

**This book contains the account
of Micah foretelling about God
punishing Israel and Judah
because of their evil leaders,
and about restoring them by the
leader coming from Bethlehem.
We call this book
Micah**

¹ *I am Micah. I am from the town of Moresheth in Judah. Yahweh gave me these messages in visions about Samaria and Jerusalem during the time when Jotham, and then Ahaz, and then Hezekiah, were the kings of Judah.*

Yahweh will punish Samaria

- ² You people everywhere on the earth, pay attention to this [DOU]!
Yahweh our God is accusing you from his holy temple *in heaven*.
- ³ He will come down *from heaven*
and walk on the tops of the highest mountains.
- ⁴ *It will be as though* the mountains will melt under his *feet*
like [SIM] wax *melts* in front of a fire,
and like [SIM] water *disappears*
when it rushes/flows down into a valley.

⁵ Those things will happen because of the terrible sins [DOU] that the people [MTY] of Israel, *the descendants of Jacob*, have committed. But it was [RHQ] *the people of Samaria city who persuaded all the people of Israel to sin,* and it was [RHQ] because the people of Jerusalem *set up altars to worship their gods* that *the other people of Judah were persuaded to worship idols on their hilltops.*

⁶ So Yahweh will cause Samaria to become a heap *of rubble/ruins;* *it will be only* a field for planting vineyards. He will cause the stones of its *buildings* to roll down into the valley, and the foundations *of the buildings* will be uncovered.

⁷ All the idols in Samaria will be smashed, and the gifts *given to prostitutes at the temples of their idols* will be destroyed in a fire.

And because people paid prostitutes there, *their enemies will take away those idols and sell them to get money to pay to prostitutes in other countries.*

Micah mourned for Judah also

⁸ Because *Samaria will be destroyed*, I will weep and wail. I will walk around ◀barefoot/without any sandals on my feet▶ and naked. I will howl like a jackal/wolf

and screech like an owl,
9 because Samaria will be completely destroyed
[MET];
nothing can save that city.

But the same thing will happen to Judah!
*It is as though the enemy army has already
reached the city gates of Jerusalem,
the main city where my people live.*

10 Do not tell that to *our enemies* in Gath city in
Philistia!
Do not cry, *lest the people there find out what
is happening!!*

*Instead, just roll in the dirt in Beth-Leaphrah
because the name of that town means
'house of dust.'*

11 You people who live in Shaphir town, whose
name means 'beautiful,'
naked and ashamed, you will be taken to
another country.

*You people in Beth-Ezel town should mourn,
because no one from Zaanan town, whose
name means 'one who goes out,' will go out
to help you.*

12 *The name of Maroth town sounds like 'bitter-
ness;'*
everyone there is anxiously waiting for good
things to happen to them,

but good things will not happen to them;
instead, terrible things are about to happen
to them,
and it will soon happen at the gates of
Jerusalem.

13 You people of Lachish city, *whose name sounds like 'team,'*
 hitch your horses to pull the chariots in
which you can ride to flee from your ene-
mies.

The Israeli people rebelled against Yahweh,
 and you ◀imitated them/did the same evil
 things that they did▶,
 and that caused the people of Jerusalem [IDM] to
 start sinning, too.

14 *You people of Judah, send a farewell gift to the*
people of Moresheth town,
because their enemies will soon destroy it.

The name of the town Aczib means 'deception,'
 and the kings of Israel will soon find out that
 the people of that town will deceive them.

15 *The name of your town of Mareshah means*
'conqueror,'
 and Yahweh will soon send someone to
 conquer your town.

It will be necessary for the great/glorious leaders
of Israel to go and hide in the cave at
Adullam city.

16 *You people of Judah, shave your heads while*
you will be mourning,
 because your children whom you love will
 soon be ◀exiled/forced to leave you and
 go to another country▶.

2

*Yahweh will punish those who oppress the
 poor*

¹ Terrible things will happen to you who lie awake at night,
planning to do wicked things.

You get up at dawn, and you do those things,
as soon as you are able to do them.

² You want fields *that belong to other people*,
so you seize them;
you also take their houses.

You cheat people to get their homes,
taking away the property that belongs to
their families.

³ Therefore, this is what Yahweh says:

“I will cause you people to experience disasters,
and you will not be able to escape [MTY]
from them.

You will no *longer* walk around proudly,
because when those things happen, it will be
a time of much trouble for you.

⁴ At that time, *your enemies* will make fun of you;
they will ridicule you by singing this sad
song about you:

‘We are completely ruined;
Yahweh is taking our land/fields from us,
and he will give it to those who will capture us.’”

⁵ So *when it is the time for the land to be given
back to you* people who belong to Yahweh,
there will be no one [MTY] who will be
able to ◀cast lots/throw marked stones▶ to
determine which land belongs to whom.

False prophets

⁶ The people *who heard me say that* replied to me,
“Do not prophesy such things!

Do not say that *Yahweh* is going to humiliate us *by causing us to experience disasters!*"

⁷ But you people [MTY] of Israel should not [RHQ] talk like that!

The Spirit of *Yahweh* will certainly not [RHQ] be patient *with people who say such things!*

People who continually do things that are righteous will certainly [RHQ] like/appreciate what I say.

⁸ *But Yahweh says,*

“*Recently my people have been acting toward me like an enemy.*

When soldiers return from fighting *against their enemies,*

you rich people refuse to return the coats of those poor soldiers who have borrowed money from you

and given you their coats to guarantee that they will pay back the money that they borrowed from you.

It is as though you are waiting to forcefully take their coats off their backs!

⁹ You have forced women to leave their nice homes,

and you have stolen from their children forever the ◀blessings/good things▶ that I wanted to give them.

¹⁰ So get up and leave *here!*

This is not a place where you can rest *and be safe/protected,*

because you have ◀defiled it/caused it to be a place that I hate▶;

it will be completely destroyed.

11 *You people want* a prophet who will lie to you, saying ‘I will preach *that you should drink* plenty of wine and *other* alcoholic drinks!’ That is the *kind of* prophet who *would please* you.”

Yahweh promised to restore them

12 “*But some day*, you descendants of Jacob, you Israeli people who have survived, I will bring you back *from* ◀*exile/other countries*▶,

I will gather you together
like [SIM] *a shepherd gathers his sheep* from the pasture into a pen [DOU];
there will be many of you in your land/
country.

13 Your leader will enable them to leave the countries where they have been exiled;
he will lead them out of the gates *of their enemies’ cities*,
back to your own country.

Your king will lead them;
it is I, Yahweh, who will be their king!”

3

Micah rebuked the Israeli leaders

1 Then I said, “You Israeli [MTY] leaders, listen *to what I say!*

You should certainly [RHQ] know what things are *right to do*
and what things are wrong,

2 but you hate what is good
and you love what is evil.

You act like butchers:

it is as though you strip the skin off my people
and *tear* the flesh from their bones.

³ *It is as though* you chop them into pieces like
[SIM] meat *to be cooked* in a pot.

⁴ Then, *when you have troubles*, you plead to
Yahweh *to help you*,
but he will not answer you.

At that time, he will turn away from you
because of the evil things that you have
done.”

⁵ This is what Yahweh says
about your *false* prophets who are deceiving the
people:

“If someone gives them food,
those prophets say that things will go well for
him.

But they declare war against anyone who
does not give them food.

⁶ So *now it is as though* [MET] night will descend
on you prophets;
you will not receive any *more* visions.

It is as though [MET] the sun will set for you;
the time *when you are greatly honored* will
end.

⁷ Then you ◀seers/people who predict what
will happen in the future▶ [DOU] will be
disgraced;

you will cover your faces *because you will be
ashamed*,

because when you ask me *what will happen*,
there will be no answer from me.”

⁸ But as for me, I am full of *God's* power,

- power from the Spirit of Yahweh.
 I am courageous and strong
 to declare to the Israeli people [MTY, DOU]
 that they have sinned and rebelled *against*
Yahweh.
- 9 You leaders of the people [MTY] of Israel, listen
 to this!
 You hate *it when people do* what is just;
 and *when people say* what is true,
 you distort it, *saying it is false.*
- 10 *It is as though* you are building *houses in*
 Jerusalem on foundations
 that consist of murdering people and doing
 what is corrupt.
- 11 Your leaders make *favorable* decisions *only if*
they receive bribes.
 Your priests teach people only if *those people*
 pay them *well.*
 Your *false* prophets require people to pay
 them to tell people what will happen *to*
them in the future.
 Those prophets say, “Yahweh is telling us *what*
we should say,
 and *we say that* we will not experience any
 disasters.”
- 12 Because of what you *leaders do,*
 Zion *Hill* will be plowed like a field;
 it will become a heap of ruins/rubble;
 the top of the hill, where the temple is *now,*
 will be covered with bushes.

4

Yahweh's future rule

¹ Yahweh says *that* some day his temple will be on top of a mountain, and that mountain will be the most important [MET] one on the earth; it will be *as though it is* higher than all the hills, and huge groups of people from all over the world will come there *to worship*.

² *People from* many nations will say *to each other*,

“Let’s go to the mountain where Yahweh is, to the temple where we can worship the God whom Jacob *worshiped*.

There God will teach us how he wants us to conduct our lives, and we will do what he wants us to do.”

Zion *Hill* is the place where he will teach *people*; and *people will go* out from Jerusalem *to tell others* his messages.

³ Yahweh will settle disputes between many people, and he will *also* settle disputes between powerful nations that are far away.

Then people will hammer their swords to cause them to become plow blades, and *hammer* their spears to cause them to become pruning knives.

Armies of nations will no *longer* fight against *armies of other* nations, and they will no longer train *men how to fight* in wars.

⁴ Everyone will sit *peacefully* under his own grapevines,

and under his own fig trees;
no one will cause them to be afraid.

That is what will surely happen because the
Commander of the armies of angels has
said it.

⁵ Many [HYP] *of the people of other nations* will
worship [IDM] their own gods,
but we will worship Yahweh our God always,
forever.

The Israeli people will return from exile

⁶ Yahweh says, “There will soon be a time when
I will gather the people whom I have punished,
who have been ◀exiled/forced to go to other
countries▶,

all those whom *I have caused* to suffer much.

⁷ My people who did not die while they were
exiled will become a strong nation *again*.

Then *I*, Yahweh, will be their king,
and I will rule from Jerusalem forever.

⁸ As for you people of Jerusalem [MET],
you who *guard all of my people* like [MET] *a
shepherd guards his sheep* from a tower,
you *who live on Zion Hill*, will have great power
again.

You people who live in Jerusalem will again
rule like you did previously.

⁹ *So why* [RHQ] are you wailing now?

Is it because you have no king?

Have all your wise people died?

You are groaning loudly like [SIM] a woman
who is giving birth to a baby.

10 *Well*, you people of Jerusalem should writhe and groan like [SIM] a woman who is having birth pains, because now you must leave this city, and *while you are traveling*, you will set up tents in open fields *at night*; you will go to *live in* Babylon.

But while you are there,
I, Yahweh, will rescue you;
I will free you from the power/control [MTY] of your enemies.

11 Now *the armies of* many nations have gathered to attack you.
They are saying, 'Jerusalem must be destroyed!
We want to see this city *when it becomes ruins!*'

12 But they do not know what I, Yahweh, think, and they do not understand what I plan:
I will gather them *and punish them*
like [SIM] *farmers* thresh grain on the ground.

13 So, you people of Jerusalem, rise up and punish [MET] *the nations who oppose you*.
I will cause you *to be very strong*,
as if [MET] you had horns made of iron,
as if [MET] you had hoofs made of bronze;
and you will crush many nations.

And *then you will take* from your enemies the valuable things that they have taken *from other countries*, and you will dedicate those things to *me, the one who is the Lord of all the people on the earth.*”

5

¹ “But now, *you people of Jerusalem, gather your troops together*, because even though you have a wall around your city to protect it, enemy soldiers are surrounding the city. And soon they will strike your leader on his face, with a rod.”

A ruler will come from Bethlehem

² But you *people of* [APO] Bethlehem in Ephrathah *district need to know that* even though your *town* is a very small one among all the towns in Judah, someone who will rule Israel will be born in your town. *He will be* someone whose family has existed a very long time ago [DOU].

³ *But now* you people of Israel will be conquered by your enemies; *but it will be for only a short time*, like [MET] *the short time that* women have great pain while their babies are being born. After that, your fellow-countrymen who were ◀exiled/forced to go to other countries▶ will return to their own country.

- 4 And that man who will be ruling *there in Jerusalem* will stand and lead his people well,
 because Yahweh, his God, will cause him to be strong and greatly honored.
 Then the people whom he rules will live *in Jerusalem* safely;
 he will be greatly honored by people all over the earth,
so no one will dare to attack Jerusalem.
- 5 And he will cause things to go well *for his people.*

Yahweh will rescue some and get rid of others

- When *the army of Assyria* attacks our country and breaks through our fortresses,
 we will appoint ◀seven or eight/several▶ leaders *to lead our army* to fight against them.
- 6 With their swords *our army* will defeat the *army of Assyria, whose capital was founded by Nimrod long ago.*
- So our army will rescue us from the Assyrian *army*
 when they invade our country [DOU].

- 7 The ◀descendants of Jacob/Israelis▶ who survive will be *a blessing* to the people of other nations,
 like [SIM] dew and rain sent by Yahweh do good to the grass.
- The Israelis will not trust in humans *to help them*;
 instead, they will rely on Yahweh.
- 8 In the midst of *their enemies in many people-groups* [DOU],

the descendants of Jacob who remain alive
 will be like [SIM] a lion among the *other*
 wild beasts of the forest,
 like [SIM] a young lion who goes among a flock
 of sheep and pounces *on one* and ◀mauls
 it/tears it to pieces▶,
 and no one will be able to rescue *that sheep*.
 9 You Israelis will defeat [MTY] all your enemies
 and completely destroy them.

10 Yahweh says,
 “At that time, I will destroy *you Israeli people’s*
 horses *that your soldiers use in war*
 and your chariots.
 11 I will tear down your city walls
 and destroy all your fortified cities.
 12 I will get rid of all those among you who
 practice magic
 and the ◀fortune-tellers/those who say that
 they can predict what will happen in the
 future▶.
 13 I will destroy *all* your idols and *sacred stone*
 pillars,
 and then you will no longer bow down *and*
 worship things that you yourselves [SYN]
 have made.
 14 I will get rid of your poles *that represent the*
goddess Asherah,
 and *I will also* destroy all your idols.
 15 And because I will be very angry,
 I will *also* punish *the people of* all the nations
 who have not obeyed *me*.”

6

Yahweh accuses his people

¹ Pay attention to what Yahweh says *to you Israeli people*:

“Stand up *in court* and state what you are accusing *me* about.

And allow the hills and mountains to hear what you will say.

² *But then* you mountains must *also* listen *carefully* [DOU] to what I, Yahweh, am complaining *about my people*.

I have something to say about what [DOU] my Israeli people are doing that displeases me.

³ My people, what have I done to *cause trouble for you* [RHQ]?

What have I done to cause you to experience difficulties?

Answer me!

⁴ *I did great things for your ancestors*;

I brought them out of Egypt;

I rescued them from that land where they were slaves.

I sent Moses to *lead* them,

and *his older brother* Aaron and *his older sister* Miriam.

⁵ My people, think about when Balak, the king of Moab, requested Beor’s son Balaam to *curse your ancestors*,

and think about what Balaam replied.

Think about *how your ancestors crossed the Jordan River miraculously while* they were traveling from Acacia to Gilgal.

Think about those things in order that you may know that *I, Yahweh*, do what is right.”

⁶ *The Israeli people ask*, “What shall we bring to Yahweh *who lives in heaven* when we come to him and bow down before him?

Should we bring calves that are a year-old that will be offerings that will be *killed and completely burned on the altar*?

⁷ Will Yahweh be pleased *if we offer to him* 1,000 rams and 10,000 streams of *olive oil*?

Should we offer our firstborn children *to be sacrifices* to pay for the sins that we have committed [DOU]?”

⁸ *No, because* he has shown each of us what is good *to do*; he has shown [RHQ] us what he requires each of us *to do*:

He wants us to do what is just/fair and to love and to be merciful *to others*, and *he wants us* to live humbly *while we fellowship* with him, our God.

The people of Israel are guilty and must be punished

⁹ “I am Yahweh, so if you are wise, you should revere me.

I am calling out to *you people of Jerusalem*, “The armies [MET] that will destroy your city are coming,

- so pay careful attention to me, the one who
is causing them to punish you with my rod.
- 10 Do you think that [RHQ] I should forget that
you wicked people filled your homes with
valuable things
that you acquired by cheating *others*?
Do you think that [RHQ] I should forget that you
used false measures *when you bought and
sold things*?
Those are things that I hate.
- 11 *Do you think* that [RHQ] I should say nothing
about people who use scales that do not
weigh correctly,
and who use weights that are not accurate?
- 12 The rich people among you always act vio-
lently *to get money from poor people*.
All of the people *in Jerusalem* are liars,
and they [SYN] always deceive people.
- 13 Therefore, I have *already* begun to get rid of
you,
to ruin you because of the sins that you have
committed.
- 14 *Soon* you will eat food, but you will not have
enough to satisfy you;
your stomachs will *still feel as though they
are empty*.
You will try to save up *money*,
but you will not be able to save anything,
because I will send your enemies to take it from
you in wars [MTY].
- 15 You will plant *seeds*,
but you will not harvest *anything*.
You will press olives,

but *others*, not you, will use the *olive oil*.
 You will trample on grapes *and make wine from the juice*,
 but *others*, not you, will drink the wine.

¹⁶ *Those things will happen to you because you obey only the wicked laws of King Omri, and you do the terrible things that wicked King Ahab and his descendants commanded.*

So, I will destroy your *country*,
 and I will cause your people to be despised;
 people of *other nations* will insult you.’ ”

7

Micah's misery and his hope

¹ I am very miserable/frustrated!
 I am like [SIM] someone who is hungry, *who searches for fruit to pick*
 after all the fruit had been picked
 and who finds no grapes or figs to eat.

² *All the godly people have disappeared from this land;*
 there is not one of them left.
The people who are left are all murderers [MTY];
it is as though everyone is eager to kill his
 fellow countryman.

³ *They all* use both hands to do what is evil.
Government officials and judges *all* ask for
 bribes.
 Important people tell others what they want,
 and they plot/scheme together *about how to get it done*.

⁴ *Even* the best people are *as worthless* [SIM] as briars;
the people *who are considered by others to be* [IRO] the most honest are worse than clumps of thornbushes.

But, *Yahweh* will soon judge them;
now is the time that he will punish people,
a time when they will be *very* confused
because of being defeated.

⁵ So, do not trust anyone!
Do not trust *even* a friend;
even be careful what you say to your wife whom
you love!

⁶ Boys will despise their fathers,
and girls will defy their mothers.
Women will defy their mothers-in-law.
Your enemies will be those who live in your
own houses.

⁷ As for me, I wait for *Yahweh to help me*.
I confidently expect that God, my Savior, will
answer me *when I pray*.

Yahweh will rescue his people

⁸ You who are our enemies,
do not gloat/rejoice about *what has happened*
to us,
because even if we have experienced disasters,
those disasters will end and we will be
restored.
Even if it is as though we are sitting in the
darkness,
Yahweh will be our light.

⁹ We must be patient while *Yahweh* punishes us

because we have sinned against him.
But later, *it will be as though* he will go to court
and defend us,
and he will make sure that the judge makes
a right decision about us.
It will be as though he will bring us out into the
light,
and we will see it when he rescues us.
10 Our enemies will *also* see that, and they will
be disgraced
because they *ridiculed us*, saying
“Why is [RHQ] Yahweh, that God of yours, *not
helping you?*”
But with our own eyes we will see them when
they are defeated;
we will see them trampled
like [SIM] mud in the streets.

- 11 *You people of Israel*, at that time your cities will
be rebuilt,
and your territory will become larger.
12 *People from many countries will come to honor
you:*
people from Assyria and from *near* the
Euphrates River in the east and from Egypt
in the south,
from distant seas,
and from many mountains.
13 But *the other countries on* the earth will
become desolate
because of the *evil* things that their people
have done.

Micah's prayer and Yahweh's answer

14 Yahweh, protect your people like [MET] *a shepherd protects his sheep* by using his walking stick;
lead your people [MET] whom you have chosen to belong to you.
Even though some of them live by themselves in a forest,
give them the fertile pastureland
in the Bashan and Gilead *regions*
that they possessed long ago.

15 *Yahweh says/replies,*
“Yes, I will perform miracles for you
like the miracles that I performed when I rescued your *ancestors* from *being slaves in Egypt.*”

16 *People from many* nations will see *what Yahweh does for you,*
and they will be ashamed
because they do not have any power.
They will put their hands over their mouths and their ears *because they will be very amazed because of what Yahweh does,*
and they will not be able to say anything or hear anything.

17 *Being very humiliated,* they will crawl on the ground [MTY] like [SIM] snakes.
They will come out of their homes trembling,
and stand revering Yahweh our God.
They will be very afraid of him,
and will tremble in front of him.

18 *Yahweh,* there is no [RHQ] God like you;

you forgive the sins [DOU] that were committed by the people who have survived, the people who belong to you.

You do not remain angry forever;
you are very happy *to show us* that you faithfully love us.

19 You will again act kindly/compassionately toward us.

You will get rid of *the scroll on which you have written* the sins that we have committed
as though you were trampling it under your feet

or throwing it into the deep ocean.

20 You will show that you faithfully *do what you promised for us* and faithfully love us,
just like you solemnly promised long ago to our ancestors Abraham and Jacob that you would do.

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