

# The Prophets

Lesson #22

Micah

## Outline

### I. ***The Prediction Of Judgment (1:1-3:12)***

- A. The judgment on the people (1:1-2:13).
  - 1. Introduction (1:1).
  - 2. Judgment on Samaria (1:2-7).
  - 3. Judgment on Judah (1:8-16).
  - 4. The cause of the judgment (2:1-11).
  - 5. The promise of future restoration (2:12-13).
- B. The judgment on the leadership (3:1-12).
  - 1. Judgment on princes (3:1-4).
  - 2. Judgment on prophets (3:5-8).
  - 3. Promise of future judgment (3:9-12).

### II. ***The Prediction Of Restoration (4:1-5:15)***

- A. The promise of the coming kingdom (4:1-8).
- B. The promise of the coming captivities (4:9-5:1).
- C. The promise of the coming King (5:2-15).
  - 1. Birth of the Messiah (5:2).
  - 2. Gathering of the Messiah (5:3).
  - 3. Work of the Messiah (5:4-15).

### III. ***The Plea For Repentance (6:1-7:20)***

- A. The first plea of God (6:1-8).
  - 1. God pleads (6:1-5).
  - 2. Micah replies (6:6-8).
- B. The second plea of God (6:9-7:6).
  - 1. God pleads (6:9-16).
  - 2. Micah replies (7:1-6).
- C. The promise of final salvation (7:7-20).

## Notes

### ***Micah 1:1-3:12***

- The judgment on the people (1:1-2:13).
  - Introduction (1:1).
    - According to the superscription, the prophetic activity of Micah spanned the reigns of three kings of Judah in the eighth century B.C.
    - This period was one of great spiritual decline, especially for the northern kingdom; and the messages of Micah and the other

eighth-century prophets, with their emphases on social justice and obedience to the laws of the Mosaic covenant, were a refreshing breeze in the arid climate of spiritual ignorance and disobedience.

- The prophecy of Micah was directed primarily toward Samaria and Jerusalem, the capital cities of the northern and southern kingdoms (Israel and Judah).
- Judgment on Samaria (1:2-7).
  - The prophet begins by calling the nations of earth to behold the judgment of the Lord against the people of His wrath and to learn a lesson from this. The "holy temple" is not Jerusalem, but heaven.
  - The figure of speech used in vs. 4 is a figurative illustration of the terribleness of the judgment.
  - The imagery of the harlot appears where the wages Samaria received from the practice of prostitution would be burned. The prostitution referred to is idolatry, which the Old Testament consistently regards as spiritual fornication.
- Judgment on Judah (1:8-16).
  - Because of the terrible judgment to come on Samaria the prophet would lament and wail in the dirge-like utterance characteristic of oriental peoples in times of great grief.
  - Micah realized that the wounds of Samaria were incurable; she had gone beyond hope of redemption. The sins and the consequent judgment of Samaria have reached to Jerusalem.
  - In a unique and mournful dirge, the prophet pictures the desolation that is to sweep the country. Making a play on the names of villages and towns in the section of the country about him, he expresses his grief in a series of puns.
- Cause of the judgment (2:1-11).
  - The judgment announced in the previous chapter is made necessary by the arrogance and wickedness of the rulers and the wealthy class who possess the ability to oppress the poor.
  - Instead of walking arrogantly as in the past, they will now be humbled because of the disaster God will bring upon them. The Assyrians were pressing westward, carrying destruction in their wake.
  - The great men and the false prophets accuse the true prophets of preaching misfortune and denunciations, pointing constantly to judgment. They want the true prophets to stop prophesying!
  - God's words are intended for the good of the people; however, they do good only to those who walk in them.

- Promise of future restoration (2:12-13).
  - Although the people will be cast out of their land and perish for their sins, God will bring back the faithful remnant. "Jacob" and "the remnant of Israel" stand for all who those of the ten tribes and the tribe of Judah who will return.
  - Although they are just a remnant, the noise of their rejoicing will be like that of a great multitude of men.
  - "The breaker is come up" is thought to be the Messiah who breaks down the wall of sin that separated them from the Lord. As they go out their King, the Messiah, leads them.
- The judgment on the leadership (3:1-12).
  - Judgment on princes (3:1-4).
    - This prophecy, which serves as the background and introduction of the great Messianic message of chapters 4-5, presents a contrast between the old and the new, the present and the future.
    - Instead of administering justice, the rulers pull the skin off the people and cut the flesh from off the bones. As they have sown, so will they reap. They have destroyed the people without mercy, and so without mercy will their destruction come.
  - Judgment on prophets (3:5-8).
    - The false prophets have likewise made their contribution to the miserable condition of the nation. They cry "Peace," creating in the people a sense of security when there is neither peace nor security.
    - Covering the lip was probably an expression used of trouble and shame, for there was no answer from God. God refuses to reveal His will to any who will not hear or see.
- Promise of future judgment (3:9-12).
  - At this point the prophet reaches the climax of his prophecies of doom. He lays the blame for the coming judgment at the feet of the rulers, prophets and priests.
  - Instead of fulfilling the position and mission for which they were appointed, they had acted in a completely opposite manner.
  - The people had a kind of trust, but one devoid of obedience to God. Micah includes the destruction of the temple, the visible sign of God's presence, in his prophecy. The symbol of the people's empty religion would perish.

### ***Micah 4:1-5:15***

- The promise of the coming kingdom (4:1-8).
  - "In the last days" always refers to the time of the Messiah. It points to the end of the Jewish age and the introduction of the new era under the spiritual ruler.

- God's spiritual temple would be at the head, or above all other powers. It would be permanently established, never to be destroyed (cf. Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14; Hebrews 12:28). The new Zion would be the stronghold and center of worship for people of all nations.
- In this new society of many peoples and nations who respected the word and law of the Lord, God would be the arbiter and judge in all matters. It would also be characterized by peace among its inhabitants. The kingdom would not be established, defended or extended by carnal weapons and means.
- The lame ones will be the remnant of the redeemed, the elect under Christ according to divine grace (Romans 11:5). They will become a strong nation which will not be brought to an end.
- The promise of the coming captivities (4:9-5:1).
  - At this point the prophet interrupts his message of the Messianic hope to consider the present, the immediate future of the nation and the captivity that would precede the Messianic rule.
  - The people who have dwelt in Zion will now dwell in the field, away from the protection of the walled city, with neither walls nor covering to protect. The prophet names the captor as Babylon.
  - "Gather thyself in troops" shows that Jerusalem, so renowned for its hostility toward the less fortunate, is to suffer siege because of its wrongdoing.
- The promise of the coming King (5:2-15).
  - Birth of the Messiah (5:2).
    - Ephrathah is the ancient name of Bethlehem (Genesis 35:16, 19; 48:7; Ruth 4:11) and distinguishes it from other towns named Bethlehem (cf. Joshua 19:15). Its use identifies the town in which David was born (1 Samuel 17:12), thus establishing a connection between the Messianic King and David.
    - "Everlasting" indicates more than that He descends from an ancient lineage; it relates Him to God, the eternal One. His rule reaches back into eternity.
  - Gathering of the Messiah (5:3).
    - Because a ruler will eventually come to deliver Israel, God will give her up only temporarily. Israel will enter a period of absolute abandonment by God because of her sin (1:5-6; 2:1-5; 3:4, 9-12; 4:10; 6:9-16), but a ruler will come who will end the period of Israel's estrangement; therefore Israel will be given up only until that time (cf. Isaiah 66:4-8).
    - The radiant woman in Revelation 12:1-6 is the remnant of the spiritually faithful through whom Christ came, fulfilling the prophecies of Micah and Isaiah. Under this ruler the remnant of the ruler's brethren would return to the Lord.

- Work of the Messiah (5:4-15).
  - As a divine provider He will supply all their needs. His greatness will be recognized from one end of the earth to the other. The peace of this new Israel will be in Him (cf. Isaiah 9:6; Ephesians 2:14).
  - They will be able to tread their enemies underfoot, conquering and overcoming them by the spiritual strength provided through their relationship to God.
  - The cutting off of the horses and chariots indicates that in the Messianic kingdom these symbols of force and war will have no place. Witchcraft, magic and sorcery would also be abolished.

### ***Micah 6:1-7:20***

- The first plea of God (6:1-8).
  - God pleads (6:1-5).
    - Micah calls the nation to come before God in a court of law. As the mountains and hills have witnessed the whole of Israel's history, so now God calls upon the nation to present their cause before these as before a jury.
    - Israel has fallen away and he must now tell why. God has done His people no harm, only good. God then gives several instances of His goodness to His people. No one can find anything of which He could be faulted.
  - Micah replies (6:6-8).
    - The people are convicted before the Lord and recognize their guilt. Micah personifies the nation as an individual and addresses God in search for a solution to their sinful condition.
    - They have forgotten the law of their God so far that they are ignorant of how to approach Him. It is ironic that the people are willing to do anything except what God requires. Sacrifices such as these are not what God wants. Vs. 8 is considered by many to be one of the most comprehensive and all-embracing statements in the Old Testament.
- The second plea of God (6:9-7:6).
  - God pleads (6:9-16).
    - "Crieth unto the city" signifies the cry of alarm heard when disaster threatens a city. Micah adds that it is wise to fear God's name.
    - In the absence of basic honesty corruption prevailed. The real judgment would be against their heart, which was very far from God and righteousness.
    - Such wickedness and corruption cannot go unpunished. Her grievous wound is the complete desolation that God will bring upon her because of her sins.

- Micah replies (7:1-6).
  - The “godly” man, the pious man who respects God, and out of that respect has a proper regard for his fellow men, has perished out of the earth. Having it in their power to do evil, the people do it diligently with vigor and zeal.
  - The state of affairs is such that one does not know in whom he can place his trust; as a matter of fact, there is no one. This was a time of complete social rebellion against the authority of God.
- The promise of final salvation (7:7-20).
  - The prophet now speaks for the spiritual remnant who recognize the hopelessness of the hour and turn to God. Although Israel will fall, God will not forsake her; although she will sit in darkness, God will be a light to guide her.
  - God will vindicate His people and sustain them through their shame. Her walls will be rebuilt and the decree of judgment will be removed. The prophet looks beyond the desolation of his day and the return from captivity to the Messianic age, when men of all races and nationalities will come and build (cf. 4:5-6; Isaiah 11:10-16; Zechariah 9:9-10).
  - The “marvelous things” were demonstrated in Christ and His work in the salvation of the new Israel. Laying their hands upon their mouth would signify that they were speechless in the presence of such power. There is simply none to compare to God in the forgiving of iniquity.