

LESSON 1 ~ MICAH

Burdened by the abusive treatment of the poor, the book of Micah rebukes anyone who would use social status or political power for personal gain. One third of Micah exposes the sins of his countrymen, another third pictures the punishment God is about to send, and the final third holds out the hope of restoration once that discipline has ended. Through it all, God's righteous demands upon His people are clear: "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God" (6:8).

Author

The prophet Micah, whose name means "Who is like the Lord?" was one of the eighth-century prophets, together with Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, and Jonah, and he is mentioned in Jeremiah 26:18. Micah's home was Moresheth Gath (1:14), a town probably located about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem.

Like Amos, Micah was a man of the country who had time for thought and clear vision. Blessed with Amos's passion for justice and Hosea's heart of love, Micah's spirit burned with indignation over how the city dwellers oppressed the peasants. Yet his teaching is not entirely unique; he echoes great truths proclaimed by his predecessors and contemporaries, especially Isaiah of Jerusalem.

Date

The first verse indicates that Micah prophesied in the days of Jotham (739–731 B.C.), Ahaz (731–715 B.C.) and Hezekiah (715–686 B.C.), kings of Judah. Although Micah deals primarily with Judah, he also addresses the Northern Kingdom of Israel and predicts the fall of Samaria (1:6). Much of his ministry, therefore, took place before the Assyrian captivity of Israel in 722 B.C. His strong denunciations of idolatry and immorality also suggest that his ministry largely preceded the sweeping religious reforms of Hezekiah. Thus, Micah's prophecies ranged from about 735 to 710 B.C.

During the ministry of Micah, the kingdom of Israel continued to crumble inwardly and outwardly until its collapse in 722 B.C. The Assyrian empire reached the zenith of its power and became a constant threat to Judah. Babylon was still under Assyrian domination, and Micah's prediction of a future Babylonian captivity for Judah (4:10) must have seemed unlikely.

Themes and Literary Structure

The book of Micah is somewhat difficult to analyze because of its loose organization. Nevertheless, certain important themes are clearly evident. Samaria's doom is certain and Judah's is not far behind. The people plan wickedness and oppress the poor without any concern for divine judgment on their behavior. The corruption of the political and religious leaders of Judah is also highlighted (ch. 3). God will restore His people and give them a true Ruler who will lead them in victory, but that hope stands only on the other side of the judgment that is coming because they failed to accept their covenant responsibilities as God's chosen people.

The book may be divided into three sections: the prediction of judgment (chs. 1–3), the prediction of restoration (chs. 4 and 5), and the plea for repentance (chs. 6 and 7).

The prediction of Micah 5:2 that the Messiah would be born in the city of Bethlehem is one of the clearest and most important of all Old Testament messianic prophecies. In addition, Micah 2:12, 13; 4:1–8; and 5:4, 5 offer vivid descriptions of the righteous reign of Christ over the whole world.

LESSON 2 ~ MICAH

Study Questions For Micah Chapters 2 - 3

1. What evil were God's people committing? Who is committing these sins?
2. What does it mean that they would have no one to determine boundary lines?
3. How did the people treat the prophets of God?
4. What kind of prophets did the people want to hear?
5. Who would God assemble and who would lead them?
6. What were the rulers doing to God's people?
7. Why were the prophets going to be ashamed?
8. Why did the rulers, priests and prophets think no harm would happen to them?
9. Who was primarily responsible for the destruction coming upon Zion?

LESSON 3 ~ MICAH

Study Questions For Micah Chapters 4 - 5

1. When would the mountain of the LORD's House be established?
2. Who would come to it?
3. From where would the law and word go forth?
4. Why would no one make them afraid anymore?
5. Whom would the LORD assemble and what would he do with them?
6. What is the former dominion that would come to the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem?
7. What was the daughter of Zion going to give birth to from her labor pains?
8. Who was going to come forth from Bethlehem Ephrathah?
9. Among whom would the remnant of Jacob dwell?
10. Why would God cut off the horses, chariots, and strongholds from the remnant of Jacob?
11. What would happen to the other nations that do not obey?

LESSON 4 ~ MICAH

Study Questions For Micah Chapters 6 - 7

1. What charge or contention does God have against Israel?
2. Why did God tell them to remember the story of Balak and Balaam?
3. With what should one come before the LORD?
4. Who has appointed the rod of correction? Why?
5. What two men stand out for the abominations practiced in Israel?
6. What has happened to the good people?
7. From where does a man's enemies come from?
8. What would happen to Israel after they fell?
9. Why would God pass over the transgressions of the remnant but not the rest of Israel?
10. Why doesn't God retain His anger forever?