

**A PERSONAL
VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY**

MICAH

**BY
SHARON CRAVENS**

Mic. 1:1 The word of the LORD that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

This book is a record of YHWH's prophecies through the prophet Micah. He is identified as ministering during the reigns of three kings of Judah—Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. He was a contemporary of Isaiah, Amos and Hosea. His message is directed to all of Israel--Samaria being the capital of the Northern Kingdom and Jerusalem the capital of the Southern.

Mic. 1:2 Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.

The prophet is calling for all the people of Israel to listen to the testimony that YHWH is going to declare against His own people. Point is made that the Lord is testifying from His holy temple, which I believe is referencing His heavenly temple in context with the following verses.

Mic. 1:3 For, behold, the LORD cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.

Mic. 1:4 And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place.

These verses speak of a time that YHWH is going to leave His heavenly throne and come down to earth in judgment and destruction. His coming will result in the mountains melting and the valleys being ripped apart (from the Hebrew), both of which are characteristic of an earthquake. This sounds very similar to what happens when the final bowl judgment is poured out in the tribulation period as recorded in Revelation.

Rev. 16:17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

Rev. 16:18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great.

Rev. 16:19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

Rev. 16:20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

As is often the case with the prophets, I don't think Micah could distinguish the times to which his prophecies referred. I'm sure many will choose to interpret this figuratively, and make application specifically to the people to whom Micah was prophesying. I don't disagree with that application, but somehow I think there is further application to future more literal events.

Mic. 1:5 For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?

Mic. 1:6 Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof.

Why is this happening? Because of the transgressions (deliberate sins) and sins (missing the mark of perfection) of the house of Israel. Verse 5 makes it clear that Samaria and Jerusalem represent the Northern (Jacob/Ephraim) and Southern (Judah) Kingdoms. The Lord is declaring His intent to make Samaria a ruined land (from the Hebrew), a place given over to the planting of vineyards. The stones are probably a reference to the wall around the city, which will be torn down to the foundations.

I am reminded that the 70th week of Daniel that we generally call the tribulation is that last seven years before Jesus returns to earth to establish His kingdom. One of its specific purposes is to bring in everlasting righteousness to the nation of Israel.

Dan. 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, **to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins**, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and **to bring in everlasting righteousness**, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Mic. 1:7 And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the hires thereof shall be burned with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered *it* of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot.

God is fed up with the idol worship of His people. His people had been unfaithful to Him, so He describes them as adulterers consorting with harlots.

“for she gathered...” – This section was a bit harder to understand. It seems to be saying that the people had gotten wealthy through their idolatrous connections with heathen nations, and God was going to see that their wealth was taken away by idolatrous heathen nations.

Mic. 1:8 Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.

Mic. 1:9 For her wound *is* incurable; for it is come unto Judah; he is come unto the gate of my people, *even* to Jerusalem.

This message is a source of great distress to the prophet Micah. He describes himself as weeping loudly with sorrow and walking about stripped and naked. This action is not unique to Micah; Isaiah did the same, except we are told that Isaiah was instructed to.

Is. 20:2 At the same time spake the LORD by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

It would certainly indicate a serious concern about his message for the prophet to resort to such drastic actions. Micah knows that his prophecy is certain, because the wound to the people is incurable.

I think God often chose His prophets based on their heart for their people. So many times I have read of the prophets weeping or mourning for their people as they declare God's message. It is really convicting to me. I love my country and would love to see a revival take place; but I can't honestly say I have grieved in the same way these prophets grieved over the sin of their people. I am more often disgusted and saddened as I am confronted with more and more evidence of a continual downward spiral in our morality and rejection of God. "Father, please give me a true burden for this nation. Teach my heart to connect with your heart as an intercessor and servant."

Mic. 1:10 Declare ye *it* not at Gath, weep ye not at all: in the house of Aphrah roll thyself in the dust.

Joe Focht revealed many interesting puns in this passage.
Gath = weep; no weeping in weep town

I had to do some research for help on these next few verses. Gath was one of the main Philistine cities and would rejoice in the coming judgment of Israel. So the admonition not to publicize the prophecy or show any public display of fear or grief would be to keep their enemies from getting that pleasure.

Although many say that Aphrah means dust, that is not the case according to Strong's; Questia (www.questia.com) indicated that the Hebrew sounded like the word for dust. Rolling in the dust or covering yourself with dust was one of the signs of mourning.

Focht: house of dust will be rolling in the dust

Mic. 1:11 Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir, having thy shame naked: the inhabitant of Zaanan came not forth in the mourning of Bethazel; he shall receive of you his standing.

The Hebrew for Saphir means beautiful. I think the NLT had the right idea of a reference to going off to captivity stripped of beauty.

Focht: no beauty in beauty town

It sounds like Zaanan and Bethazel were allies. The Hebrew for *receive* means "to take." The KJV is confusing, but it seems that the people of Zaanan were staying at home mourning over the removal or capture of Bethazel.

Focht: Bethazel = neighbors; no nearness in near town
Zaanan = marching; no marching from march town

Mic. 1:12 For the inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good: but evil came down from the LORD unto the gate of Jerusalem.

I like the CJB translation of this verse:

The inhabitants of Marot have no hope of anything good; for ADONAI has sent down disaster to the very gate of Yerushalayim.

Maroth means "bitter springs" and was located near Jerusalem.

Focht: only bitterness in bitter town

Focht: Jerusalem = peace; no peace in peace town

Mic. 1:13 O thou inhabitant of Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast: she is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion: for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee.

According to Easton's, Lachish became one of Judah's strongest fortresses. I thought it was interesting that the British Museum has a stone slab upon which Sennacherib, King of Assyria, recorded his permission to destroy this city. It reads:

"Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment before the city of Lachish: I gave permission for its slaughter."

I think the NLT got it right regarding the last part of the verse:

You were the first city in Judah to follow Israel in the sin of idol worship, and so you led Jerusalem into sin.

Focht: Lachish = horse; horses not free in horse town

Mic. 1:14 Therefore shalt thou give presents to Moreshethgath: the houses of Achzib shall be a lie to the kings of Israel.

Again, the NLT translation makes good sense to me:

Send a farewell gift to Moresheth-gath (Micah's home); there is no hope of saving it. The town of Aczib has deceived the kings of Israel, for it promised help it could not give.

Focht: Achzib = a lie; only lies in lie town

Mic. 1:15 Yet will I bring an heir unto thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah: he shall come unto Adullam the glory of Israel.

"heir" = to occupy (by driving out previous tenants, and possessing in their place); by implication, to seize, to rob, to inherit; also to expel, to impoverish, to ruin:

The Hebrew for *heir* certainly wasn't what I expected to see. It seems to be saying that an enemy is coming that will drive out the inhabitants of Mareshah. The "he" seems to refer back to the "heir," and would indicate that Adullam, the glory of Israel, would also be conquered. This was the place where David killed Goliath. There was a large cave close to the city in which David and his first followers gathered after he fled from Saul. Maybe that is why Micah calls it "the glory of Israel." JFB suggests that it is because of its superior situation.

1Sam. 22:1 David therefore departed thence, and escaped **to the cave Adullam**: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard *it*, they went down thither to him.

1Sam. 22:2 And every one *that was* in distress, and every one that *was* in debt, and every one *that was* discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

Focht: Mareshah = possession; no possession in possession town; will be conquered

Adullam = testimony; no testimony in testimony town

Mic. 1:16 Make thee bald, and poll thee for thy delicate children; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; for they are gone into captivity from thee.

Again, I like the CJB translation:

Shave the hair from your head as you mourn for the children who were your delight; make yourselves as bald as vultures, for they have gone from you into exile.

Shaving the head was another sign of mourning.

Job 1:20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

Job 1:21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

Ezra 9:2 For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of *those* lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.

Ezra 9:3 And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished.

It was forbidden by the law. Since you want to be like the pagans, you might as well mourn like the pagans.

Another interesting observation by Focht: Children going into captivity are better off than living with parents who would sacrifice them to idols.