

The Book of Micah: “Who Is a God Like You, Who Pardons Iniquity?”

A The Lord Witnesses Against Israel* (1:1–16)

Structure of 1:6-16: Cities are listed from most distant (Samaria), to nearest (including Micah’s hometown of Moresheth)—also in approximate order of attack by Babylon.

- Theme: “sins” and “rebellion”, of which Israel is guilty
- Destruction and exile are promised; walls of Samaria will be demolished
- Israel will be ashamed

B Woe to the Oppressors – God Will Disappoint Their Trust (2:1–13)

- Begins “Woe to those who scheme iniquity!”
- Social evils described: greed, deception, etc.
- God will prove “untrustworthy” to the oppressors, treating them as they have treated others
- Ends with hope of God’s deliverance

C God’s Case Against the Leaders of Israel (3:1-12)

Center: 3:6-7 – Seven punishments for false prophets

- Begins “Hear now”
- Leaders: corrupt rulers, prophets, and priests
- Condemnation of dishonesty and social injustice; Jacob’s “rebellious act” and Israel’s “sin” (3:8)
- God’s provision of a just prophet (Micah) in place of prophets who prophesy for pay (3:8)
- Israel abhors justice, loves evil, and is arrogantly presumptuous of God’s presence (3:2, 9, 11)
- Destruction promised

D CENTER: Restoration for the Remnant Under God’s Shepherd-King (4:1–5:15)

a Worship of the LORD is restored; no more war machinery; God teaches repentant nations (4:1-5)

b Good news for the remnant assembled in Zion (4:6-7)

c Zion (great city) will regain the dominion (“tower of the flock”) of old times (4:8-10)

- after enduring the “childbirth” of exile in Babylon (suggests birth of a Son...)
- God will deliver them from Babylon
- begins “As for you, [place name]”

d TURNING POINT: Israel’s present hopeless situation will be reversed by God (4:11-5:1)

c’ Bethlehem (little city) will produce a ruler (“shepherd”) from long ago (5:2-6)

- after enduring the “childbirth” (of exile; suggests birth of a Son...)
- this ruler will deliver them from all future invaders (typified by Assyria)
- begins “As for you, [place name]”

b’ Good news for the remnant among the nations (5:7-9)

a’ Worship of idols is cut off; no more war machinery; God judges rebellious nations (5:10-15)

C’ God’s Case Against the People of Israel (6:1–16)

Center: 6:8 – God’s central requirements

- Begins “Hear now”
- Leaders: people have forgotten good past leaders provided by God, following corrupt leaders instead
- Condemnation of dishonesty and social injustice; attempts to atone for “rebellious acts” and “sin” (6:7)
- God’s deliverance from Balaam, a prophet hired to prophesy for pay (6:5)
- Israel admonished to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God (6:8)
- Destruction promised

B’ Woe to the Oppressed – God Alone Can Be Trusted (7:1–7)

- Begins “Woe is me!”
- Social evils described: greed, deception, etc.
- God will prove trustworthy to the prophet, saving him
- Ends with hope of God’s deliverance

**Note: “Jacob” and “Israel” were usually used in reference to the northern kingdom. When it fell in 722 B.C., the terms were reclaimed by Judah. Both usages are reflected in Micah, which was written both before (1:6) and after (3:9-12, cf. Jeremiah 26:18) the fall of the northern kingdom.*

A’ The LORD Pleads Israel’s Case (7:8–20)

Center: 7:14 – Prayer for God to shepherd Israel

- Theme: “sins” and “rebellious acts”, which God will forgive
- Destruction and exile will be reversed; walls will be rebuilt
- Israel’s enemies will be ashamed