

Outlines for Country Preachers by a Country Preacher
Sermon Outlines by Milburn Cockrell

THE BOOK OF MICAH

TITLE:

Micah is an abbreviated form of Micaiah. His name signifies “Who is like Jehovah?” The prophet seems to make a play on his name in 7:18. The Septuagint renders Michaias and the Vulgate Micah-aeas.

AUTHOR:

Micah was a native of Moresheth (1:14), a Judean town near Gath, about 20 miles west of Jerusalem. His father’s name is not given, and we may conclude that his family was of humble origin. He prophesied against his home town (1:14), which probably did not help his popularity with the home folks.

Micah must not be confused with Micaiah (I Kings 22:8,19-23). The writer of our book, along with Hosea and Amos, was a contemporary of Isaiah. While Isaiah was a court and city prophet, Micah was a country preacher. Some call Micah a “sister-book” to Isaiah, and some others say it is Isaiah in shorthand (Mic. 4:1-3 with Isa.2:2-4).

It seems that he spoke mostly to the poor people and always on their behalf. He ministered mainly in Samaria and the border of Judah. His message was to both Israel and Judah, addressed primarily to their two respective capitals, Samaria (1:1,5-7) and Jerusalem (1:9-16). He seems to major on three subjects: sin, judgment, and restoration. He died in peace in the days of good King Hezekiah (Jer. 26:16,19).

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING:

Micah dates his prophecy according to the kings of the southern kingdom (1:1). This would be from 758 B.C. to 699 B.C. This makes his ministry last about 50 years. The background of much of his prophecy is the bad reign of wicked King Ahaz of Judah. The brighter aspects may reflect the rule of good King Hezekiah. The exact location from which this prophecy originated is not known. Some say from Jerusalem.

STYLE:

Micah wrote in simple yet eloquent language. He is outspoken and fearless in denouncing iniquity (1:5; 2:1-2). He is logical in his development but often abrupt in transition from one subject to another. This is largely hidden in our AV by such logical terms as “therefore” (1:6), “then” (3:7), “but” (4:1), etc. He makes considerable use of metaphors (1:6; 3:2-3,6; 4:6-8,13; 6:10-11) and is fond of rhetorical interrogations (1:5; 2:7; 4:9). He shows how God requires justice and mercy in His people. He does not have the poetic beauty of Isaiah. A deep earnestness pervades the book, revealing an intensely honorable and patriotic soul.

PURPOSE:

To call the people’s attention to their sins and to warn of God’s judgment. But he shows that despite men’s failures God’s purpose will be fulfilled in the restoration of the nation: First, after the Babylonian Captivity; second, at the millennium.

DIVISION:

Some divide it into three parts according to literary form into three parts, all beginning with “Hear ye”: (1) Chs. 1-2; (2) Chs. 3-5; (3) Chs. 6-7. Others would divide it by subjects: (1) imminent judgment declared, 1-3; (2) Ultimate blessing promised, 4-5; (3) Present repentance pleaded, 6-7.

OUTSTANDING VERSE:

Bethlehem as the place of the Messiah’s birth (5:2). Isaiah foretold His virgin birth (Isa. 7:14). When the wise men enquired of Herod where the King of the Jews should be born, the scribes answered with Micah 5:2 (Matt. 2:5).

OTHER IMPORTANT VERSES:

The eternity of the person of Christ (5:2) and His greatness (5:4-5) What God requires of man (6:8). Divine chastisement (6:9). Rebellion in the home (7:6). The restoration of the nation (4:7; 7:19-20).

Chapter One

I. THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE (1:1-2).

1. "The word of the LORD that came to."
 - (1) His message is Divine and not from the will of man (II Pet. 1:21).
 - (2) His are not the words of a dying man but the word of the living God.
 - (3) This applies to the whole contents of the book (Hos. 1:1; Zeph. 1:1).
2. "Micah the Morasthite."
 - (1) "Micah's name means "Who is like Jehovah?" He is called Morasthite or "a man from Mareshah."
 - (2) Morasthite is probably Mareshah (v. 15) a city in the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:44).
 - (3) Mareshah was a town about 20 miles southeast of Jerusalem. Eusebius and Jerome place the site not far east of Eleutheropolis.
 - (4) Micah was a younger contemporary of Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos (Micah 1:1 with Isa. 1:1). He labored in the latter half of the 8th century B. C.
3. "In the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah."
 - (1) He mentioned the kings of Judah, as the only kings appointed by God.
 - (2) Ahaz was one of the worst kings and Hezekiah one of the best.
4. "Which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem."
 - (1) Samaria is the capital of the Northern Kingdom and Jerusalem of the Southern Kingdom.
 - (2) Samaria comes first as being ripe for punishment and the first to feel the judgment.
 - (3) The two capitals stand for the people themselves.
5. "Hear, all ye people" (v. 2) or literally "hear, ye peoples, all of them." All nations are summoned to come and witness the judgment and to profit by the warning (I Kings 22:28).
6. "O earth, and all that therein is." Note Moses (Deut. 32:1), Isaiah (Isa. 1:2), and Jeremiah (Jer. 6:19) did this.
7. What happens to Israel concerns the nations of earth. God warns the future through the present generation. The whole creation stands in court to reprove Israel and Judah and testify to the justice of God's dealings. The earth would shake under these judgments.
8. "And let the Lord GOD be a witness against you."
 - (1) They are summons to let Adonai Jehovah be a witness against them. They are to justify God and condemn themselves.
 - (2) All nations are to be, not judges, but witnesses of God's judgment (Deut. 29:24,25). A Jew is a witness of God's judgment against sin.

9. "The Lord from his holy temple."

(1) Some say Jerusalem where God revealed Himself.

(2) Better Heaven of which the temple in Jerusalem is an image (I Kings 8:30; Ps. 11:4; Hab. 2:20).

II. JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL FOR HER SINS (1:3-7).

1. The Lord's coming in judgment (v. 3).

(1) The prophet pictures the Lord coming forth from Heaven treading upon the mountains of the earth.

(2) "Out of his place" is a striking expression. God's place ordinarily is in Heaven. For judgment He comes out of His place. His nature is not to judge but to bless. Judgment is His strange work. He turns the mercy seat into a judgment seat.

(3) Ordinarily God seems to hide Himself (Isa. 45:15; Ps. 44:24). He becomes visible in judgment (Gen. 11:5; 18:21-22; Jude 14-15).

(4) "High places of the earth"—the places of false worship (Deut. 12:2; I Kings 11:7).

2. Nature shall tremble at God's presence (v. 4).

(1) The imagery is taken from the action of earthquakes and volcanoes (Judg. 5:4; Ps. 18:7-10; 68:8; Isa. 64:1-2; Hab. 3:5).

(2) This may be a reference to a terrible storm and earthquake, maybe volcanic eruption.

(3) The hills melt like wax before the fire, and the mountains pour down like floods into the valleys. Samaria and Jerusalem were built on high mountains.

(4) High places were set up for the worship of idols and valleys were fruitful places.

(5) The highest—kings, priests, judges—and the lowest shall feel His judgments.

(6) "Wax before the fire." Mountains will melt at the presence of the Lord and kingdoms cannot stand His wrath (Ps. 68:2; 97:5).

(7) "As the waters that are poured down a steep place." God's judgment is swift and it cannot be stopped (Prov. 23:32).

3. The cause of this judgment (v. 5).

(1) This judgment was coming from a righteous God who judges sin (Isa. 10:5-6).

(2) "All this"—the manifestation of God's wrath described in verses 3 and 4. Sin had laid all waste. Sin is the cause of all ruin, material or moral.

(3) External privileges and professions will not secure a sinful people from the judgment of God.

(4) "The house of Israel"—the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom.

(5) Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom, is the source of the evil in the land of Samaria. It was built by Omri (I King 16:23-26) whose son was Ahab (I Kings 16:30).

- (6) “The high places of Judah”—idolatrous shrines of worship were erected on high places because of the belief that gods dwelt in the heights (Jer. 32:35).
 - (7) The capital of Israel and Judah had become the headquarters of calf worship. (II Chron. 28:22-25). Those must expect to be examples of God’s judgment who have been examples of wickedness.
4. The destruction of Samaria (v. 6).
 - (1) The city of Samaria was set upon a hill (I Kings 16:24) amid a green valley. Isaiah describes it as a wreath on the head of a drunkard (Isa. 28:1-4).
 - (2) “An heap of the field”—like a heap of stones gathered out of a cultivated field (Isa. 10:2). Its slopes would lose their urbane character and be cultivated as vine terraces.
 - (3) “I will pour down stones thereof into the valley.” The stones of its gorgeous palaces and noble temples would be rolled down the hill. This may be seen even today. It literally happened as the prophet said.
 - (4) “Discover the foundations thereof”—there would be no trace of the city left. Whatever is built without God—nation or church—and cemented by sin will be hurled down by God’s judgment.
 5. God’s judgment on idols (v. 7).
 - (1) Idols were to be beaten into pieces and burned. The invading soldiers would carry them off and recycle them into their own idolatrous worship.
 - (2) “The hires thereof”—wages of prostitution. Idolatry is viewed as spiritual fornication (Hos. 4:12). Offerings to idols are harlot-gifts (Isa. 23:17; Ezek. 16:31).
 - (3) Baal was the fertility god who gave birth to children, the abundance of crops, and increase in the flocks. They believed that sexual acts with prostitutes (male and female) at Baal’s altar would induce him to bestow blessings.
 - (4) The Israelites now worshipped the God of Heaven as Baal!

III. MICAH MOURNS OVER THE INCURABLE WOUNDS OF DIVINE JUDGMENT (1:8-9).

1. “I will wail” literally “to beat” the breast. He would beat his breast and cry, using all acts and sounds of grief (v. 8).
2. “Stripped and naked”—half-naked like one plundered and stripped by an enemy (v. 8; Isa. 20:2-3).
3. “Dragons” are “jackals” (Job 30:29; Mal. 1:3). He would sound like the long, plaintive howl of the jackal in the night (v. 8).
4. “Owls”—maybe a night owl, but most likely an ostrich bereaved of her young (v.8).
5. He would lament the sufferings of saints and the punishment of sinners (Isa. 22: 4; Jer. 9:1; Rom. 9:1-3; Phil. 3:18). Ministers must be affected with the message they deliver to others.
6. The wounds inflicted on Samaria were incurable (v. 9). No hand can cure the wounds that God inflicts.
7. The judgment would pass on to Judah and Jerusalem (v. 9). Micah saw no remedy in the present state of things (Jer. 15:18).

8. "He is come" (v. 9)—the enemy who will inflict these wounds. Sennacherib (II Kings 18:13) and the final ruin of the nation as well is meant.

IV. THE EXTENT OF JUDAH'S JUDGMENT (1:10-16).

1. This section is difficult because he makes a word-play of the town names listed. Their names were treated as omens of coming fate.
2. Gath, Acco, and Aphrah (v. 10).
 - (1) "Declare ye it not at Gath"—a city of the Philistines near Micah (II Sam. 1:20). "Gath" means Tell-town or "In Tell-town tell it not."
 - (2) "Weep ye not at all"—weep in silence or hide your tears. Don't let the enemy know your grief. Some have it read: "In Acco (Weep-town) weep not" to foreigners (Judg. 1:31).
 - (3) Aphrah or Beth-le-Aphrah—house of dust." Also called Ophrah in the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. 18:23). Here called Aphrah to make it better agree with dust. "In Dust-town roll thyself in the dust as a sign of mourning" (II Sam. 13:19; Jer.6:26). From the dust we sprang, to the dust we must return, and afflictions are designed to remind us of this.
3. The towns of Saphir, Zaanan, and Beth-ezel of Judah (v. 11).
 - (1) Saphir with its beauty would be clothed in rags.
 - A. In verse 10 he said don't tell our enemies, the Philistines in Gath.
 - B. "Saphir" means "Fair-town." Its site is unknown. Its inhabitants were to go into captivity in the midst of shame and nakedness. Their beautiful clothes would be removed by the enemy.
 - C. "Fair-town" would become naked and shame town.
 - (2) Zaanan with all its flocks and population would not be able to sympathize with its nearest neighbor.
 - A. "Zaanan" means "Flock-town" or "March-town." The word literally means "to come out."
 - B. The citizens of March-town could not march forth because they would be besieged (Josh. 6:1).
 - (3) Beth-ezel could not permit them to linger in their flight, being unable to provide them refuge.
 - A. "Beth-ezel" means "Neighbor-town."
 - B. The meaning is Neighbor-town will be no neighbor to you. Some think this town was destroyed completely.
4. Maroth would expect good and receive evil (v. 12).
 - (1) "Maroth" means "Bitter-town." Bitter-town will look in vain for tidings of good. They will be in great bitterness of soul.
 - (2) Even Jerusalem will be threatened and destroyed.
 - (3) "Evil came down from the LORD" (Amos 3:6). Micah speaks of the evil of suffering here.

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- (4) Calamities come from God. Storms at sea (Ps. 48:7), barrenness of soil (Ps. 107:34), loss of loved ones (Ps. 88:18), and war (Isa. 54:16) come from God.
 - (5) Let not the instruments lead us to overlook the hand of God. They could have no power over us unless it was given them from above.
 - (6) The evils God sends are the effects of sin; the fruits to take away sin.
5. Lachish would be strong only to flee (v. 13).
- (1) It was a fortress city upon which Judah depended for defense on the west (II Chron. 11:9).
 - (2) It was 30 miles southeast of Jerusalem and 6 miles southwest of Micah's hometown.
 - (3) "Lachish" means "Horse-town." Chariots would be bound to swift horses for retreat instead of battle. They would be horsing around in Horse-town.
 - (4) "The beginning of sin." Lachish was the first to introduce image worship into the Southern Kingdom from the Northern Kingdom (II Kings 23:11).
 - (5) Others say Lachish relied on horses instead of the Lord (Deut. 17:16; Ps. 20:7; 33:17; Prov. 21:31).
6. Presents cannot purchase aid against the invaders (v.14).
- (1) Moresheth-gath was once a part of Gath. This is Micah's hometown. "Moresheth" means "parting gift." Judah would give gifts because they were going away into captivity.
 - (2) Wicked men employ any means rather than seek God in trouble.
 - (3) "Gath" some say means "possession." "Thou shall give up possessions to the city of possession."
 - (4) "Achzib" means "False-spring." It would become Achzib (a deceitful or dried up brook—Jer. 15:18). "Is rael" must mean Judah here.
7. Even the distant cities of Mareshah and Adullam would not escape God's judgment (v. 15).
- (1) Mareshah and Adullam were frontier towns for Judah and were a part of Rehoboam's defense system (II Chron. 11:5-10).
 - (2) "Mareshah" means "Heir-town." The conqueror would take possession of it like it was his inheritance. The heir would come to Heir-town.
 - (3) "Adullam" means "the wild beasts' cave." It was David's asylum (I Sam. 22:1-2). People of every rank would be forced to take refuge there as David did.
 - (4) Great distances can never exempt from God's judgment. He will find out and chastise the guilty wherever they are.
8. Universal mourning results from the ruin of the towns (v. 16).
- (1) Shaving the head was a mourning custom (Isa. 3:24; 15:2; Jer. 7:29; 16:6) although forbidden (Deut. 14:1; Lev. 19:27).
 - (2) Their baldness is compared to the bald eagle or vulture whose neck and head are without feathers.

(3) “Delicate children” or children of delights. Probably the people in the towns just mentioned by the prophet.

Chapter Two

I. THE RECORD OF ISRAEL'S GLARING SINS (2:1-2).

1. The prophet pronounces a woe upon the sinners in his land (v. 1).
 - (1) Having announced the awesome judgment upon Israel and Judah, Micah proceeds to call attention to the sins of Judah.
 - A. Iniquity is first conceived, then purposed or planned.
 - B. Actions are traced to principles. The thought is the fountain of the deed (Prov. 14:22; Matt. 9:3-4).
 - C. It is bad enough to be led into wickedness by others, but to devise it is worse—"inventors of evil things" (Rom. 1:30).
 - (2) They devised evil plans—"that devise iniquity."
 - A. Iniquity is first conceived, then purposed or planned.
 - B. Actions are traced to principles. The thought is the fountain of the deed (Prov. 14:22; Matt. 9:3-4).
 - C. It is bad enough to be led into wickedness by others, but to devise it is worse—"inventors of evil things" (Rom. 1:30).
 - (3) They made them evil plans at night—"Work evil upon their beds" (Ps. 36:4).
 - A. They should have been asleep. Or, at least remembering God and His blessings of the day (Job 4:13; Ps. 4:4; 77:6).
 - B. To "work" means to mature the plan (Ps. 58:2). They prepared the means of carrying out their conception.
 - C. They spent sleepless hours scheming of evil to be done in the daytime.
 - (4) Their plans were executed in the day—"when the morning is light, they practise it."
 - A. There is no leisure between deliberation and practice.
 - B. They do evil openly—in the light—and deliberately—in full light. They sin against knowledge and conscience.
 - C. They should have blessed God for His mercies in the night and went about lawful business during the day.
 - (5) Might, not right, regulated their conduct—"because it is in the power of their hand."
 - A. They knew no higher power than themselves.
 - B. They have no principle of goodness in them, nor fear of God to restrain them (Neh. 5:15; Gen. 31:29; Prov. 3:27).
 - C. Lust for power increases in strength until it becomes a law to itself.
 - D. Then all restraint is cast off (Gen. 11:6). No evil is too bad to attain the desired goal.
 - E. Conception, earnest preparation, and execution by force (Jas. 1:14-15; Gen. 3:6; Josh. 7:21). Note the connection between wicked thoughts and wicked deeds (Isa. 55:7).
 - F. Resist the first attack of sin lest you be overtaken by it.

2. They were evil land-grabbers (v. 2).

- (1) These men were violating God's laws and destroying the well being of the community. When the law of God is scorned, the rights of man will fare no better.
- (2) Covetousness was the root of their sins—"And they covet fields" (Ex. 20:17; Isa. 5:8; Col. 3:5; I Tim. 6:9-10).
- (3) Their covetousness led to violence—"take by violence; and houses, and take them away."
 - A. This was not open violence as in war.
 - B. It was methods of exploitation within the limits of the law—high interest rates, perjury of witnesses, and bribery of judges (I Kings 21:1-27; Amos 4:1).
 - C. No amount of legal procedure could make it right to remove a man from his ancestral heritage.
- (4) Their conduct was inhuman—"They oppress a man and his house." Human life was not held sacred.
- (5) Woe in the Hebrew means all kinds of pain, sorrow, and misery.

II. RETRIBUTIVE PUNISHMENT (2:3-5).

1. They devise evil; God devised a penalty (v. 3).

- (1) God plans judgment against wicked men. They unjustly devised evil against their brethren, and God justly devised evil against them.
- (2) Punishment for sin cannot be avoided. They took the lands of others, and God will allow their enemies to take away their lands ill gotten. They could not shake off the evil they did as they did the commandments of God.
- (3) Men reaped what they sowed. Their punishment would be humiliating. Money and influence could not save these land barons.
- (4) They would not endure the yoke of God's commandments (Ps. 2:3). Now they must suffer under the yoke of His judgment.
- (5) Their pride would be humbled—"neither shall ye go haughtily." God can humble the proudest of men and subdue the self-willed sinner.

2. Judah's land would be seized by the invaders (v. 4).

- (1) They would become a byword in their sufferings. "Parable" means "a taunting song" by their enemies (Hab. 2:6). Their enemies would mock at their calamities.
- (2) Literally lament with a lamentation of lamentations—mournfully mourn a song.
- (3) "We be utterly spoiled." It is all over! An exclamation of despair. We are miserably miserable!
- (4) God has given our lands to our enemies—"he hath changed the portion of my people."

3. Judah would have no descendants present in the land to claim their inheritance (v. 5).

- (1) There is a reference to the original distribution of the land by lot in Joshua's time (Josh. 14:2).

(2) They had forfeited the right to be called “the congregation of the LORD.”

III. OPPOSITION TO GOD’S PROPHETS (2:6-10).

1. The silencing of true prophets (v. 6).

- (1) They had lost the power to distinguish truth from error. This always happens when people do not walk in revealed truth.
- (2) The people did not want to hear a rebuke for their sins (Isa. 30:10; Amos 2:12; 3:10).
- (3) The word for “prophesy” means, “to let drop, or drip,” meaning the words that drip from the lips of the prophet (Amos 7:16). Micah uses their own words sarcastically, “Do not be always rebuking.”
- (4) The people wanted Micah to preach to please as the false prophets did. They wanted him to withhold the truth (Acts 4:18; 5:28,40).
- (5) God’s servants must obey their commission despite persecution and opposition: “They shall indeed prophesy” (See Jer. 26:10-15).
- (6) One version renders the last part of the verse: “But if they do not speak out concerning these things, reproaches will not be turned back.”
- (7) If the prophet does not preach, judgment will fall. They could be deprived of a faithful ministry.

2. God’s Spirit cannot be restrained (v. 7).

- (1) “Is the Spirit of the LORD straitened?” Can you overcome God by opposing His servants? Can you keep the Spirit from uttering the truth? Can you make the spirit of God your prisoner? Can you frustrate the Divine counsel? He is the “free Spirit” (Ps. 51:12).
- (2) “Are these his doings?”
 - A. Are these the doings of Jacob your father? If you were his children, you would tread in his steps (John 8:39-40).
 - B. Are these judgments from God? Does He delight in judgment? Are the causes of them in Him? Are they not in you (Lam. 3:33; Ezek. 33:11; Micah 7:18)?
- (3) “Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?”
 - A. The Bible is a real profit and blessing to a godly soul (Prov. 4:26-27).
 - B. His Word reveals His will and design.
 - C. It is wicked men who hate the Word (Prov. 15:10). The Bible is designed to do good (Ps. 119:68).

3. Evildoers are the enemies of God and man (v. 8).

- (1) “Even of late” literally “yesterday,” implying an action recent and repeated. Their sins were a daily occurrence.
- (2) “Risen up as an enemy” (Micah 5:4; 7:14; I Kings 11:14). The Israelites treat their brethren as enemies, robbing and plundering them. They were acting more like Ishmaelites than Israelites.

- (3) "The robe"—the wide cloak, the mantle sufficient to wrap the whole person, often of costly material.
- (4) "Garment"—the principle inner garment or tunic. See Ex. 22:26.
- (5) "As men averse from war." Probably the fugitives from the Northern Kingdom who sought to escape the evils of war and who left their wives and children in the hand of Judaeans. They treated refugees harshly.
- (6) Some say they robbed men returning from war—had no respect for those who had been away fighting for the safety of all—robbed the citizen soldier!

4. These evildoers robbed widows and orphans (v. 9).

- (1) "Women" means widows who should have been protected and cared for (Isa. 10:2).
- (2) They showed no regard for the weaker sex (Matt. 23:14). Sex did not save the women nor age the children. Human rights and happiness were disregarded.
- (3) "Their pleasant houses"—where she had lived with her husband and children with delight.
- (4) "From their children have ye taken away my glory for ever." Israelite children were free born. These they had sold into slavery. Instead of a holy home and parental care, the children grew up in want and neglect, away from all the ordinances of God and in a foreign land.
- (5) Gill believes the men committed adultery with other men's wives who were divorced and the children sent away as they were believed to be illegitimate. This might have been the case.
- (6) God takes notice of how we treat widows (Ex. 22:22; Deut. 27:19; 10:18).

5. They would be forcibly dispossessed, as they had done to others God would do to them (v. 10).

- (1) "Arise ye and depart." They shall be banished from their land, even as they have torn others from their homes. There is no resting place in sin.
- (2) Canaan had been given to them as a resting place (Deut. 12:9-10; Josh. 1:13; Ps. 95:11). They must be driven out as the Canaanites were.
- (3) "It is polluted"—the land is because of their evil deeds (Lev. 18:25,28; 26:32-39; Num. 35:33; Jer. 2:7).
- (4) The dispersion of Israel was consequently the fulfillment of both the Mosaic Law and the preaching of the prophets.

IV. THEIR RECOURSE TO FALSE PROPHETS (2:11).

1. "If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie."
 - (1) False prophets have a lying spirit (1 Kings 22:22; Ezek. 13:2-3,17; 1 John 4:1-3,6).
 - (2) They misrepresented God and His Word, the gospel and its claims.
 - (3) Those who love not the truth shall be sent strong delusion (II Thess. 2: 10-12).
2. "I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink"—plenty of wine and whiskey as it would be said in our day.

- (1) They promised material prosperity and sensual pleasure.
- (2) They preached not gloom and doom but plenty of material things—just what the people wanted to hear (Gal. 1:10).
- (3) They disregarded good morals and spiritual conditions necessary for prosperity and safety.
- (4) The people wanted freedom from reproof and a license to sin (Jer. 5:31; Hos. 9:7). Their prophets had no concern for the truth.
- (5) The false prophets were miserable charlatans and frauds.
- (6) The primary reason for the rise of the order of false prophets was because of the unpopular character of the message of the true prophets.

V. THE REGATHERING OF THE ISRAEL AND THE RETURN OF THE MESSIAH (2:12-13).

1. A remnant to be re-gathered like a shepherd who would gather his flock (v. 12; Micah 4:6-7).
 - (1) “I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of these.”
 - A. This gathering is sure—“I will surely assemble.” Now they are scattered to many lands.
 - B. “All of these”—can mean no more than the remnant left alive after the Great Tribulation (Rom. 11:5,7,25-28; Dan. 12:1).
 - C. The captivity threatened will come, but they shall be delivered.
 - (2) This is both Jacob and Israel, the ten tribes and Judah, who will be re-gathered (Deut. 30:1-10; Ezek. 37; Isa. 11:11-13; Hos. 1:11).
 - (3) “I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah”—a district celebrated for its flocks and pastures (II Kings 3:4; Isa. 34:6).
 - A. Some apply this to the gathering of Jews and Gentiles in the New Testament church (John 10:16; 11:52; Eph. 3:5-6), but not all saved people in this age are in churches.
 - B. Some take the Hebrew word translated “Bozrah” to mean “fold” or “pen.” The parallelism favors this view (Ezek. 34:11-31; Jer. 23:3).
 - (4) “They shall make a great noise by reason of the multitude of men” (Ezek. 36:37). Like sheep bleating in a fold. This speaks of a restored people celebrating their return and regeneration.
2. The Breaker goes before them (v. 13).
 - (1) “One that breaketh” is a liberator, a leader who overcomes all obstacles that oppose Israel’s return.
 - (2) The Breaker is a title of the Messiah (Ps. 2:9; Dan. 2:40; Rev. 12:5). In the sheepfold there was a leading ram that broke down every barrier.
 - (3) There may be an allusion to Cyrus the Great who captured Babylon and allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem (Isa. 44:28-45:4; Ezra 1:1-6).

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- (4) The final fulfillment is at the return of the Messiah to earth.
- (5) “They have broken up...passed through the gate...gone out by it”—a removal like the exodus from Egypt.
- (6) “Their king shall pass before them, and the LORD on the head of them” (Isa. 33:22; Ps. 89:18; Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:1-11). The Messiah is often seen as the King of Israel.
- (7) He went before them when they went out of Egypt (Ex. 13:21; Deut.1:30,33). It will be so again (Isa. 52:12; Rev. 17:14; 19:14).
- (8) No one can hinder His work of restoration, for He is the Breaker.
- (9) Israel will not live under Gentile rule in that day, but under the rule of the Messiah, her Shepherd-King.

Chapter Three

I. THE MORAL ROTTENESS OF THE JUDICIAL LEADERS (3:1-4).

1. The judges were responsible before the Lord to know justice (v. 1).
 - (1) "Heads of Jacob" is synonymous with "princes of the house of Israel."
 - (2) Judges in Israel started in the days of Moses (Ex. 18:25). In towns, the ruling elders of the families presided over the court at the city gate (Deut. 16:18-20).
 - (3) Micah probably refers to the Jerusalem judges appointed by the King (II Chron. 19:4-11).
 - (4) The judges of all people should have known what is just and fair (Deut. 1:17). They sat in judgment on others and were not ignorant (Jer. 5:4).
 - (5) They had abused their authority and dishonored their position. The prophet reproved them for this.
2. These judges loved evil and hated good (v. 2-3).
 - (1) This was the opposite of what God expected (Ps. 34:16; Isa. 1:16-17; Amos 5:15).
 - (2) They were a power of evil, aiding and abetting criminals against society (John 3:20; Rom. 1:32).
 - (3) They hated the good and those that do good. Evil was their principle and practice.
 - (4) The words about skinning their victims, stripping their flesh, chopping their bones, etc. may be a reference to cannibalism. This is a bit unlikely.
 - (5) It may only mean the judicial leaders reduced the poor to absolute destitution, starvation, and death.
 - (6) Others say the helpless citizens were crushed by evil verdicts handed down by these evil judges.
 - (7) Some say the Judeans were skinned of property to increase the coffers of those who should have been their protectors (Ezek. 34:2-4).
3. Punishment is proportioned to their guilt (v. 4).
 - (1) Those who show no mercy shall have judgment without mercy (Jas. 2:12-13; Judg.1:5-7).
 - (2) This is a just retribution to those who refused to listen to the cry of the poor (Ps. 18:41; Prov. 1:28; 21:13; Jer. 11:11).
 - (3) God would hide His face from them (Ps. 27:9). This is the essence of the punishment of Hell.
 - (4) Men cannot fare well if they do ill. A just God rules over all things, which they wickedly forgot.

II. FALSE PROPHETS ARE CONDEMNED (3:5-7).

1. They are deceptive in their teaching and mercenary in their purpose (v. 5).
 - (1) "That make my people err." An unfaithful ministry carries the people from God and leaves them to perish in sin (Jer. 23:16).

- (2) “Bite...and cry, Peace.” The prophets were bread and butter preachers whose preaching was influenced by their diet. If you gave them food, they would preach you a sermon on peace and plenty.
 - (3) Those who did not pay them well (I Sam. 9:8; I Kings 14:3) got a sermon about a coming war—judgment and public disgrace.
 - (4) For a price these greedy parasites would preach on peace and plenty. Rents and tithes, preferment and honor, governed their lives (Rom. 16:17-18).
 - (5) A true prophet goes forth depending on Him who sent him. He is free to preach God’s Word without fear or favor to any.
2. As they hid the light from others, they shall go into the night at last (v. 6).
 - (1) Their prophetic insight into the future would fade into the darkness of night (Isa. 8:20).
 - (2) When teachers are dark, how can light be expected? Blind leaders of the blind.
 - (3) The sun will go down over the false prophets. The sun of their prosperity will set and darkness will come.
 3. They shall be ashamed because their prophecy does not come to pass (v. 7).
 - (1) They cover the lower part of their face to express shame (Lev. 13:45; Ezek. 24:17).
 - (2) God will give them no message. They have lied in the past.
 - (3) Those who deceive others are preparing shame and confusion for themselves.

III. THE TRUE MINISTER (3:8).

1. It is a ministry of power—“I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD.”
 - (1) The power of the Spirit is needed in service (Luke 1:17; 24:47; Acts 1:8; 6:5,8).
 - (2) False prophets prophesied of their own spirits (Ezek. 13:3). Micah spoke by the leading of the Holy Spirit. His words were God’s words.
 - (3) The power of the Spirit controlled his heart and life. Power must be in the soul before it can be expressed in doctrine.
 - (4) Micah’s inspiration came from the Lord and not from the prospects of any material gain from his listeners.
2. It is a ministry of light—“and of judgment.”
 - (1) “Justice” is a true sense of right or moral light. He discouraged wrong as well as encouraged justice.
 - (2) He spoke from a sense of justice, a regard to truth, and not to please men.
 - (3) He had righteous indignation against sin, an ardent love for souls, and a zeal for the glory of God.
 - (4) Under such a ministry sinners will be converted, inquirers enlightened, and saints edified.
3. It is a ministry of courage—“and of might.”

- (II)
- (1) He was given might by the Spirit. He preached with a holy boldness. He stood against the entire nation (Tim. 1:7).
 - (2) He had the moral courage to set forth in an impartial manner God's coming judgment upon the nation.
 - (3) Those who act honestly act boldly (Eph. 6:10). Those who know they have a commission from God are not afraid of opposition from men.
 - (4) Let all who speak for God in any age measure themselves by their God-given standard. God will be pleased with nothing less than this.

IV. THE PRINCES, PRIESTS, AND PROPHETS CONDEMNED (3:9-12).

1. The civil rulers perverted judgment for selfish reasons (v. 9).
 - (1) They should have been models and guardians of justice, but they despised it. They violated all laws, both human and Divine (Isa. 59:8).
 - (2) They cleared the guilty and condemned the innocent.
 - (3) Not only crushed individuals, but destroyed the very foundation of justice.
 - (4) They neither governed themselves by right, nor gave right to others.
2. With bloody gain they built up the city of Jerusalem (v. 10).
 - (1) This was urban renewal with a vengeance. They killed those who opposed them.
 - (2) Jerusalem was renovated with money collected through violence (I Kings 21; Jer. 22:13; Ezek. 22:27; Hab. 2:12) and other evil maneuvers.
3. Both church and state operated on a monetary basis (v. 11).
 - (1) "The heads thereof judge for reward." The most righteous cause would be carried on only if a large fee was paid under the table (Isa. 1:23; Ezek. 22:12). The law condemned this (Ex. 23:8; Deut. 16:19).
 - (2) "Priests...teach for hire." They loved the wages of unrighteousness, but this was forbidden (Lev. 10:11; Jer. 6:13; Deut. 17:8-10; 21:5).
 - (3) "Prophets...divine for money"—money preachers. Their tongues were mercenary (v. 5; Ezek. 22:28; Zeph. 3:3-4).
 - (4) They boasted in carnal confidence: "Is not the Lord among us?"
 - A. Have we not the tokens of His presence—His temple, His ark, and the lively oracles?
 - B. They felt no disaster would come upon them. Sin feeds men with delusion and rocks to sleep in fatal security.
 - C. Perversion of truth will drive the Lord from us.
4. They were doomed to destruction in their confidence (v. 12; Jer. 7:4,8-11).

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- (1) Zion was the name of the original city that was captured by David after he became king (II Sam. 5:7). Later it became a synonym for Jerusalem as seen here.
- (2) “Zion for your sake”—for your sins against God and man. Every sanctuary desecrated by hypocrisy will be demolished by the wrath of God.
- (3) “Be ploughed as a field” (Lam. 5:18).
- (4) “Jerusalem shall become heaps.” Samaria’s ruin would be theirs (1:5-6). This literally happened (Neh. 2:17; 4:2; Jer. 9:11).
- (5) The mound of the temple would become a thicket of overgrowth. I Macc. 4: 38 speaks of shrubs growing in the courts as in a forest.
- (6) God’s continual presence and blessing depended upon righteous and faithful conduct. There must be consistency between creed and conduct.
- (7) Micah’s prophecy had a great impact upon Hezekiah and brought reforms (II Kings 18:5-7; II Chron. 31:20-21; Jer. 26:18-19).
- (8) A quote from Micah’s words saved the life of Jeremiah in the reign of Jehoiakim (Jer. 26:1-24).

Chapter Four

I. THE TIME OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM (4:1).

1. "But in the last days it shall come to pass."
 - (1) The Hebrew can read, "at the end of days," or "in the days to come," or "in the sequel of days."
 - (2) The "last days" denotes the Messianic era. It may refer to Christ's first advent (Heb. 1:2; Acts 2:17) or His second advent (II Tim. 3:1; Jas. 5:3; II Pet. 3:3).
 - (3) Micah speaks of an event in the last days of the last days—the kingdom age when Christ will literally reign over the earth (Isa. 9:6-7; Dan. 7:13-14).
 - (4) No such kingdom has yet been set up by Christ. Hence it must be founded in the future.
 - (5) Micah 4:1-3 is much like Isaiah 2:2-4.
 - A. Did Isaiah quote Micah or vice versa? God inspired both. The language is a bit different.
 - B. God has established the millennial kingdom by two witnesses.
2. "That the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains."
 - (1) No reference to the founding of the church on a mountain when Christ chose the 12 apostles. Christ was only on one mountain. Micah speaks of "mountains."
 - (2) The reference is to Mount Moriah just mentioned (3:12), and it may also include Jerusalem itself.
 - (3) This is the millennial temple (Ezek. 40:1-44:31).
 - (4) This event is certain—"it shall be established." Evil angels and amillennialists cannot prevent it from happening. The expression denotes continuance and perpetuity.
3. "It shall be exalted above the hills."
 - (1) The temple mount will be elevated above the other hills and mountains.
 - (2) The millennial temple will not stand on Mount Moriah, but on a magnificent tableland, lifted up above all the surrounding hills.
 - (3) A miraculous geological change is to take place (Ezek. 40:2; Zech. 14:1,4-5,9-10).
 - (4) The temple will be built after this mighty earthquake (Zech. 14:4; Rev. 16:18-20).
 - (5) Christ Himself will build this temple (Zech. 6:12).
4. "And people shall flow unto it."
 - (1) In Hebrew it is "peoples."
 - (2) The multitudes who constantly come there to worship Christ flow swiftly, plentifully, and constantly as a river.

II. THE INSTRUCTION IN THE MESSIAH'S KINGDOM (4:2).

1. "The "many nations" are Gentile nations and Jewish nations (Zech. 8:20-23; 14: 16-21). The heathen are to be the inheritance of Christ (Ps. 2:8).
2. The Gentiles will go because they will share in Christ's salvation (Isa. 11:10; 60:3) along with Israel (Jer. 31:31-34; 33:24-26). This is universal worship of Christ (Isa. 66:23; Ps. 65:2; Phil. 2:9-11).
3. This will be a complete reversal of Micah's day. Jerusalem will be a center of religious instruction. People will travel many miles from Washington, London, Paris, Berlin, and Moscow to worship Christ.
4. The magnetic attraction of the millennial kingdom is its rich source of instructions—"he will teach us of his ways." Christ is the Master Teacher—the infallible Truth will teach them infallibly!
5. "His ways" means the ways He would have men to walk in order to please Him. They do not go to be amused with idle speculations or novel theories.
6. "He will teach us of his ways...we will walk in his paths."
 - (1) Right obedience must be preceded by Divine instructions.
 - (2) Moral conduct must not contradict one's religious faith.
 - (3) "Will walk" means they are constant and persevering in their practice.
7. "For the law shall go forth of Zion."
 - (1) The moral law as the rule of life (Prov. 6:23).
 - (2) "Go forth" a personal, direct act of Christ.
8. "Word of the LORD from Jerusalem."
 - (1) The gospel was preached there at His first coming (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8). It will be again and by Christ Himself.
 - (2) How different from when they crucified Christ there at His first advent.
 - (3) The Word is the source of salvation and many shall be saved.

III. CHRIST AS THE JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH (4:3).

1. "And he shall judge among many people."
 - (1) Hebrew has "peoples." Christ will be the Arbiter of all disputes. He will administer justice internationally (Isa. 11:1-5).
 - (2) When His kingship is acknowledged His law shall be obeyed. Peace and love shall everywhere abound.
2. "Rebuke strong nations afar off."
 - (1) Rebuke" means "to act as umpire for." The arbitrations of the sword shall no more be resorted to.
 - (2) The rulers of the world shall recognize His kingship (Isa. 25:3; 49:7).

- (3) Nations will practice justice and fairness toward each other. His word will always be the court of last appeal.
3. Weapons of war will be converted into instruments of peace and economic productivity.
 - (1) Military metals will be turned into constructive use.
 - (2) In that day swords and spears were representative of all weapons of warfare (Ezek. 38:5,21; 39:9).
 - (3) This is the opposite of Joel 3:9-10. The nations practice the act of peace instead of war (Hos. 2:18; Zech. 9:10).
4. “Neither shall they learn war any more.”
 - (1) War colleges will be a thing of the past. No West Point!
 - (2) There will be no military maneuvers or war games.
 - (3) The millennium will be characterized by a warless society.

IV. THE PEACE AND PROSPERITY OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM (4:4).

1. “But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree.”
 - (1) This speaks of plenty and security in the land (I Kings 4:25; Lev. 26:4; Zech. 3:10). No fear of raiders.
 - (2) People do not have to dwell in walled cities and lock themselves up in their houses. They can sit in their gardens, fields, and vineyards, and enjoy their crops.
 - (3) Jews would sit under their vines and trees to read, meditate, pray, and converse together (John 1:48).
 - (4) This will be true of both Jews and Gentiles in the millennium. People will remain undisturbed in the enjoyment of their own personal property.
 - (5) Note in the millennium men will have the right to own property. The final world order will not be any kind of socialist or Marxist state-ownership of all property. These present movements are Satanic.
2. “And none shall make them afraid.”
 - (1) There is no need to fear that other men will try to take their property by war.
 - (2) Men will be free from oppression—no need to fear other men. There is no Devil or demons on earth at this time.
3. “For the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.”
 - (1) The idea was that God was the Leader of the armies of Israel.
 - (2) It means the Lord of the powers of Heaven and earth.
 - (3) He speaks nothing but the truth and has the power to do it. This means we may depend on it.

V. WORSHIP IN THE MILLENNIUM (4:5).

1. “For all people will walk every one in the name of his god.”

- (1) How do you reconcile this with verse 2? Will the nations worship the true God under the name of its national god?
 - (2) Micah is probably contrasting his day with the future day. In his day heathen peoples worshipped their own particular gods, but Israel the true God.
2. "We will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever."
- (1) The name of God includes all that He is and does. To walk in the name of God is to live in conformity to the will and character of the God we serve (II Chron. 17:4; Ezek. 5:6).
 - (2) All peoples will in the millennium walk in the name of the Lord (v. 2).
 - (3) Micah stresses Israel's obedience, for they were not then walking in the name of the Lord.
3. In Micah 4:5 the ingredients of world peace are given:
- (1) A court people can trust;
 - (2) A hatred and horror of war;
 - (3) Arbitration as the way to settle disputes;
 - (4) International submission to the results of arbitration;
 - (5) A commonly accepted standard of right and wrong.

VI. THE REGATHERING OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL (4:6-8).

1. The Lord will assemble Israel (v. 6).
 - (1) Here the figure is that of a footsore and dispersed flock of sheep (Zeph. 3:19; Ezek. 34:16; Jer. 50:6,17; Micah 2:11-12).
 - (2) "Halted" means like lame and maimed sheep because of their sins (Ps. 38:16-17). The word signifies such as go side-way—one whom deviates from God.
 - (3) "Driven out"—of the land of Israel and scattered among the nations of the world.
 - (4) "I have afflicted." God sent upon them various calamities of famine and sword, resulting in captivity and poverty. This would change (Isa. 35:10).
 - (5) Some apply these words wrongfully to the apostle going to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and bringing them into the new nation of the church.
2. A remnant shall be restored and Christ shall reign over them (v. 7).
 - (1) "Remnant" means what remains of the many who were destroyed (Isa. 11:11-12,16). It will be a repentant remnant (Ezek. 20:41-44; Rom. 11:25-27).
 - (2) The remnant will be made up of the suffering and surviving sheep, and this remnant shall become a strong nation—a saved and happy nation.

(3) The Lord will reign forever over the restored Israel from Mount Zion (Isa. 24:23; 52:7; Obed. 21; Zech. 14:9).

3. Jerusalem shall be restored to her former glory as the capital of Israel (v. 8).

(1) Watchtowers were built overlooking the fold in which the sheep were gathered.

(2) The “tower of the flock” is probably a reference to the old palace of David (Neh. 3:26-27). It had originally been a place of observation for flocks.

(3) From Jerusalem, Christ will watch His flock. The “daughter of Zion” speaks of the population of Jerusalem. Zion is an alternative name for the city of Jerusalem.

(4) The rulership of kings will be returned to Jerusalem in the millennium (Zeph. 3:14-17; Luke 1:32-33).

(5) Some say the tower of the flock is near Bethlehem (Gen. 35:21), the birthplace of David and the Messiah. Daughter of Zion represents Jerusalem.

VII. THE TWO SEIGES OF JERUSALEM (4:9-13).

1. The attack of the Babylonians upon Jerusalem (vv. 9-10).

(1) The Babylonian siege would be tragic and terrifying (v. 9). It occurred in 588-586 B. C.

A. “Now why dost thou cry out aloud?” This is a most lamentable cry, as if no help or hope was to be had.

B. “Is there no king in thee?” Judah had a king at its fall (II Kings 25: 1-7). The idea is that he would not be able to carry out his kingly office. Judah would lose its royal government.

C. “Is thy counsellor perished?” A synonym for king. The root melech (“king”) in Aramaic means “to counsel.” The Messiah is called “counsellor” (Isa. 9:6).

D. “For pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail.” Labor pains are used figuratively of the anguish of military assault (Isa. 13:8; Jer.4:31; 6:24; 50:43; Hos. 13:13).

(2) They would be led to a place of exile (v. 10).

A. “For now shalt thou go forth” out of Jerusalem into the open country and finally to Babylon.

B. When Micah wrote this, Babylon was a conquered country of Assyria. Babylon did not become powerful for another hundred years. Only inspiration can account for Micah’s prophecy.

C. “There shall thou be delivered” by Cyrus after being in Babylon for 70 years of captivity (Isa. 48:20; Jer. 25:12-14; 29:10-14; Ezra 2:1-67; 7:1-8:36; Neh. 2:1-9).

D. “There the LORD shall redeem thee.” This was typical of the redemptive work of Christ for His people. He redeemed us from all of our spiritual enemies—Satan, the world, death, Hell, and the law.

E. Affliction often ends in good (Ps. 30:6; 73:24; Jer. 10:24). Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity.

2. The attack of many nations upon Jerusalem (vv. 11-13).

(1) The Gentile nations attack Jerusalem near the end of the tribulation period (Joel 3:1-17; Zech. 12:1-9; 14:1-5; Rev. 19:11-21).

- A. "Now" is a prophetic present like the prediction of Christ's birth (Isa. 9:6).
 - B. The nations will be bent on the desecration of Jerusalem. The world hates God's people and seeks to ruin them (Obed. 12).
 - C. Malice is blind to all virtue. The powers of earth and Hell are sometimes arrayed against the Lord's people.
- (2) The nations are gathered by God (v. 12; Rev. 16:13-16).
- A. "They know the thoughts of the LORD" (Isa. 55:8; Rom. 11:33). They think little about what God has designed for them. They aim at Zion's ruin; God aims at theirs. They intend one thing; God another (Isa. 10:5-7).
 - B. "For he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor." They gather as soldiers in the field, but God gathers them as sheaves to be beaten on the floor. They would march to their destruction.
- (3) Israel shall win a glorious victory (v. 13).
- A. "Arise and thresh"—tread your enemies under feet as the oxen tread out the corn (Isa. 51:15; Jer. 51:33). See Isa. 63:1-4, 14:15; Ps. 58:10; and Rev. 14:15-20.
 - B. "I will make thine horn iron." The threshing machine of the Israelite farmer was studded underneath with iron spikes. The ox would drag it over the stalk-strewn threshing floor to chop the straw and to loosen the grain (Amos 1:3; Isa. 41:13-15).
 - C. "I will make thine hoofs brass." This metaphor depicted a strong animal like a bull that stomped and gored its enemy (Deut. 33:17; I Kings 22: 11).
 - D. God will make Israel's horn iron to push down her enemies, and her hoofs brass to tread upon them when they are knocked down.
 - E. "Thou shalt beat in pieces many people." Israel will fight in the strength of Jehovah and none will be able to withstand them. When God has a conquering work for His people, He will furnish them with strength and ability for it.
 - F. "I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD." The glory of the victory shall redound to God (Num. 31:28; Josh. 6:17-19).
 - G. "The Lord of the whole earth"—Christ who will appear as the King of the whole earth (Dan. 7:13-14,27; Zech. 14:9; Rev. 17:14; 19:11-13,16, I Tim. 6:14-15).

Chapter Five

I. THE MISTREATMENT OF JUDAH'S KING (5:1).

1. This verse properly belongs with chapter 4.
2. "Now gather thyself in troops"—Jerusalem must collect its armies to defend itself against the enemy.
3. Jerusalem is named "daughter of troops" from the number of soldiers collected in its walls.
4. "He hath laid siege against us"—the king of Babylon. Note the prophet identifies himself with the besieged people. Micah speaks of it as present because it is sure to happen.
5. "They shall smite the judge of Israel"—Zedekiah the king and judge of Judah (Amos 2:3; Micah 3:1,9,11).
 - (1) To smite on the cheek was the greatest insult (I Kings 22:24; Job 16:10; Lam. 3:30).
 - (2) See II Kings 25 here.
6. Is there a reference to Christ here (Isa. 50:6; Matt. 26:67-68; 27:30)? No!
 - (1) Israel in the main did not receive Christ as their judge and king.
 - (2) Christ was not smitten in any siege of Jerusalem.
 - (3) He was not smitten with a rod on the cheek.
 - (4) He was smitten by His own people, not only by the Romans.

II. THE BIRTH AND PERSON OF THE MESSIAH (5:2).

1. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah."
 - (1) The degradation of Zedekiah is contrasted with the greatness of Israel's future Ruler.
 - (2) The town is called Bethlehem Ephratah to distinguish it from a town of the same name in the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. 19:10,15). Micah's Bethlehem was called "Bethlehem Judah" (Judg. 17:7).
 - (3) The Septuagint has it: "And thou, Bethlehem, house of Ephratah." Ephratah was the name of a clan of the tribe of Judah located around the town of Bethlehem (Gen. 35:19; Ruth 1:1-2).
 - (4) Look at Matthew 2:4-8 and John 7:40-42 here.
 - (5) Bethlehem was about 6 miles southeast of Jerusalem and the birthplace of David (Ruth 1:1-2; 4:11).
 - (6) "Bethlehem" means, "house of bread," a fitting place for the birth of the Bread of Life (John 6:48). "Ephratah" means "fruitfulness." All fruitfulness comes from Christ.
2. "Though thou be little among the thousands of Judah."
 - (1) Bethlehem was little in Micah's day. "Not the least" by the time of Christ (Matt. 2:6).
 - (2) It was not named among the possessions of Judah in Joshua 15 or Nehemiah 11:25.

- (3) The low condition of the Davidic dynasty is also indicated here. Both David and Christ were born of a town of little worldly importance.
- (4) God uses the base things of the world to bring to naught things that are.
3. “Yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me.”
 - (1) From this small village, not Jerusalem, the Messiah came forth.
 - (2) “Shall come forth” sometimes means birth and descent—to come forth (Gen. 10:14; 17:6; 35:11). Christ was born in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:8,11; Luke 2:1-6,11,15-16).
 - (3) At other times this expression has the notion of proceeding from—to go forth (Jer. 30:21). Both ideas are true of Christ.
 - (4) “Unto me”—Jehovah is speaking.
 - A. Christ will come to My praise and glory, to do My will.
 - B. He would come forth to perform the work of our redemption and salvation—to fulfill His covenant engagements to the Father.
 - C. He would come forth to be a sacrifice for sin and to suffer the death of the cross.
4. “That is to be ruler in Israel.”
 - (1) It is strange how some can make this mean Christ’s headship over the church. The Israel in Micah 5:1 means Israel, but the Israel in verse 2 is the church! A person could not know this without an amillennial commentary!
 - (2) If Micah meant the church, why did he not say the church? Did he deceive the people in his day? Use terms no one understood? I think not!
 - (3) Would any listener in Micah’s day have thought that he was speaking of a Gentile church made up of Jews and Gentiles?
5. “Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”
 - (1) The NASB renders it better from the Hebrew: “His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”
 - (2) Christ not only had a human beginning as David’s descendant in Bethlehem, but He was eternally active with God.
 - (3) The eternity of Christ’s Divine nature and person are seen here. The newborn child in Bethlehem was an infant of days in His human nature, but in His Divine nature the Ancient of Days.
 - (4) “Goings forth” means in the Godhead.
 - A. He went forth as our covenant Head in election—for His people as their representative before the throne, even before they were born on earth.
 - B. He went forth in a way of grace toward His people as their Surety before the world was.

C. Some make His goings forth to be the Old Testament saints in a pre-incarnate form, but the reference is to eternity—not time.

(5) The church fathers believed these words referred to His eternal sonship—the only-begotten of the Father—the same nature with Him—a distinct person from Him—truly God and in the form of God.

III. THE MESSIAH'S REJECTION AND RECEPTION (5:3-4).

1. Israel will suffer as a nation until her birth pains terminate (v. 3).

(1) The first part of this verse discloses the rejection of Messiah would receive in the days of His earthly ministry at the hands of the Jews.

(2) Had Israel not rejected Christ, this prophecy would not have been fulfilled.

(3) Christ would give up Israel to its enemies. They would suffer under the galling yoke of Roman domination and oppression (Luke 21:24).

(4) Some say the woman who travails to bring forth is the nation of Israel in general (Rev. 12:1-6) and the Virgin Mary in particular (Isa. 7:14).

(5) Others say Israel is suffering birth pains and will continue to do so until she receives her Messiah (Isa. 66:7-9).

(6) The latter part does not mean that foreign Jews in the time of Christ would travel to their native land to receive Christ, as some say.

(7) Rather, it points to the reunion of the divided Israelite nation (Isa. 11:12; Ezek. 37:15-28; Hos. 1:10-2:1; 3:5). "His brethren" is the same as "My brethren" in Matthew 25:40.

2. The Shepherd King (v. 4).

(1) This verse pictures Christ coming to earth to set up His millennial kingdom. Verse 2 predicts His birth, verse 3 His rejection, and verse 4 His exaltation.

(2) "And he shall stand." This is not Christ's present mediatorial rule as some say, for Christ now sits (Mark 16:19; Ps. 110:1-2; Rev. 3:21). Standing is connected with His return to earth to rule (Job 19:25; Zech. 14:2-4).

(3) "And feed" or shepherd His flock. The Messiah will stand as the great Shepherd to watch and guide His flock, Israel.

(4) "In the strength of the LORD"—the strength of His Divine nature and the power given to Him as the Mediator.

(5) "In the majesty of the name of the LORD his God"—the Father of Christ. The Father's name is in Christ. The Messiah in His divine nature is of the same nature and perfections with the Father.

(6) "They shall abide"—Israel shall not wander. His flock shall rest and abide in their own land.

(7) "For now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth"—the future universal reign of Christ over the earth.

IV. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MESSIAH'S KINGDOM ON EARTH (5:5-9).

1. The peace of the Messiah kingdom (v. 5).
 - (1) "This man shall be the peace"—this Ruler or Shepherd will not only bring peace and be the Author of peace, but be peace Himself (Isa. 9:6; Zech. 9:10; Eph. 2:14).
 - (2) There is probably here an allusion to the peaceful rule of Solomon.
 - (3) "The Assyrian shall come into our land"—Micah's land, the holy land. In Micah's day, Assyria was a great danger to Israel and Judah. The Assyrian here is Antichrist (Dan. 11:40-45) who will be backed by the revived Roman Empire.
 - (4) "Then shall we raise against him seven shepherds."
 - A. Seven in the perfect number, representing completeness and perfection.
 - B. This is an idiomatic way of saying "as many as needed." These leaders, as well as the Messiah, will be able to defend Israel from any enemy. The millennial kingdom of Christ will be established.
2. Israel will go on the offensive (v. 6).
 - (1) Israel under Christ will carry the conflict to the land of Nimrod (Gen. 10:8-11) and conquer it.
 - (2) "In the gates thereof"—into the cities and fortresses of Assyria.
 - (3) The deliverance is due to the Divine intervention of the Messiah.
3. A remnant with the Messiah shall gain the victory (v. 7).
 - (1) Israel will be a source of blessing to her Gentile neighbors. Formerly they have been an object of scorn (Deut. 28:37; Ps. 44:14).
 - (2) "Dew from the LORD." From June to September the plant life of Palestine is generally dependent on dews.
 - (3) Both dews and rains are gifts from God.
4. To those who oppose Israel, she will be a lion (vv. 8-9).
 - (1) The Lamb of God is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah. To believing Gentiles, Israel will be a source of blessing; and to unbelieving Gentiles, a source of judgment.
 - (2) Israel will get the upper hand of her enemies (Num. 33:3; Isa. 26:11).

V. IN THE MESSIAH'S KINGDOM ISRAEL'S INSTRUMENTS OF WAR WILL DISAPPEAR (5:10-11).

1. The horses and chariots to be destroyed (v. 10; Zech. 9:10).
 - (1) Micah describes military weaponry in the only way he knew. His message had to be understandable to the people of his day.
 - (2) Micah's predictions were not annulled when the weapons of his day became obsolete. Ezekiel did the same thing (38).

- (3) The horses and chariots in which Israel so often trusted (Ps. 20:7) would be removed by Jehovah.
 - (4) Israel cannot then lean on the arm of the flesh. The Shepherd will be Israel's great Protector. Human aids will be taken away.
2. The cities and fortresses cut off (v. 11).
 - (1) Cities were the abodes of luxury and pride. From Christ's kingdom all pomp and vainglory shall be shut out.
 - (2) There will be no fortified cities and walled towns to trust in for safety. Their enemies are subdued.
 - (3) All man-made defenses are removed.

VI. ALL IDOLTAROUS WORSHIP SHALL BE REMOVED (5:12-14).

1. Witchcraft and soothsayers are cut off (v. 12).
 - (1) Witchcraft is condemned by God (Ex. 22:18; Gal. 5:19-20). They worked spells and charms (Num. 22-24).
 - (2) "Soothsayers" or "sign-mongers" were cloud diviners, or storm-makers. They divined by the shape and color of a cloud. Today we call them rainmakers.
 - (3) Sorcery as a method of procuring information from the supernatural was condemned (Lev. 19:26; Deut. 18:9-13). It was presumption against the Lord's way of communicating His will through the law and prophets.
 - (4) The paraphernalia of occultism and the presence of its practitioners will be removed by Christ.
 - (5) God will judge them in his wrath (Lev. 20:27).
2. Idol gods will be removed (vv. 13-14).
 - (1) Graven images of stone or metal were forbidden (Ex. 20:4; I Kings 14:22-24; Ps. 115:4; Jer. 1:16; 10:3). Graven images will be demolished.
 - (2) Graven images were sometimes stone pillars dedicated to false gods. A pillar could mark the place of Divine worship (Gen. 28:18; 31:13,45; Isa. 19:19). It degenerated into idolatry and was condemned (Deut. 16:21-22).
 - (3) "Thy groves"—Asherah pole. A Canaanitish goddess. She corresponds to Ashtoreth of the Phoenicians and Istar of the Assyrians. Her symbol was a tree or wooden post. She was regarded as the wife or sister of the god El. Later she became connected with Baal (Judg. 3:7; II Kings 23:4).
 - (4) The evil of idolatry was that a man bowed before the thing he made with his own hands!
 - (5) "Cities"—centers of idolatry.
 - (6) Christ will remove all forms of idolatry from His kingdom. As they now exist on earth, we can be sure the Messiah's kingdom has not yet been set up on earth.

VII. GOD'S JUDGMENT ON UNBELIEVING GENTILES (5:15).

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1. This is predicted in other Scriptures (Joel 3:1-16; Zech. 12:1-6; 14:1-3; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 16:16-21; 19:11-21).
2. This includes the Battle of Armageddon. See here the irresistible certainty of the Lord's defense of His sovereignty.

Chapter Six

I. THE LORD'S CASE AGAINST HIS PEOPLE (6:1-5).

1. The Lord pleads His case before the mountains and the hills (v. 1).
 - (1) Inanimate nature was often called upon in the Old Testament to serve as a witness (Deut. 32:1; Isa.1:2; Jer. 2:12-13).
 - (2) "Hear" means plead with God in controversy. The whole nation is bidden to heed these words.
 - (3) "Contend thou"—God's words to Micah, telling him to put himself in his people's place and plead a case in court to the mountains and hills.
 - (4) The mountains and hills were older than man and had witnessed the Lord's goodness and Israel's ingratitude.
 - (5) The prophet was to be earnest in this plea. A cold frosty heart can never kindle others into a flame. The hills would as soon hear his message as the people.
2. The Lord had a legal controversy against Judah (v. 2).
 - (1) These are the words of the prophet obeying the Divine command.
 - (2) "His people"—by election, by covenant, and by their own profession. The covenant relation has come to the point of a court case.
 - (3) "Foundations of the earth"—mountains were considered everlasting (Gen. 49:26; Deut. 33:15), as compared to man's life and doings.
 - (4) God judged the heathen in wrath, but He pleads with His people (Isa. 1:18; Hos. 4:1; 12:2).
 - (5) Israel's depravity showed the need of the Messiah's redemption and ours as well (Rom. 3:22-23).
 - (6) Sin begets a controversy between man and God. A righteous God has a court case against every sinner—"guilty before God."
3. The Lord asks if they have any complaint (v. 3).
 - (1) In loving condescension Jehovah opens the suit and assumes the position of defendant.
 - (2) "What have I done unto thee?" What did I do to drive you away? Have I let you down? Failed to keep my part of the covenant? (See Isa. 5:4; Jer. 2:5,31).
 - (3) God does not demand what is impossible and unreasonable. He is not a tyrant who compels men to serve with rigor and hardships.
 - (4) "Testify against me." Am I a hard Master? My demands unreasonable?
 - (5) In spite of their grievous sin, He still calls them "my people." He remains faithful and has not disowned them yet.
4. He had done them much good (v. 4).

- (1) Israel had treated the Lord as if He had been guilty of injustice toward them. He had done them no evil; He had done only good to them.
 - (2) He redeemed them from unbearable slavery in Egypt (Ex. 20:2; Isa. 63:11-13; Jer. 2:6-7; Hos. 1:11; Amos 2:10). She owed her existence as a free nation to that event.
 - (3) “Moses” an inspired leader, teacher, and lawgiver (Num. 12:8).
 - (4) “Aaron”—the priest and director of Divine worship.
 - (5) “Miriam”—the prophetess (Ex. 15:20-21) who led the praise at the Red Sea.
 - (6) Moses led them, Aaron made atonement for them, and Miriam instructed the women.
5. The Lord changed Balaam’s curse into a blessing (v. 5).
- (1) Jehovah had provided leaders and also deliverance for them.
 - (2) Balak, the king of Moab, hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22-24). Instead of cursing them, he blessed them (Num. 23:14-24).
 - (3) God cares for His people even when they are in enemy territory.
 - (4) “From Shittim unto Gilgal”—mercies under Joshua. The word “remember” might be inserted to make it plainer in English.
 - (5) Shittim was the last campsite before crossing Jordan, and Gilgal the first in the land of Canaan (Num. 25). Many things happen in the travel from one place to another.
 - A. The crossing of Jordan (Josh. 4:1-18).
 - B. The defeat of the Midianites (Num. 31:1-24), the settlement of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh (Num. 32:1-42).
 - C. The renewal of the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 1:1-33:29).
 - (6) These things proved how faithful he is to His promises, how He cares for His elect (Judg. 5:11; I Sam. 12:7).

II. THE QUESTIONS ABOUT SACRIFICE (6:6-7).

1. What should Judah bring to worship before the Lord (v. 6).
 - (1) The prophet represents the people in asking him how to make amends and obtain the favor of the Lord.
 - (2) “Come before,” appear in the presence of the Lord for worship.
 - (3) “Bow myself before the high God”—God of the height, who has His throne on high (Isa. 33:5; 57:15).
 - (4) “Calves of a year old”—the choicest victims (Ex. 12:5; Lev. 9:2-3).
2. Still more questions (v. 7).
 - (1) “Thousands of rams” and “ten thousands of rivers of oil.” They would go to excess to appease God, if it would help.

- (2) Some had rather “do” religion than to “be” religious. The Lord cannot be appeased by material things. Man naturally clings to outward forms to heal the breach of fellowship between himself and God—zealous profession, liberal offerings, but (Heb. 10:4).
- (3) God requires one ram for a sin offering—not 1,000.
- (4) They would even offer human sacrifice.
 - A. A thing forbidden (Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5).
 - B. The people did do this at times (II Kings 16:3; 21:6; Jer. 32:35). Molech was associated with child sacrifice.
 - C. The surrender God wants is the spirit, not the flesh (Gen. 22:10-12).
- (5) This shows the people had no knowledge of how to worship God properly.
- (6) They tried to bargain with God like He was a merchant. Bribe God!
- (7) They would make any sacrifice except for righteous living!

III. THE LORD’S REQUIREMENT (6:8).

1. This is the answer to the questions in verses 6 and 7.
2. “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good.”
 - (1) God requires some things of His people. See Deut. 10:12-13.
 - (2) The prophets enforced the principles of righteous conduct and not mere formal worship.
 - (3) God requires not ritual but actual righteousness on the part of His people. He desires not costly things but the surrender of the heart to His service.
3. “And what doth the LORD require of thee.”
 - (1) His requirements are justice, mercy, and humility. These embrace both tables of the law.
 - (2) Israel was guilty of injustice, oppression, and lack of submission to God.
 - (3) The requirements are threefold: outward, inward, and upward.
4. Outward—“to do justly.”
 - (1) To do justly is not only to do what is just because it is just.
 - (2) Paul put it: “Render therefore to all their dues” (Rom. 13:7).
 - (3) Do what God requires in the Divine standard of righteousness—His moral law. Apart from this law there is no morality.
 - (4) Hurt no man person, property, or character. Do wrong to none, but do right to all.
 - (5) Social morality is inseparable from and rooted in true religion.

(6) Israel had done the contrary (2:1-2; 3:2).

5. Inward—"to love mercy."

(1) This is covenant loyalty—inward commitment to God's revelation that will manifest itself in a right relationship toward God and man.

(2) Mercy must not be stained, or given grudgingly, but rather loved—a matter of the heart.

(3) Be merciful out of love. "Mercy" here includes forgiveness and compassion.

(4) Mercy spreads her wings over the sinful and the suffering. It is nobility's true badge—God like (Prov. 21:21; Matt. 5:7; Luke 6:32-36).

(5) Justice is not enough; mercy must be shown and loved.

6. Upward—"to walk humbly with thy God."

(1) This is a right attitude toward God and a determination to walk in continuous fellowship with Him.

(2) The humble walk with God means we recognized His holiness, righteousness, and sovereignty.

(3) It is the identification of man's will with the will and purpose of God.

(4) "To walk" is to live and act as is seen in the case of Enoch.

(5) It is to devote ourselves to His service—to make His glory the great object and end of life—to value nothing more than His favor and fear His displeasure—to ever seek His approval.

(6) It is easy to talk of justice and mercy, but it is harder to walk with God.

7. Salvation is the soul going away from sin and the world, and going to God. Not merely to temples, theologies, ceremonies; but to God.

8. There must be a true life both in relation to man and God. Are we like the Pharisees? See Matthew 23:23.

IV. THE LORD'S JUDGMENT ON THE UNGODLY (6:9-16).

1. Divine judgment is announced (v. 9).

(1) "The LORD'S voice crieth into the city."

A. The voice of the prophet is the Lord's voice (Prov. 8:1; Isa. 58:1; Heb. 1:1).

B. God warns before He wounds. He calls upon men to arouse from carnal security, to cause them to repent and reform (Eph. 5:14).

C. "City"—either Jerusalem or Samaria or both—the singular being put for the plural, maybe means city and countryside.

D. Many did not hear it (Job 33:14; Isa. 25:11). Men often ascribe Divine judgments to chance and to second causes.

(2) "The man of wisdom shall see thy name."

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- A. Wise men hear God’s voice and discern His majesty. They see the Name of God and the power of His presence—His glory in the administration of His providence (Dan. 12:10).
 - B. The wise (Jas. 3:17; II Tim. 3:15) only hear and obey. They bow to the rod as under command to God.
 - C. A truly wise person discovers the name of God in the voice of God (Prov. 9:10). The name of God stands for the person of God.
- (3) “Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.”
- A. This is what the voice of God says to all.
 - B. Hear the rod when it is coming before you—see and feel it. Go forth to meet the Lord in the ways of His judgments.
 - C. The rod of correction and affliction is the voice of God (Isa. 9:4; 10:5,24). View it not as a national calamity, but as a chastisement from the hand of God.
 - D. Every rod is appointed by God as to its kind, severity, and duration (Job 23:14).
 - E. We must hear what God says to us by the rod of correction (Job 5:6-9).
2. The cause of the judgment (vv. 10-13).
- (1) The Lord would not forget their wicked business dealings (v. 10).
- A. “Scant measure” is “an ephah of leanness.” An ephah is about a bushel—a dry measure of 5 gallons.
 - B. When God searches the house of a wicked man He finds treasures of wickedness—abundance of ill-gotten wealth—a storehouse of injustice (Rom. 2:5).
 - C. God is Lord of the marketplace (Lev. 19:35-36; Deut. 25:13-16).
- (2) The Lord will not declare innocent a man that is guilty (v. 11; Ex. 34:7).
- A. They used dishonest scales, with a bag of false weights.
 - B. Their business was built by commercial dishonesty. Their profits would not long be enjoyed (Prov. 10:2).
 - C. False weights are forbidden by the law (Lev. 19:35-36), and the gospel (Matt. 7:12; Phil. 4:8).
 - D. Men may commend wicked business dealings as being smart (Luke 16:1-8), but God will judge it (Prov. 11:1).
 - E. As men deal with their fellow men, so God will deal with them.
- (3) The violence of the wealthy (v. 12).
- A. They have been justly charged with injustice and fraud, now they are denounced for practicing every kind of violence.
 - B. The rich and the poor alike were liars—used fraud and deceit (Ezek. 8:12). There was a lack of integrity.

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- C. Men in general had great difficulty with speaking and doing the truth (Isa. 1:4).
- (4) They would be ruined through Divine judgment (v. 13). The sickness was the result of the smiting (Nah. 3:19).
- 3. The character of the Divine judgment (vv. 14-15).
 - (1) They would be afflicted by scarcity (v. 14; Hos. 4:10; Hag. 1:5-6).
 - (2) This was threatened in the law (Lev. 26:25; Deut. 28:29).
 - (3) What was stored would not be consumed by them, and their crops of oil and wine would be lost to them—taken away by their enemies.
- 4. A summary of the judgment (v. 16).
 - (1) Judah was guilty of the sins of the infamous Omri dynasty (I Kings 21:1-16).
 - (2) There was the ruthless overriding of legal, personal, and traditional values.
 - (3) Threefold penalty.
 - A. “A desolation” (Deut. 28:37; Jer. 25:9).
 - B. “An hissing” as an object of derision (Jer. 19:9; 25:18).
 - C. “Bear the reproach of my people.” Their enemies would say, “So you claim to be the Lord’s peculiar people. Then why do you suffer so much?” See Ezek. 34:29; 36:6,15.

Chapter Seven

I. THE LACK OF GODLY MEN (7:1-4).

1. The number of righteous men were a small remnant like the gleanings of a vineyard (v. 1).
 - (1) “Woe is me!” See I Kings 19:10.
 - A. What an unhappy man I am to live in an age when most good men are perished out of the land (Ps. 120:5-6).
 - B. Godly men are precious and profitable as the first ripe fruit—useful to the church and the world. They preserved the world from moral corruption—draw blessings by their prayers to Heaven—ward off judgment—testify of God—uphold justice on earth.
 - (2) A good man was as hard to find as good grapes after the harvest was past.
 - A. Good men were few (Ps. 12:1).
 - a. Some are removed by cruelty—martyrs.
 - b. Some backslide and become castaways (I Cor. 9:27).
 - c. Some are taken away by death (Isa. 57:1). Good men are gathered like summer fruit and escape the severity of winter.
 - B. The righteous person seems to be an individual of the past. Society was filled with carnal and materialistic people.
 - C. “There is no cluster to eat.” No society of good men could be found. Here and there you could find a single person (Isa. 17:6).
 - D. People did not come in clusters or crowds to hear the Word.
 - E. “My soul desired the firstripe fruit.” This was sweet and good (Isa. 28:4; Jer. 24:2).
 - F. Oh, for primitive Christianity. We desire it but often in vain. The golden age is gone and past recall.
2. Judah’s society had bloody hands and preyed upon other people (v.2).
 - (1) “The good man” can also read “the merciful man.” The Hebrew word implies one who exercises love to others.
 - (2) The good man has a good work of grace begun in him—found in performance of good works—merciful to the poor and needy.
 - (3) Once there were great numbers of them, but now they are dead and gone.
 - (4) “Upright among men”, upright in heart and life—walk according to the rules of the Bible—truly honest and faithful (Job 1:1; Luke 1:5-6; John 1:47).
 - (5) They robbed and killed their neighbor (2:1-2; 3:2-3) for the sake of gain.

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- A. Men lay nets for fish, fowls, and beasts. They hunt them until they get them.
 - B. Wealth and power were perverted into weapons to achieve personal gains.
 - C. The Hebrew for “net” can also signify “anathema” or “destruction.” Net is probably best here.
3. The wicked used both hands to do evil (v. 3).
- (1) Their wicked hearts desired and both hands were ready to hurt and harm—wearing themselves to do iniquity.
 - (2) The prince and judge ought to be protectors of right, but they were practicers and promoters of wrong.
 - (3) For a bribe, a ruler would condemn an innocent man—a judge would render a verdict against an innocent person (I Kings 21).
 - (4) They could be bribed to do anything; they had no morals.
 - (5) The rich man speaks of the evil that his heart had conceived—there was depravity, corruption, and perverseness in his soul.
 - (6) “They wrap it up” or “they weave it together.” The prince, the judge, and the rich man weave their evil plans together and make them strong. They conspired together.
4. The wicked were like briars and were worse than thorns (v. 4).
- (1) The reference is probably to the thorny hedge (Prov. 15:19). The wicked only prick, hurt, and injure people.
 - A. The wicked are like thorns, noxious and worthless (II Sam. 23:6-7).
 - B. The enemies of God’s people are thorns (Num. 33:55; Josh. 23:13; S. of S. 2:2; Nah. 1:10).
 - C. Good only for burning (Heb. 6:8; Isa. 27:4).
 - (2) If this was the character of the best, what were the worst?
 - (3) “The day of thy watchman and thy visitation cometh.” God’s judgment had arrived. The prophet, like watchman, had warned of this judgment (Ezek. 3:17; 33:7).
 - (4) “Has come.” Micah speaks of it as present although it was future (Isa. 9:6). The foreseen thing was certain to come to pass.
 - (5) “Now shall be their perplexity.”
 - A. The Divine judgment would turn things upside down (Isa. 22:5).
 - B. Sinners are heedless and the day of judgment will break suddenly upon them.
 - C. They will be caught in their own snare as they entangled others (Isa. 22:5; Luke 21:25).

II. THE DISINTEGRATED SOCIETY OF JUDAH (7:5-6).

1. In Micah’s day people could not be trusted (v. 5).

- (1) "Trust ye not in a friend."
 - A. This is not said to lessen the value of friendship or to discourage the cultivation of it.
 - B. Things were so bad even a friend could not be trusted—any further than you could see him.
- (2) "Put ye not confidence in a guide."
 - A. Some make these leaders—judges and kings.
 - B. The Hebrew means "closest, most familiar friend" (Ps. 55:13).
 - C. Christ said this would happen in the last days (Matt. 10:21,35-36; 24:12).
- (3) "Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom."
 - A. The reference is to one's wife (Deut. 13:6; 28:54).
 - B. A man's wife would not keep the secrets of his heart. Intimacy was no guarantee of fidelity.
 - C. Like Delilah with Samson (Eccl. 10:20).

2. Complete social rebellion was taking place against natural relations (v. 6).

- (1) The deepest blood relationships were trodden underfoot. The bonds of love and trust had been broken.
- (2) Children did not respect their parents (Ex. 20:12; Isa. 3:12; II Tim. 3:2). They abused them.
- (3) The son spoke evil of his father, treated him as a fool, and studied to do him mischief (Deut. 32:6,15).
- (4) The daughter rose up against her own mother and had no affection for her.
- (5) "Men of his own house"—probably servants (Gen. 17:27) and maybe his own sons. See Matt. 10:21,35.

III. MICAH EXPRESSES HIS FAITH IN THE LORD (7:7-13).

1. Israel's only hope was in her God (v. 7).

- (1) This is another great eschatological section of Micah's prophecy.
- (2) Micah speaks here in the name of the Jewish remnant. Though love and confidence have disappeared and the day of visitation has come—all human help has failed, yet the remnant shall trust in the LORD.
- (3) They needed to wait for Christ in hope, since He was their Savior (Ps. 27:9; Isa. 17:10). God would hear her prayer and save her.
- (4) The resolution of faith—"I will look unto the LORD."
 - A. Gaze intently, as if posted on a watchtower to look for help.
 - B. His promises encourage me to look, and experience teaches me to look.
 - C. The upward look of a believing soul is always a clear one, even when outward and inward things look dark and cloudy.

- (5) The resolution of patience—"I will wait for the God of my salvation."
 - A. His time is best. The blessing is worth waiting for. Those who wait will not be disappointed.
 - B. The waiting time is a testing time for our faith.
 - C. God is the source of temporal, spiritual, and everlasting salvation (Ps. 18:46; 25:5; 27:9; Hab. 3:18). He only can save us from our sins and our enemies.
- (6) The confidence of hope—"my God will hear me."
 - A. Though my cry be feeble and my faith weak.
 - B. Though I am alone and few pleaders can be found (Isa. 30:19).
2. Micah has undiminished confidence in God (v. 8).
 - (1) "Mine enemy"—Babylon in Micah's time and in the end time. The enemies of God's people treat them with insult and reproach.
 - (2) God's people experience trouble—"when I fall, I shall arise."
 - A. The perseverance of the saints is seen here (Ps. 37:23-24; Prov. 24: 16).
 - B. The strongest saint is liable to fall. Sin within and temptation without overcome us.
 - C. He can keep us from falling (Jude 24).
 - (3) God's people experience mysterious providence—"when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me."
 - A. Blessed darkness when all the light we have is His holy presence.
 - B. There is the darkness of doubt and events hard to understand (Isa.9:2; Lam. 3:6; Amos 5:18).
 - C. Clouds hangs over us, friends desert us, and shadows hide God from us (Isa. 50:10).
 - D. When we know not the way to go, He will disperse the gloom and reveal our way before us.
 - E. When we enter the darkness of the tomb and earthly light is extinguished, the LORD will be our light (Ps. 23:4). We will pass through the dark valley without danger and enter the region of eternal day.
3. He would bear chastisement and trust the promises of God (v. 9).
 - (1) Sin is the cause of Divine indignation. Men make themselves rods of judgment by their own guilt.
 - (2) The Divine indignation must be received as fatherly chastisement, consistent with the strong affection for them that He has. We deserve to suffer for our sins. True of Israel and the church.
 - (3) We must bear the stroke until God pleads our cause as the powerful and prevailing Mediator.
 - (4) He pleads our cause with the Father, but also against our enemies. In His time He will punish our ungodly oppressors and reward our patience.

- (5) The patient, trustful sufferers He shall bring into light and cause them to behold His righteousness in all His dealings with them (I John 1:9).
 - (6) What a revelation! What a cause for joy and praise (Ps. 37:5-7; John 13:7).
4. Those who oppress Judah shall be brought to shame (v. 10).
- (1) “Mine enemy shall see it”—the Babylonians of Micah’s time and of the end time. They shall see Israel was not conquered because their God was powerless to save (Gen. 12:3).
 - (2) The heathen ascribed their victories in war to the superiority of their gods over the gods of the conquered people (Isa. 10:9-11; 37:10-13).
 - (3) The conquering enemy denounced their God (Ps. 42:3; 79:10; 115:2; Joel 2: 17).
 - (4) Her enemies would one day be destroyed (Isa. 10:6; Zech. 10:5).
5. The restoration of Israel will be a time of rebuilding (v. 11).
- (1) This rebuilding of Jerusalem is seen in many passages (Is. 11:11-12; Ezek. 20:33-44; 37:1-14; Micah. 2:12-13; 4:6-8).
 - (2) Tyrannical rule will be destroyed, and perfect freedom enjoyed. No power on earth can detain God’s people in bondage when He intends to deliver.
 - (3) This prophecy may point to the rebuilding of Jerusalem in Nehemiah’s time (Dan. 9:25), but it also points to the Messiah’s kingdom.
 - (4) “The decree be far removed.”
 - A. Some say the decree to punish Israel for their sins in Babylon. Others the decree to rebuild Jerusalem under Cyrus (Ezra 5:13-17).
 - B. Some translate “shall the bound be afar off”—the boundaries of the land of Israel shall be widely extended (Isa. 54:1-10; Gen. 15:18).
 - C. Others say it is the decree that the Messiah shall possess the uttermost parts of the earth (Ps. 2:7-8).
6. Micah gives some general boundaries of restored Israel (v. 12).
- (1) “He shall come”—probably Israelites in these areas mentioned.
 - (2) “From Assyria and from the fortified cities.” Hebrew “the cities of Mazor” or Egypt (II Kings 19:24; Isa. 19:6). Here are the north and south boundaries.
 - (3) “The fortress even to the river”—again from Egypt to Euphrates.
 - (4) “Sea to sea”—the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea or the Persian Gulf (See Zech. 14:4-9).
 - (5) These boundaries are in keeping with the area promised to Abraham (Gen. 15:18-21).
7. Israel’s judgment (v. 13).
- (1) “The land shall be desolate”—the land of Canaan (Jer. 4:20-27).

(2) In a sense, the whole earth is to some degree desolate due to sinners upon it (Gen. 3:17-19; 6:13; Isa. 24:5).

IV. MICAH PRAYS FOR THE PROMISED REGENERATION AND RESTORATION OF ISRAEL (7:14-17).

1. The LORD will be a shepherd to His people (v. 14).
 - (1) Compare 2:12 and 5:14. Israel shall be restored and God will care for her like a shepherd.
 - (2) Israel is a flock chosen and loved by God (Deut. 7:7-8; Mal. 1:2).
 - (3) Micah prays to the Shepherd of Israel (Gen. 49:24; Ps. 80:1) to lead His flock into green pastures.
 - (4) The rod is the shepherd's staff (Lev. 27:32).
 - (5) "The flock of thine heritage"—so Israel is called (Ps. 28:9; 95:7).
 - (6) In the N.T. the church is the Lord's flock (Acts 20:28-29; I Pet. 5:2-3).
 - (7) "Which dwell solitarily in the wood" (Num. 23:9; Deut. 33:28). God's people are to live apart from the world in their character, tastes, and pursuits (II Cor. 6:14-18). Israel prospered when she did this (Ex. 33:16).
 - (8) Bashan and Gilead were known for their rich pastures (Num. 32:1-5; Deut. 32:14; Ps. 22:12; Amos 4:1).
 - (9) "The days of old"—the time of Moses and Joshua or David and Solomon.
2. Israel's victory over their enemies will be like the victories at the Exodus (v. 15; Ex. 14:13-31).
 - (1) The future victories will be no less spectacular (Isa. 11:11-14; Joel 2:20; Zech. 12:1-5; 14:3; Rev. 19:11-21).
 - (2) "Unto you"—the people of Israel (v. 14).
 - (3) "Marvellous things"—supernatural occurrences and miracles (John 7:31).
 - (4) The Christian life is a life that witnesses God's loving kindness (Ps. 17:7).
3. The Gentile nations will be brought to utter humiliation as the LORD triumphs over them (v. 16).
 - (1) "Shall see" and "be confounded" by the sight of these marvelous things (Jer. 16:14-15).
 - (2) Their enemies failed in their opposition. All their might proved to be weakness. Human power can avail nothing against God's people (Ps. 136:2; Ex. 15:14; Josh. 2:9-10).
 - (3) "They shall lay their hand upon their mouth"—in silent awe and astonishment (Judg. 18:19; Job 21:5; Isa. 52:15).
 - (4) "Their ears shall be deaf"—not wanting to hear any more about His wonders (Job 26:14).
4. The enemies of God's people shall lick the dust—extreme humility (v. 17).
 - (1) They shall be reduced to the utmost degradation (Gen. 3:14; Ps. 72:9).

- (2) “Shall move out of their holes”—come out trembling from their closed places like snakes (Ps. 2:11; Hos. 11:10).
- (3) In terror they shall acknowledge the God of Israel and His people.
- (4) Like snakes driven from their holes, they shall come forth ashamed of their conduct toward Israel. No security or secret place can protect them.

V. MICAH REJOICES IN GOD’S SALVATION (7:18-20).

1. The forgiveness of God (v. 18).

- (1) “Who is a God like unto thee?” See Exodus 15:11. Heathen gods were revengeful and cruel. Then follows seven things He does for His people.
- (2) “That pardoneth iniquity.”
 - A. The Hebrew means to lift up and take it away as the word signifies. God takes away the sins of His people and lays them on Christ (Isa. 53:6).
 - B. He takes the burden of guilt from off the conscience by sprinkling the blood of Christ (Heb. 9:14; 10:22).
- (3) “Passeth by the transgression.”
 - A. Or, passes over their iniquities. There is an allusion to the night of the first Passover (Ex. 12:13).
 - B. Sin is passing over the law—a transgression; pardon is God passing over sin.
 - C. God takes no notice of it, as if He saw it not. When God pardons sin He passeth over it and does not punish the sinner as he deserves.
 - D. Our sins passed from us to Christ (Heb. 9:26; II Cor. 5:21; Isa. 53: 5-6).
 - E. When God pardons sin He does not set aside justice. He pardons through substitution (II Cor. 5:21; Isa. 53:6) and satisfaction (Rom. 3:25-26) which honors the law and magnifies His love and mercy.
- (4) “He retaineth not His anger for ever” (Ps. 103:9). He changes the course of His providence and manifests forgiving love (Ps. 85:2-3; Isa. 12:1).
- (5) “He delighteth in mercy.”
 - A. We do not read He delights in judgment (Ezek. 33:11). Judgment is His strange work, but mercy is His delight.
 - B. Mercy belongs naturally to God. Without it He would not be God.

2. The compassion of God (v. 19).

- (1) “He will turn again, He will have compassion.” Better translated: “He will again have compassion.”
- (2) Compassion is pity touched with loving care. This points to the elect remnant in the tribulation period, but it is also true of all God’s elect.
- (3) When His people sin, He shows Himself to be angry and turns from them (Ps. 78:38).

- (4) “He will subdue our iniquities”—literally tread them underfoot—a military term showing spiritual warfare.
 - A. Sin is regarded as an enemy which God shall entirely subdue (Heb. 9:26; Dan. 9:24).
 - B. Sin is too strong and mighty for us (Ps. 65:3).
 - C. Christ took it away and trampled upon it (Col. 2:15; Rom. 8:37; I Cor. 15:57).
 - D. He subdues the sin that dwells in us by His Spirit and Word (Gal. 5: 16; I Pet. 1:22).
 - E. To conquer and subdue is something deeper than merely to forgive (Rom. 7:15-8:4).
- (5) “Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”
 - A. As at the Red Sea, not one enemy was left (Ex. 14:28; 15:1-11), so when God pardons sin none are remembered.
 - B. Sin, when it is forgiven is buried in eternal oblivion, never more to rise in view (Ps. 103:12; Isa. 38:17; I John 1:7). They are buried in eternal forgetfulness.
3. The faithfulness of God (v. 20).
 - (1) “Thou will perform the truth to Jacob” (Gen. 27:27-29; 28:3-5,10-15; 35: 9-15).
 - (2) “The mercy to Abraham” (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:17-21; 17:3-8; 22:15-18).
 - (3) “Which thou has sworn unto our fathers from the days of old” (Deut. 7:8-10; Rom. 11:26-29).
 - (4) They will be completely fulfilled in the future though centuries have come and gone.
 - (5) This is guaranteed by God’s mercy, truth, and oath (Luke 1:72-73; Ps. 105: 8-11). Nothing can make Israel restoration and regeneration more certain.