

# The Prophet Micah

Prayer: Dear Lord, You gave Your word many years ago. But still today Your word is true for our lives. As we study the book Micah, please make us see Your message for us. Show us our sins that we must repent. Show us our Savior Jesus and the forgiveness of sins. Give us Your Holy Spirit to lead us in true Christian faith and life. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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## Author

The man who wrote this book is named Micah. His name means, "Who is like Yahweh." It could be a question, "Who is like Yahweh?" meaning Yahweh is the greatest and no one is like Him.

## Place

Micah lived in Moresheth Gath (Micah 1:1). If you look on a map, look west of Jerusalem. He lived in Judah, the Southern Kingdom. But he prophesied to both Judah and Israel (the Northern Kingdom).

## Date

Micah 1:1 says that God's word came to Micah while Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were kings of Judah. That means he began prophesying between 740 – 732 B.C. (Jotham's reign) and ended between 713 – 686 B.C. (Hezekiah's reign). Micah was a prophet at the same time as Isaiah.

## Setting

People in Israel and Judah were both not following God. But Israel was worse and did much idol worship. During Micah's ministry, Assyria destroyed Israel in the north in 722 B.C. Assyria also defeated many cities in Judah, but God protected Jerusalem. King Hezekiah was a good king and led the people to worship the true God. But the people were not all good and they still needed God's warning.

## Theme

People at that time were rich and living well, but they ignored people who were poor and needy. They looked religious, but they were hypocrites. Micah preached judgment on them. He also preached hope, because God will not destroy, but will forgive and build them up again. Micah also gave several prophecies about the Messiah, Jesus. There are three main parts, chapters 1-3, 4-5, and 6-7.

## 1. Micah 1:1-16

Prayer: Dear Lord, You are always our hope and strength. Help us obey Your warnings and show true sorrow for our sins and trust You for forgiveness. Then help us live in hope and show hope to all people. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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Micah 1:1-2. Introduction.

- Micah says when he prophesied and who he prophesied to. Why do you think that is important? Why should we care who he spoke to?
- Did Micah preach his own ideas? Where did his message come from?
- People often hated prophets and their message. Prophets needed a lot of bravery and strength to preach. Imagine you are Micah. God's word gives you strength to preach. But people hate you because you preach God's word. How does that feel?
- Who did Micah preach to (vs. 2)? Was this message only for the Jews?

Micah 1:3-7. A message of judgment.

- When God comes, what will it look like? How will He come?
- These verses are especially about Samaria (the capital city of Israel in the north). What was Samaria/Israel guilty of doing? Hints: high places means worship places especially for idol worship, images or statues means idols, and prostitution was often part of idol worship.
- What will God do to Samaria because of their sin?

Micah 1:8-16. Micah's response to the judgment.

- What did Micah think about the messages he preached? (vs. 8-9)
- Most of the cities named were in Judah (south), not Israel (north). If Israel got punished, why should Judah be sad? See vs. 13-16 (Zion means Jerusalem, capital city of Judah.)
- What should be our attitude when we see unbelievers going to hell?

## 2. Micah 2:1-13

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You give us Your word to show us Jesus our Savior and give us faith in Him. Don't let us foolishly follow other messages. Always keep us faithful to You and Your word. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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Micah 2:1-2. People sin against each other.

- God names the people's sins. What do they do?

Micah 2:3-5. A message of judgment.

- Can the people escape from God's judgment?
- What will happen to their land and everything they own?
- Remember their sins in verses 1-2? How is this punishment right for their sins?

Micah 2:6-11. The people ignore God's message.

- Micah and other prophets preached God's warnings. Did the people want to hear those warnings? Did they believe the warnings?
- In verse 7, the people are asking, "Is God truly angry with us? He doesn't really punish people, does He?" The people are living in D \_ \_ \_ \_ \_.
- The land is supposed to be a place for God's people to rest, same as heaven will be a place of rest for God's people. But God says the land isn't a place of rest any more. Why not?
- What kind of prophets do the people want? What does this say about how we choose who to listen to?

Micah 2:12-13. A message of hope.

- Who will open the doors of captivity and lead the people out? Will the people escape by themselves, or does someone else save them?
- God will lead His people again. But how many? All of the people, or only some of them? Read verse 12 very carefully. Explain why God does that.

### 3. Micah 3:1-12

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You give leaders to do right, protect people, and lead people to You. Help us always pray for our leaders and encourage them to do right, then our churches and nation can live and please You. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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Micah 3:1-4. The leaders destroy the people.

- Verse 1 says the leaders of Jacob (Judah) and Israel should know justice. That is a word that means they use laws in a right and fair way. What happens if leaders aren't just, aren't fair, if they favor some people more than others?
- Verses 2-3 describe how bad it is for people when leaders are not fair and take advantage of people. Why would leaders do this to their own people?
- When the leaders oppressed the people, they ignored the people's cries for mercy. When God punishes, will He listen to the leaders crying for mercy?

Micah 3:5-8. The prophets destroy the people.

- Remember that a prophet is a "mouthpiece of God," a person who announces God's word for Him. Were those prophets announcing the truth?
- Why were they speaking? What was the only thing the prophets cared about?
- Will God speak through those kinds of prophets? What does this say about "prophets" today who don't speak the truth?
- How is Micah different from those prophets (vs. 8)? Give two big differences.

Micah 3:9-12. God will destroy Jerusalem.

- What are the words the leaders, priests, and prophets say (verse 11)?
- What do the leaders, priests, and prophets do (verses 9-11). Do they act like God is with them?
- Zion is another name for Jerusalem. Who is responsible for Jerusalem getting destroyed?

#### 4. Micah 4:1-13

Prayer: Lord, the nations and unbelievers work against Your people. Our own sins try to destroy us. But You promise victory for us. Come, Lord Jesus. Come and save us, and give us Your victory. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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Micah 4:1-5. Promises about the last days.

- The mountain of the Lord's house means the temple in Jerusalem. People often put their idols and altars on top of hills and mountains. The temple will be on the highest mountain. What does that mean?
- Will nations continue to worship their idols? Where will they go (verse 2)?
- Nations will no longer fight wars. Who will judge? Who will rule and make peace for people?
- Will all people be saved? Compare verse 2 and verse 5. Which one describes nations being saved? Which one describes nations not saved?

Micah 4:6-8. More about the last days.

- In Micah 2:12, we talked about the "few people" (also named the remnant) saved from Israel. Micah 4:6-7 is another description of that remnant. Does God save the strong people who can take care of themselves, or weak, hurt, and oppressed people?
- God will make these people become what kind of nation?
- When are these things to happen? When are the last days?

Micah 4:9-13. Judah will suffer, then have victory.

- God will make Judah great. But before that, what will happen to Judah, also named the Daughter of Zion? (verses 9 – 11).
- We know that God wins the victory. In verse 13, what shows that He will share the victory with His people?

## 5. Micah 5:1-15

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You rule the earth. The nations plan against You and Your people, but You win the victory. You sent Your Son to save us and rule us. Let us be strong witnesses and share Your life with them. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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Micah 5:1-5a. The new Ruler from long ago.

- Enemies will strike (hit) the judge (ruler) of Israel on the cheek with a stick. There are two meanings, one soon and one later. What are they?
  1. Soon... (see 2 Chronicles 36:17-20)
  2. Later... (see Matthew 27:27-30)
- Verses 2-4 describe a new ruler for Israel.
  1. He will be born in \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. He is really from the distant \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. He will be a \_\_\_\_\_ of His flock.
  4. People will live in safety because His greatness will reach all the \_\_\_\_\_.

Micah 5:5b-9. Victory!

- Assyria is the mighty enemy and no one can defeat them. In the future, Assyria will be so weak, seven \_\_\_\_\_ and eight \_\_\_\_\_ can defeat Assyria.
- Where will the few people (the remnant) of Jacob be?
  1. They will be among many people, like dew from the Lord. That means they will be a ble\_ \_ \_ \_ to the people.
  2. They will be among the nations. They will be like a \_\_\_\_\_ among animals. That means they will rule.
  3. God's people will be among all nations. This also means that God will save people from every nation.

Micah 5:10-15. A new day to worship God alone.

- Who is God talking to? Israel or Assyria?
- God will defend His people. That is why He will defeat Assyria. But will God let Israel do whatever they want? What do these verses say?

## 6. Micah 6:1-16

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are patient and loving. This world sins and earns Your judgment. But You put Your judgment and punishment on Jesus, not on us. Now You wait for people to trust Jesus and become saved. Help us be faithful to Jesus, and make more people trust Him also. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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Micah 6:1-5. God goes to court against His people.

- Who are the witnesses in court? When God's people disobey, who sees?
- Verses 3-5 describe what God did for His people.
  1. What did God do for them (verse 4)?
  2. Who did God give to lead them (verse 4)?
  3. B \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ blessed Israel and gave promises how God will make them a great nation (Numbers 23-24). Did Israel follow God's promises?

Micah 6:6-8. What does God want?

- Can we do enough to make God happy? Can we sacrifice enough, work enough, do enough good, and God will be happy with us?
- This is still part of the court case. Now God explains the charge (accusation) against Israel. This is the law they must do, but they failed. What does God want them to do (verse 8)?
- How does verse 8 apply to us? What does God want us to do?

Micah 6:9-16. God announces His judgment.

- In verses 9-12, God names some more sins they are guilty of doing. What are the people doing wrong?
- What are the punishments in verses 13-15?
- The kings Omri and Ahab (Omri's son) did much evil and led the people to do evil. What is the final punishment for that?
- What happened to Israel often happened to Jesus, but Jesus always did it the way God wanted. How did the end of verse 16 happen to Jesus?

## 7. Micah 7:1-20

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You punish sin, but You save Your people. Make us patient and wait for You to save us. Give us strong faith. Then if the world is evil, doesn't-matter, we will always trust You and praise You forever. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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Micah 7:1-6. Micah is very sad.

- Fruit means God's people doing good things. Is there any good fruit in Israel? Were there any good people still in Israel? (vs. 1-2)
- Could the people trust each other? Could families trust each other? (vs. 3-6)

Micah 7:7-10. Micah waits for God to save.

- Faith means trusting God even when things look bad. In verses 7-8, how do you know things are bad? How do you know Micah still has faith?
- He knows he will first suffer the Lord's anger (vs. 9). Why?
- Who will end his punishment and defeat his enemies (vs. 9-10)?

Micah 7:11-20. God will build His kingdom.

- What does verse 11 say about Israel's walls and borders? Will God make the country be bigger or smaller?
- Read vs. 12. What will believers from other countries do? Where will they go?
- Read vs. 13 and 16-17. What will happen to unbelieving nations?
- How will God take care of His people (verses 14-15)?
- Verses 18-20 talk about how great God is. What great things does He do?
- Think of how much judgment and bad news there is in the book of Micah. All that judgment and punishment can make a person depressed and give up. When you are ready to give up, how do verses 18-20 give you hope?