

Micah

A Self-Study Guide

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Goals of the lesson:

1. Understand the political and spiritual environment of Micah's preaching.
2. Notice the reaction of the Lord to wickedness.
3. Visualize the evil deeds occurring in Judah.

Introduction: The date of Micah's prophecy is placed between 735-700 B.C. Micah is from Moresheth, a town about 20 miles southeast of Jerusalem. As stated in 1:1, Micah prophesies during the reigns of Kings Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Thus, Micah ministers just before the captivity of Israel and approximately 100 years before the captivity of Judah. To understand Micah's prophecy, it is important for one to understand the political and spiritual turmoil occurring at this time.

Jotham ruled Judah from 750-735 B.C. His reign is best described as holy, peaceful, and prosperous (2 Chron. 27). Ahaz was king of Judah from 735-715 B.C. Ahaz was extremely idolatrous, so extreme that he would sacrifice his own children to Baal. Ahaz led the people into all kinds of wickedness and idolatry. During Ahaz' reign, he entered into a treaty with Assyria. The results of this treaty were disastrous, making Judah a mere satellite nation of Assyria. Much of what Ahaz did led to the future destruction of Judah. Hezekiah reigned from 715-686 B.C. King Hezekiah tried to reverse Ahaz' corruption of the people. During Hezekiah's rule Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Judah and attempted to overthrow Jerusalem. Because of Hezekiah's dedication and prayer to God, the Lord intervened and stopped the Assyrian invasion (2 Kings 18-19). Therefore Micah spoke in a time of social unrest, national insecurity, and religious turmoil.

Survey the Book:

Take your Bible and skim through the book of Micah, looking at the subheadings of each paragraph in each chapter.

1. What themes did you notice?

1:1-16 In the space below, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

2. Explain the term used in 1:3 “the Lord will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth?”
3. Explain the transgression of Israel and Judah in 1:5.
4. Notice Micah’s statement “I will go barefoot and naked” in 1:8. (NRSV) What does this mean? Is it literal?
5. In 1:10-16, Micah in a very unique way shows how the Assyrian invasion of Israel would affect the cities of Judah. Micah makes a play on words that is not readily seen in the English translations. Check a commentary for the definitions and a better understanding of the play on words. Fill in the play on words below:

Gath (tell-town):

Bethlephrah (house of dust):

Shaphir (beauty-town):

Zaanah (march-town):

Bethezel (neighbor-town):

Maroth (bitterness):

Lachish (sounds like chariot in Hebrew):

Moreseth-gath (betrothed of Gath):

Achzib (lying fountain):

Mareshah (hereditary-city):

Adullam (wild beast's cave):

2:1-13 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

6. Notice 2:10-11.

a. What kind of prophet were the people looking for?

Life Application:

b. How do we also act like the people of Judah in this passage?

7. Explain the imagery found in 2:12-13.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS LESSON:

1. The political circumstances of Judah during Micah's ministry.
2. Judgment upon Israel and Judah is pronounced.
3. Deliverance is promised.

** In the Hebrew Bible, 5:1 is marked as 4:14 because the verse best connects with chapter 4.

2. When are the “latter days?” Give support for your answer.

3. Explain what is being predicted in 4:1-5.

4. Explain how God would assemble the lame, outcast, and afflicted in 4:6-7.

5:2-15 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

5. List some of the important things we learn about the Messiah in 5:2.

6. Explain the imagery in 5:3. Who is the woman “who is in labor?”

7. From 5:7-9, list the characteristics of the Messianic kingdom.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS LESSON:

1. The promise of Messiah
2. The promise of the Messianic kingdom

Goals of the lesson:

1. Learn what the Lord requires of us.
2. Recognize the dilemma of God's justice and mercy.
3. See the coming restoration of the nation.

6:1-16 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

1. Notice 6:5. Explain Micah's reference to Balak and Balaam. Also explain Micah's statement "from Shittim to Gilgal." (NRSV)
2. In your own words, what is the Lord's complaint in 6:3-5?
3. In 6:7, what is alluded to by "shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression?" (NIV)

Life Application:

4. What applications can you make to your life from 6:6-8?

Life Application:

5. Explain 6:10-14 and make personal application. What does this passage say about

those who believe that God is too merciful to execute stern judgment upon us?

7:1-20 In the space below, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

6. Explain what Micah is saying in 7:5-6.

7. List the images in this chapter that point to a future restoration.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS LESSON:

1. Though the Lord will judge Judah, there will be a restoration of the nation.
2. Sins of the nation will be punished by the Lord.
3. Remember what the Lord has done for you.