

## Books of The Bible A Survey of Micah

### Observations

- 1) In chapter 1:2 God gives His verdict, “all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is” and then in verse five He gives the reason for the judgment. It is because of the sins of Israel and Judah! The unified nation of Israel was to be the head of the nations through whom God would pour His blessing. However, due to their sins, judgment came not only on Israel but on the nations of the world. Had Israel been faithful to God the nations would have known blessing. The question that needs asking is, “Does the sinfulness of the people of God result in the loss of blessing to the nations?” If the saints do not proclaim the gospel as commanded to do so, if the saints sit in their gospel meetings instead of going out to the highways and byways, how much of the judgement of God falls on the individuals because believers failed to be what they ought to be?
- 2) The book is a series of warnings followed by the reason for the ensuing judgments. This is seen by the repetition of the words “for” used in forty verses and the word “therefore” used in 11 verses. The “judgments and assessments” are against the greatest nations of the known world, Egypt, Assyria and Babylon as they relate to Israel as the rod of God’s judgment on Israel. Ultimately there will come the infinitely greater kingdom, that of the Lord, when every rising political power, fully risen power, or Satanically empower and indoctrinated political movement will be either broke, passed away by the power and sovereignty of God.
- 3) Like other literary prophets, it is a necessity to know who the speaker is, to whom is he speaking and what is he speaking about. This is further complicated by the fact the words “he,” “him,” and “they” are not always used of the same persons, that is, “he” does not always refer to the Assyrian. Sometimes it refers to the Lord.
- 4) In the world of higher criticism, liberal scholars do not credit Micah as being the author of the book and go as far as saying only chapter 1:1-2:11 and chapter 3 are his. The sections of chapter 6:9-7:6 are by another individual and chapter 2:12-13; 4:6-9 and 7:20-20 are not prophetic but were written either during their exile or after it (much the same as said about Daniel). For myself, it is irrelevant what is said by others concerning whither Micah wrote it or someone else. God placed His sanction on it. It was the word of the LORD that came to Micah (ch. 1:1).
- 5) As with several of the minor prophets it is difficult at times to know who the speaker is, who is being spoken to, and who is being spoken about. For instance:
  - a) Is the “he” of ch. 5:3 the same person as the “he” of verse 4?
  - b) At times Micah is repeating the admonitions of the Lord (ch. 1:2-3:4) and then the Lord speaks in ch. 4:5). It is an intriguing study to seek to answer these questions.
- 6) Notable in this book are the two references to the children of Israel being brought out of Egypt (Mic. 6:4; 7:15).

### The Basic Message of Micah

The first thing in the study of any Biblical book is to determine what the goal of the book is and why was it written? An illustration: If the captain and first mate who are flying an aircraft have no set goal on how to get to their destination and no knowledge of the prime guidelines along the way, they will get hopelessly lost. The same is true with any Biblical book. What is its goal and what are the prime observations the writer makes to bring the readers to the goal for which he writes. What then is the goal God is seeking to teach the children of Judah and us in Micah?

The restoration of God’s people for the fulfilling of His promises to Abraham and the fathers of old (ch. 7:20). However, before those promises are fulfilled there must be the judgment for their sins. Whither it is in the past by the Assyrians or Babylonians, in the present or future, the message is the same. There must be a recognition of the sins committed whither it was idolatry, cruelty, or rejection of divine truth. There had to be a change of attitude (ch. 6:8) from insolence to humility and indifference to that which the Lord had done for them (ch. 6:4-5). Added to their own sins was the dreadful reality that their sins brought God’s judgment on the nations (ch. 1:2). Chapter

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1:3-4 speaks of a geographical upheaval which is a demonstration of God's power and the total inability of man to control or curtail it in any way. While God does not always cause the devastation due to man sins as He does in chapter 1:5, yet he does permit it by the natural forces he has imbedded in creation.

### Key Words

- a) Hear (9 times)
- b) O earth\ my people\ Jacob (15 times)

### Key Verse

"Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of His people, He retaineth not his anger forever, for he delighteth in mercy" (ch 7:18-19)

### Aspects of God

- 1) His Names
  - a) Apart from the distinguishing name of LORD or GOD which normally is Jehovah (ch. 1:1, 2), He is also called Lord which is "Adonai" (ch. 1:2) and "The Lord of the whole earth" (ch. 4:13).
- 2) His sovereignty and non-frustrating abilities are seen when He declares, "I will". Sometimes in mercy (ch 2:12; 4:7, 13) and at other times in judgment (ch. 5:10-15).
- 3) His foreknowledge in the prophecies he makes concerning Israel's downfall and the coming of Messiah (ch. 4:3; 5:2, 4) and the Millennial reign (ch. 4:1-2, 3, 6-8).
- 4) His knowledge of their open sins and evil discussions during the night seasons (ch. 2:1) followed by their evil activities (ch. 2:1-2) and their judgment (ch. 2:4).
- 5) His gracious debating with Israel (ch. 6:3-5). Compare Jeremiah chapter 2.
  - a) In the withholding of judgement over many years they had been warned before.

### The Man

Concerning the man, we know very little about him. He is to be distinguished from Micah, the son of Imlah, in the reign of Ahab (1 Kgs. 22:8). The original form of his name was "Miciahu" which means, "Who is like unto the Lord". It would appear that he lived his name for at the end of his prophecy he declares, "Who is a GOD like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage" (Mic. 7:18). Micah sees God as the God who hates falsehood, those who make merchandise of the people of God, and insincerity. He loves to pardon.

### The Times In Which He Prophesied

Staying mainly with the three kings of Judah during whose tenure they prophesied, we discover they were in one way sad years. Several observations are made during the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, among which are:

- a) They sought revival but it was superficial among the populace of Judah.
- b) The kings did some good things but did not wholly follow the ways of God in that they allowed the high places to continue (2 Kgs. 12:3; 14:4; 15:14, 35).
- c) Amaziah who reigned for fifty two years died a leper and was the father of Jotham (2 Kgs. 15:5, 7).
- d) Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians under Pul, king of Assyria (2 Kgs. 15:19), and later by Tiglath-pileser, a later king of Assyria (2 Kgs. 15:29).
- e) In particular, for Israel these were days of:
  - i) Treachery and rebellion against man (2 Kgs. 15:10, 14, 25) and God, doing evil in His sight (2 Kgs. 15:9, 18, 24, 28).
  - ii) The execution of divine judgment in accordance with a previously given prophecy (2 Kgs. 15:10-12).

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- iii) Viciousness (2 Kgs. 15:16)
- iv) Loss of the monarchy by going into captivity under the Assyrians (2 Kgs. 15:29)

There had been at least a 20 year period when evil king Ahaz did the most dreadful acts (2 Kgs. 16:10-18), making an unholy alliance with the king of Syria (2 Kgs. 16:5) against Judah. Ahaz moved the brazen altar and cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them (2 Kgs. 16:17).

- a) Israel and Judah had received warnings from God (2 Kgs. 17:13) but they would not hear (2 Kgs. 17:14). Those who would have been God's messengers were Hosea, Micah and Isaiah (Mic. 1:1; Hos. 1:1; Isa. 1:1).
- b) God had also spoken to them by the removal of Israel into Assyria because of their sins (2 Kgs. 15:29; 17:4, 5, 6, 23, therefore the leaders of Judah ought to have known that the same judgment would fall on them, but they refused to see it approaching.
- c) Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, did that which was right in the sight of the Lord (2 Kgs. 18:3-7). He encouraged the people to trust in God against the Assyrians under Sennacherib (2 Kgs. 18:29-30). Hezekiah spoke to Isaiah who greatly encouraged him prays to God (2 Kgs. 19:4-7). Having received the letter from Rabshakeh (2 Kgs. 19:14), his response is to pray to the Lord (2 Kgs. 18:15-20). The Assyrians were slaughtered by the angel of the Lord (2 Kgs. 19:35).

These were dark and darkening days. In the days of Isaiah, Micah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah there was systematic opposition to the prophets of God which resulted in two things:

- a) The closing in of the judgment of God on Judah
- b) The refusal to accept the warning of the judgment of God by false prophets. False prophecy was a very financial occupation and the people loved it, forbidding Micah to present the truth. The battle between the truth of God and idol worship had been an ongoing conflict for centuries. It was very soon after they came out of Egypt the Israelites made the golden calf. Years later the robe of Gideon was made an idol and despite constant warnings of God, the children of Israel persisted in it. There was now extreme oppression, violence and bribery among the influential, prophets building a lucrative profit, women and children extradited from their homes, covetousness, cheating and pride, living at the cost of blood shed. Now it had reached to every aspect of Judah and the judgment was impending.

### His Fellow Prophets

While Hosea, Isaiah and Micah all prophesied in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah (Mic. 1:1; Hosea 1:1; Isa. 1:1), yet to the extent that they knew each other we can say little. Isaiah had started to prophecy before Micah and Hosea for he also ministered during the days of Uzziah (Isa. 1:1) (also called Amaziah). Hosea gives a little more detail in mentioning that Jeroboam, the son of Joash, was king of Israel (Hos. 1:1).

### Structure

In reading the book and viewing it based on the promises of God, it is observed that there are three great promises from God despite the rebellious of His people. They are:

- i) "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. 2:13).
- ii) "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it" (Mic. 4:1-4).

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- iii) “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old” (Mic. 7:18-20).

In reading the book thematically:

- a) God’s righteous condemnation of His people and His judgment on others because of their sin (ch. 1:2-15)
- b) God’s proclamation to His people (ch. 1:16-3:12)
- c) God’s salvation for His people (ch. 4:1-5:15)
- d) God’s controversy with His people (ch. 6:1-7:17)
- e) God’s pardoning grace toward His people (ch. 7:18-20)

#### Suggested Structures

- 1) Structure No. 1, a very broad structure
  - a) Condemnation (chs. 1-3)
  - b) Reconciliation (chs. 4-6)
- 2) Structure No. 2, another broad structure
  - a) God proving their guiltiness and reason for the judgment (chs. 1-3)
  - b) God pacifying the trembling and anxious hearts (chs. 4-5)
  - c) God pleading with His erring people (ch. 6)
  - d) God’s pardon of grace (ch. 7)

Another has written, I do not know who:

- a) There are three sections each ending with judgement, chs. 2:13; 5:10-15; blessing (ch. 7:14-20)
  - i) Section 1: God’s judgment against Samaria, Judah and the world. Cycle No. 1 deals with the judgment and Restoration of Israel and Judah (ch. 1:2; 2:13)
    1. The predicted destruction (ch. 1:2-7)
    2. Lamentation over the destruction (ch. 1:8-16)
    3. Woe to oppressive land-grabbers (ch. 2:1-5)
    4. Condemnation of the wealthy wicked and their false prophets (ch. 2:6-11)
    5. Restoration of a Remnant (ch. 2:12-13)
  - ii) Section 2: God is the witness against the judges and prophets of His people, Cycle No. 2 which deals with the indictment of Judah's leaders, but future hope for God's People (chs. 3-5).
    1. Guilty civil leaders (ch. 3:1-4)
    2. False prophets of peace and Micah's response (ch. 3:5-8)
    3. Corrupt leaders and Zion's fall (ch. 3:9-12)
      - (a) Future hope for God's people (chs. 4-5)
      - (b) The coming kingdom (ch. 4:1-5)
      - (c) Restoration of a remnant and Zion (ch. 4:6-8)
      - (d) From distress to deliverance (ch. 4:9-10)
      - (e) From siege to victory (ch. 4:11-13)
      - (f) From helpless ruler to ideal king (ch. 5:1-4)
      - (g) The ideal king delivers his people (ch. 5:5-6)
      - (h) The remnant among the nations (ch. 5:7-9)
      - (i) Obliteration of military might and pagan worship (ch. 5:10-15)

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- iii) Section 3: God's ultimate deliverance, Cycle No. 3, God's Charges against His people and the Ultimate Triumph of His Kingdom (chs. 6-7)
1. A divine covenant lawsuit (ch. 6:1-8)
  2. Further charges and the sentence (ch. 6:9-16)
  3. A lament over a decadent society (ch. 7:1-7)
  4. The Ultimate Triumph of God's Kingdom (ch. 7:8-20)
  5. An expression of trust (ch. 7:8-10)
  6. A promise of restoration (ch. 7:11-13)
  7. A prayer, the Lord's answer, and the response (ch. 7:14-17)
  8. A hymn of praise to God (ch. 7:18-20)

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**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.  
John 16:13**

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