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May memory verse Romans 6:8 (NKJV)

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

Commentary on Micah Chapter 1&2 by Chuck Smith 5.8.24

Includes John MacArthur :: Bible Introductions - Micah

Chapter 1

As is the very typical opening of most of the books of the prophets,

The word of the LORD that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, the kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem (Mic 1:1).

So he introduces himself Micah; the city from which he hailed, Morasthite; the time of his prophecy, it is about the same time that Isaiah was prophesying. He was a contemporary to Isaiah.

As we go back in the history of II Kings and we look at Ahaz. He was one of the bad kings of the Southern Kingdom of Judah and he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but he established high places for the worship of the false gods in Jerusalem. Hezekiah was a good king, instituted reforms when he came to the throne.

Now, prophesying during this period of time would mean that he was prophesying during the time that the Northern Kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians. The Assyrians having conquered the Northern Kingdom then invaded the Southern Kingdom at the time of Hezekiah and, of course, were defeated by the work of the Lord, the intervention of God. So the time that Samaria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel fell. So his prophecy is against Samaria and also against Jerusalem.

Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that is therein: and let the Lord GOD be the witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple (Mic 1:2).

So his calling unto the people now to hear God's indictment, what God is witnessing against you.

For, behold, the LORD has come forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth (Mic 1:3).

So he begins to use figurative language in describing the judgments of God that are going to be coming against them.

And upon the mountains shall be molten under him, the valleys shall be split, as wax before the fire, and as waters that are poured down from a steep place (Mic 1:4).

So the mountains will be melting.

[And the reason] for the transgression of Jacob has all of this happened, and for the sins of the house of Israel. But what is the transgression of Jacob? is it not centered in Samaria? (Mic 1:5)

Where they had introduced the Baal worship in the Northern Kingdom.

Is it not the high places of worship for false gods that were established in Jerusalem under king Ahaz? Therefore [the Lord declares] I will make Samaria as a heap of the field, and as the plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof (Mic 1:5-6).

That is the buildings will be destroyed right down to the foundations.

Now today as you are traveling in the middle portion of Jerusalem, leaving Shechem and heading towards Megiddo, you come to a very beautiful valley and there is a hill in the valley that is the sight of Samaria. The hills are covered with olive trees and fruit trees of all sorts. But as you turn off the main road and you head up towards Samaria, you first get to the gate that was once the entrance to the city during the Roman period, and then you go along a road where there are Roman columns on either side. For the city of Samaria was rebuilt by the Romans. But as you get up to the top of the hill, you can find the palace of Ahab and of Omri, those palaces that were once adorned with ivory furniture; those palaces which were once such a glorious spectacle for everyone. The city of Samaria was a fabulous city set there on the hill. They thought that they were impregnable. And yet, God had prophesied the destruction of Samaria. As you stand there, you can see where they have rolled the stones down the hillside. You can see the rubble, and even as the prophecy here goes, God uncovered the foundations and you can see what was once the foundation of the palace of Ahab and of the palace of Omri there in Samaria. And this prophecy, of course, has been fulfilled and you can go there today and see the fulfillment of this prophecy. It is like a heap in the field. It is destroyed; lies in ruins to the present day; foundations of the city having been uncovered.

And all the graven images that are there will be beaten to pieces, and all the hires thereof shall be burned with fire, and all of the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she has gathered it of the hire of a harlot, and they shall return to the hire of a harlot.

Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked [the prophet declares]: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls. For her wound [that is, of Samaria, her illness] is incurable; for it is come unto Judah (Mic 1:7-9);

It has actually also infected the Southern Kingdom and they have begun the worship in the groves and in the high places.

he is come unto the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem [referring to the Assyrian invasion]. Declare ye it not at Gath (Mic 1:9-10),

Now Gath was one of the capital cities of the Philistines. And when David was lamenting over the death of Saul and Jonathan, he made the same statement, "Declare it not at Gath." They hated to have their enemies rejoicing over their misfortunes and, of course, that was usually the case. The Philistines loved to rejoice over the misfortunes of God's people.

You remember when they brought Samson into the house of their god Dagon, the purpose was to make sport, to rejoice over the helplessness of Samson. And so the idea was always, "Don't publish it, don't tell it in Gath lest they rejoice at the calamity of God's people."

Now, here he begins to use a play on words, and you have to really have a smattering of an understanding of Hebrew. The King James doesn't really give it to you here, but it is sort of a play on words. And he is saying,

weep not in weep town (Mic 1:10):

For Aphrah means weep town. So he said, "Don't weep in weep town," or not Aphrah. Aprah is dust, and so he said,

in dust town roll in the dust (Mic 1:10).

Weep not in weep town, in dust town roll in the dust.

Saphir means beautiful, but here is a change.

That which is beautiful shall be stripped naked, and shall be ashamed because of her nakedness: the inhabitants of Zaanan [which means march] came not forth (Mic 1:11)

Or did not march forth. So the inhabitants of march did not march.

in the mourning of Bethazel; he shall receive of you his standing. For the inhabitant of Maroth (Mic 1:11-12)

And Maroth is bitterness.

waited carefully for good: but evil came down from the LORD to the gate of Jerusalem [the Assyrian invasion again]. O thou inhabitant of Lachish (Mic 1:12-13),

Now Lachish is horse town.

bind the chariot to the swift horses: she is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion (Mic 1:13):

Lachish was one of the fortified cities. It was taken in the Assyrian invasion, but Jerusalem was not taken by the Assyrians, for God intervened.

for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee. Therefore shalt thou give presents to Moreshethgath: the houses of Achzib (Mic 1:13-14)

Now Achzib is lies.

shall be a lie to the kings of Israel (Mic 1:14).

So the house of lies will be a lie to the kings of Israel. So here Micah makes quite a play on words through these particular passages.

Yet [the Lord said] will I bring an heir unto thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah: he shall come unto Adullam the glory of Israel (Mic 1:15).

Then he speaks of the mourning. That is, the shaving of their heads that they did when they mourned. And then they would shave their heads and for a period of time let their hair grow. Then they would shave all the hair that grew over a thirty-day period and they'd take and offer it to the Lord. They'd burn it as a offering unto the Lord and it was a sign of mourning. They do this to the present day. If there is a death in the family, then they don't shave for thirty days. So you see many times a person in Israel... of course, a lot of them just have beards, a lot of the rabbis. But we've had friends, we go over there and they'll have beards, and the reason being there has been a death in the family. So, they shave and then they let their hair grow for thirty days and offer it and it is a sign of their mourning.

So make thee bald, poll thee for the delicate children (Mic 1:16);

Which, of course, the children have been slain.

enlarge thy baldness as an eagle; for they are gone into the captivity from thee (Mic 1:16).

The children are slain. Those that are not slain have been carried away captive. So a time of mourning for them.

Chapter 2

Now God is giving here His continued indictment against Israel and He said,

Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practice it, because it had been in the power of their hands (Mic 2:1).

So those that were abusing their positions of power.

For they covet fields, and take them by violence (Mic 2:2);

He was probably thinking here of the vineyard of Naboth which earlier King Ahab was just so doleful and all, and his wife said, "What's the matter, Honey? What is wrong with you?" He said, "Oh, I want the field of Naboth and he won't sell it to me. Oh, I want that field." She says, "Well, don't worry. I'll take care of it for you." She got some vain fellows who brought a false charge against Naboth and the people stoned him to death and she said, "Hey, he's dead. Go take his field." So wicked Jezebel in her taking by violence that which belonged... and so abusing their power or using their power for their own enrichment and their own gain. They covet fields; Ahab coveted the field of Naboth. Then through the cunning of his wife, Jezebel, they took it by violence.

and houses, they take them away: so that they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage (Mic 2:2).

So notice, here are the sins: one, covetousness; two, violence; and three, oppression. These things were common in Samaria, and that is why the judgment of God came against Samaria and God allowed the Assyrians to carry them away captive.

Therefore thus saith the LORD; against this family do I devise an evil, from which you will not escape; neither shall you go haughtily: for the time is evil. In that day one will take up a parable against you, and a lamentation with a doleful lamentation (Mic 2:3-4),

A lamentation was a song of sorrow, but this is especially sorrowful, the doleful lamentation.

and they will say, We are utterly spoiled: he has changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed it from me! turning away he hath divided our fields. Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the LORD (Mic 2:4-5).

The temple worship will cease. There will be none to take their turn, which, of course, they determined by the casting of lots in the temple of the Lord.

Now they were saying to the prophets of God,

Don't prophesy (Mic 2:6),

But yet, the false prophets continued their dribble. And that is pretty much more literally than what you will find in your King James.

they shall not prophesy to them, that they shall not take shame (Mic 2:6).

In other words, don't prophesy in creating a shame in the people.

O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the Spirit of the LORD troubled [or angry]? are these his doings? do not my words do good to them that walk uprightly? But even of late my people is risen up as an enemy (Mic 2:7-8):

Now notice that even though all of this sin exists and they have risen up against God, God still maintains them as "My people." "Oh love that will not let me go, I rest myself in Thee." "Even of late," God said, "My people is risen up as an enemy."

you pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war. The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; and from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever. Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction. If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; then you will make him a prophet to the people (Mic 2:8-11).

They didn't want to hear God's Word. They told Micah, "Hey, don't prophesy to us." And yet, if a fellow would come along and say, "I'll sing to you of good days of wine and strong drink and all," then they say, "You're our prophet. We want to hear you." Men haven't changed much. They don't want to hear really of the judgment of God that is to be meted out against a sinful generation. They want to hear, "All is well. All is going to be good. Don't worry, it's all going to work out. Cheer up! Keep your head up. Think positively because we're going to come through on top." People say, "Oh, tell me more, tell me more," as the whole thing is going down the tubes. And so they don't want to hear the truth. And God is rebuking them that they will not listen to His truth. They would rather hear a lie than the truth.

But the Lord is talking now of a remnant that He is going to work with.

I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the LORD on the head of them (Mic 2:12-13).

John MacArthur :: Bible Introductions - Micah

Title

The name of the book is derived from the prophet who, having received the word of the Lord, was commissioned to proclaim it. Micah, whose name is shared by others in the OT (e.g., [Judg. 17:1](#); [2 Chr. 13:2](#); [Jer. 36:11](#)), is a shortened form of Micaiah (or Michaiah) and means “Who is like the LORD?” In [7:18](#), Micah uses a play on his own name, saying “Who is a God like You?”

Author and Date

The first verse establishes Micah as the author. Beyond that, little is known about him. His parentage is not given, but his name suggests a godly heritage. He traces his roots to the town of Moresheth ([1:1](#), [14](#)), located in the foothills of Judah, approximately 25 mi. SW of Jerusalem, on the border of Judah and Philistia, near Gath. From a productive agricultural area, he was like Amos, a country resident removed from the national politics and religion, yet chosen by God ([3:8](#)) to deliver a message of judgment to the princes and people of Jerusalem. Micah places his prophecy during the reigns of Jotham (750–731 B.C.), Ahaz (731–715 B.C.), and Hezekiah (715–686 B.C.). His indictments of social injustices and religious corruption renew the theme of Amos (mid-eighth century B.C.) and his contemporaries, Hosea in the N (ca. 755–710 B.C.) and in the S Isaiah (ca. 739–690 B.C.). This fits that which is known about the character of Ahaz ([2 Kin. 16:10–18](#)) and his son Hezekiah prior to his sweeping spiritual reformations ([2 Chr. 29](#); [31:1](#)). His references to the imminent fall of Samaria ([1:6](#)) clearly position him before 722 B.C., at approximately 735–710 B.C.

Background and Setting

Because the northern kingdom was about to fall to Assyria during Micah’s ministry in 722 B.C., Micah dates his message with the mention of Judean kings only. While Israel was an occasional recipient of his words (cf. [1:5–7](#)), his primary attention was directed toward the southern kingdom in which he lived. The economic prosperity and the absence of international crises which marked the days of Jeroboam II (793–753 B.C.), during which the borders of Judah and Israel rivaled those of David and Solomon (cf. [2 Kin. 14:23–27](#)), were slipping away. Syria and Israel invaded Judah, taking the wicked Ahaz temporarily captive (cf. [2 Chr. 28:5–16](#); [Is. 7:1](#), [2](#)). After Assyria had overthrown Syria and Israel, the good king Hezekiah withdrew his allegiance to Assyria, causing Sennacherib to besiege Jerusalem in 701 B.C. (cf. [2 Kin. 18](#), [19](#); [2 Chr. 32](#)). The Lord then sent His angel to deliver Judah ([2 Chr. 32:21](#)). Hezekiah was used by God to lead Judah back to true worship.

After the prosperous reign of Uzziah, who died in 739 B.C., his son Jotham continued the same policies, but failed to remove the centers of idolatry. Outward prosperity was only a facade masking rampant social corruption and religious syncretism. Worship of the Canaanite fertility god Baal was increasingly integrated with the OT sacrificial

system, reaching epidemic proportions under the reign of Ahaz (cf. [2 Chr. 28:1–4](#)). When Samaria fell, thousands of refugees swarmed into Judah, bringing their religious syncretism with them. But while Micah (like Hosea) addressed this issue, it was the disintegration of personal and social values to which he delivered his most stinging rebukes and stern warnings (e.g., [7:5](#), [6](#)). Assyria was the dominant power and a constant threat to Judah, so Micah’s prediction that Babylon, then under Assyrian rule, would conquer Judah ([4:10](#)) seemed remote. Thus, as the prophet Amos was to Israel, Micah was to Judah.

Historical and Theological Themes

Primarily, Micah proclaimed a message of judgment to a people persistently pursuing evil. Similar to other prophets (cf. [Hos. 4:1](#); [Amos 3:1](#)), Micah presented his message in lawsuit/courtroom terminology ([1:2](#); [6:1](#), [2](#)). The prophecy is arranged in 3 oracles or cycles, each beginning with the admonition to “hear” ([1:2](#); [3:1](#); [6:1](#)). Within each oracle, he moves from doom to hope—doom because they have broken God’s law given at Sinai; hope because of God’s unchanging covenant with their forefathers ([7:20](#)). One third of the book targets the sins of his people; another third looks at the punishment of God to come; and another third promises hope for the faithful after the judgment. Thus, the theme of the inevitability of divine judgment for sin is coupled together with God’s immutable commitment to His covenant promises. The combination of God’s 1) absolute consistency in judging sin and 2) unbending commitment to His covenant through the remnant of His people provides the hearers with a clear disclosure of the character of the Sovereign of the universe. Through divine intervention, He will bring about both judgment on sinners and blessing on those who repent.

Interpretive Challenges

The verbal similarity between [Mic. 4:1–3](#) and [Is. 2:2–4](#) raises the question of who quoted whom. Interpreters are divided, with no clear-cut answers on either side. Because the two prophets lived in close proximity to each other, prophesying during the same period, this similarity is understandable. God gave the same message through two preachers. The introductory phrase, “in the latter days” ([4:1](#)), removes these verses from any post-Exilic fulfillment and requires an eschatological timeframe surrounding the Second Advent of Christ and the beginning of the Millennium.

Apart from [Is. 2:2–4](#), three other passages from Micah are quoted elsewhere in Scripture. [Micah 3:12](#) is quoted in [Jer. 26:18](#), thereby saving Jeremiah’s life from King Jehoiakim’s death sentence. [Micah 5:2](#) is quoted by the chief priests and scribes ([Matt. 2:6](#)) in response to Herod’s query about the birthplace of the Messiah. [Micah 7:6](#) is employed by Jesus in [Matt. 10:35](#), [36](#) when commissioning His disciples.