

Majesty in Micah—The Unrivaled God

The God of Judgment (Micah 1-2)

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Dominant Thought: Our King judges and delivers His people.

Objectives:

I want my listeners to understand the background of Micah.

I want my listeners to feel remorse for dishonoring our relationship with our heavenly Father.

I want my listeners to repent when we dishonor God.

Today, we begin a series through the prophet Micah. Micah preached around 740 BC to 690 BC. He ministered during the times of fellow prophets Isaiah and Hosea. Micah is included in the collection of the smaller writing prophets called the Minor Prophets. They are not minor in significance, but minor or smaller in length. Micah has 7 chapters compared to Isaiah's 66 chapters. Micah appears to have ministered for about 50 years. Nothing minor about that ministry.

The opening of Micah states, "the word of the LORD came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" ([Micah 1.1](#)). We don't know Micah's parents, but we do know his hometown, Moresheth. It's possible it was near what we call the Gaza Strip.

The kings listed: Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah are recorded in [2 Kings 15-20](#) and [2 Chronicles 27-32](#). Jotham and Hezekiah were pretty good kings. They had their faults, but overall good. Ahaz was not a good king. We are introduced to Ahaz in [2 Chronicles 28:1](#) "...he did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father David had done." Later, we read in [2 Chronicles 28:22](#), "In the time of his distress he became yet more faithless to the Lord—this same King Ahaz." He offered sacrifices to the gods of Damascus thinking if they helped Damascus, then they can help me. "But they were his downfall and the downfall of all Israel" ([2 Chronicles 28:23](#)). After Ahaz dies, the Chronicler says in [2 Chronicles 28:27](#), "And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, for they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel. And Hezekiah his son reigned in his place."

Ahaz reigned for 16 years during part of Micah's ministry. Ahaz led God's people further away from their relationship with our faithful Father.

It is in this context, the LORD, the Great I AM, sends His word to Micah. The message begins with the LORD taking the role as judge as we read in the opening verses. "Hear, you peoples, all of you, listen, earth and all who live in it, that the Sovereign LORD may bear witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple" ([Micah 1.2](#)).

In the next scene the LORD is coming down from His dwelling place and the mountains melt and the valleys split apart like wax before fire.

God is coming as judge, and creation is melting at His presence. As we move through Micah in the coming weeks, we will find that there is no match for our God. He has no rival. Mountains melt and valleys split.

The people of Judah expect God to judge their enemies to the north since they are a divided kingdom. They expect God to judge Israel and their capital Samaria. Then, come the words in [Micah 1:5](#), "All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?"

As we look at the first two chapters of Micah, we'll encounter two images of judgment.

The LORD judges sin like a plague ([Micah 1.8-15](#)).

In [Micah 1:9](#), we read, "For Samaria's plague is incurable; it has spread to Judah. It has reached the very gate of my people, even to Jerusalem itself." The sins have spread like a plague. The LORD will bring their sins to judgment.

Bruce Waltke shares in his book, *A Commentary on Micah*, p. 58, "Julia Ward Howe caught a similar vision while on a visit during the American Civil War to the Federal Army encamped near Washington and gave expression to it in the stirring lines of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic":

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read the righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.

In [Micah 1.10-16](#), he calls out cities and teaches them a lesson from their names. Beth Ophrah, “house of dust,” roll in the dust ([Micah 1.10](#)). “Those who live in Maroth [sounds like “bitter”] writhe in pain, waiting for relief” ([Micah 1.12](#)). “The town of Akzib [deception] will prove deceptive to the kings of Israel” ([Micah 1.14](#)).

The LORD’s judgment is like a plague. The plague destroys people’s lives who have dishonored the covenant. Words like idols, images and prostitution ([Micah 1.7](#)), covet ([Micah 2.2](#)), liar and deception ([Micah 2.11](#)) show how God’s people were breaking His 10 commandments. They are breaking the relationship. It spreads like a plague. Much like God sent plagues on Egypt to free His people from slavery, judgment comes on His people to invite them to repent.

The LORD judges sin like a disaster ([Micah 2.1-11](#)).

In [Micah 2:3](#), we read, “Therefore thus says the Lord: behold, against this family I am devising disaster, from which you cannot remove your necks, and you shall not walk haughtily, for it will be a time of disaster.”

Then, in [Micah 2:10](#), we read, “Arise and go, for this is no place to rest, because of uncleanness that destroys with a grievous destruction.”

Judgment is pictured as disaster and destruction. It would come in the form of armies from Assyria and Babylon with siege ramps and starvation, fire and chains. People led away from their homes. Many would never return.

He compares their false prophets to liars and deceivers. In [Micah 2:11](#), we read, “If a man should go about and utter wind and lies, saying, “I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,” he would be the preacher for this people!” Do we live among people like that today?

Sin seems pleasant in the moment, but it wrecks lives with destruction and disaster. I can still remember returning to Joplin, MO the first time after the EF-5 tornado tore through the city on May 22, 2011. 158 people died. One of those was a classmate from my hometown. People talk about it looking like a warzone. It was several months after the tornado. Most of the debris was cleaned up, but it was so strange to see no trees. The landmarks were all gone.

Judgment is God's way of telling people the choices you are making will kill you. Judgment of sin is like a disaster. It is full scale. No turning back. You reap what you sow.

We have two responses to these opening chapters of Micah.

First, we repent of our sins with sadness ([Micah 1.8](#), [11](#), [16](#)).

In [Micah 1.8](#), "Because of this I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and naked. I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl." Images of sadness and grieving accompany sorrow over sin. Let's ask God to break our hearts with what breaks His heart.

In [Micah 1.11](#), "Pass by naked and in shame...Beth Ezel is in mourning." "Shave your head in mourning for the children in whom you delight; make yourself as bald as the vulture, for they will go from you into exile" ([Micah 1.16](#)).

On Wednesday night, we asked the question, "Where do we find the steadfast love and faithfulness of God in the life of Jesus?" "How did Jesus display God's steadfast love and faithfulness?" One of our students came up to me after our group time. He said, "I should have said it earlier, but it came to me after we had moved on in the discussion. We see God's love in Jesus when He weeps with people." The shortest verse in the English Bible is [John 11.35](#), "Jesus wept." He weeps at the tomb of His friend Lazarus. He is sad for the death of His friend. He may also be sad at the effects of sin in this world that brings death.

As we move through Micah in the coming weeks, he will confront us with our idols and challenge us to change and renew our commitment to our King.

Second, we look to God for hope ([Micah 2.11-12](#)).

As we read through Micah's message, we will find glimpses of hope. I'll be honest, much of Micah's message is, "Straighten up. God's gonna get you." But mixed in the messages of judgment are glimpses of hope. There's a remnant. A ruler will come and make things right. A promise is given.

During the Joplin tornado, the high school received a direct hit. The building was in shambles. And the letters from the school sign were mostly gone. Only the letters "O and P" were left from "JOPLIN." Afterwards, someone used duct tape and added two letters to "OP". They put an "H" at the front and an "E" at the end to spell "HOPE." It was a tangible reminder in the midst of tragedy, there's hope.

In [Micah 2.11-12](#), we encounter one of those promises of hope. “I will surely gather all of you, Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people” ([Micah 2.11](#)).

On Wednesday night, we studied [Psalm 100](#). In the middle of that Psalm, we hear some similar language. [Psalm 100:3](#), “Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” The Psalm concludes by telling us God is good. In [John 10](#), Jesus says, I’m the good shepherd. My sheep hear and recognize My voice. [John 10:14–16](#), “I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

The message of Micah is a shepherd is coming who will deliver His sheep. [Micah 5.2](#), tells us the shepherd will come from a little town in Bethlehem who will rule His people.

Our main idea for today, “Our King judges and delivers His people.”

Some kings judge and other kings may deliver, but our King judges and delivers His people.