MICAH

*Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God*

TIME PERIOD

740-700 BC

KEY VERSE

*"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*

6:8

Last updated February 26, 2023

Icon

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Micah lived approximately at the same time as Isaiah in the latter half of the 8th century and is somewhat in a special position because he has a message for both the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. He focuses on evil among the people in general, but especially on corrupt leadership in Jerusalem, which applies to both the "chiefs", the priests, and the prophets.

Micah experiences the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC and uses it as a warning to the southern kingdom that if they don't behave themselves, the same thing will happen to them too. It happened in 586 BC, but along the way, we know that the judgment was canceled, or at least postponed. Micah 3:12 is quoted in Jer 26:18-19, which says that God spared Judah because king Hezekiah feared the Lord and sought his favor. That was the reaction God was looking for, and that is why Jerusalem was not destroyed in Micah's time. It seems that this was the siege of 701 BC when the Assyrians almost captured Jerusalem (2 Kings 19).

Micah is often divided into three messages, all three of which begin with *"hear!"* All three messages follow the cycle of sin, judgment, and restoration. In all three restorations (2:12-13, Ch. 4-5, 7:8-20), it is mentioned that a remnant of the people will be saved. *"Israel's remnant"* is an expression often used in the prophets for the faithful minority who will be saved from judgment, i.e., those who make up God's people after the judgment. Jesus is particularly clear in 5:1, where there is mention of a ruler who will come from Bethlehem since this is quoted in Matthew 2:6. But since all three restorations are about sheep and shepherding, it may well be that Jesus is the fulfillment of all three.

**1st message (Ch. 1-2)**

1:2-2:11 Judgment on Israel and Judah

2:12-13: Restoration

**2nd message (Ch. 3-5)**

Ch. 3: Judgment on Judah (corrupt leaders, priests and prophets)

Ch. 4-5: Restoration

**3rd message (Ch. 6-7)**

6:1-7:7: Judgment on Judah

7:8-20: Restoration