

Micah

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Time Line

- 1220-1050 – Period of the Judges
- 1050 – 930 – United Kingdom: Saul, David, Solomon
- 931-**722** – Divided Kingdom – **Israel into the Assyrian Exile**
- **587** - **Judah into the Babylonian Exile**
- 538 - Judah returns from Babylon
- 538 – 332 Persian Domination
- 332- 63 Greek Domination
- 63 – 330 A.D. Roman Domination

Transition to Micah

- “Minor prophet” is determined by the length of their book, not the importance of their message
- We are returning to three of the pre-exilic Minor Prophets who prophesied during this same time period as Isaiah
 - **Micah**
 - **Nahum**
 - **Zephaniah**
- Earlier we looked at three other pre-exilic minor prophets:
 - Jonah
 - Amos
 - Hosea

Micah

- *Micah (740-700 BC)* was from ***Moreseth*** a village in the low-lying hills country of *Judea* under the watchful eye of the military fortress at *Lachish*
- He ministered to *Israel* and *Judah*
- Being raised in the country, he was familiar with the poor of *Judah*
- He was also at home among the sages of *Judah* as he discerned the folly of the two states
- He contrasted the kingdom to come with the seedbed of corruption in *Jerusalem*

Micah (Cont)

- With the fall of *Samaria* in **722 BC** many of the *Israelites* fled to *Judah* for asylum
- The population of *Jerusalem* increased fourfold while her leaders grew more corrupt and the moral fiber further disintegrated
- Micah prophesied in *Judah* during the reign of Kings:
 - *Jotham* 742- 735 BC
 - *Ahaz* – 735 -715 BC
 - *Hezekiah* – 715 -687 BC

Micah (Cont)

- *Micha* prophesied to *Israel* during the reign of Kings:
 - *Zachariah 746-746 BC*
 - *Shallum – 745 BC*
 - *Menahem – 745 -737 BC*
 - *Pekahiah – 737 – 736 BC*
 - *Pekah &36- 732 BC*
 - *Hoshea 732-724 BC*
- Both he and *Isaiah (640 – 700 BC)* spoke of and lived to witness the fall of *Samaria (Israel)* in **721 BC**

Micah (Cont)

- Both witnessed the rise of the *Assyrian Empire* before its eclipse by *Babylon* in **612 BC** with the conquering of *Nineveh*
- *Micah's* ministry supports the significant reform programs of King *Hezekiah*
- As discussed earlier, the book of *Micah* can be seen as “cliff notes” for the book of *Isaiah*
- Again, his book begins with a brief reference to the historical context

Micah (Cont)

- He was a contemporary of *Hosea* (**750 – 715 BC**) and *Isaiah*
- As a peasant, he had much in common with *Amos* in that he was suspicious of city life
- He had a taste for swift strokes of imagery and a play on words
- His book has four parts alternating between threats and promises
- As a bearer of God's word, he was initially condemned and told not to prophesy

Micah (Cont)

- He scourges:
 - the moneyed capitalists
 - the inexorable usurer
 - the swindling tradesmen
 - families divided by rivalry
 - avaricious priests and prophets
 - tyrants
 - venial judges

Micah (Cont)

- **Micah 1:1**

- He begins by giving the historical context with the identification of the three kings of *Judah* and by listing a town in the north (*Samaria*) and one in the south (*Jerusalem*)
 - *Jotham 742 - 735 BC*
 - *Ahaz 735 - 715 BC*
 - *Hezekiah 715 - 687 BC*
- Remember, *Isaiah* received his calling in the year that King *Uzziah* died (**742 BC**)*

Micah (Cont)

- **Micha 1:2-5**

- Look at the similarities of his opening text with that of *Isaiah* and *Micah* as they discuss the “iniquities of the people”
- Remember that *Jacob* was:
 - The trickster who was born holding on to the heel of his brother, Esau
 - The one who stole his brother’s birthright and blessing
 - Given the name “Israel”
- The northern kingdom contains the majority of the descendants of the sons of *Israel* (10 tribes)

Micah (Cont)

- The transgression of *Jacob* and *Samaria* is the same thing
- The sin of *Judah* and *Jerusalem* are also the same thing
- He is using synonymous parallelism
 - *Jacob* and *Samaria (Israel)*
 - *Judah* and *Jerusalem*
- He is talking about the sins of the northern and southern kingdoms *

Micah (Cont)

- **Micah 1:6-7**

- *Samaria* is the capital city of the Northern Kingdom and is also called *Israel* or *Jacob*
- The center of the sins of the Northern Kingdom are in the city of *Samaria*
- The sins of the Southern Kingdom are centered in *Jerusalem*
- As with the prophet *Hosea*, *Micah* uses the image of idolatry to present covenantal adultery
- The people of God have been going after pagan idols and therefore committing covenantal adultery

Micah (Cont)

- God is the husband of *Israel* by the covenant of *Sinai*
- *Israel* is the bride, so when they worship pagan gods, they are participating in covenantal adultery
- As we have seen, this image is expressed throughout the prophets
- Again, their sin is pagan idolatry *

Micah 1 (Cont)

- **Micah 1:8-9**

- Running through the town naked is a prophetic sign depicting what will happen to *Israel*
- This should remind us of ***Isaiah 20:2-5*** *₁ where *Isaiah* was instructed by God (probably around the same time) to run naked through the cities of *Philistia*
- This was a prophetic sign (against the law today) to depict what was going to happen to the *Philistines* (they will be stripped naked) when they are taken off to *Egypt* as slaves in punishment for their sins
- *Micha* continues by proclaiming that this same idolatry has come to *Jerusalem* *

Micha 2

- **Micah 2:1-6**

- Here, we find *Micah* addressing the “oppression of the poor” as did *Isaiah*, *Amos*, and *Hosea*
- He is told by the people not to prophesy just as we saw earlier in
 - Amos 2:12; 7:12
 - Isaiah 30:9
- We saw the idea that “disgrace will not overtake us” in *Amos* 2 and 7 *

Micah 2 (Cont)

- **Micah 2:7-13**

- Here he presents destruction, problems, chastisement and then restoration language
- This is a pattern very similar to that used by several of the prophets and especially *Isaiah* *

Micah 3

- **Micah 3:1-4**

- Cannibalism is a metaphor for what was being done to the people of *Israel* by the ruling class
- Again, he is talking to the Northern Kingdom and one of the major problems, according to *Amos*, was the oppression of the poor *

Micah 3

- **Micah 3:5-12**

- These were the **false prophets**
- Looking back at **1st Kings 22:1-40***₂ we see an example of this:
 - King Jehoshaphat of Judah went north in an attempt to unify the countries with Israel under King Ahab being at war with Syria
 - The false prophets and the court prophets advised them to go to war while only Micaiah was the true prophet promising a failed battle

Micah 3 (Cont)

- During the prophetic age there were a few true prophets sent by God but there were also countless false prophets
- The false prophets who served within the court, were paid by the king, and often ate at his table in order to say nice things about him
- Once again, *Micah* is using synonymous parallelism
- Here the job of a prophet is spelled out in a nut shell

Micah 3 (Cont)

- His job is to relate to God's people the word of God, particularly to those living in sin
- The idea of declaring to *Jacob* their transgressions and to *Israel* their sins is to proclaim justice and truth *

Micah 4

- **Micah 4:1-2**

- This is very similar to **Isaiah 2:2-4** *₃
- The nations shall come together and worship the one true God as the truth will flow out of *Zion (Jerusalem)* once again
- *Israel* and *Jerusalem* will return to their original calling of converting the nations
- The question is “when will this be fulfilled?”
- In **Acts 1:8***₄ we see the word of the Lord going forth from Jerusalem *

Micha 4

- **Micah 4:3-4**

- He prophesies peace in the same manner as had *Isaiah*
- The idea that every man would live under his vine and fig tree, meant that there no longer would be war within their homeland
- Again, more parallels to *Isaiah*
 - Micha 4:10 is a parallel to Isaiah 39

Micah 4 (Cont)

- One can see how this might have been fulfilled in some of the kings in the line of David, but it was totally fulfilled in Jesus, who was born in *Bethlehem*
- This is why *Matthew* makes such a point of this in his gospel *

Micah 5

- **Micah 5:1-2**

- You find this quoted in **Matthew 2:1-6***₅ when the wise men from the East arrive in Jerusalem asking where the king will be born who's star they have seen
- *King Herod* has no clue, so his advisors tell him that he must be born in *Bethlehem* in accordance with the prophecies of the prophet *Micah*
- *Jesus* was born in *Bethlehem* because that was where *David* came from
- The prophecy is that the Messiah would come again and that he would be a king in the line of *David* *

Micah 5 (Cont)

- **Micah 5:5-6**

- The *Assyrians* will attack, but there will be a restoration and eventually, the *Babylonians* will conquer the *Assyrians*
- He is speaking about the diaspora *

Micah 6

- **Micah 6:1-8**

- Here, he is speaking of a “covenantal controversy,” or a “covenantal lawsuit” because the people have broken the covenant
- You can hear the echoes of **Hosea 6:6** *₆
- This is followed by more criticisms of the unjust behavior of the people of the city *

Micah 6 (Cont)

- **Micah 6:14**

- Obviously they are not going to have success in anything they do
- This is all about the Northern Kingdom to include their sinfulness in following the House of *Omri* and *Ahab* *

Micah 7

- **Micah 7: 8-15**
 - Presents resurrection imagery *

Micah 7 (Cont)

- **Micah 7:18-20**

- All of the prophets toward the end of their prophesy present restoration language
- Steadfast love is covenantal faithfulness
- We can see a bit of Baptismal imagery here
- Again, the promise of *Abraham* and God's covenantal love is reflected in the idea that *Abraham's* seed will fill the earth
- We will next make a brief overview of the **Book of Nahum**