

**MICAH:**



**THE ROLLER COASTER  
GOES ON**

**CONSIDER – COMPREHEND – CONNECT  
A 3 C'S CONTEMPLATIVE STUDY  
BY DR. JACK M. JACOB**

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*All Scriptures quoted, partially quoted, or adapted from the New American Standard Version of the Holy Bible with 1995 Update.*

## Introduction to Book of Micah

**Author:** Most people know very little about this small book of the Minor Prophets. They may know this was the book that told King Herod's advisors Jesus Christ would be born in Bethlehem of Judah, but further than that, they could not tell you much about the book, let alone its author.

The Book of Micah identifies Micah of Moresheth as its author. While it does not explicitly state that Micah penned the Hebrew words, it nonetheless tells us that the book contains all that Micah saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. Other than these details, what do we know about the author?

From the map on page 7, Mareshah is the same as Moresheth and was located just six miles from Lachish. It was a poor, rural town in an area not known for either educated or important people. This is one reason why mentioning Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah would seem to fit as it was also a poor place for the uneducated.

That Micah lived in Moresheth is not debatable from the text, but Micah does not seem to fit the picture of a poor, uneducated man. He uses comparisons, figures of speech, and styles that indicate he had some education. While he may have lived in a poor, uneducated area, he seems to have risen above.

**Date:** The opening verse of this work indicates that Micah served during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. His writing seems to indicate that he wrote and prophesied primarily during the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah, although it is quite probable that he also prophesied during the co-regency of Hezekiah and Manasseh. These reigns are significant in that the condition of the people varied markedly and the powers of the world changed radically during these reigns.

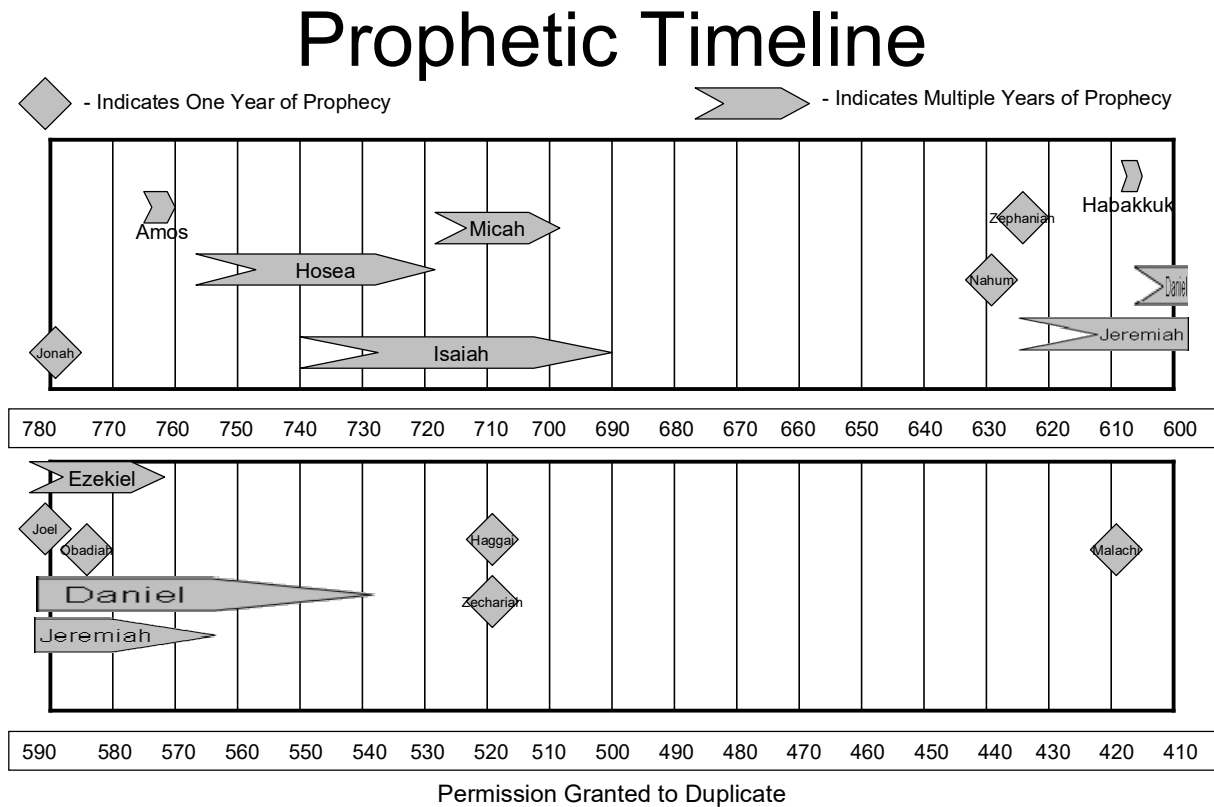
In order to narrow down the date for the writing, one must unravel the various dates of several kings. While scholars do not agree on the dates for all of the kings mentioned in 1:1, it is not unreasonable to establish the following timeline when one attempts to align the events from 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles in the Bible:

Jotham reigned as a co-regent with his father, Uzziah, from 750-740 BC and enjoyed a time of relative peace and calm as they followed God at least partially. Jotham made his son, Ahaz, a co-regent with himself and his father, Uzziah, from 743-740 BC and then kept him as co-regent from 740-731 BC, when Jotham died. Ahaz took over as sole regent from 731-729 BC and then made his son, Hezekiah, co-regent from 729-715 BC. Ahaz was an evil king and did not follow in his father's footsteps. Fortunately, Hezekiah, his son, did not follow in Ahaz's footsteps either, but turned and reformed the nation, doing away with the abominations Ahaz had established. Hezekiah would reign until 686 BC.

Given that brief overview of the history of Bible times, one can extrapolate the data within the book to arrive at a reasonable time frame in which the writing came to be written. First, it is logical to assume Micah wrote prior to the fall of Samaria in 722 BC as he warned that Samaria would fall in Micah 1:6-8. Given the sense of urgency with which Micah wrote, it would be

sensible to also assume that he wrote closer to the fall rather than further away. On the other end, it would also seem that Micah wrote after the invasion of Jerusalem in 701 BC as he described the situation in Jerusalem after the invasion in 5:6 and following. In 4:10, he talked about Babylon after Merodach-Baladan's emissaries arrived in 701 BC. Given these dates from events described within the text, it makes sense to think that the events of Micah's prophecy took place from 725 BC to 695 BC and that he wrote his prophecy under the direction and inspiration of the Holy Spirit shortly thereafter.

**Contemporary Prophets:** In order to see the contemporaries of Micah, refer to the following chart:



It should be noted from the chart above that Micah spoke to Judah while Isaiah was also speaking to them. You will find some of the same themes in Micah as you find in Isaiah for the simple reason that they were speaking during the same time and among the same events of the day.

**Historical Situation:** Although some aspects of the historical situation are covered above, other facts are germane to understanding the environment into which Micah wrote. During the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz, the people of Judah lived under some pretty burdensome situations. They had to deal with paying incredible amounts of tribute which the king extracted from the people. They also had to deal with evil kings who led them into idolatry and even child sacrifice! It was during this time that they paid tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III. You can read about the exploits of the people and the kings in 2 Kings 15:32-38 and 2 Kings 16:1-20. Tiglath-Pileser III started out as a champion and friend of Judah only to become a cruel taskmaster later. It was during this

reign that Damascus fell, and the Arameans ceased to be a power. Additionally, the people of Judah got to experience a good king in Hezekiah, and then another evil king in Manasseh. The key situation described in Micah, and in Isaiah, is the social injustice of the day. Just from Micah's writings, we see the people mistreating those returning from war, stealing the lands of widows and orphans, using dishonest scales when doing business and more! God's people were living more evilly than their neighbors while attempting to cover their tracks by offering multiple sacrifices that meant no more to them than attending a neighborhood barbeque.

**Main Focus:** The main focus of this book is how the actions of the people of God indicate that their hearts are far from Him. They abuse each other with no remorse. They cheat each other and attempt to cover it up with empty religious practices. All of this boils down to the key verse found in 6:8 "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" The people were doing anything but, and God wanted to warn them this was not going unnoticed and would not go unpunished.

### **Outline of the Book of Micah**

- I. Micah's Prophetic Calling (1:1)
- II. God's Judgment on Samaria and Jerusalem
  - a. God is coming to judge all (1:2-4)
  - b. God is coming to judge false religious practices (1:5-7)
  - c. God's judgment will be seen by all (1:8-16)
  - d. Reasons for God's judgment
    - i. Oppression of the poor (2:1-5)
    - ii. Refusal to listen to rebuke (2:6-11)
  - e. Hope promised after judgment (2:12-13)
  - f. People included in God's judgment
    - i. The judges (3:1-4)
    - ii. The prophets (3:5-8)
    - iii. The rulers (3:9-12)
- III. God's Promise of Peace
  - a. Israel will be exalted above all nations (4:1-5)
  - b. God will exalt those who have been rejected (4:6-8)
  - c. God will rescue from exile (4:9-13)
  - d. God will raise up a ruler that will rule eternally (5:1-5)
  - e. God will protect her from her enemies (5:6-9)
  - f. God would purify them religiously (5:10-15)
- IV. God's Indictment of His People
  - a. How God had provided for His people (6:1-5)
  - b. God's requirements for right living (6:6-8)
  - c. Man's sins against God (6:9-12)
  - d. God's punishment pronounced (6:13-16)
  - e. Micah acknowledges the peoples' sins (7:1-6)
  - f. Micah expresses confidence in God to deliver (7:7-13)
  - g. Micah's prayer for deliverance (7:14-20)

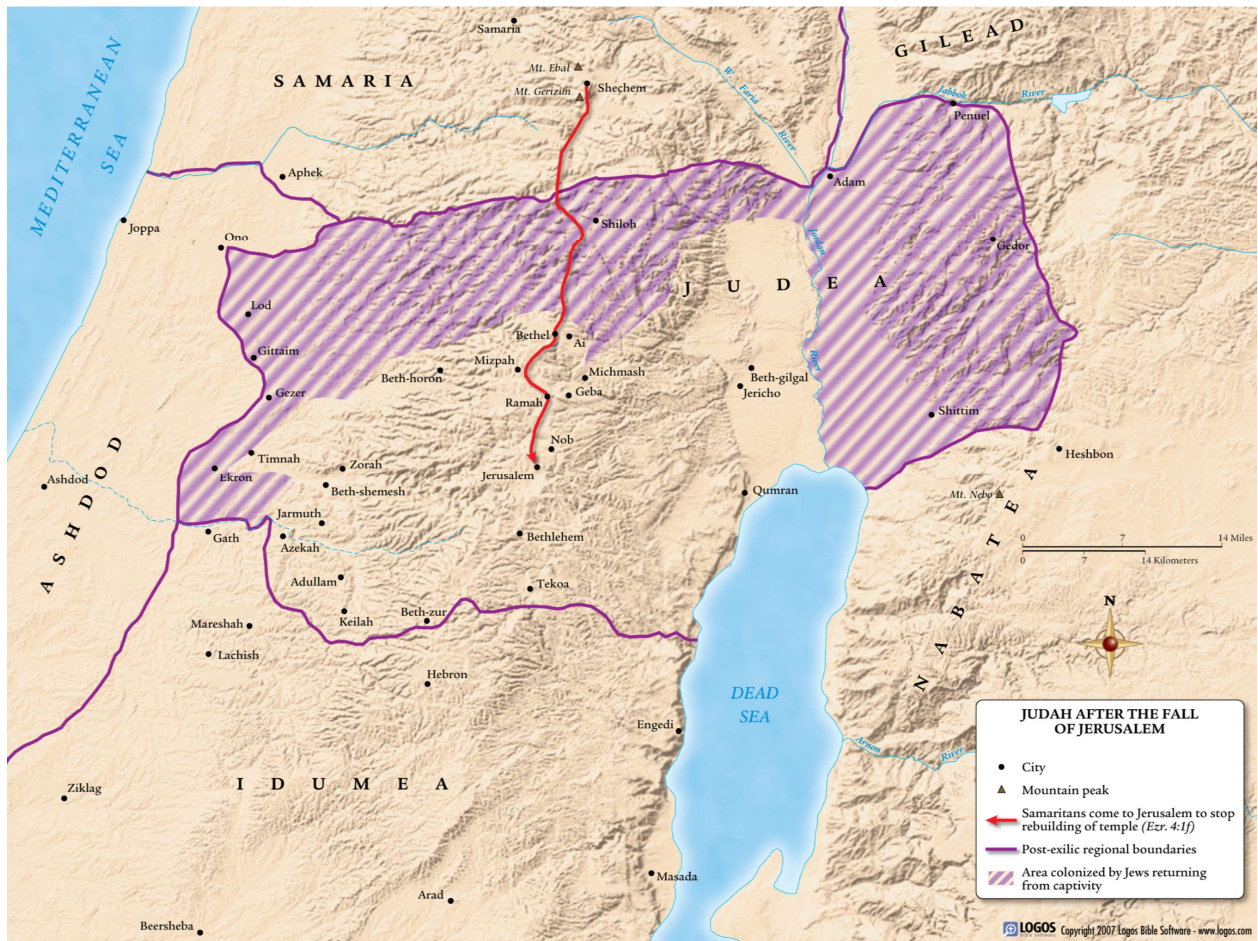
**Personal Word:** If you have studied the book of Isaiah, you might be tempted to skip over this little book. I would advise against just skipping over it for several reasons. First, God included this book in His word for a reason. He wanted us to see that He is both the judge and the deliverer. This matches the mission of Jesus in the New Testament and is a reminder we need in our day. Many people of our day have trouble seeing God as anything but a heavenly ATM Who should spit out our blessings whenever we ask. They cannot see Him as wanting to take anything away from us, but this book reminds us of His holiness and of His reign over all the world.

Second, this book gives us another glance at the circumstances of Isaiah's day and helps us to better understand some of the comments he made in his book. The better we understand the issues of Isaiah's and Micah's day, the better we can hear what God is saying to us in our day. Lastly, this book reminds us to check our own motives as we worship God and reminds us that God knows all we do and why we do it. It also reminds us that He loves us and all that He has done and is doing for us.

May God richly bless you as you study His Word.

Dr. Jack M. Jacob

## Geography of Micah's Day



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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Nelson, *Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts, Old and New Testaments, Updated and Revised Edition*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN, 1996.

Reading Record for the Book of Micah

- Chapter 1
- Chapter 2
- Chapter 3
- Chapter 4
- Chapter 5
- Chapter 6
- Chapter 7

Record Observations Below:





## Lesson One

### Umm! You're in Trouble!

#### Micah 1:1 through 3:12

I don't know if you have ever lived in a house with a younger brother or sister that loved to tattletale on you, but it can be frustrating at times. It seems that every time you do something wrong, they are there to see it and they run straight to your parents to tell them. The result is that you get in trouble without ever getting the opportunity to tell your side of the story. I have been there, and I can tell you it is not fun.

When I was nine years old, my stepmother gave birth to a little boy. He was instantly the favorite of the family. When he was old enough, he took on the role of tattling. I remember one such event that turned out excessively bad for me. It seems that my younger half-brother knew that my older brother and I had not been following our parents' instructions for what we could do when they left us at home with a babysitter. We stayed up later than we were supposed to, and to make things worse, we lied to our babysitter about when we were supposed to go to bed and what television programs we could and could not watch. My brother and I got to stay up an hour later than usual and got to watch a questionable program on television.

When my parents got home, my stepbrother got out of bed and ran to tell them what we had done. We were disciplined accordingly. The next day, we jumped him about it, and he said, "I only tell what I see. If you don't want to get in trouble, either don't let me see it or don't do it!" I am not sure which was worse: his tattling or that he was right!

In the book of Micah, the prophet is given the job of telling the people that God knew what they were doing. Since God sees and knows all, they could not keep Him from seeing what they were doing wrong, so their only option was to stop doing the things God was telling them about.

Have you ever had anyone find out something you had done that you thought you had hidden? If so, describe it below:

How did they find out?

How did you feel about how they found out?

### **Consider It**

1. Who were the kings of Judah during Micah's ministry? (1:1)
2. What was the reason for God's judgment? (1:2-7)
3. What was the "rebellion of Jacob"? (1:2-7)
4. What specific punishment did God promise? (1:2-7)
5. What other nations did God say would witness the judgment of Israel? (1:8-16)
6. How did God promise to bring this judgment? (1:8-16)
7. What specific sins did Israel commit? (2:1-5)
8. How was God going to punish Israel for the sins they had committed? (2:1-5)
9. What did God refuse to allow as a defense? (2:1-5)
10. How did God say He would respond to the cries of the people in judgment? (2:6-11)

11. What additional charges did God bring against Israel? (2:6-11)
  
12. Where was Israel to find its comfort from God's judgment? (2:6-11)
  
13. What hope did God offer Israel? (2:12-13)

14. Fill out the following table

Verses	Offenders	Crime	Punishment
3:1-4			
3:5-8			
3:9-12			

**Comprehend It**

1. From the following scriptures, describe how the king and the nation acted during the reigns of:
  - a. Ahaz (2 Kings 16:1-9)

- b. Hezekiah (2 Kings 18)
- 
2. From the pronouncement of judgment on the people of Israel, how would you have expected them to respond after hearing Micah?
  
  3. What did God mean by saying that Samaria was the rebellion of Jacob?
  
  4. What did God mean by saying that Israel had made its living by the wages of a harlot?
  
  5. Using a bible dictionary or other means, describe what each town's name means. If you do not have access to a Bible dictionary, one can be found online at [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).
    - a. Beth-le-aphrah
  
    - b. Shaphir
  
    - c. Zaanan
  
    - d. Beth-ezel
  
    - e. Maroth
  
    - f. Mareshah

6. What was God communicating by naming these specific towns?
7. How were the towns and their names connected to Israel?
8. If you were an Israelite in Micah's day, who would you have thought God was describing in the first part of chapter 2?
9. Who was He describing in the first part of chapter 2?
10. What does this tell you about how things were going in Israel?

11. Fill Out the following table:

Verses	Sin	Punishment
2:1-5		
2:8-11		

12. What three groups did God accuse in chapter 3?
13. Why did God select these three groups?
14. What does this tell you about being a leader in the church today?

15. What did the prophets of Micah's day use to determine their message to the people?
16. What did Micah use to determine his message to the people?
17. What would you say is the overall message of the first three chapters of Micah?

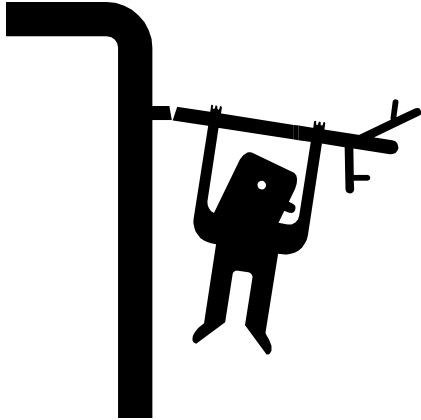
### **Connect It**

1. How does being reminded that God sees and knows all affect the way you want to live your life?
2. Is there any "secret sin" that has crept into your life? If so, take the time right now to confess and repent.
3. What do you plan to do to make sure this sin remains conquered?
4. Micah mourned for the destruction that was coming on Israel for their sins. Has there ever been a time when you were broken over your sins or those of your nation? If so, describe it.
5. God took the very things the various nations were known for and used them to show they had abused those privileges. Do you feel like your nation has abused its blessings? If so, how?
6. Have you ever abused your blessings? If so, how?

7. What did you or do you plan to do about it?
  
8. God judged the people of Israel for acting like their enemies and abusing those without the ability to defend themselves. Does your nation do that? How?
  
9. Do you do the same things? How?
  
10. Why did God give the Israelites a picture of hope in the middle of judgment?
  
11. What does this tell you about God's character?
  
12. Who, in your day, matches the following groups judged in Micah 3:
  - a. Judges (3:1-4)
  
  - b. Prophets (3:5-8)
  
  - c. Rulers (3:9-12)
  
13. In the middle of this judgment, Micah declared his innocence. Do you agree with him or not? Why?
  
14. What does this tell you about Christians' roles in their society?

15. What needs to change in your life as a result of studying this lesson?





## Lesson Two

### Hold On! Help is on the Way!

#### Micah 4:1 through 5:15

Have you ever had one of those days when you couldn't wait to go to bed so you could wake up to a different day? Let me explain. Sometimes it just seems like the day you are living will never end and that it is filled with so much bad news, pain, and discomfort that you can't wait for it to end and a new day to start. Maybe a story will help you understand what I am trying to say:

One day a little boy named Billy awoke to the smell of smoke in his house. Since they had just talked about fire safety in kindergarten, he knew that he needed to get out of bed, stay low and crawl towards the door to his room. He felt the door and it was cool, so he opened the door and glanced down the hallway. He saw no sign of fire. He silently crept out of his room and down the hall toward his parents' room. He felt their door and it was cool, so he crawled in and shouted his parents' names. They were not there. He next crept down the hall to his sister's room and looked in her crib. She was not there either.

By this time, Billy was growing more concerned. He crawled back down the hall to the front door of his house and noticed the family car was gone. He crawled out of the door and looked back at his house. He was aghast at what he saw. The top floor was collapsing in a huge plume of smoke and a giant column of fire reached high into the sky. He looked at his hands and pajamas and saw dirt and soot. He smelled the acrid smell of burning wood and chemicals as well as other unidentifiable odors.

"Where are you guys!" he yelled. There was no answer. He yelled again and again and again. Suddenly, he felt something grab him and begin to shake him. He felt it as a gentle shake at first and then it began to get more intense. He felt himself being tugged and pulled but could not see anyone. About the time he was starting to panic...

He woke up! It had all been a dream.

Most of us would like to be able to wake up from the circumstances of our lives and find it was only a dream, but sadly, this is the life we must live. The Israelites found themselves in this same position during the first part of King Hezekiah's reign, but God promised them a better tomorrow. He still makes those promises today. Tomorrow may not come until Heaven, but it is coming.

Describe your worst day:

How did you keep going?

### **Consider It**

1. Compared to Israel's status of being ruled by another nation, how did God offer them hope? (4:1-5)
2. How would Israel relate to other nations at that time? (4:1-5)
3. What signs of peace did God promise? (4:1-5)
4. What choice did the people of Israel need to make for this to happen? (4:1-5)
5. Who was God going to draw together to make a nation? (4:6-8)
6. What promise did God make to those who were faithful? (4:6-8)
7. What did God say had to happen before this peaceful time? (4:9-13)
8. Why did the nations think they would triumph over Zion? (4:9-13)
9. What was the real reason for their victory? (4:9-13)
10. What would be the ultimate result of their rising up against Jerusalem? (4:9-13)

11. What did God say would happen before their deliverance would come? (5:1-5)
12. What promise did God make concerning their deliverance? (5:1-5)
13. How long would this ruler reign? (5:1-5)
14. Over whom would this ruler reign? (5:1-5)
15. Over what enemy did God say they would have victory? (5:6-9)
16. How would the nations of the world look at Israel in the future? (5:6-9)
17. What work did God promise to do before that day came? (5:10-15)
18. What would be the punishment for those who refused to worship God? (5:10-15)

### **Comprehend It**

1. What is the “mountain of the house of the Lord” in Micah 4:1?
2. For what reason did God say the nations of the world would stream to the mountain of the house of the Lord?

3. What position did God promise He would have among the nations of the world?
4. From your understanding of Old and New Testaments, has this time come yet?
5. What kind of environment will God create when that day comes?
6. What oath was God going to require of His people?
7. Given their present circumstances, what was the message God was trying to communicate to His people?
8. What did God mean by assembling a nation out of the outcasts and the lame?
9. What was the “former dominion” in 4:8?
10. How did God temper this message of peace and prosperity?
11. What did God mean in 4:12?
12. God seems to constantly move between the coming defeat of Israel and their hope. What was God trying to communicate?

13. In Micah 5:2, what kind of king is God describing?
14. Who is this king?
15. How far would the kingdom and fame of this king spread?
16. What terms of refreshing did God use in describing Israel?
17. What terms of strength did God use in describing Israel?
18. Why did God mention all the things He promised to do to Israel in 5:10-15?

### **Connect It**

1. In these passages, God tells the people of Israel to hold on because one day things will get better. Has God ever had to tell you this? If so, describe it.
2. God had to remind the people of Israel that He is God, not only of Israel, but of the whole world. Have you ever doubted this truth? If so, describe the situation.
3. How did God remind you that He is sovereign?

4. Jehovah Witnesses talk about peace on earth and these verses certainly speak to this peace, but what must come first?
5. When is this peace to come? Who is this peace to include?
6. Have you ever had a time when God revealed to you that your thoughts are not the same as His? If so, describe it.
7. Why did He have to remind you of this?
8. How did this encourage, comfort or challenge you?
9. God promised the coming of a king whose Kingdom would not end. We assume this to be Jesus because of the description. Does it seem that Jesus is on the throne today? Why or why not?
10. God called the Israelites to make a choice of who they would recognize as God. If God is sovereign, why did He allow them to make this choice?
11. What does this tell you about the people of Micah's day?
12. What does this tell you about God?

13. What are you facing right now, that God wants to communicate these truths to you?

14. Take time today to thank Him for that communication.

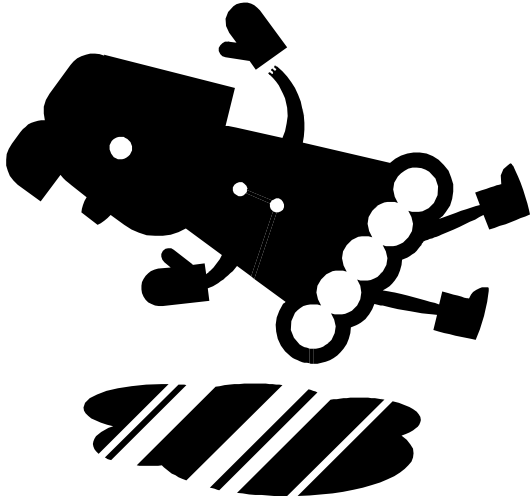




### Lesson Three

## Here We Go Again!

### Micah 6:1 through 7:20



Some people just seem to have difficulty learning the first time. Have you noticed that? Maybe YOU are that kind of person. I must admit that I am that way at times. It seems that I think I can do the same thing and get different results. Someone once said that was the definition of insanity. I guess I am just crazy about some things. I suspect I may not be the only one.

As a child, I used to love to watch cartoons. One of my favorites was Wile E. Coyote and Road Runner. The coyote was always trying to find ways to catch the road runner and eat him for supper. No matter how many contraptions he ordered from Acme, he never got the job done.

Looking at the coyote, it was both amusing and amazing that he never realized he was going to lose. While I know this makes for great cartoons, it is not so great in real life. Many of us have tried to withhold a tithe thinking we would be better off financially if we had more to work with. We found out this was not true and yet, we tried it again. Others of us have tried to stop being gluttons and yet, we go to the all-you-can-eat buffet and wonder why we didn't have the will power to say no. And then we go again!

In this lesson, Israel has been through bad times under a bad king, Ahaz. They have also been through a good time under King Hezekiah. Now, they are about to have a new king that comes on to reign with Hezekiah, King Manasseh, and they go right back to doing the things for which God condemned them under Ahaz. Would they never learn? Will we?

Describe a time when you knew how things were probably going to turn out, but you went ahead and did something anyway hoping for different results:

Looking back on that time now, how do you feel?

Do you want to try again? Why or why not?

### **Consider It**

1. Who did God call together to listen to His presentation of His case against Israel? (6:1-5)
2. What question did God ask in the beginning of the presentation of His case against Israel? (6:1-5)
3. How did God answer that question? (6:1-5)
4. How had God acted towards His people? (6:1-5)
5. How did Micah respond to God's accusation? (6:6-8)
6. What did Micah say God required of the people? (6:6-8)
7. Of what did God accuse His people? (6:9-16)
8. How did God say He was going to punish His people because of their sin? (6:9-16)
9. Whose ways did the people follow? (6:9-16)
10. How did God respond to their sin? (6:9-16)

11. What conditions did Micah complain about? (7:1-6)
12. From where was the fighting coming in Micah's day? (7:1-6)
13. How did Micah say he was going to respond to the judgment of God? (7:7-13)
14. To what hope did Micah cling? (7:7-13)
15. To what event did Micah look forward after God's destruction of His people? (7:7-13)
16. What promise did God make to the people? (7:14-20)
17. How would those who had destroyed Israel respond in that day? (7:14-20)
18. How would God react to Israel when they returned? (7:14-20)

### **Comprehend It**

1. What parts of a lawsuit do you find in these verses?
  - a. Who is the plaintiff?
  - b. Who is the defendant?

- c. What is the accusation?
  - d. What is the response?
  - e. What is the verdict?
- 
- 2. Looking back to Numbers 22:1-20, what was the counsel of Balak?
  - 3. What was the answer of Balaam?
  - 4. What did God mean by mentioning these?
  - 5. What did Micah mean by asking in 6:7, “Does the Lord take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”
  - 6. How does 6:8 answer the questions of 6:6 and 7?
  - 7. Why was God so interested in the business practices of His people?
  - 8. How do the punishments of 6:13-16 compare to the crimes of 6:10-12?

9. Why was Micah upset in the beginning of chapter 7?
10. Describe the situation in which Micah found himself.
11. Why did Micah decide to trust in God even though everything around him seemed to indicate that God was punishing the people?
12. Was Micah right in including himself in the punishment of the people at the end of 7? Why or why not?
13. What was Micah's main concern that the judgment of God would generate?
14. How did Micah anticipate God would take care of this concern?
15. To what promises did Micah cling during all of this?

### **Connect It**

1. Have you ever had to go to God and ask forgiveness multiple times for the same sin? If so, how did you feel as you were asking yet again?
2. How did you react to your own cry for help?

3. Have you ever questioned the goodness of God? If so, describe the situation.
4. How did God answer your questions?
5. What did you learn as a result?
6. Is God pleased with your church attendance, tithing, Sunday School attendance, service in the church? Why or why not?
7. What makes your service different from the service that God was condemning in Micah's day?
8. What would the sin of "wicked scales" be today?
9. Have you been guilty of this at times? If so, how?
10. From God's instructions to Micah, what might be the source of your frustrations when things do not go as you would like?
11. Is this always the case? Why or why not?
12. Micah described a time of woe in which he could not find fruit to eat, an honest person to trade with, and even his own household was turning against him. How did he respond?

13. Have you ever felt that way? If so, how did you respond?
  
14. Micah trusted God to answer his critics and enemies. How do you respond to yours?
  
15. What needs to change in your life right now, having studied this lesson?
  
16. How will you make that change today?
  
17. Pray right now and commit your life and heart to that change.





## **Bibliography of Additional Helpful Resources**

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