

Micah

Authorship: Micah was from Moresheth in Judah, about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. His identity is verified by Jeremiah, who quoted him and named his hometown (compare 1:1; 3:12; Jeremiah 26:18).

Date: Micah prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (1:1), c. 740 B.C. – 690 B.C., the same time span as Isaiah's ministry.

Background: About 10-20 years before the northern kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria in 722 B.C., Micah was called to prophesy to both the northern and southern kingdoms. Judah itself would barely escape destruction by Assyria in 701 B.C.

Recipients: The people of Judah living during Micah's lifetime. The first hearers were people living in Judah during the end of the 700s B.C.

Purpose: (1) To pronounce judgment for continual apostasy and insincere religious observance (3:8; 6:6-7); (2) To show that true faith has practical manifestations, such as social justice and honesty in business (6:8); (3) To proclaim God's ultimate plans for His people (2:12-13; 7:11-20).

Key Verse

"He has told you, O man, 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?" (Micah 6:8 ESV).

Key Term: "Idolatry"

The essential sin of Judah was idolatry, a rejection of the "First Table" of the Ten Commandments (the first four commandments). This brought about corruption, violence, and many other sins, a rejection of the "Second Table" (the last six commandments)

Meaning of Name

Micah, the eighth-century Israelite prophet from Judah, has given his name to this book as its composer. His name is a short form of Micaiah, meaning "Who Is Like the LORD" in Hebrew.

Outline:

I. The Prophecy of Retribution (1:1-3:12)

A. The Calamity 1:1-16)

1. The Coming forth of Jehovah (1:1-2)
2. The Coming focus of Judgment (1:3-16)
 - a. The Salient Points of Focus (1:3-9)
 - i. The Sin of Samaria was Spiritual (1:3-8)
 - ii. The Sin of Samaria was Spreading (1:9)
 - b. The Subsidiary Points of Focus (1:10-16)
 - i. The Advancing Foe (1:10-15)
 - ii. The Advertised Woe (1:16)

B. The Cause (2:1-3:12)

1. The People (2:1-3:12)
 - a. The Robbers (2:1-5)
 - b. The Revilers (2:6-7)
 - c. The Resisters (2:8-9)
 - d. The Repudiators (2:10-11)
 - e. The Remnant (2:12-13)
2. The Princes (3:1-4)
3. The Prophets (3:5-12)
 - a. The Lying Prophets (3:5-7)
 - b. The Lord's Prophets (3:8-12)
 - i. His Claim (3:8)
 - ii. His Courage (3:9-12)



II. The Promise of Restoration (4:1-5:15)

A. Restoration Depicted (4:1-8)

1. Exaltation of the Kingdom (4:1)
2. Extent of the Kingdom (4:2)
3. Excellence of the Kingdom (4:3-5)
4. Exiles of the Kingdom (4:6-8)
 - a. Restored in Weakness (4:6)
 - b. Ruling in Power (4:7-8)

B. Restoration Delayed (4:9-5:6)

1. The Times of Israel's Misery (4:9-13)
 - a. The Babylonian Empire (4:9-10)
 - b. The Beast's Empire (4:11-13)
2. The Times of Israel's Messiah (5:1-6)
 - a. The Insult (5:1)
 - b. The Incarnation (5:2)
 - c. The Interval (5:3)
 - d. The Investiture (5:4-6)

C. Restoration Described (5:7-15)

1. The Remnant (5:7-8)
2. The Recovery (5:9)
3. The Revival (5:10-14)
4. The Revenge (5:15)

III. The Plea for Repentance (6:1-7:20)

A. Israel's Sins (6:1-16)

1. The Lord's Controversy with Israel (6:1-8)
 - a. The Word of the Lord as Declared on the Hills (6:1-2)
 - b. The Warmth of the Lord as Displayed to the Hebrews (6:3-4)
 - c. The Will of the Lord as Discerned by the Heathen (6:5-8)
2. The Lord's Condemnation of Israel (6:9-16)
 - a. Sin's Deceptions (6:9-12)
 - b. Sins Disappointments (6:13-15)
 - c. Sin's Distortions 6:16)

B. Israel's Sorrows (7:1-6)

1. Blight (7:1-3a)
2. Bribery (7:3b-4)
3. Betrayal (7:5-6)

C. Israel's Savior (7:7-20)

1. Israel's Forgiveness (7:7-11)
2. Israel's Foes (7:12-17)
3. Israel's Future (7:18-20)

One Sentence Summary

Although Micah also prophesied against Israel, his main message was against Judah, who must repent of idolatry and injustice or else go into exile – but then be restored to divine blessing under the Ruler from Bethlehem.

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