The Bible and Bread

Context, Themes, and Word Study

Minor Prophet: Micah

2026 Week 11

Micah means "Who is like [Yahweh]?" (NIB)

Moresheth-Gath is Micah's hometown, located 22 miles southwest of Jerusalem. (AI)

Moresheth is from the Hebrew root *yarash*, meaning "to take possession of" or "to enfranchise." (AI)

King David reigned over the United Kingdom of Israel for approximately 40 years between 1000-900 BCE. (AI)

Micah began his prophetic ministry in the 730's BCE. Samaria and the northern kingdom fell in 722BCE. (NIB)

Micah held leaders (rulers, merchants, and prophets) responsible for the suffering of the ordinary citizens of Israel. The rich and powerful used their influence to exploit the vulnerable and to create even greater inequalities of wealth and influence. The economic situation of the poor was further aggravated by programs of armament and fortification in efforts to hold off the threat (2Chronicles 32) from foreign empires. Population growth by influx of northern kingdom refugees (2Kings 16-19) further strained the people. (NIB)

Micah ~ Eugene Peterson Introduction

Prophets use words to remake the world. The world—heaven and earth, men and women, animals and birds—was made in the first place by God's Word. Prophets, arriving on the scene and finding that world in ruins, finding a world of moral rubble and spiritual disorder, take up the work of words again to rebuild what human disobedience and mistrust have demolished. These prophets learn their speech from God. Their words are God-grounded, God-energized, God-passionate. As their words enter the language of specific communities, men and women find themselves in the presence of God, who enters the mess of human sin to rebuke and renew.

Left to ourselves, we turn God into an object, something we can deal with, some *thing* we can use to our benefit, whether that thing is a feeling or an idea or an image. Prophets scorn all such stuff. They train us to respond to God's presence and voice. Micah, the final member of that powerful quartet of writing prophets who burst onto the world scene in the eighth century B.C. (Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos were the others), like virtually all his fellow prophets —those charged with keeping people alive to God and alert to listening to the voice of God—was a master of metaphor. This means that he used words not simply to define or identify what can be seen, touched, smelled, heard, or tasted, but to plunge us into a world of presence. To experience presence is to enter that far larger world of reality that our sensory experiences point to but cannot describe—the realities of love and compassion, justice and faithfulness, sin and evil.... and God. Mostly God.

Micah ~ Wesley Study Bible Introduction

The Book of Micah bears witness to the divine purposes for God's social, political, and religious community, personified as the holy city, Jerusalem. (Jerusalem is the home of God's earthly throne in Zion – the Jerusalem temple mount, where the Lord issues judgement.) This community, however, is not living up to its divine calling of showing God's mercy and justice to its own people and the rest of the world. It is necessary, therefore, for God to correct and purify the community through divine judgment. The book suggests that the advancing military threat of Assyria will serve as God's means of judging the sinful leaders in Zion. After the judgment, the community will be restored to God's intended vocation in the world.

Like Amos, Micah's earlier 8th century contemporary, Micah proclaims God's demand for social justice. The two books also announce that God will judge the capital cities of Samaria and Jerusalem, although Amos focuses on Samaria, and Micah on Jerusalem. The Book of Micah, however, more explicitly and consistently articulates hope for Zion based on God's purposes for Israel and the world.

- **Micah 1-4a:**

Accusing Israel's Leaders of Injustice

- **Micah 4b-5:**

Hope for Restoration Under the Messianic King

- **Micah 6-7:**

Hope in God's Mercy and Redemption

https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-micah/

2 Hear, you peoples, all of you;
    listen, O earth, and all that is in it,
and let the Lord GOD be a witness
against you,
    the Lord from his holy temple.
3 For the LORD is coming out of his place
    and will come down and tread upon
the high places of the earth.
4 Then the mountains will melt under
him,
    and the valleys will burst open
like wax near the fire,
    like waters poured down a slope.

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

6 Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in
the open country,
    a place for planting vineyards.
I will pour down her stones into the
valley
    and uncover her foundations.

7 All her images shall be beaten to pieces,
    all her wages shall be burned with fire,
    and all her idols I will lay waste;
for as the wages of a prostitute she
gathered them,
    and as the wages of a prostitute they
shall again be used.

16 Make yourselves bald and cut off your hair
    for your pampered children;
make yourselves as bald as the eagle,
    for they have gone from you into exile.

6 Hear what the LORD says:
Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.
2 Hear, you mountains, the case of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations of the earth,
for the LORD has a case against his people,
and he will contend with Israel.
3 "O my people, what have I done to you?
In what have I wearied you? Answer me!
4 For I brought you up from the land of Egypt
and redeemed you from the house of slavery,
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.
5 O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD."

6 "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?"
8 He has told you, O mortal, 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?

9 The voice of the LORD cries to the city
(and he shall save those who fear his name):
Hear, O tribe and assembly of the city!
10 Can I forget the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked
and the despicable false measure?
11 Can I tolerate wicked scales
and a bag of dishonest weights?
12 Your wealthy are full of violence;
your inhabitants speak lies
with tongues of deceit in their mouths.
13 Therefore I have begun to strike you down,
making you desolate because of your sins.
14 You shall eat but not be satisfied,
and there shall be a gnawing hunger within you;
you shall put away but not save,
and what you save, I will hand over to the sword.
15 You shall sow but not reap;
you shall tread olives but not anoint yourselves with oil;
you shall tread grapes but not drink wine.
16 For you have kept the statutes of Omri
and all the works of the house of Ahab,
and you have followed their counsels.
Therefore I will make you a desolation and your inhabitants an object of hissing,
so you shall bear the scorn of my people.

MICAH

"GOD DELIGHTS IN COVENANT LOVE, SO HE WILL AGAIN SHOW COMPASSION. HE WILL TRAMPLE OUR EVIL; HE WILL TOSS OUR SINS INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA." 7:18-20

ALLUSION TO GOD'S COVENANT PROMISES TO ABRAHAM (GENESIS 12,15,17)

ALL NATIONS WILL FIND BLESSING THROUGH ABRAHAM

JUDGMENT → HOPE

GOD MUST CONFRONT & JUDGE EVIL AMONG HIS PEOPLE.

GOD'S COVENANT LOVE & PROMISE ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN HUMAN EVIL.

1-2

GOD APPEARS

TO JUDGE HIS PEOPLE

(LIKE AT MT. SINAI – SEE EXODUS 19-20)

ACCUSATIONS & WARNINGS

GATH
LACHISH
ADULLAM
SHAPIR
JERUSALEM

BUT WHY...?

NABOTH (1 KINGS 21)

LEADERS & PROPHETS

WEALTHY THROUGH THEFT & GREED

HOPE & RESTORATION

2:12-13 GOD WILL SHEPHERD THE REMNANT OF HIS PEOPLE

3-4a

INJUSTICE OF ISRAEL'S LEADERS

FIELD FOR SALE

BUT IT'S OUR LAND!

TORAH VIOLATION! (Illegal sale of family land) (LEVITICUS 25:23, NUMBERS 36:7)

DISASTER IS COMING...

NO MORE!

...BUT IT'S NOT PERMANENT

4:1-7

REMNANT RESTORED!

PEACE ON EARTH!

NEW JERUSALEM

4b-5

4:8-13 ASSYRIA → BABYLONIAN EXILE → RESTORATION

BABYLON

BETHLEHEM

NEW JERUSALEM

5:1-6 MESSIANIC KINGDOM

5:7-14 GOD'S KINGDOM CONFRONTS EVIL & BLESSES THE NATIONS

THE REMNANT AMONG THE NATIONS!

6-7

ISRAEL'S UNJUST ECONOMIC PRACTICES

HE HAS TOLD YOU, O HUMAN, WHAT IS GOOD, AND WHAT THE LORD REQUIRES OF YOU: TO DO JUSTICE, TO LOVE MERCY, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD. (6:8)

7:8-20 ISRAEL PERSONIFIED AS A SUFFERING, DEFEATED INDIVIDUAL

2 REASONS FOR FUTURE HOPE:

1 GOD'S CHARACTER

"WHO IS A GOD LIKE YOU, WHO FORGIVES SIN & PARDONS REBELLION?" (7:18)

I WATCH FOR THE LORD...

LET MY GOD HEAR ME!

2 GOD'S PROMISES

"YOU WILL STAY TRUE TO JACOB & SHOW COVENANT LOVE TO ABRAHAM, AS YOU SWORE LONG AGO." (7:20)