israel will endure great distress at the hands of the Gentile nations until Messiah comes to turn Israel to God and rule all the nations.
- C. *They*: The besiegers of Jerusalem would be from Assyria, or Babylon, or Rome, or the Antichrist.
- D. Jesus’ birth (5:1-3), His kingdom (5:4-7), and His conquest of His enemies (5:8-15) are foretold.
²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah...out of you shall come forth...One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are...from everlasting.” ³Therefore He shall give them up, until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel. ⁴And He...feed His flock...and He shall be great to the ends of the earth... (Mic. 5:2-4)
1. *Ephrathah*: This was the name of the district in which Bethlehem was located (Gen. 48:7). The territory of Ephrathah distinguishes it from Bethlehem in Zebulun (Josh. 19:15).
 2. *Therefore* (5:3): in light of a divine leader coming to Israel. “Therefore” or because such great events are promised by God, His discipline of Israel will only be temporary, lasting only until the time when a glorious, national birth takes place that brings salvation to the nations.

3. **He shall give them up** (5:3): Because of their smiting and rejection of their King in 5:1, the Lord gave up the Jewish nation *until* the time when Israel labors to give birth to her children. The prophetic theme of Zion's travail or labor is synonymous with the Great Tribulation.
4. The Lord gave Israel up by withdrawing His protection and the nearness of His presence and by giving them into the hands of their enemies and judging them with spiritual blindness.
5. **She who is in labor**: Zion or Jerusalem is compared to a woman in travail to give birth, resulting in the birth of their nation "in one day" (Isa. 66:8; Ezek. 39:22; Zech. 3:9; 14:7).
6. **Remnant of His brethren**: The remainder of the Ruler's brethren (Jewish people) will be regathered and led back to the land as a restored and reunified covenant nation.
7. **Until the time** (5:3): This discipline of the covenant continues *until* Israel endures the labor or travail related to the Great Tribulation that results in their national salvation and deliverance.
8. The Lord compared Himself to a lion tearing his prey when describing His judgment of Israel. In context to the return of Jesus, the Israelites will seek His face. After Israel rejected Jesus, He withdrew from them to return to His place in heaven until they acknowledge their sin. In the pain of their end-time affliction, they will seek Him earnestly (5:15).

¹⁴***I will be like a lion...to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear them and go away...***

¹⁵***I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.*** (Hos. 5:14-15)

E. Jesus will bring deliverance and victory to Israel over the Assyrian (5:5-6).

⁵***...When the Assyrian comes into our land, and when he treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princely men. ⁶They shall waste with the sword the land of Assyria, and the land of Nimrod...thus He shall deliver us from the Assyrian...*** (Mic. 5:5-6)

1. **The Assyrian**: Israel's prophesied victory over "the Assyrian" has not yet happened. "The Assyrian" in Scripture sometimes speaks of the Antichrist (Isa. 10:5, 24; 52:4). Many agree that "the Assyrian" is symbolic of all of Israel's enemies when the nations attack Israel.
2. **Seven and eight**: "Seven and eight leaders" is a literary device to indicate an indefinite yet adequate number of leaders who will arise to overthrow the Assyrians and possess their land. This expression indicates a "sufficient number" or "more than enough" to defeat their enemy.
3. **Shall waste the land of Assyria** (5:6): Israel's leaders mentioned in 5:5 will be used by the Lord to lay waste the land of Assyria with the sword and bring it under Israel's control.

VI. THE RESTORATION OF THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL (MIC. 5:7-9)

A. The Lord will save the remnant of Israel who are scattered among the nations in the end times (5:7).

⁷***Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples [nations], like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, that tarry for no man nor wait for the sons of men. ⁸And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep, who, if he passes through, both treads down and tears in pieces, and none can deliver. ⁹Your hand shall be lifted against your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off.*** (Mic. 5:7-9)

- B. **The remnant:** The unsaved survivors of the Great Tribulation who come to Jesus for salvation after His return are called the “remnant of Jacob.” They represent all twelve tribes (2:12; 4:7; 5:8; 7:18).
- C. **Like dew:** Israel will be like dew and showers of rain to bring renewal and vitality to the nations.
- D. **Like a lion:** The theme of the remnant’s military victory over their enemies is continued here.
- E. **All your enemies shall be cut off:** There was a partial application of this defeat in Micah’s day, when an angel killed the Assyrian king Sennacherib’s army at Jerusalem (Isa. 37:36). However, the “cutting off” of *all* of Israel’s enemies will only occur at the end of the age (5:9).

VII. THE PURIFICATION OF ISRAEL (MIC. 5:10-15)

- A. The Lord will destroy all of Israel’s false sources of security and prosperity as represented by horses, chariots, and cities (5:10-15). In 5:9, the Lord promised to destroy all of Israel’s enemies. Here, Micah addresses the Lord destroying Israel’s *internal* enemies in a spiritual deliverance.
¹⁰“And it shall be in that day...that I will cut off your horses from your midst and destroy your chariots. ¹¹I will cut off the cities of your land and throw down all your strongholds. ¹²I will cut off sorceries from your hand...¹⁴I will pluck your wooden images...thus I will destroy your cities. ¹⁵I will execute vengeance in anger and fury on the nations that have not heard.” (Mic. 5:10-15)
- B. **Cities** (5:11): Parallel to strongholds (military cities), her military centers will be removed.
- C. **Sorceries:** All objects of idol worship will be totally removed from Israel forever (5:12-14).
- D. **Nations that have not heard:** The footnote in NKJV at “heard” indicates “obeyed.”

VIII. MICAH’S LAMENT OVER THE EVIL IN HIS GENERATION (MIC. 7:1-7)

- A. Micah’s prayerful lament in the face of society being filled with sin and betrayal (7:1-7; Mt. 24:10): He expresses his lament in 7:1-6 and his confidence in the Lord in 7:7.
*¹⁰And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another (Mt. 24:10).
¹Woe is me!...²The faithful man has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; every man hunts his brother with a net ³that they may successfully do evil with both hands— the prince asks for gifts, the judge seeks a bribe, and the great man utters his evil desire; so they scheme together...⁵Do not trust in a friend; do not put your confidence in a companion; guard the doors of your mouth from her [wife] who lies in your bosom. ⁶For son dishonors father, daughter rises against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man’s enemies are the men of his own household. ⁷Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me. (Mic. 7:1-7)*
- B. **The faithful man has perished:** Micah laments the disappearance of the righteous man (7:2), though obviously there were some godly people, like Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos, but far too few.
- C. Micah determined to pray and wait on the Lord to intervene and to act to fulfill His promises (7:7).

IX. A PSALM OF TRUST IN THE LORD (MIC. 7:8-10)

- A. Micah expressed his unwavering trust in the Lord's faithfulness in the face of great darkness.

⁸Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me. ⁹I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case and...He will bring me forth to the light... (Mic. 7:8-9)

- B. ***I will arise***: When Micah's enemies saw him in discouraging situations, they rejoiced. He told them not to rejoice, because, though he fell, he knew God would raise him and His people up.
- C. ***I bear the indignation***: The remnant will humbly embrace God's discipline, seeing their sin.

X. ISRAEL'S FUTURE RESTORATION (MIC. 7:11-13)

- A. When the Lord returns, all of Israel's enemies will be removed, defeated. Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

¹¹In the day when your walls are to be built, in that day the decree shall go far and wide. ¹²In that day they [the remnant] shall come to you [Jerusalem] from Assyria...to the River, from sea to sea, and mountain to mountain. ¹³Yet the land shall be desolate because of those who dwell in it, and for the fruit of their deeds. (Mic. 7:11-13)

- B. ***Your walls are built***: The building of walls points to the reestablishment of the Jews in their land.
- C. Israel's exiles and captives will come from all over the world—Assyria to the Euphrates River, everywhere between the seas and the mountains—from everywhere on earth (Ps. 72:8; Zech. 9:10).

XI. A PRAYER FOR FUTURE RESTORATION (MIC. 7:14-17)

- A. Micah asked the Lord to intervene in power as Israel's Shepherd to fulfill His promises (7:14-17).

¹⁴Shepherd Your people with Your staff... ¹⁵“As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders.” ¹⁶The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall put their hand over their mouth...¹⁷They shall lick the dust like a serpent; they shall crawl from their holes like snakes of the earth. They shall be afraid of the LORD... (Mic. 7:14-17)

- B. ***Miracles***: The Lord answered this prayer by promising that He would show Israel miracles again (7:15), like the miracles He did in Egypt (Ex. 7-12), when leading Israel in a final end-time Exodus.

XII. THE UNIQUENESS OF GOD'S LOVE (MIC. 7:18-20)

- A. The Lord's answer to Micah moved him to worship the Lord and declare His majesty (7:18-20).

¹⁸Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. ¹⁹He will again have compassion on us and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. ²⁰You will give...mercy to Abraham, which You have sworn... (Mic. 7:18-20)

- B. Micah magnified God's uniqueness in pardoning the serious sins of the surviving remnant.