



THE BOOK OF MICAH



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INTRODUCTION

The prophet Micah has a warning for God's people, and the warning was that God was going to punish them for their sinfulness because they were listening to the lies of the false prophets.

This wasn't how God intended things to be; God was to be their teacher, and God wanted peace between the nations. God goes on to promise that He will send a leader for them who will be born in Bethlehem. We know Him today as Jesus, the Christ.

In the meantime, God accused His people of sinfulness and refused to receive any gifts from them. He simply wanted them to humble themselves and do what was right in His eyes. However, because of their stubborn hearts, God would end up punishing them.

The good news is that when His people finally did humble themselves and turn to serve the Living God, then God would make them into a great nation once again.

AUTHOR

The very first verse of Micah tells us that Micah wrote this book, **Micah 1:1**. Not much is known about Micah other than what is mentioned in this book, but we know his name means 'Who is like God'. He was from Moresheth on the border of Judah and Philistia, which was the main road leading to Egypt. His contemporaries were Isaiah and Hosea. He is mentioned by Jeremiah, **Jeremiah 26:18** and other prophets also validated the authorship of Micah by quoting from his writings, **Isaiah 41:15 / Ezekiel 22:25 / Zephaniah 3:19**.

While Isaiah was able to mix with nobles and court people, Micah was able to mix with ordinary people, and some say he is overshadowed by Isaiah, but his words are in no way inferior to Isaiah's words.

The closing verse is quoted in the song of Zacharias, **Micah 7:20 / Luke 1:72-73**. The prediction regarding the place 'where Christ should be born,' one of the most remarkable Messianic prophecies, **Micah 5:2** is quoted in **Matthew 2:6**.

There are a few other references to this book in the New Testament.

- a. **Micah 5:2** is quoted in **Matthew 2:6 / John 7:42**.
- b. **Micah 7:6** is quoted in **Matthew 10:21 / Matthew 10:35-36**.
- c. **Micah 7:20** is quoted in **Luke 1:72-73**.

DATE

Because Micah prophesied during the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, who were kings of the Southern Kingdom, and since he began his ministry before the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 722/21 B.C., and he continued his prophecy into the reign of Hezekiah, **Jeremiah 26:18**, we can conclude, therefore, that the book was written in 735 B.C.

SUMMARY

Halley's Bible Handbook says the following.

'Micah's message was to both Israel and Judah, addressed primarily to their two respective capitals, Samaria and Jerusalem. Its three main ideas were: their Sins; their Destruction, and their Restoration. These ideas, in the book, are mixed up, with abrupt transitions between Present Desolation and Future Glory.'

THEME

Judah will fall because of the same thing that is going to cause the Northern Kingdom to fall, that is, idolatry and forsaking the law.

OUTLINE

God is Coming in Judgment. Micah 1-2
God is Coming in Peace. Micah 3-5
God is Coming in Mercy. Micah 6-7

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

'The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah—the vision he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. Hear, you peoples, all of you, listen, earth and all who live in it, that the Sovereign LORD may bear witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.' Micah 1:1-2

Micah prophesied during the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, who were kings of the Southern Kingdom, **Micah 1:1 / 1 Peter 1:11 / 2 Peter 1:21**. He received a vision concerning Samaria and Jerusalem, **Micah 1:1**. Samaria was the capital of the Northern Kingdom and was on the verge of being destroyed. Why? Because of idolatry. The destruction will come fourteen years later in 721. He speaks of sin as if it were a disease that is spreading to the capital of the Southern Kingdom, that is, Jerusalem, whose destruction will not be far behind. All the people of the earth and the earth itself are about to bear witness to God's upcoming judgment, **Malachi 1:2**.

JUDGMENT AGAINST SAMARIA AND JERUSALEM

"Look! The LORD is coming from his dwelling place; he comes down and treads on the heights of the earth. The mountains melt beneath him and the valleys split apart, like wax before the fire, like water rushing down a slope. All this is because of Jacob's transgression, because of the sins of the people of Israel. What is Jacob's transgression? Is

it not Samaria? What is Judah's high place? Is it not Jerusalem? "Therefore, I will make Samaria a heap of rubble, a place for planting vineyards. I will pour her stones into the valley and lay bare her foundations. All her idols will be broken to pieces; all her temple gifts will be burned with fire; I will destroy all her images. Since she gathered her gifts from the wages of prostitutes, as the wages of prostitutes, they will again be used." Micah 1:3-7

Micah sees God coming from heaven to earth, and coming with judgment, **Micah 1:3**. We must note that **Micah 1:3-4** are highly figurative and so, when God is pictured as coming from His holy temple, His dwelling place, it's not referring to Jerusalem but heaven itself, **Psalms 11:4 / Isaiah 26:21**.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following concerning **Micah 1:3-4**.

'The geophysical disturbance of the whole earth is repeatedly mentioned in both the Old Testament and the New Testament as accompaniments of the final judgment day, **Revelation 6:14-17 / Revelation 11:19 / Revelation 16:17-21**, etc. The mention of such phenomena here definitely indicated that the judgment about to be executed against Samaria and Jerusalem is typical of that ultimate judgment upon all mankind, hence the propriety of demanding that 'all nations' hear it, **Micah 1:2**.'

Gill, in his commentary, says the following concerning **Micah 1:3-4**.

'As Sinai was when he descended on it, and as all nations will be at the general conflagration but here the words are to be taken, not literally, but figuratively, for the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and for the kings, and princes, and great men in them, that lifted up their heads as high, and thought themselves as secure, as mountains, yet when the judgments of God should fall upon them, their hearts would melt through fear under him, as well as all their glory and greatness depart from them, and they be no more what they were before, but levelled with the meanest subject.'

Allen, in his commentary, says the following concerning **Micah 1:3-4**.

'Although directed primarily against Samaria, and ultimately against the southern capital, the prophet sets his pronouncement against a vast backcloth of world judgment. Micah's God is no provincial deity but the universal Overlord to whom all nations must render account.'

God is coming in judgment against Israel and Judah because of their sinfulness, their idolatry, **Micah 1:5 / 1 Peter 4:17**. Samaria would end up being a heap of stones in the field and the city's walls would be torn down to such an extent it would expose its foundation, **Micah 1:6**. This was fulfilled in 722 B.C. when Samaria fell to the Assyrians and was completely destroyed.

The idols which were made of gold and silver would be broken and melted down and taken back to Assyria as plunder, and all their treasures would be taken away too, **Micah 1:7**.

Waltke, in his commentary, says the following.

'Golden images, of such monetary value yet so spiritually and politically worthless, were constructed from the wages of cult prostitutes. The conquerors will break them up and use the money to repeat the same cycle. Only the heart of a depraved man could worship gods like that!'

Because Samaria had given themselves over to spiritual prostitution, **Romans 1:23**, all the wealth which they had gathered because of their prostitution would be taken away, **Micah 1:7**. All of Samaria's wealth was taken away by the Assyrians, **2 Kings 17:4-6**.

Archer, in his commentary, summarises these verses as follows.

'The Assyrian troops of Sargon would smash her idols and destroy the dedicated treasures and votive monuments, the harlot's hires from her false lovers, the heathen gods, in her temples. All the materialistic gains and advantages, such as the political alliance with Phoenicia engineered by Jezebel's marriage to Ahab, will be wiped out, or carried off as spoil by the enemy.'

WEEPING AND MOURNING

‘Because of this, I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and naked. I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl. For Samaria’s plague is incurable; it has spread to Judah. It has reached the very gate of my people, even to Jerusalem itself. Tell it not in Gath; weep not at all. In Beth Ophrah roll in the dust. Pass by naked and in shame, you who live in Shaphir. Those who live in Zaanan will not come out. Beth Ezel is in mourning; it no longer protects you. Those who live in Maroth writhe in pain, waiting for relief, because disaster has come from the LORD, even to the gate of Jerusalem. You who live in Lachish, harness fast horses to the chariot. You are where the sin of Daughter Zion began, for the transgressions of Israel were found in you. Therefore, you will give parting gifts to Moresheth Gath. The town of Akzib will prove deceptive to the kings of Israel. I will bring a conqueror against you who live in Mareshah. The nobles of Israel will flee to Adullam. Shave your head in mourning for the children in whom you delight; make yourself as bald as the vulture, for they will go from you into exile.’ Micah 1:8-16

It’s difficult to determine whether this is God speaking or Micah, but it doesn’t really matter. The words carry with them a sense of mourning. They roam about barefoot and dressed only in a loincloth, Micah 1:8, which speaks of the spiritual state of Israel.

Those who have heard the howl of jackals, Micah 1:8, tell us that it’s an especially bloodcurdling scream. The noises made by owls also convey a sense of grief and horror, Micah 1:8.

They had gone too far, and they couldn’t be cured; they cannot do anything about it, Micah 1:9 / Luke 18:27. Israel had turned away from God and forsaken Him, and as a result, they would be handed over to the nations.

Not only did Micah mourn over the Northern Kingdom, but he also mourned over the Southern Kingdom, that is, Judah, which was also infected with the same sinfulness, Micah 1:9.

Notice the whole nation will be affected, in Gath, a Philistines city, Micah 1:10, where stories were told, would become silent as there would be no one around to speak, 2 Samuel 1:20.

Beth Ophrah, Micah 1:10, which means the house of dust would roll about in the dust, Joshua 7:6 / Job 16:15 / Isaiah 47:1 / Jeremiah 25:34. Shaphir, which was a beautiful city, would walk in shame, Micah 1:11. Zaanan, the town of marching, would no longer be marching in pride, Micah 1:11.

Constable, in his commentary, says the following concerning Zaanan.

‘Inhabitants of Zaanan, a town name that sounds like the Hebrew word translated ‘come out,’ would not be able to come out of their town to escape.’

There would be nowhere for a foothold in the city of Beth Ezel on the hillside, Micah 1:11. They would lament because the Lord would remove its support. Maroth, the town of bitterness, would wait for something good, Micah 1:12. Lachish, the horse town, would cease to exist, Micah 1:13. In the law, they were forbidden to have horses but were to depend on God, Deuteronomy 17:16.

Lachish should give her parting gifts to Micah’s hometown, Moresheth in Gath, Micah 1:14. Micah sees his people fleeing, Micah 1:15, as David did from Saul to Adullam, 1 Samuel 22:1-5.

Because they were told to shave their head, Micah 1:16, implies this was a time of mourning, Leviticus 19:27 / Deuteronomy 14:1. Their children were about to go into exile, Micah 1:16. The vulture or eagle, KJV, appeared to be bald because its head was white.

Deane, in his commentary, says the following.

‘This cannot refer exclusively to the Assyrian invasion but must look forward to the Babylonian deportation in Micah 4:10. The latter calamity alone is parallel to the destruction of Samaria announced in Micah 1:6-7.’

Archer, in his commentary, says the following.

‘This prophecy of captivity to the event of 586 B.C. The exile here foretold is more likely to be the Babylonian, **Micah 4:10**, than the Assyrian, which involved only the provinces and not Jerusalem itself. It is possible that both invasions, 701 and 586 B.C., are in view.’

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION

‘Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning’s light, they carry it out because it is in their power to do it. They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them. They defraud people of their homes; they rob them of their inheritance. Therefore, the LORD says: “I am planning disaster against this people, from which you cannot save yourselves. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of calamity. In that day, people will ridicule you; they will taunt you with this mournful song: ‘We are utterly ruined; my people’s possession is divided up. He takes it from me! He assigns our fields to traitors.’” Therefore, you will have no one in the assembly of the LORD to divide the land by lot.’ Micah 2:1-5

HUMAN PLANS AND GOD’S PLANS

Because Israel had become such a corrupt nation, not only in violating the civil laws but also God’s laws, Micah now proceeds to zoom in on two things in this chapter.

1. Dreamers of evil.

He says they plot evil in their beds, **Micah 2:1**; in other words, they would stay awake at night planning how to deal dishonestly with their neighbours. And in the morning, when they woke up, they would carry out their deceitful plans.

They would repossess their neighbour’s lands and houses by bribing officials who were just as corrupt, **Micah 2:2** / **Leviticus 25**. In other words, they would make themselves wealthy at the expense of the poor, **Psalms 36:1-4** / **Amos 8:4** / **Matthew 23:14** / **Mark 12:38-40**.

Constable, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The wealthy not only violated the tenth commandment against coveting what belongs to a neighbour but also the eighth commandment against stealing, **Exodus 20:15** / **Exodus 20:17** / **Leviticus 19:13** / **Deuteronomy 5:19** / **Deuteronomy 5:21** / **Colossians 3:6-7**. Furthermore, they broke the second greatest commandment that said they should love their neighbours as themselves, **Leviticus 19:18** / **Matthew 22:34-40**.’

God says He’s planning a disaster against these corrupt people, and they won’t be able to save themselves, and God will humble them, and as a result, they won’t walk about proudly anymore, **Micah 2:3**.

People will ridicule and taunt them, **Micah 2:4**, much like the Edomites did to them. God was about to give the fields that the rich had acquired through oppression to the Assyrians, **Micah 2:4-5** / **Galatians 6:7**. When the Assyrians came, they took the rich into captivity and left behind the land for the poor.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Some would limit this to the evil oppressors, but we believe that it applies to the whole nation of Israel. The reference to ‘casting the line by lot’ is a reference to the manner of dividing the land of Canaan among the Israelites after God had led them into the possession of it under Joshua. The wicked nobility had destroyed that ancient system, and therefore God would take the entire land away from them through the instrumentality of conquest and deportation about to fall upon them. In short, Israel was here prophesied to lose ‘their land’, the land of Canaan, because of the wanton violation of their covenant with God.’

FALSE PROPHETS

‘Do not prophesy,” their prophets say. “Do not prophesy about these things; disgrace will not overtake us.” You descendants of Jacob, should it be said, “Does the LORD become impatient? Does he do such things?” “Do not my words do good to the one whose ways are upright? Lately, my people have risen up like an enemy. You strip off the rich robe from those who pass by without a care, like men returning from battle. You drive the women of my people from their pleasant homes. You take away my blessing from their children forever. Get up, go away! For this is not your resting place, because it is defiled, it is ruined, beyond all remedy. If a liar and deceiver comes and says, ‘I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,’ that would be just the prophet for this people!’ Micah 2:6-11

2. Ear tickling preachers.

We need to remember to heed God’s warning, not just remember the promises, 2 Timothy 4:3. These false prophets didn’t want Micah to tell the people the bad news, Micah 2:6.

In other words, they went out of their way to try to stop Micah from prophesying about their sinfulness; they didn’t want to hear it, Isaiah 30:10 / Jeremiah 5:30-31 / Amos 2:12 / Amos 7:10-13 / 2 Timothy 4:1-5 / 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12.

May, in his commentary, says the following.

‘With an absolute assertion of their feeling of security, Micah’s opponents deny the relevance of judgment to them. The disgrace of humiliating catastrophe, any misfortune that would leave them exposed to the insults of those who beheld their downfall, would never touch them.’

Micah goes ahead and speaks to the descendants of Jacob, Micah 2:7 / Isaiah 48:1, and presents three questions in an effort to reason with them. Notice the footnote says does the Spirit of the Lord become impatient? Micah 2:7.

Constable, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Spirit’ could refer to the spirit or attitude of the Lord, or it could refer to the Holy Spirit. Either translation makes sense, but since the Holy Spirit executes the will of God in the world, He is perhaps in view here, Genesis 1:2.’

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following.

‘They boasted of what convicted them of faithlessness. They relied on being what in spirit they had ceased to be, what in deeds they denied, children of a believing forefather.’

As a result of their sinfulness, Israel had become an enemy of God, Micah 2:8 / Exodus 22:25. They had taken the clothing of their fellow Israelites as payment for their debts, Exodus 22:26-27 / Amos 2:8.

In other words, their behaviour got to such a bad state that they were actually going against everything God had commanded them, hence why they are being punished, Deuteronomy 28:15-68.

When travellers passed through the land, they stripped off their traveller’s robes to maintain their wealth, Micah 2:9 / Matthew 23:14 / Mark 12:40, and so, the innocent in society, their women and children, were going to be taken into Assyrian captivity.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The outrage and presumptuous arrogance of Israel’s sins are in this verse exposed as being particularly despicable in that they were perpetrated against defenceless women and children, the implication being that the women were widows and the children orphans. This undoubtedly claimed the contravention of sacred law. The book of the covenant specifically included among its statutes, ‘You must not afflict any widow or orphan,’ [Exodus 22:21-22](#).’ Notice Micah says, ‘get up, go away!’ [Micah 2:10](#). Some commentators believe that Micah is appealing to them and asking them to repent, to turn from their wickedness, because the land will have no rest if they continue to behave the way they are behaving, [Leviticus 18:24-28](#).

Ironside, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The address was to the oppressed, instructing them not to continue in fellowship with what was unclean and unholy.’

Allen, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Their dirty conduct in illtreating their needy neighbours has rendered them unfit to tread Canaan’s soil any longer.’

Israel didn’t want a prophet to tell them the truth about their spiritual condition; they wanted these false prophets to continue to tell them that everything is fine, there is peace and safety, [Micah 2:11](#) / [Ezekiel 13:10](#).

These false prophets who were proclaiming to speak on God’s behalf were telling the people that God would never send His people into captivity, [Micah 2:11](#) / [Jeremiah 5:18-21-23](#) / [Jeremiah 5:31](#) / [Jeremiah 23:25-28](#) / [Jeremiah 23:32](#) / [Jeremiah 29:8-9](#).

Clarke, in his commentary, says the following.

‘There remains today a willing audience for anyone who panders to the vices of the age under the guise of proclaiming God’s truth.’

DELIVERANCE PROMISED

‘I will surely gather all of you, Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people. The One who breaks open the way will go up before them; they will break through the gate and go out. Their King will pass through before them, the LORD at their head.” [Micah 2:12-13](#)

Micah ends with some good news here; Israel is not without hope, but only in terms of a remnant, [Micah 2:12](#) / [Micah 1:5](#). Micah now looks to the future; he looks at the time after the captivity.

He sees the restoration of God’s people to their land and back into fellowship with God again, [Micah 2:12](#). We must note that the restoration wouldn’t include all of God’s people; only a remnant from the twelve tribes of Israel would return.

Some commentators suggest that ‘the One who breaks open the way’, etc, [Micah 2:13](#), is none other than the Medo-Persian King, Cyrus. God would use him to free the captives, [Ezra 1:2-4](#) / [Ezra 7:13](#).

Other commentators believe that this is an obvious illusion to King Jesus, who leads us, the sheep of His pasture, [Psalms 78:52-53](#) / [Psalms 80:1](#) / [John 10:15](#) / [John 12:32](#), to freedom from our sins, [Romans 11:1-5](#) / [Galatians 5:1](#).

Clarke, in his commentary, says the following.

‘He who is to give them deliverance, and lead them out on the way of their return. He who takes down the hurdles, or makes a gap in the wall or hedge, to permit them to pass through. This may apply to those human agents who shall

permit and order their return. And Jehovah being at their head may refer to their final restoration when the Lord Jesus shall become their leader, they having returned unto him as the shepherd and bishop of their souls, and they and the Gentiles forming one fold under one shepherd, to go no more out into captivity forever. Lord, hasten the time!’

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION

‘Then I said, “Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of Israel. Should you not embrace justice, you who hate good and love evil; who tear the skin from my people and the flesh from their bones; who eat my people’s flesh, strip off their skin and break their bones in pieces; who chop them up like meat for the pan, like flesh for the pot?” Then they will cry out to the LORD, but he will not answer them. At that time, he will hide his face from them because of the evil they have done.’ Micah 3:1-4

LEADERS REBUKED

Most commentators don’t believe this is a continuation of the previous chapter; they believe that this message is directly speaking to Judah, the Southern Kingdom, and although both terms ‘Israel’ and ‘Jacob’ are used, the terms are used of the Southern Kingdom, as in [Micah 1:13-16](#).

Micah now turns his attention to the leadership of Judah, the people who should have known better, [Micah 3:1 / 2 Kings 3:9-12 / Jeremiah 5:3-5 / 1 Peter 4:17](#). They hate good and love evil, [Micah 3:2](#).

In other words, they were more concerned with themselves, even to the point of exploiting the poor. They had no respect for human beings, which is seen in their willingness to sacrifice people, [Micah 3:2-3](#).

Therefore, when God’s judgment came upon them, and they cried out to God for help, God wouldn’t listen to them in the same way they didn’t listen to the cries of the poor they were exploiting, [Micah 3:4 / Proverbs 21:13 / Isaiah 1:12-15 / James 2:13](#). God would indeed hide His face from them, [Numbers 6:25 / Luke 19:42](#).

Hailey, in commentary, says the following.

‘In this highly exaggerated figure, Micah expresses the white heat of his indignation at the treatment dealt to the common people by the rulers. Therefore, when judgment falls on these heartless rulers, and they cry to Jehovah, His face will be hid from them. Have they sown, so will they reap. They have destroyed the people without mercy, and so without mercy shall their destruction come.’

PROPHETS REBUKED

‘This is what the LORD says: “As for the prophets who lead my people astray, they proclaim ‘peace’ if they have something to eat, but prepare to wage war against anyone who refuses to feed them. Therefore, night will come over you, without visions, and darkness, without divination. The sun will set for the prophets, and the day will go dark for them. The seers will be ashamed, and the diviners disgraced. They will all cover their faces because there is no answer from God.” Micah 3:5-7

There's a saying we could use to describe what's happening here, and it's simply this: 'You scratch my back, and I will scratch yours,' but their day is coming. The false prophets were leading the people astray, [Micah 3:5](#) / [Micah 2:11](#) / [Hosea 4:6](#).

Their hypocrisy is seen in their greed for food, they proclaim peace if they get food but if the people don't give them food they proclaim war, [Micah 3:5](#) / [Ezekiel 13:19-23](#) / [Isaiah 3:12](#) / [Jeremiah 9:16](#). It appears they will do anything to win the support of the people in an effort to keep Micah quiet.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following concerning the sun and dark, [Micah 3:6](#).

'Micah was not affirming anything with reference to prophecies of the false prophets except the night of total oblivion that was to fall upon them. The sun will go down upon their prosperity, the night shall fall upon their day of glory.'

Deane, in his commentary, says the following concerning the sun and dark, [Micah 3:6](#).

'The imagery here suggests that of [Amos 8:9](#), where it was prophesied that the 'sun would be darkened in a clear day' for the whole nation. The fate here predicted to fall upon the false prophets would likewise extend to the whole people.'

When God is done judging these false prophets, they will be ashamed of themselves, ashamed of all the false prophecies they proclaimed to the people, [Micah 3:7](#) / [Leviticus 13:45](#).

'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, to Israel his sin. Hear this, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of Israel, who despise justice and distort all that is right; who build Zion with bloodshed, and Jerusalem with wickedness. Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they look for the LORD's support and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No disaster will come upon us." Therefore, because of you, Zion will be ploughed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.' [Micah 3:8-12](#)

Micah now goes ahead and tells it like it is. He is filled with power with the Holy Spirit, [Micah 3:8](#) / [Jeremiah 6:11](#) / [Ezekiel 2:7-8](#) / [2 Corinthians 3:4-6](#). He tells them straight that they were unrighteous and unjust, and they were oppressing the people by using bribes and taking advantage of their power by taking people's land and houses, [Micah 3:9-10](#).

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following concerning [Micah 3:10](#).

'Their whole society was built on blood and wrong. Zion and Jerusalem in this verse are synonymous and stand not only for the great and revered capital city but for all of Judea.'

Both the priests and the prophets were corrupt leaders who maintained their positions for the sake of money, [Micah 3:11](#). They taught only if there was money to be made, they became fortune-tellers for the sake of making money, and they made their money by pretending that God was with them, [Micah 3:11](#).

They said that God was proclaiming peace through them when the truth was, there wasn't going to be any peace; a time of doom and gloom was fast approaching. They think they are safe, but they are far from being safe, and so God says, think again, [Micah 3:11](#).

Zion, that is, Jerusalem, was about to be ploughed by God because of these corrupt leaders, [Micah 3:12](#) / [Jeremiah 26:17-19](#). [Micah 3:12](#) is clearly speaking about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Nebuchadnezzar and his army in 586 B.C.

Boice, in his commentary, says the following concerning Micah being listened to.

'He was heard in the days of Hezekiah. A revival followed. Then, one hundred years later, his words were still remembered, and the memory of what happened earlier was used of God to spare the life of Jeremiah, [Jeremiah 26:17-19](#).'

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION

‘In the last days, the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. Many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken. All the nations may walk in the name of their gods, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.’ Micah 4:1-5

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD

The promises of the remnant’s return from exile and the blessings that go along with it are prophesied here, [Isaiah 2:1-5](#) / [Zechariah 8:20-23](#). Note that [Micah 4:1-3](#) is repeated in [Isaiah 2:1-3](#). The last days are a reference to the coming of the Messianic age, [Micah 4:1](#) / [Acts 2:16](#). The mountain of the Lord, [Micah 4:1](#), is a reference to Mount Zion.

The people will flow like a mighty river into the kingdom, [Micah 4:1](#), that is, the church, [Isaiah 60:11](#) / [Daniel 2:35](#) / [Daniel 2:44-45](#) / [Matthew 24:14](#) / [Revelation 7:9](#). Notice that many nations will come, [Micah 4:2](#) / [Isaiah 2:2](#) / [Revelation 7:9](#).

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following concerning [Micah 4:2-3](#).

1. The gospel would spring from Jerusalem, where Christ exercised his ministry, died, rose again from the dead, and from whence he commanded his disciples that ‘repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning in Jerusalem’.
2. The gospel was not for the purpose of destroying the law of Moses, but for the sake of fulfilling it. The righteousness of Christ himself consisted, at least in part, of his perfect obedience to the ancient Law and as Christ’s righteousness is that alone which redeems men now, the salvation of every man is surely, thereby, related to it.
3. Note that it will be a law that will go forth from Jerusalem in the new dispensation, confirming exactly what is reiterated again, and again by the sacred writers of the New Testament who referred to the gospel as the precious law of liberty, [James 2:12](#), the perfect law, [James 1:26](#), the royal law, [James 2:8](#), the law of faith, [Romans 3:27](#), the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, [Romans 8:2](#), the law of Christ, [Galatians 6:2](#), and not being without law but under the law to Christ, [1 Corinthians 9:21](#). No greater misunderstanding prevails upon the earth today than the notion that the grace of God has freed God’s children from all law. They were, of course, freed from the law of Moses, but they are under law to Christ.’

When Jesus reigns, He will judge between the people and war will cease, [Micah 4:3](#). [Micah 4:3](#) and [Isaiah 2:4](#) both read, ‘they will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.’ But in [Joel 3:10](#) we find the words, ‘beat your ploughshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears’. In Micah and Isaiah, the weapons are made into farming implements, but in Joel, the farming implements are made into weapons.

The point is that when Micah and Isaiah speak, they both speak in terms of peace, which will come in the future, hence why the weapons are made into farming implements. But in Joel, there will be no peace for God's enemies because they are about to be judged, hence why the farming implements are made into weapons.

The land will be clean again, and because they have eradicated idolatry, they can have a relationship with a pure land, Micah 4:3. Sitting under a vine and fig tree, Micah 4:4, signifies peace, security, and enjoyment of property, 1 Kings 4:25 / 2 Kings 18:31 / Zechariah 3:10.

Walking in the name of the LORD, Micah 4:5, means relying on Him and living in His ways, Genesis 5:22 / Genesis 17:1. This is a picture of the coming reign of the Messiah, in which His kingdom is one of peace, Jeremiah 31:31-34 / Daniel 2:44 / Daniel 7:13-14. We must note that this peace is only offered to those who submit to the Kingship reign of Christ, Psalms 2:9.

THE LORD'S PLAN

'In that day,' declares the LORD, "I will gather the lame; I will assemble the exiles and those I have brought to grief. I will make the lame my remnant, those driven away a strong nation. The LORD will rule over them in Mount Zion from that day and forever. As for you, watchtower of the flock, stronghold of Daughter Zion, the former dominion will be restored to you; kingship will come to Daughter Jerusalem." Micah 4:6-8

The day mentioned here, Micah 4:6, is the day when the above prophecy was fulfilled in Christ, Romans 11:26. This will be the day when the Holy Spirit was poured out, Joel 2:28-32 / Acts 2:16-17, the day the church was established on Pentecost, Acts 2.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

'That portion of the old Israel which was 'lame' and 'cast off', as for example the hated and hunted minority in the times of Elijah, will become, through God's power, 'the remnant', that is, the only part of old Israel that will partake of the everlasting kingdom in Christ. The nucleus of the New Israel of God would be precisely those persons in the old order who were disowned and cast out as evil by the Pharisees.'

Micah says the church would become a strong nation on earth because Christ would be reigning supreme, Micah 4:7 / Daniel 7:13-14 / Matthew 16:18-19 / Ephesians 1:20-22. The church would become the New Jerusalem where Jesus will reign as King, Luke 17:20-21.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following about the remnant, Micah 4:7.

'That portion of the old Israel which was 'lame' and 'cast off,' as for example the hated and hunted minority in the times of Elijah, will become, through God's power, "the remnant," that is, the only part of old Israel that will partake of the everlasting kingdom in Christ.'

God Himself will be the watchtower of His sheep; He will watch over and protect His people, Micah 4:8.

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following.

'The visible kingdom of God in Judah was often obscured, kings, princes, priests, and false prophets combining to encourage one another in rebellion against God. In captivity, it even underwent an almost total eclipse by the overshadowing of earthly power, save when the divine light flashed forth for an instant in the deeds or words of power and wisdom, related by Daniel. 'Henceforth', that is, from the time when the law should go forth out of Zion, God should indeed reign, and that kingdom should have no end.'

Gill, in his commentary, says the following concerning the coming kingdom.

‘Not the first notice of the Messiah’s kingdom, given by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, to the Jews, in the first times of the Gospel or the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom first to them but rather he who has the first or principal dominion, and to whom the kingdom belongs, he shall come to the daughter of Zion, as in Zechariah 9:9, though it rather respects here his coming to them at the time of their conversion when they shall come to him, Romans 11:26, and when the first, chief, and principal kingdom in the world, and which is preferable to all others, will come unto and be placed among them, as in Micah 4:7, and when it shall be, as some interpret it, as at the beginning, in the days of David and Solomon, and much more abundantly.’

‘Why do you now cry aloud—have you no king? Has your ruler perished, that pain seizes you like that of a woman in labour? Writhe in agony, Daughter Zion, like a woman in labour, for now you must leave the city to camp in the open field. You will go to Babylon; there you will be rescued. There the LORD will redeem you out of the hand of your enemies. But now many nations are gathered against you. They say, “Let her be defiled, let our eyes gloat over Zion!” But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD; they do not understand his plan, that he has gathered them like sheaves to the threshing floor. “Rise and thresh, Daughter Zion, for I will give you horns of iron; I will give you hooves of bronze, and you will break to pieces many nations.” You will devote their ill-gotten gains to the LORD, their wealth to the Lord of all the earth.’ Micah 4:9-13

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Here follows a contrast between the judgments already pronounced against the literal house of Jacob and about to be reiterated, with the glorious and universal blessings of the kingdom of heaven in Christ set forth by Micah in Micah 4:1-8. The now is therefore temporal, having direct reference to the way it was when Micah wrote and when the times he was prophesying would be fulfilled in the defeat and captivity of the punished chosen people.’

When Israel went through their captivity, it was like a woman going through labour, Micah 4:9. After going through captivity, a new Israel was born, one which was cleansed of idolatry.

This is looking forward to the time when the Messiah would bring about a new birth, a new birth which would create a new people, in a new relationship with God, 2 Corinthians 5:17 / Jeremiah 31:31-34. Notice Micah tells them that they will go to Babylon, Micah 4:10.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘As is always the case with the great predictive prophecies in the Bible, this one also is multiple in meaning. The going of Israel to Babylon will come about because of military disaster, indicated by their going forth out of the city and dwelling in the field. The slavery of the people is indicated by their ‘dwelling’ in the field, the usual habitation of slaves. The rescue and redemption of the people are also prophesied at the same time.’

God says He will redeem them, Micah 4:10, and He will do this using Cyrus of the Medo-Persians, who defeated the Babylonians, Daniel 2:39 / Isaiah 13. After seventy years of captivity, Cyrus allowed Israel to return to the restored land, Ezra 1:2-4. In much the same way, Christians have been redeemed from the bondage of sin, Ephesians 1:7.

Constable, in his commentary, says the following concerning Micah 4:11-12.

‘In Micah’s day, many nations desired to see Israel polluted and destroyed. However, they did not understand God’s purposes for Israel or for themselves. They failed to see that He would gather the nations for judgment, as a farmer gathers sheaves of grain on a threshing floor in preparation for beating them out.’

The metaphor of threshing the nations is a terrible one indeed, Micah 4:13. The allusion is to the threshing machine studded underneath with iron spikes dragged over the threshing floor.

Some of Israel’s enemies had actually executed such horror upon them, Amos 1:3 / 1 Kings 13:7, and the promise in Micah 4:13 is that God will reward the wicked nations in kind, for their godless, evil ways.

Gill, in his commentary, says the following concerning the words ‘iron horns’ and ‘brass hooves’, Micah 4:13.

‘The Lord would give them strength sufficient to such work, and such power their enemies should not be able to resist and overcome and that they should into their hands, and be crushed, trod and trampled on by them, and utterly subdued.’

Henry, in his commentary, says the following concerning Micah 4:13.

‘The nations thought to ruin Christianity in its infancy, but it was victorious over them; those that persisted in their enmity were broken to pieces, Matthew 21:44, particularly the Jewish nation, but multitudes by divine grace were gained to the church, and they and their substance were consecrated to the Lord Jesus, the Lord of the whole earth.’

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION

‘Marshal your troops now, city of troops, for a siege is laid against us. They will strike Israel’s ruler on the cheek with a rod. “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” Therefore, Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labour bears a son, and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites. He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. And he will be our peace when the Assyrians invade our land and march through our fortresses. We will raise against them seven shepherds, even eight commanders, who will rule the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod with drawn sword. He will deliver us from the Assyrians when they invade our land and march across our borders.’ Micah 5:1-6

A PROMISED RULER FROM BETHLEHEM

Here we read that God will assemble the exiles and call them back, Micah 5:1. Israel would eventually be redeemed out of the nations to which they would be sent in captivity. They will strike Israel’s ruler on the cheek with a rod, Micah 5:1, speaks of the coming Messiah, Isaiah 50:6 / Matthew 26:67-68.

Ironside, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The New Testament makes it plain here that the smitten One is none other than the Christ.’

Notice the birthplace of the Messiah is mentioned, that is, Bethlehem, Micah 5:2 / Matthew 2:4-6 / Isaiah 7:14 / Isaiah 9:6-7. Bethlehem means House of Bread, and Jesus is the Bread of Life, John 6:35.

Ephrathah, Micah 5:2, was the original older settlement that was eventually absorbed into the larger village of Bethlehem, Genesis 35:19. Bethlehem was the first home of David, Psalms 89:19-37, and the Ephrathites were descendants of David, 1 Samuel 17:12 / Ruth 1:2.

The One who would rule would give the people of God, the Israelites, over to the hands of the nations, Micah 5:2. This is a link with the throne, the house of David. The meaning goes further than human origin; the Messiah is working through history for the redemption of the people.

Although Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He didn’t originate there, Micah 5:2. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, John 1:1-2 / Revelation 22:13. He is the creator of all things, Colossians 1:16-17 / John 1:1-3.

Hailey, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The prophet was looking to the birth of the Messiah and the kingdom that began on Pentecost. The ‘great sign’ seen by John on Patmos, a woman arrayed with the sun, having the moon under her feet and a crown of stars upon her brow, who gave birth to the man-child, is this same woman, Revelation 12:1-6.’

Israel will be abandoned until Mary had her son, Micah 5:3 / Isaiah 7:14 / Micah 4:9 / Matthew 1:25 / Luke 2:25-38. Israel will reject Jesus, and He will go to the Gentiles until the fullness of the Gentiles come, that is, until all nations will hear the Gospel first, Mark 13:10.

Henry, in his commentary, says the following concerning Micah 5:3.

‘The remnant of the Jewish nation shall return to the spirit of the true genuine children of Israel, a people in covenant with God; the hearts of the children shall be turned to the fathers, Malachi 4:6. Some understand it of all believers, Gentiles as well as Jews; they shall all be incorporated into the commonwealth of Israel; and, as they are all brethren to one another, so he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Hebrews 2:11.’

The Messiah will shepherd His flock, Micah 5:4 / Matthew 2:5-6 / John 10:27-30, and His people will live in security. His greatness will go to the ends of the earth, that is, Christ’s Kingship would go throughout the world, Malachi 1:11 / Malachi 1:14 / Luke 17:20-21, and those who have faith in Him will submit to His rule, Philippians 2:5-11. Notice again that the Messiah will be their peace, Micah 5:5 / Isaiah 9:6 / Luke 2:14 / Luke 10:36 / Romans 5:1 / Romans 14:17 / Philippians 4:7 / Ephesians 2:14.

The Assyrians’ invasion of the land, Micah 5:5, is used as a metaphor to demonstrate the resistance to any invasion into the church. The Assyrians, being Israel’s most powerful enemy at that time, are made the representative of all of Israel’s enemies of all ages, who shall receive their final destruction in the Messiah’s coming, Ezekiel 38.

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following.

‘For since this plainly relates to the time after Christ’s coming, and, to say the least, after the captivity in Babylon and deliverance, Micah 4:10, from it, which itself followed the dissolution of the Assyrian Empire, the Assyrians cannot be the literal people, who had long since ceased to be. In Isaiah, too, the Assyrian is the type of antichrist and of Satan.’

The seven shepherds and commanders are manifestly inferior, spiritual shepherds, acting under the One Shepherd, by His authority, and He in them, Micah 5:5. The commanders of men are most naturally a civil power, Joshua 13:21 / Psalms 83:12 / Ezekiel 32:30.

The number seven symbolises perfection or completeness, indicating that whatever emergency arises, the Messiah would meet it with perfect sufficiency, even with more than enough, eight commanding men, Job 5:19 / Proverbs 6:16 / Ecclesiastes 11:2, indicating an over-abundance of resources. Notice the footnote for Micah 5:6, it says or Nimrod in its gates.

Clarke, in his commentary, says the following.

‘At its posts or water gates, for it was by rendering themselves masters of the Euphrates that the Medes and Persians took the city, according to the prediction of Jeremiah, Jeremiah 51:32 / Jeremiah 51:36.’

The land of Nimrod is in Assyria, Micah 5:6, and Nineveh was its capital. Babylon was built by Nimrod, who was its first king, Genesis 10:10-12. Messiah shall deliver them, when the Assyrian comes, Micah 5:6.

Clarke, in his commentary, says the following concerning Micah 5:6.

‘Perhaps it is best to refer it to the invasion of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar and the final destruction of the Babylonian empire by Cyrus, who took Babylon, slew Belshazzar, and possessed himself of the kingdom.’

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Although it would have been perfectly natural for Micah to have applied these words merely to the immediate danger in Israel, the whole tenor of the passage requires it to be understood as the ultimate judgment upon all wickedness, stated climactically in Micah 5:15. No matter how far wickedness may progress and no matter what

advantages it might appear to have in any given situation, the scales of eternal justice are weighted in favour of the truth and righteousness of God.’

‘The remnant of Jacob will be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, which do not wait for anyone or depend on man. The remnant of Jacob will be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep, which mauls and mangles as it goes, and no one can rescue. Your hand will be lifted up in triumph over your enemies, and all your foes will be destroyed.’ Micah 5:7-9

The immediate context concerning the remnant is speaking about the remnant of all twelve tribes who would return from captivity, [Micah 5:7](#) / [Micah 5:3](#). In the future context, this is speaking about the remnant of those nations that would be freed from sin, and so, they would become the light of God in the world.

God’s people will be like dew on the ground and showers on the grass, [Micah 5:7](#) / [Deuteronomy 32:2](#) / [Psalms 72:6](#) / [Psalms 110:3](#) / [Matthew 5:13](#). The terrible metaphor of destruction ‘as a lion and a young lion’, [Micah 5:8](#), would indeed come to pass, as executed by God Himself, not by his humble and faithful children.

All the enemies of Christ and His church, all the kings of the earth that shall gather against them, the beast and false prophet, with all their followers, will be defeated, [Micah 5:9](#) / [Revelation 19:19](#).

Clarke, in his commentary, says the following concerning [Micah 5:9](#).

‘In this, and the following verse, the victories of the Maccabees are supposed to be foretold.’

Under the Maccabees, the Jews acquired Idumea, Samaria, and parts of the territory of Ammon and Moab, [1 Maccabees 4:29](#) / [1 Maccabees 4:61](#) / [1 Maccabees 5:3](#) / [1 Maccabees 5:65](#).

‘In that day,” declares the LORD, “I will destroy your horses from among you and demolish your chariots. I will destroy the cities of your land and tear down all your strongholds. I will destroy your witchcraft, and you will no longer cast spells. I will destroy your idols and your sacred stones from among you; you will no longer bow down to the work of your hands. I will uproot from among you your Asherah poles when I demolish your cities. I will take vengeance in anger and wrath on the nations that have not obeyed me.” Micah 5:10-15

The people being destroyed are the Assyrians, who destroyed Israel and the Babylonians, who brought Judah to ruin, [Micah 5:10-11](#).

Hailey, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The instruments of carnal warfare, all classes of wizards, and the idols of the land will be cut off. God’s vengeance will be on those who hearken not.’

Jamieson, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The Church will never be safe till she is stripped of all creature-trusts, and rests on Jehovah alone.’

God is going to destroy those who practise witchcraft, [Micah 5:12](#) / [Hosea 4:12](#) / [Acts 19:18-20](#) / [Revelation 9:21](#), and those who cast spells, [Micah 5:12](#) / [Deuteronomy 18:10](#), and practice idolatry, [Micah 5:13](#) / [Isaiah 2:8](#) / [Isaiah 2:18-21](#) / [Isaiah 30:22](#) / [Zechariah 13:2](#).

He will uproot the Asherah poles, [Micah 5:14](#) / [Deuteronomy 16:21](#). This was the place where they worshipped the sex-goddesses of the pagans, [1 Kings 15:13](#). Asherah was a Canaanite goddess, the worship of which was celebrated with licentious rites, the same as Ashteroth of the Phoenicians, and Ishtar of the Assyrians. Any nation that doesn’t obey God will face His anger and wrath, [Micah 5:15](#) / [Psalm 149:7](#) / [Romans 1:18](#).

Henry, in his commentary, says the following.

‘I will execute vengeance upon the heathen who have not heard, so some read it, or who would not hear and receive the doctrine of Christ. God will give his Son either the hearts or the necks of his enemies, and make them either his friends or his footstool.’

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION

‘Listen to what the LORD says: “Stand up, plead my case before the mountains; let the hills hear what you have to say. “Hear, you mountains, the LORD’s accusation; listen, you everlasting foundations of the earth. For the LORD has a case against his people; he is lodging a charge against Israel. “My people, what have I done to you? How have I burdened you? Answer me. I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery. I sent Moses to lead you, also Aaron and Miriam. My people, remember what Balak, king of Moab, plotted and what Balaam, son of Beor, answered. Remember your journey from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteous acts of the LORD.” Micah 6:1-5

THE LORD’S CASE AGAINST ISRAEL

Micah’s thoughts return again to the present conditions in Judah. He gives us a picture of a court case going on, as we see in [Hosea 4:1-3](#). The mountains are the jury, these are the leaders of the nations, and they are summoned to hear the complaint that God has against His people, [Micah 6:1-2](#). The mountains witness the blessing of God and the ingratitude of the people. God is the Counsel for the Prosecution.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The calling of the mountains and hills to be witnesses was a characteristic courtroom procedure in those days. Nature itself would be an appropriate witness against Israel, whose conduct in rejecting their God and protector was contrary to nature.’

God asks, ‘What have I ever done to you to cause you to become idolatrous? How have I burdened you? [Micah 6:3](#). In other words, God asks, what have I done to you? I gave you good. Why are you turning against me? God didn’t give them any commandments that were a burden to them, [Jeremiah 2:5-8](#) / [1 John 5:3](#).

He recalls His gracious dealings with Israel from the time of the Exodus, [Micah 6:4](#). God says He’s done everything for them, even during the exodus, their sandals didn’t wear out, [Deuteronomy 29:5](#).

He had counselled them for good, while Balaam counselled them for evil and destruction, [Micah 6:5](#) / [Numbers 22-24](#) / [Jude 11](#). He took care of them on their journey from Shittim to Gilgal, [Numbers 22-27](#) / [Joshua 1-4](#) / [Hosea 9:15](#) / [Amos 4:4](#).

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The mention of Shittim and Gilgal in this passage was not for stressing the wonderful blessings of God upon his people, but for the purpose of showing what an evil response Israel had made to those blessings.’

‘With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.’ Micah 6:6-8

Micah pictures the people acknowledging their guilt. How shall we come before the Lord to put this right? With burnt offerings, the best of the herd? [Micah 6:6](#). If God doesn’t want quality, does he want quantity? How about one thousand rams? [Micah 6:7](#) / [1 Kings 3:4](#) / [1 Kings 8:63](#) / [2 Chronicles 30:24](#) / [2 Chronicles 35:7](#).

Or shall I offer ten thousand rivers of olive oil? or my firstborn, the fruit of my body? If God doesn't want quality or quantity, can we give our most precious thing, our firstborn? Micah 6:7 / Genesis 22:1-18.

They had gotten into child sacrifice, 2 Kings 16:3 / 2 Kings 17:17, and they did all of this to win God's pleasure.

Micah says that none of these is the answer. What God requires comes from the heart, Deuteronomy 10:12-13 / Deuteronomy 30:11-14.

Scoggin, in his commentary, says the following.

'Sacrifices of whatever kind have no meaning when unaccompanied by ethical behaviour. Sacrifice in itself is not wrong, but unaccompanied by ethical living, it is simply irrelevant.'

The Lord requires the following.

1. They act justly, Micah 6:8 / Proverbs 21:3 / Amos 5:23-24 / Zechariah 8:16, that they live according to God's laws.
2. That they be merciful, Micah 6:8 / James 2:13.
3. That they be humble and submissive, that they walk humbly with their God, Micah 6:8 / Romans 3:31 / Matthew 23:23 / Luke 11:42 / James 1:27.

God isn't interested in their offerings of precious things. He wants a change of lifestyle and behaviour from the people, Matthew 23:23.

ISRAEL'S GUILT AND PUNISHMENT

'Listen! The LORD is calling to the city—and to fear your name is wisdom—“Heed the rod and the One who appointed it. Am I still to forget your ill-gotten treasures, you wicked house, and the short ephah, which is accursed? Shall I acquit someone with dishonest scales, with a bag of false weights? Your rich people are violent; your inhabitants are liars, and their tongues speak deceitfully.’ Micah 6:9-12

Micah now emphasises that the voice of the Lord is about to be heard, Micah 6:9.

McKeating, in his commentary, says the following.

'The prosecution is resumed with an appeal this time, not to the mountains and hills, but to the populace. The rod is the chastisement, or judgment, about to be made known to the people. The city here is probably Jerusalem.'

Micah says that God will not forget their ill-gotten ways, Micah 6:10. Shall I acquit a man with dishonest scales and a bag of false weights? Micah 6:11 / Amos 8:5.

How they made their profit, they have short-changed the people, an ephah was the incorrect amount, Deuteronomy 25:13 / Proverbs 11:1 / Proverbs 16:11 / Amos 8:5.

The rich are characterised by lies, violence and deceit, Micah 6:12. The rich had gained their wealth through their exploitation of the poor. The city of Jerusalem was a spiritually sick society, Romans 1:18-32.

Boice, in his commentary, says the following.

'No society is ever entirely upright or godly; there are always evil people in it. But in a well-functioning society, the evil are suppressed, and those of good character are prominent and rule the land. In times of moral breakdown, this is inverted.'

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

'The corollaries of this verse are easily discerned.'

1. God can never be pleased by the exploitation inherent in crooked weights and measures.

2. Mountains of sacrifices or the constant observance of religious routines are impossible to please God if found in the conduct of people whose lives are immoral, unethical, unselfish, or deceitful.

‘Therefore, I have begun to destroy you, to ruin you because of your sins. You will eat but not be satisfied; your stomach will still be empty. You will store up but save nothing, because what you save I will give to the sword. You will plant but not harvest; you will press olives but not use the oil; you will crush grapes but not drink the wine. You have observed the statutes of Omri and all the practices of Ahab’s house; you have followed their traditions. Therefore, I will give you over to ruin and your people to derision; you will bear the scorn of the nations.’ Micah 6:13-16

God begins to punish them for their sin, Micah 6:13 / Matthew 23:38. They shall eat but not be satisfied, they will be unable to provide for themselves, Micah 6:14. They will sow seeds but not reap a harvest, they will tread olives, but there will be no oil. They will tread grapes, but there will be no wine, Micah 6:15.

Deane, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The following passages strictly forbade the very conduct reprov’d here, Leviticus 26:25, etc., and Deuteronomy 28:29, etc.’

The reason for this is that the people have given up worshipping God and started serving the gods introduced by Omri and Ahab, Micah 6:16 / 2 Kings 8:26. Omri and Ahab were the two worst kings in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, 1 Kings 16-22, and so the people were following their king’s laws, not God.

Deane, in his commentary, says the following concerning ‘the statutes of Omri.’

‘No special statutes of his are anywhere mentioned; but he was the founder of that evil dynasty that gave Ahab to Israel and Athaliah (the murderess) to Judah.’

Clarke, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Omri, king of Israel, the father of Ahab, was one of the worst kings the Israelites ever had, and Ahab followed in his wicked father’s steps. The statutes of those kings were the very grossest idolatry.’

God had established Israel as a nation that would bring glory to His name, Deuteronomy 28:1-14. However, they rejected His leadership and ended up creating an unjust society that was scorned by the surrounding nations, Micah 6:16. Note the KJV uses the word ‘hissing’.

Smith, in his commentary, says the following.

‘They wanted to show just utter disdain for people, they would just hiss at them, just like you do a cat, hiss. So it showed a sign of total disdain, and God said, ‘You will become a hissing. People will see you, and they’ll just hiss at you. They’ll just give you the ‘ol hiss.’

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION

‘What misery is mine! I am like one who gathers summer fruit at the gleaning of the vineyard; there is no cluster of grapes to eat, none of the early figs that I crave. The faithful have been swept from the land; not one upright person remains. Everyone lies in wait to shed blood; they hunt each other with nets. Both hands are skilled in doing evil; the ruler demands gifts, the judge accepts bribes, the powerful dictate what they desire—they all conspire together. The best of them is like a brier, the most upright worse than a thorn hedge. The day God visits you has come, the day your

watchmen sound the alarm. Now is the time of your confusion. Do not trust a neighbour; put no confidence in a friend. Even with the woman who lies in your embrace, guard the words of your lips. For a son dishonours his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man's enemies are the members of his own household. But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Saviour; my God will hear me.' Micah 7:1-7

ISRAEL'S MISERY

Micah now speaks of himself; he is mournful of all this and thinks he is all alone, [Micah 7:1](#) / [Jeremiah 5:1](#). We have the people mourning over their fruitlessness, [Micah 7:1](#) / [Micah 6:15](#). The godly and the upright have disappeared from the land, [Micah 7:2](#) / [Hosea 4:1-2](#).

The society is characterised by crime and violence, [Micah 7:2](#) / [Micah 3:10](#) / [Micah 6:12](#). Society was in collapse, [Psalm 37:35-38](#) / [Proverbs 14:24](#) / [Isaiah 5:15](#) / [Jeremiah 17:10-11](#).

He comes back to the corruption of the leaders and the judges, [Micah 7:3](#). The best amongst the corrupt are like a brier, a thorn hedge, they have no value, [Micah 7:4](#). Justice no longer existed in the courts for decisions were made on the basis of how much the judge could be bribed, [Micah 7:4](#) / [Micah 3:11](#) / [Isaiah 1:23](#).

The 'Day of your Watchmen', [Micah 7:4](#), would be the day of judgment predicted by the prophets that has now come upon them.

We read of a breakdown of family and neighbourly relationships, [Micah 7:5](#).

Jesus spoke similar words in [Matthew 10:21](#), and [Matthew 10:35-36](#), the latter two verses being taken from [Micah 7:6](#). He spoke these words in response to His teaching of the generation in which He lived, [Matthew 10:34-36](#) / [Luke 12:51-53](#).

Allen, in his commentary, says the following.

'Man is so made that he finds security in a small group among whom he is accepted and receives support. At the heart of the concentric circles of people known to him, there must ever be a stable core of friends, and usually family, if his psychological equilibrium is to be maintained. The prophet gradually penetrates to the centre of these inner circles of familiarity: friend-best friend-wife. A man is now forced to go against his nature, retiring within himself and keeping his own counsel, if he is not to face betrayal.'

Micah made a commitment to trust in the Lord and looked to God for deliverance, [Micah 7:7](#) / [1 Samuel 4:13](#) / [Titus 2:13](#) / [Isaiah 59:20](#).

Constable, in his commentary, says the following.

'The reason Micah did not succumb to utter pessimism in view of the terrible conditions in his day is that he determined to trust God. The same faith is much needed in our dark day, [Philippians 2:15-16](#).'

ISRAEL WILL RISE

'Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light. Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the LORD's wrath until he pleads my case and upholds my cause. He will bring me out into the light; I will see his righteousness. Then my enemy will see it and will be covered with shame, she who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?" My eyes will see her downfall; even now, she will be trampled underfoot like mire in the streets. The day for building your walls will come, the day for extending your boundaries. In that day, people will come to you from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, even from Egypt to the

Euphrates and from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain. The earth will become desolate because of its inhabitants, as the result of their deeds.’ Micah 7:8-13

The book ends with confession and mercy. There is hope for the faithful when God seems to be only interested in judgement. He knows and cares for every single one of them, [Romans 8:28](#) / [1 Corinthians 10:13](#). Micah totally trusted God for protection, [Mark 6:48](#) / [Acts 12:5-10](#) / [Acts 23:11](#).

The faithful remnant looks to God for deliverance, and there will be a future for God’s people. These enemies were mocking; they thought that Judah had fallen, [Micah 7:8](#). Even in darkness and despair, [Lamentations 3:6](#), God is still a light for the faithful, [Micah 7:8](#) / [Lamentations 1:10-16](#) / [Lamentations 1:18-22](#).

We have an acknowledgement of sin, [Micah 7:9](#) / [Daniel 9:5](#) / [Daniel 9:8](#) / [Daniel 9:11](#) / [Daniel 9:15](#), and they know they deserve punishment, but there is an expectation of deliverance, [Micah 7:9](#). God’s people will be vindicated as the enemies are trodden underfoot, [Micah 7:10](#) / [Joshua 10:24](#) / [Psalms 110:1](#).

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The true penitent accepts the punishment of his iniquity, [Leviticus 26:41](#) / [Leviticus 26:43](#); they who murmur against God do not yet know their guilt, [Job 40:4-5](#).’

Micah speaks of the rebuilding of the walls and the extension of the boundaries after the deliverance has come, [Micah 7:11](#) / [Ezekiel 47:13-23](#) / [Obadiah 1:19-20](#). Israel looked for a day when their frontiers would be extended, when her dominion would run from Assyria to Egypt, [Micah 7:12](#) / [Isaiah 19:23-25](#) / [Amos 9:11-15](#).

There is a gathering of the faithful from all parts of the world, [Micah 7:12](#) / [Psalms 72:8](#) / [Zechariah 9:10](#). In contrast to the Messiah’s spiritual kingdom, the earth will be left desolate because of their sins, [Micah 7:13](#) / [Isaiah 24:1](#) / [Isaiah 34-35](#).

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following.

‘This sounds almost like a riddle and contradiction, ‘the walls built up’, ‘the people gathered in’, ‘the land desolate.’ Yet it was all fulfilled to the letter. Jerusalem was restored, the people were gathered in, first from captivity, then to Christ, and yet the land was again desolate through the ‘fruit of their doings’ who rejected Christ.’

The land would be forsaken because the generation that was taken into captivity and had to bear the fruit of their sins, [Galatians 6:7](#). Only their descendants would be restored to the land.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

‘Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, which lives by itself in a forest, in fertile pasturelands. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in days long ago. “As in the days when you came out of Egypt, I will show them my wonders.” Nations will see and be ashamed, deprived of all their power. They will put their hands over their mouths, and their ears will become deaf. They will lick dust like a snake, like creatures that crawl on the ground. They will come trembling out of their dens; they will turn in fear to the LORD our God and will be afraid of you. Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever, but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. You will be faithful to Jacob, and show love to Abraham, as you pledged on oath to our ancestors in days long ago.’ Micah 7:14-20

Micah says a prayer for the people, the Messiah will be a shepherd to them, [Micah 7:14](#). Carmel was a land of great vineyards, Goshen and Gilead were great pasture lands and were names associated with the former excellence and glory of the chosen people, [Micah 7:14](#). Micah solicited for his people the most wonderful of all God’s wonderful blessings. In other words, God cares for His flock wherever they are.

God answers this prayer by declaring that He will do again as He did when they came out of Egypt, [Micah 7:15](#). He will show wonders of protection when He brought them back from their captivity, [Micah 7:15](#) / [Exodus 3:20](#) / [Exodus 15:11](#). The nations who have been put to shame will turn to God, [Micah 7:16](#) / [Micah 3:7](#) / [Micah 7:7](#).

Licking the dust like a snake, [Micah 7:17](#), is figurative language for total defeat, [Genesis 3:14](#) / [Psalms 72:9](#) / [Isaiah 49:23](#) / [Isaiah 65:25](#). They will surrender to God and come before Him in trembling because of what He will do to them, [Micah 7:17](#) / [Philippians 2:10](#).

Micah asks, Who is like God? [Micah 7:18](#) / [Exodus 15:11](#) / [Psalms 35:10](#) / [Psalms 71:19](#) / [Psalm 89:6](#) / [Psalms 113:5](#) / [Isaiah 40:18-25](#) / [Isaiah 46:5](#). This may be a play on words as Micah's name means 'who is like God?' We see that God is willing to forgive their sins, and read of the completeness of this forgiveness, [Micah 7:18-19](#) / [Psalms 103:9](#) / [Psalms 103:12](#). This is the character of God, He doesn't retain His anger but delights in steadfast love, [Micah 7:18-19](#) / [Psalms 102:13](#) / [Psalms 103:4](#) / [Psalms 103:13](#) / [Psalms 116:5](#) / [Psalms 119:156](#) / [Hosea 14:4](#) / [Zechariah 10:6](#).

Micah finishes by saying that God will be faithful to the promises of Jacob and Abraham, [Micah 7:20](#) / [Genesis 12:2-3](#) / [Genesis 13:15](#) / [Genesis 15:18-21](#) / [Genesis 17:7-8](#) / [Genesis 17:13](#) / [Genesis 17:19](#) / [Genesis 17:21](#) / [Genesis 28:13-14](#) / [Genesis 35:10-12](#) / [Genesis 48:4](#). They find their fulfilment in Christ. So the book ends with this promise of hope.

McComiskey, in his commentary, says the following.

'Like a day that begins with a dark, foreboding sky but ends in golden sunlight, this chapter begins in an atmosphere of gloom and ends in one of the greatest statements of hope in all the Old Testament.'