

## Micah

- Micah's name- is an abbreviation of Micaiah, which means “who is like Jehovah”.
- Micah was from a village called Moresheth near Gath, about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem.
- Micah prophesied during the last half of the eighth century BC. His contemporaries were Isaiah in Judea, and Amos & Hosea in Israel.
- Micah saw the judgment that was to come on both Israel and Judah by the Assyrians and Babylonians. He tried to call God's people back to faithful worship of Jehovah, but the people refused to repent.
- Micah received three messages from God to give to his people to them away from their idolatry to return back to the Lord. The first message was a warning to both Israel and Judah that judgment was coming and God will use the Assyrians (722 BC) and the Babylonians (606-586 BC).

The first message is found in Micah 1:1-2:13.

### **Verse 1**

*The word of the Lord that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.*

Micah makes it very clear the source of the message he received was from the Lord. And when the Lord speaks His Word comes true.

Micah also gives the time of his ministry and to whom this prophecy is directed. Samaria is the capital of Israel and Jerusalem is the capital of Judah.

### **Verses 2-7: The warrior comes to judge Samaria and Jerusalem.**

#### **Verse 2**

*Hear, you peoples, all of you;  
pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it,  
and let the Lord God be a witness against you,  
the Lord from his holy temple.*

A couple of keywords in verse 2:

- Hear- in Jewish culture “hear” meant more than to receive information, it meant to listen, to understand, and to respond in the right way.
- Witness- this refers to a court setting and the Lord is the witness in the prosecution against both Israel and Judah.
- Holy temple- this is a reference to God's throne.

### Verses 3-4

*For behold, the Lord is coming out of his place,  
and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.  
4And the mountains will melt under him,  
and the valleys will split open,  
like wax before the fire,  
like waters poured down a steep place.*

He comes down refers to his intervention in history (Psalm 96:13)

### Verse 5

*All this is for the transgression of Jacob  
and for the sins of the house of Israel.  
What is the transgression of Jacob?  
Is it not Samaria?  
And what is the high place of Judah?  
Is it not Jerusalem?*

The Lord's coming is usually referring to the coming to answer prayers, not here. The Lord comes to bring judgment on His people.

The reason for this judgment is God's people are in rebellion against God. God places the blame for the false religion (high places) at both capitals who represented the corrupt leadership of both Israel and Judah.

### Verses 6-7

*Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country,  
a place for planting vineyards,  
and I will pour down her stones into the valley  
and uncover her foundations.  
7All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces,  
all her wages shall be burned with fire,  
and all her idols I will lay waste,  
for from the fee of a prostitute she gathered them,  
and to the fee of a prostitute they shall return.*

God gives the sentence and describes the judgment on Israel. The judgment will be carried out by the Assyrians in 722 BC.

In verse 7 God gives a more detailed account of Israel's sin which was idol worship. God would destroy the idol worship, the religious prostitution, and the wealth of Israel.

Fee of a prostitute- were gifts the people would give the prostitutes as part of the pagan fertility rites.

The last part of the verse talks about this fee and what Micah is telling us is the gifts the Israelites paid the prostitutes would be taken by the Assyrians and used in their own temples.

### Verse 8

*For this I will lament and wail;  
I will go stripped and naked;  
I will make lamentation like the jackals,  
and mourning like the ostriches.*

Micah is mourning, after he has talked about the destruction of Samaria he turns his thoughts to Judah. In about 20 years, after Samaria is destroyed by the Assyrians the Assyrians will come after Jerusalem and Micah is very upset about this and mourns.

### Verses 9-16

Micah switches gears and talks about Judah and how what was going on in Samaria had spread to Judah. Micah weeps and mourns over what has happened in Judah and the destruction which would be coming.

Micah describes the destruction that will happen and starts in 701 BC when the Assyrians swept into Judah and took about forty-six cities, but they could not take Jerusalem.

### Chapter 2 Verses 1-11

In this section, the Lord tells his people why He is going to punish them. Amos 3:2 tells us why, great privileges bring great responsibilities and accountabilities. There were two sins Micah talks about; covetousness and listening to false prophets.

### Verses 1-5: Covetousness

We need to understand about the land in Israel. The land belonged to the Lord and he leased it to the different tribes and then to families. The families were to keep the land in their families. If anybody sold their land they would receive their land back in the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:13-17). This kept the rich from taking the land of the poor.

### Verse 1

*Woe to those who devise wickedness  
and work evil on their beds!  
When the morning dawns, they perform it,  
because it is in the power of their hand.*

Woe- This word is used of threats in prophetic literature. Here it refers to rich land-grabbers.

Two words are used of the sin these rich land-grabbers were involved in:

1. **Iniquity**- here this word refers to abuse of power in illegal and unethical actions
2. **Evil**- refers to things that are wicked in God's eyes.

These evil oppressors were so greedy that they **plotted** their evil schemes at night when in bed and the next morning **carried** out their schemes.

What were they doing?

### **Verse 2**

*They covet fields and seize them,  
and houses, and take them away;  
they oppress a man and his house,  
a man and his inheritance.*

These land-grabbers, out of greed, were taking lands probably from the poor. They would foreclose on fields and houses of the poor and they probably had the help of the **courts in** doing this. They would take the family land that belonged to the poor that had been handed down by their **ancestors** (Leviticus 25:23).

### **Verse 3**

*Therefore thus says the Lord:*

*behold, against this family I am devising disaster,  
from which you cannot remove your necks,  
and you shall not walk haughtily,  
for it will be a time of disaster.*

Because of the sin of the land-grabbers **judgment was coming**. The judgment would be when the Assyrians would come in 722-721 BC to Israel and then return some twenty years later to the south (Judea).

### **Verse 4**

*In that day they shall take up a taunt song against you  
and moan bitterly,  
and say, "We are utterly ruined;  
he changes the portion of my people;  
how he removes it from me!  
To an apostate he allots our fields."*

Micah tells us that God will turn these fields to their **enemies** and the rich land-grabbers will mourn. This judgment would fulfill the curses of the covenant for disobedience (Leviticus 26:33; Deuteronomy 28:49-68).

## Verse 5

*Therefore you will have none to cast the line by lot  
in the assembly of the Lord.*

The sentence God gave them looks past the exile into eternity and they will not be there when the land is divided again. They will receive **spiritual death**.

## Verses 6-7: False Prophets

*“Do not preach”—thus they preach—  
“one should not preach of such things;  
disgrace will not overtake us.”*

*7Should this be said, O house of Jacob?*

*Has the Lord grown impatient?*

*Are these his deeds?*

*Do not my words do good*

*to him who walks uprightly?*

First Micah is attacked by these false prophets for saying what God says about coming judgment. The false prophets **denied** what Micah was saying, instead they said that **everything was** going to be fine because they were children of Abraham and God would **never** bring judgment on them.

## Verses 7b-13: God speaks about His faithful servant and defends him

**Verse 7b:** God calls these land-grabbers to come back to him and receive **mercy**.

## Verses 8-9

*But lately my people have risen up as an enemy;  
you strip the rich robe from those who pass by trustingly  
with no thought of war.*

*9The women of my people you drive out  
from their delightful houses;*

*from their young children you take away  
my splendor forever.*

God lists some of their sins. The first one was attacking **innocent** passersby as if they were enemies. These innocent people thought they were as safe as soldiers returning home after a battle they won.

The second sin in this verse deals with giving a cloak as a **pledge** for a loan. They were to return the cloak at night so the person would have that cloak to cover them at night (Exodus 22:26-27).

**Third**, these land-grabbers were kicking widows and the children of the widow out of their homes. These children were left without property, money, and security. In other words, these greedy men stole the clothes from men, women of their homes, and children of their inheritance.

### Verse 10

*Arise and go,  
for this is no place to rest,  
because of uncleanness that destroys  
with a grievous destruction.*

The greedy who took this land should not rest because God will take this land from them just like they took this land. God will **take this land back** (Leviticus 18:24-28).

### Verse 11

*If a man should go about and utter wind and lies,  
saying, "I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,"  
he would be the preacher for this people!*

This section starts out with false prophets and also ends with them. The false prophet was saying **everything** was going to be okay, nothing but prosperity was coming to God's people. There are two tests of a prophet:

1. The message must not **contradict** God's Word.
2. Their prophecy must **come true** every time.

These false prophets **failed** both these requirements.

### Verses 12-13

*I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob;  
I will gather the remnant of Israel;  
I will set them together  
like sheep in a fold,  
like a flock in its pasture,  
a noisy multitude of men.  
13 He who opens the breach goes up before them;  
they break through and pass the gate,  
going out by it.  
Their king passes on before them,  
the Lord at their head.*

There is a **future for Israel**. In these verses it would appear that God is talking about all of Israel (north & south). And one day their Messiah would lead them. This is probably referring to the millennium.

## Chapter 3 Verses 1-12: Sins of the leaders

### Verses 1-4

God makes it clear in His Word that leaders are to love what is good and hate what is evil (Exodus 18:21). But in this case, just the opposite was happening. Instead of being good shepherds and protecting the sheep they attacked and devoured the sheep. In the day when they need mercy from God, they will not find it (Deuteronomy 31:17).

### Verses 5-8

Micah then turns to the **false prophets**. These prophets made it possible for these leaders to continue attacking and devouring the people by not calling them out.

### Verse 8

*But as for me, I am filled with power,  
with the Spirit of the Lord,  
and with justice and might,  
to declare to Jacob his transgression  
and to Israel his sin.*

In this verse, God describes the true prophet of God.

1. **Filled** with the Spirit.
2. **Faithfully** proclaiming God's Word.
3. **Unafraid** of what people might say.

### Verses 9-12

Micah sums up what the leaders have done and what is going to happen to Judah and Jerusalem and it is not going to be **pretty**.

## Chapters 4:1-5:15: Future Hope

After Micah tells his people about the coming destruction of Jerusalem He advises them that this was not the end for the Jewish people. God had **plans** for them and for Jerusalem.

### Verse 1

*It shall come to pass in the latter days  
that the mountain of the house of the Lord  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and it shall be lifted up above the hills;  
and peoples shall flow to it,*

Micah mentions the last days. The last days started with **John the Baptist and Jesus Christ** and ends when Jesus comes back. When that happens, Jerusalem will be a place where everyone wants to go.

## Verse 2

*and many nations shall come, and say:  
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
to the house of the God of Jacob,  
that he may teach us his ways  
and that we may walk in his paths.”  
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,  
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

Jerusalem will be destroyed but when **Jesus** comes back it will be the world’s religious capital and learning center.

## Verse 3

*He shall judge between many peoples,  
and shall decide disputes for strong nations far away;  
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war anymore;*

Instead of nations going to war, the Lord himself will **judge** them and settle the differences. This kind of judging was a royal function back in the day.

Because of this, nations will not need to go to war anymore and will get **rid** of their weapons.

## Verse 4

*but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree,  
and no one shall make them afraid,  
for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.*

This verse tells us that this will happen because it is from the Lord. Again this is talking about the **Millennium** when there will be peace and there will not be covetousness and everyone will be content because the Messiah will rule.

## Verse 5

*For all the peoples walk  
each in the name of its god,  
but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God  
forever and ever.*

Micah brings his readers back to the present time when he is writing this. Yes, one day the nations will want to know the **truth** and follow the **Lord** but now they will continue following their false gods.



### Verse 6

*In that day, declares the Lord,  
I will assemble the lame  
and gather those who have been driven away  
and those whom I have afflicted;*

*In that day*- probably refers to the last days and what Micah is probably **talking** about is the Diaspora (dispersion of the Jews) in 70 AD. This restoration is referring to the **final** restoration.

### Verse 7

*and the lame I will make the remnant,  
and those who were cast off, a strong nation;  
and the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion  
from this time forth and forevermore.*

This verse is referring to the Rule **of Jesus** for 1000 years (Psalm 146:10).

### Verse 8

*And you, O tower of the flock,  
hill of the daughter of Zion,  
to you shall it come,  
the former dominion shall come,  
kingship for the daughter of Jerusalem.*

The Lord then speaks to **Jerusalem**, the capital of David, and refers to David and possibly to Solomon's reign and that glory and even greater will come when the Lord rules.

### Verses 9-10

*Now why do you cry aloud?  
Is there no king in you?  
Has your counselor perished,  
that pain seized you like a woman in labor?  
10 Writhe and groan, O daughter of Zion,  
like a woman in labor,  
for now you shall go out from the city  
and dwell in the open country;  
you shall go to Babylon.  
There you shall be rescued;  
there the Lord will redeem you  
from the hand of your enemies.*

These verses are talking about the coming exile which will come at the hands of the **Babylonians**. Micah is writing this around 700 BC and the Babylonians will start deporting people from Jerusalem in 605 BC. Micah also tells them they will be rescued from their enemies and this is a reference to Cyrus the Great, **King of Persia**.

#### **Verse 11**

*Now many nations  
are assembled against you,  
saying, "Let her be defiled,  
and let our eyes gaze upon Zion."*

We don't know for sure what this is speaking of. It would appear that it probably is talking about all the armies that have surrounded Jerusalem from the **Assyrian** army to the **Babylonians**, to the Maccabees, to the Roman army. In other words a progressive fulfillment.

#### **Verse 12**

God reminds his people that he is in complete control and he knows what he is doing.

#### **Chapter 5 Verse 1**

*Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops;  
siege is laid against us;  
with a rod they strike the judge of Israel  
on the cheek.*

The siege that Micah is speaking about, some say it refers to when Sennacherib and the Assyrian army came in 701 BC. But it probably refers to when Nebuchadnezzar's **army** came in 588-586 BC. The king would be Zedekiah, the last king of Judah.

#### **Verse 2**

*But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to be ruler in Israel,  
whose coming forth is from of old,  
from ancient days.*

The Messiah will come for me for **God's** advantage.

Ancient of days- from time immemorial

### Verse 3

*Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labor has given birth;  
then the rest of his brothers shall return  
to the people of Israel.*

The first part of this verse tells us that Israel will be abandoned until the Messiah comes to inaugurate the new age. The term *she who is in labor* probably refers to Israel (Judah). *The brothers* here refer to believing Jews who believed in Jesus and started the new age- the church in Acts 2.

### Verse 4

*And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,  
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.  
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth.*

The Lord will take care of his people.

### Verses 5-6

*And he shall be their peace.  
When the Assyrian comes into our land  
and treads in our palaces,  
then we will raise against him seven shepherds  
and eight princes of men;  
they shall shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword,  
and the land of Nimrod at its entrances;  
and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian  
when he comes into our land  
and treads within our border.*

The Assyrians in this verse are symbolic of all enemies of the Messiah. The Messiah will raise up great leaders whenever his people are threatened.

### Verses 7-9

The Jewish people will be a blessing among all people like they were supposed to be. They also will be unstoppable and will have ultimate victory.

### Verses 10-15

In this section the Lord makes it very clear he will protect his kingdom from enemies; whether militarily, sorcery, witchcraft, or idolatry all will be eradicated.

**Chapter 6 Verses 1-8: The case against Israel**

The people of Israel thought since they had the temple they were safe, nothing was going to happen to them. In this section, God lays down his case against his people. In these verses, God says (in verse 3) “What have I ever done to you to make you the way you are?”

**Verses 9-16: The fulfillment of the curses**

God has made it very clear that they have chosen to disobey him and now the door to restoration has been shut and judgment is coming.

**Chapter 7 Verses 1-7**

The state will break apart and people will turn on each other.

**Verses 8-20**

Even though all this will happen, God will not forget his people. These are very important verses and they show the heart of God for his people, but for us also.

## Nahum

We know little about the author. His name means "comfort" and his message brought comfort to those who were oppressed by the Assyrian empire. Nahum was from a town called Elkosh. We do not know where this is located but is probably located in Judah because he had a great concern for Judah.

We do not know for sure when this book was written but it was probably written when the Assyrians were invading Judah by King Sennacherib.

In this book, the prophet tells us about the destruction of Nineveh. Nineveh was the capital city of one of the cruelest, most idolatrous empires in the world. The Assyrian empire.

### **Chapter 1 Verse 1**

*An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.*

Nahum speaks of comfort and the message Nahum has brought comfort to Judah because it deals with the destruction of their oppressor, the Assyrians.

Oracle or burden- this term was used by the prophets referring to revelations about non-Israelites.

Vision-this is a message which was delivered to Nahum by the Lord. The subject of this vision is Nineveh and the Assyrian empire.

### **Verses 2-3**

*The Lord is a jealous and avenging God;  
the Lord is avenging and wrathful;  
the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries  
and keeps wrath for his enemies.  
3 The Lord is slow to anger and great in power,  
and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty.  
His way is in whirlwind and storm,  
and the clouds are the dust of his feet.*

God is jealous- this is not talking about sinful jealousy. This is speaking about zeal for his people. The idea is a strong desire to see the right accomplished. Remember the Assyrians took the northern tribes into captivity and now they had invaded the land and were trying to capture Jerusalem.

For God not to destroy the Assyrian empire would mean he was not true to himself. God cannot let evil triumph in the world.

## **Chapter 2 Verse 6**

*The river gates are opened;  
the palace melts away;*

Nahum continued to describe the attack upon Nineveh by describing the physical surroundings and protection of Nineveh. Any attacker would be forced to contend with the Tigris River. Nineveh was situated on the east bank of the Tigris River, and the river Husur (Khosr) ran through the city. Rivers provided natural protection for Nineveh but also proved to be the downfall of the city. Any conqueror would be defeated partly by the river or would harness the river's power to undermine the city of Nineveh. But now "her very means of protection have become the instruments of her destruction."

Nahum described the "river gates," which apparently controlled the flow of water through a system of moats and channels that protected the city in times of trouble and harnessed the river's power in more peaceful times. Exactly how the attackers used the river to their advantage is unknown. Either of two possibilities is plausible. The attackers may have captured the river gates, thus controlling the flow of the water and allowing the attackers to move closer to the walls of the city. Or the river gates may have been used to flood the city. The NIV implies the latter idea by describing the palace as having collapsed. The Hebrew text pictures the palace as "melting away" or "being dissolved," which may be a reference to the effects.

The attackers were Cyaxares of the Median Empire, who ruled from 625-585 BC, and Nabopolassar of the Babylonians 626-605 BC.

## **Chapter 3 Verse 19**

*There is no easing your hurt;  
your wound is grievous.  
All who hear the news about you  
clap their hands over you.  
For upon whom has not come  
your unceasing evil?*

There will be no sympathy for the Assyrians, rather there will be rejoicing because everyone in that area has been the recipients of their cruelty.