

Seeing Jesus in the Minor Prophets

Micah

Historical background

- Thus far, in our series through the minor prophets we have bouncing through time. With Micah, there is no bouncing. We simply move forward in time a bit from Jonah. Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah and had a long ministry (at least 30 years) primarily to the southern kingdom of Judah. His ministry began during the reign of Jotham, king of Judah (742-735 B.C.). It continued under Ahaz, king of Judah (735-715), and it was while Ahaz was king of Judah that the northern kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria (722 B.C.). It went on through the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah (715-686). This period of his ministry was both fruitful and difficult. He, unlike the other minor prophets we have studied (with the lone exception of Jonah), was actually listened to. Jeremiah 26 teaches us that king Hezekiah headed Micah's words and the Lord relented because of it...
- ❖ Jeremiah 26:18-19--*"Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and said to all the people of Judah: 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height. ' 19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear the Lord and entreat the favor of the Lord, and did not the Lord relent of the disaster that he had pronounced against them*
- When all looked hopeless and it seemed certain that Judah would fall to Assyria in 701 B.C., Micah saw God deliver Judah by causing 185,000 Assyrian troops to be struck down in the night (2 Kings 19:35).
- Yet, all was not gravy. Micah saw many of Judah's cities raided and destroyed by the Assyrian ruler Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:13). He also saw Hezekiah foolishly give Babylonian envoys a guided tour of Judah's treasury and armory which would eventually lead to their fall to Babylon in 586 (2 Kings 20:12-18).

The Message of Micah

- The book of Micah is not a single recorded message. It is a collection of messages. "Micah's prophecy contains once-independent announcements of judgements, oracles of salvation, controversy sayings, lawsuit speeches, instructions, laments, prayer, hymn, and a proclamation of the Lord's epiphany.¹" Kevin DeYoung in his sermon on the book of Micah referred to it as something of a "Micah's greatest hits album"² Thus what we have is a collection of Micah's prophetic utterances into a single book that seems to preach three mini sermons...
 - Sermon 1: Judgement and Deliverance (Chapter 1-2)
 - Sermon 2: From Ruin to Exaltation (Chapter 3-5)
 - Sermon 3: Indictment and Restoration (Chapters 6-7)

1. Sermon 1: Judgement and Deliverance (Chapter 1-2)

Judgment on Samaria (1: 2-7)

- After calling the whole world to attention, Micah announces that God is coming down from his throne to render judgement and it is a terrifying picture...

¹ David W. Baker, T. Desmond Alexander, and Bruce Waltke, *Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah: TOTC*, p.156.

² Kevin DeYoung, "Micah." Sermon given at University Reformed Church in 2008.

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- ❖ Micah 1:3-4--*For behold, the Lord is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. 4 And the mountains will melt under him, and the valleys will split open, like wax before the fire, like waters poured down a steep place.*
- Micah is essentially saying, “God is coming and you should be very afraid! His wrath is burning so hot that it melts the mountains under his feet!” But who is he angry with? He is angry with Israel...
- ❖ Micah 1:6-7--*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. 7 All 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.*
- This prophesy came true during Micah’s ministry In 722 B.C. when the Assyrians conquered Israel.

Judgment on Judah (1:8-16)

- Unfortunately, the sin of Israel was not just in Israel. It had spread to Judah as well. Thus, judgment would come to Judah as well. What is summarized very succinctly in 2 Kings...
- ❖ 2 Kings 18:13--*In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them*
- Is prophesied by Micah using an interesting literary technique. In verses 10-15, Micah uses puns to announce coming judgement upon Judah’s cities. For example, in verse 10 he says to the city of Beth-le-aphrah, “roll yourselves in the dust.” The pun is in the fact that Beth-le-aphrah means “house of dust.” So it is sort like he is saying “House of dust will bite the dust!” He does something like this for each of the cities mentioned in this passage.
- He closes this section by calling the people of Judah to...
- ❖ Micah 1:16--*Make yourselves bald...make yourselves as bald as the eagle,*
- Undoubtedly this seems weird to most of us. However, it is helpful to know that shaving the head was sometimes used as a sign of shame or mourning. Thus, Micah is calling the people of Judah to mourn deeply over the coming destruction.

Judgment Against Greedy Land Barons (2:1-5)

- Micah condemns the greedy landholders. He says they dream of snatching other peoples land and then they wake up and do it. They care nothing for the families they displace. They care not about the fact that God had given those lands to the people as an inheritance.
- Because Judah has become filled with such people, God will cause a nation to rise up against Judah and snatch her land from her and care nothing for the people they displace.

Judgment Against False Prophets (2:6-11)

- The wicked people of Judah didn’t tolerate Micah’s preaching. They didn’t want to hear that they were in sin. They didn’t want to hear about the wrath due them because of their sin. They said...
- ❖ Micah 2:6--*“one should not preach of such things; disgrace will not overtake us*
- To rebuke them, Micah says...


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- ❖ Micah 2:11--*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!*

A Remnant Restored (2:12,13)

- While Micah begins this first section with announcements of judgment, he ends this first section with a promise of restoration. Though the people of Israel and Judah will be exiled and dispersed throughout Assyria and eventually Babylon, they will be gathered together again...
 - ❖ Micah 2:12-13--*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.*
- In the New Testament, we see that The fulfillment of this promise is way bigger than simply returning the Jewish people to their homeland. Ultimately, this promise is all about Jesus. He gathers his “noisy multitude” of sheep.
 - ❖ John 6:37--*All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.*
 - ❖ John 10:4--*When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.*
- Jesus’s sheep aren’t just Jews either. He has sheep among the gentile folds as well that he will make into one flock.
 - ❖ John 10:16--*I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*
- He is the one who “opens the breach.” He is is the “Lord at their head.”
 - ❖ John 10:7-9--*“Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.*

 Thus, the flow of this first sermon is essentially that God will bring judgment upon his people because of their wickedness yet one day, through Jesus, he will lead them out of judgement, he will gather his people together, and he will be their shepherd.

2. Sermon 2: From Ruin to Exaltation (Chapter 3-5)

Wicked Leadership and judgment (3)

- In chapter 3 we discover that the rulers of the day were cruel and full of corruption...we see that the rulers were wicked. Speaking of them, Micah says...
 - ❖ Micah 3:2-3--*you who hate the good and love the evil, who tear the skin from off my people and their flesh from off their bones, 3 who eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones in pieces and chop them up like meat in a pot, like flesh in a cauldron.*
 - ❖ Micah 3:9-10--*Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who detest justice and make crooked all that is straight, 10 who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity.*
- We see that the prophets were leading God’s people astray. They sold indulgences...
 - ❖ Micah 3:5--*Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who lead my people astray, who cry “Peace” when they have something to eat, but declare war against him who puts nothing into their mouths.*

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- Here we see that if you brought them plenty of rich food, the would prophets would prophesy “peace” over you and over the land. If they didn’t have plenty of food they proclaimed war and doom to scare you into giving them what they wanted.
- Thus there was corruption at every level of leadership...
 - ❖ Micah 3:11--*Its heads give judgment for a bribe; its priests teach for a price; its prophets practice divination for money;*
- As a result, God would bring terrible judgement upon them. Even worse, it would come upon the entire nation...
 - ❖ Malachi 3:12--*Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height.*

Restoration and Exaltation (4:1-8)

- Chapter 4 begins with a description of what it will look like when Jesus reverses the judgement of Micah 3:12. God’s kingdom won’t remain flattened, it will be exalted! God’s people won’t remain dispersed throughout foreign lands, rather God will add to them people from all nations! This promise begins to see it’s fulfillment in the church age and will see it’s utter fulfillment in eternity. This is an age in which...
 - ❖ Micah 4:3--*He will settle disputes among many peoples and provide arbitration for strong nations that are far away. They will beat their swords into plows, and their spears into pruning knives. Nation will not take up the sword against nation, and they will never again train for war (HCSB)*
- What Micah is saying here is that God will one day cause people who hate each other to be at total peace with one another. This is exactly what we see in the New Testament...
 - ❖ Ephesians 2:13-16--*But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.*
 - ❖ Galatians 3:28--*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ 's, then you are Abraham' s offspring, heirs according to promise.*

The Lord’s Secret Agenda (4:9-13)

- As yet, the period of restoration and exaltation is still a way off. What isn’t quite as far off is a period of great difficulty. A period of exile will come first. However, God’s people should not despair, because the Lord has a secret agenda. One that will bring deliverance to his people (4:10), one that his enemies know nothing about (4:12). So what is this secret agenda?

The Messianic Ruler (5:1-6)

- ❖ Micah 5:2-5--*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. 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. 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. 5 And he shall be their peace.*

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- Judah's prophets, priests, and rulers were corrupt. Judgment and exile was upon Israel and soon awaited Judah. Yet God had a plan! Out of the most obscure town, from out of the smallest of the people's on earth (Deuteronomy 7) would come a righteous ruler! An ancient ruler. One who...
 - ❖ John 1:2--*was in the beginning with God*
- They would have to endure hardship, suffering, and exile for a time, but when "she who is in labor has given birth..." DELIVERANCE HAS COME!!! This ancient ruler will deliver his people and shepherd his people with the strength of almighty God! Those whom he delivers are kept secure in him and his salvation reaches ever corner of the globe!!!! Is there any question at all about who we are speaking of here!? Micah is speaking of the one and only Jesus Christ!!

The Remnant of Jacob Among the Gentiles (5:7-9)

- In this section, we simply see that when Jesus comes and establishes his kingdom, it won't be all in one place. It won't be a socio-political entity. The kingdom of God will be all over the place...
 - ❖ Micah 5:7--*like showers on the grass*
- Furthermore, the people of his kingdom will powerfully and radically affect whatever civilization they inhabit. They will be like...
 - ❖ Micah 5:8--*a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep,*

The Lord Purifies His People and Judges the Nations (5:10-15)

- We have already seen that Jesus is the righteous ruler in place of Judah's wicked rulers. However, he is even more than that. He is also the righteous prophet and priest. As such, he purifies his people. He will take away their horses, chariots, cities, and strongholds because it is in these things that they foolishly place their trust. He will take away their sorcery and idols so that they will not be guilty of idolatry anymore.
- For those who are not his sheep, he says...
 - ❖ Micah 5:15--*in anger and wrath I will execute vengeance on the nations that did not obey.*

 Thus, the flow of this second sermon can be summarized by saying because there is such wickedness even among the prophets, priests, and kings of God's people, there will be judgment. Yet there will be restoration and even exaltation one day when God's chosen one (Jesus) comes. He will be for us the righteous prophet, priest, and shepherd king.

3. Sermon 3: Indictment and Restoration (Chapters 6-7)

God's people on trial (6:1-8)

- Chapter six begins with something of a back and forth legal dialogue. God says through Micah, "After all I have done for you, how could you possibly live so wickedly" (paraphrase of Micah 6:1-5)? God's people then offer an exasperated defense...
 - ❖ Micah 6:6-7--*"With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7 Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"*

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- God's response makes it clear that their mellow drama isn't going to work on him. He clearly and simply states what he expects out of his people with that famous line of...
 - ❖ Micah 6:8--*He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

Crimes and Sentencing (6:9-16)

- After the brief dialogue, God brings their crimes before them and issues his sentence. He describes their crimes as such...
 - ❖ Micah 6:10-12--*Can I forget any longer the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is accursed? 11 Shall I acquit the man with wicked scales and with a bag of deceitful weights? 12 Your rich men are full of violence; your inhabitants speak lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.*
- He then issues a brutal sentence. He says...
 - ❖ Micah 6:13--*Therefore I strike you with a grievous blow, making you desolate because of your sins.*
- The sentence is one of inability and dissatisfaction. They won't be able to fill their bellies no matter how much they eat, they won't be able to accumulate wealth no matter how much they save, they'll press olives but will have no oil, they'll press grapes but will have no wine, etc. They have been a wicked idolatrous people and thus...
 - ❖ Micah 6:16--*I may make you a desolation, and your inhabitants a hissing; so you shall bear the scorn of my people*

A Lament for a Broken and Corrupt Nation (7:1-7)

- The book of Micah ends with two songs. One is a lament because of how wicked God's people have become. Micah cries out...
 - ❖ Micah 7:2-4--*The godly has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among mankind; they all lie in wait for blood, and each hunts the other with a net. 3 Their hands are on what is evil, to do it well; the prince and the judge ask for a bribe, and the great man utters the evil desire of his soul; thus they weave it together. 4 The best of them is like a brier, the most upright of them a thorn hedge.*
 - ❖ Micah 7:5-6--*Put no trust in a neighbor; have no confidence in a friend; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your arms; 6 for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.*
- All that said, Micah has not fallen into despair. He ends his lament with one of those glorious "but as for me" statements...
 - ❖ Micah 7:7--*But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me*
- From this point he begins a new song.

The Church's Hymn of Victory (7:8-20)

- ❖ Micah 7:8-9--*Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me. 9 I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him, until he pleads my cause and executes judgment for me. He will bring me out to the light; I shall look upon his vindication.*
 - In Christ, we are in some ways invincible. Kill us and we simply go on to eternity with our glorious Lord! Isolate us and we will be comforted by indwelling Holy Spirit. Even earthly suffering for our own sins we can bear knowing that Jesus has borne our sins in his body (1

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Peter 2:24) so that we won't face eternal punishment. Truly, no weapon formed against us shall succeed (Isaiah 54:17) because of the work of Christ Jesus.

- ❖ Micah 7:11-13--*A day for the building of your walls! In that day the boundary shall be far extended. 12 In that day they will come to you, from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, and from Egypt to the River, from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain.*
 - This speaks to the massiveness of Christ's kingdom. Micah says, "when he comes, the kingdom will be way bigger than Israel ever was and it will include those who were once bitter enemies."
- ❖ Micah 7:18-20--*Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. 19 He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. 20 You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.*
 - This book closes with a verse about the glorious work of Christ. It is because of the work of Christ on the cross that there is "pardon for iniquity and passing over of transgression." It is because of the work of Christ on the cross that God the Father "does not retain his anger forever." The wrath of God was satisfied at the cross. It is through Christ, that the Father "has compassion on us." It is in the death and burial of Christ that "our iniquities are tread underfoot" and our "sins are cast into the depths of the sea." It is only in Christ that we gentiles become partakers of the covenant promise to Abraham...
 - ❖ Galatians 3:29--*And if you are Christ s, then you are Abraham' s offspring, heirs according to promise.*