

MICAH

Micah was a prophet near the time that Israel fell to the Assyrian empire in 722 B.C. His first two chapters are warnings of what the Assyrians would do to Israel. He uses some great plays on words (in Hebrew) in **chapter 1**. He also promised restoration of Israel at the end of **chapter 2**. Judah had similar problems to Israel, and both were condemned for those in **chapter 3**. Then Micah looks further into the future and sees the fall of Jerusalem that would happen in 586 B.C. (**3:12**).

Isaiah was a prophet at that same time. They even share a very important prophecy in their writings: **Isaiah 2:2-4** is the same as **Micah 4:1-3**. We more often use the **Isaiah 2** because it goes with **Joel 2:28-32**, **Daniel 2:44**, and **Acts 2** as the fulfillment. The great spiritual restoration through Christ is the main idea in the rest of the book, and it does specify that it will come only after the Babylonian captivity (**4:10**) and the opposition to the Jews in the days of the Persian Empire (**4:11**--see **Esther**, **Nehemiah**). They would be without a leader while under foreign powers, but that would be remedied by the birth of the Messiah (**5:2-5a**). He was to be a spiritual leader. The hope for Judah would be exemplified by their survival of the Assyrian invasion (**5:5b-6**). The Jews would be scattered throughout the inhabited world, but that would be good as a positive influence on other nations and to remove paganism from Israel (**5:7-15**).

Therefore, the judgment on Israel was fair (**6:1-16**). God reminds Him of His goodness (**6:1-5**). He desires repentance rather than sacrifice (**6:6-8**). **Verse 8** is a classic: *"He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"*

The book finishes with a balance of sorrow for the necessary chastening of the Lord (**7:1-7**) and assurance that God is compassionate and would spiritually restore Israel (**7:8-20**). Jesus' use of **Micah 7:6** in His day should have served as a warning to the Jews that they were facing imminent chastening, too (**Matthew 10:35-36**). Two statements in **chapter 7** specifically point to the first century: **7:15** prophesied that many miracles would be done (fulfilled by Jesus and the apostles), and **7:20** promises that the promise of Abraham would be fulfilled (fulfilled by Jesus forgiving us—**Acts 3:24-26**). The event to which the period of future wonders is compared is the deliverance of Israel out of bondage in Egypt. The miracles done by Jesus and the apostles would accompany the deliverance of Israel, and all men, from the bondage of sin. Then we are free to do justly, show mercy, and walk humbly with our God.