

I. Hometown Hero

04-Dec-05 Micah 1:1 (2 Kgs. 18-20; 2 Chr. 29-32; Is. 36-39)

Theme: Micah of Moresheth was a faithful prophet of the Lord who saw success in his ministry of the word.

Key Verses: Isaiah 37:21, 33-35 ²¹Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria ... ³³Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor build a siege mound against it. ³⁴By the way that he came, by the same shall he return; and he shall not come into this city,’ says the LORD. ³⁵For I will defend this city, to save it For My own sake and for My servant David’s sake.”

Introduction

Welcome to the latest installment of the “Minor Prophets.” Three years ago, I was in a bit of a pinch because I suddenly had an opening to teach a Sunday school class only about one month before the class started. O. Palmer Robertson had recently visited the church for our Theology Conference, and he and his family stayed at our house. Perhaps receiving some inspiration from his visit, I decided to teach a class based on his commentary on Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. I so enjoyed my study of these little books that I decided to do some more studies in the so-called “Minor Prophets.” So, two years ago I taught the first book of The Twelve, Hosea; and last year I covered the next two Minor Prophets – Joel and Amos.

Now, you might expect that this next quarter of the Minor Prophets would cover Obadiah and Jonah, and perhaps Micah. In fact, that was my original plan. But instead, you are getting Micah and Haggai. What happened?

Really, it all comes down to time management and fitting the material into the time allotted. I had originally hoped to cover Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah this quarter. I started by studying the longest book first, in this case Micah. I soon realized that it would take me eight weeks to cover the book of Micah. Since we have another Theology Conference planned in February, I would have only four more weeks in this quarter to cover Obadiah and Jonah. Four weeks is not quite enough for Jonah (I think it will take five or six lessons). On the other hand, four weeks is too much time for the little book of Obadiah (two lessons max). So, I had to find another Minor Prophet I could cover in four lessons to round out the quarter. Enter Haggai.

On the surface, the prophets Micah and Haggai have little in common. Micah lived and ministered about 200 years before Haggai. Micah lived during the last glory days of the kingdom of Judah and was a witness to the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel. Meanwhile, Haggai was a prophet to the remnant, those who returned from captivity in Babylon to rebuild the Temple. The glory days of Micah were a distant memory.

The writing styles of the two prophets are very different. Micah writes in poetry, as do many of the prophets of his time. His undated oracles are hard to pinpoint to specific historical events, although we do have some indications through the subject matter. Haggai, on the other hand, writes primarily in prose. He is a historian, accurately dating to the day each of the messages in his book.

Minor Prophets: Micah & Haggai

The subject matter of these prophets is very different. Micah is warning against sin and predicts the captivity to come. Haggai has lived through that captivity and is encouraging and exhorting the remnant to faithful work. Micah's prophecies span the time scale from here to eternity, looking to the Messiah and beyond. Haggai is more practical, though no less focused on the future glory of God.

However, as I've studied these two very different prophets, I have come to realize that they share one thing in common. They share one attribute that very few of their fellow prophets ever experienced. What is the commonality between Micah and Haggai? It is this: both Micah and Haggai saw some measure of success from their ministries. Let me repeat: Micah and Haggai saw some success.

The people of God listened to Micah and repented for a time. The prophet Jeremiah testifies to the success of Micah:

¹⁷Then certain of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying: ¹⁸“Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts:

“Zion shall be plowed *like* a field,
Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins,
And the mountain of the temple
Like the bare hills of the forest.””

¹⁹Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah ever put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and seek the LORD's favor? And the LORD relented concerning the doom which He had pronounced against them. But we are doing great evil against ourselves” (Jer. 26:17-19).

The elders of Jeremiah's day quote Micah 3:12 and then describe the response to Micah's message. The king feared God and sought the Lord's favor; and God turned aside the prophesied punishment for a time, until the days of Jeremiah. Micah saw some measure of success, and it was remembered in the time of Jeremiah, over 100 years later.

Haggai also saw success. His mission was to encourage the remnant in Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple. The remnant had returned from Babylon fully intending to rebuild the Temple, but life got in the way, and eventually the project stagnated for sixteen years. Haggai sounded the clarion call for action, and within four years of his first prophecy, the Temple was rebuilt and dedicated.

So, this quarter, we will be studying two prophets who saw some success. I have taken great encouragement from my study in Micah and Haggai, and my prayer is that you will too.

Exposition

A. Stage Setting

Today we will be *setting* the *stage* for the prophecy of Micah. In order to understand Micah's prophecy, we need to understand Micah's context.

1. David's Descendants

Micah lived and ministered in the southern kingdom of Judah. Remember that following Solomon's death in 930 BC, the kingdom had split into the southern kingdom of Judah, ruled by

Minor Prophets: Micah & Haggai

David's descendants, and the northern kingdom of Israel, ruled by a number of godless dynasties. These two sisters co-existed, sometimes in conflict, sometimes in harmony, for just over two hundred years before the Assyrian empire came and destroyed Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom and took those people into exile in 722 BC. Micah was a contemporary of this event.

Micah prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah. These kings span the time period from about 750 BC to 686 BC. *Jotham* (750-731 BC) succeeded his father, the great Uzziah. Like Uzziah, Jotham “did what was right in the sight of the Lord” (2 Kgs. 15:34). However, Jotham’s son, *Ahaz* (743-715), was a different sort of king: “He did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord his God, as his father David had done. But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel” (2 Kgs. 16:2b-3a).

Ahaz had political trouble with the Syrians to the north. Instead of calling on God to help him win his battles, he called on Assyria (2 Kgs. 16:7ff.). And while Ahaz’s strategy worked in the short run, it was disastrous for the nation overall. The king of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser III accepted Ahab’s vassalage, and he conquered Damascus to alleviate the Syrian pressure on Judah. Ahaz went north to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser. While he was there, he took a fancy to an altar that was in Damascus. He had his high priest build a new altar to the specifications of the Syrian one, replacing the God-ordained furniture in the Temple with this pagan import. Ahaz altered the altar and the rest of the Temple worship, preferring the latest trends from Syria rather than the express commands of God. The book of 2 Chronicles says that his imported worship ideas “were the ruin of him and of all Israel” (2 Chr. 28:23).

Hezekiah (728-686), the next king of Judah, set out to reverse all of the disastrous consequences that his father had brought to the nation. His religious reforms are listed in great detail in 2 Chronicles 29-31. The book of Kings gives a glowing tribute to Hezekiah:

³And he [Hezekiah] did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done. ⁴He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan. ⁵He trusted in the LORD God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. ⁶For he held fast to the LORD; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the LORD had commanded Moses. ⁷The LORD was with him; he prospered wherever he went (2 Kgs. 18:3-7a).

While the religious reforms of Hezekiah were sufficient for a temporary reprieve of judgment, ultimately the seeds of destruction had already been sown in Judean society.

2. Assyrian Ascendance

Looming over the kingdom of Judah as a threat to her national existence was the empire of Assyria. The *ascendance* of *Assyria* as a bloodthirsty conqueror began in the middle of the 9th century BC. By the middle of the 8th century BC they were virtually an unstoppable force. The Assyrian empire dominated the near east until the destruction of Nineveh (prophesied by Nahum) in 612 BC.

The ministry of Micah overlapped with the reigns of four Assyrian kings, each of whom impacted the land of Canaan. *Tiglath-pileser III* (745-727 BC) was the Assyrian king that

Minor Prophets: Micah & Haggai

launched the imperial ambitions of Nineveh to the southwest. He conquered Philistia, Damascus, Galilee, and the Transjordan region. King Ahaz of Judah paid him tribute and became a vassal of Assyria. The next king of Assyria, *Shalmaneser V* (726-722 BC), began the siege of Samaria, although the northern kingdom of Israel finally fell under his successor, *Sargon II* (722-705 BC).

During the reign of Ahaz, both Damascus and Samaria were captured and deported by Assyria. And it appeared as if during the reign of King Hezekiah that Samaria would add Jerusalem to the list. After the death of Sargon II, King Hezekiah led an anti-Assyrian coalition and rebelled against their overlords. This is expressed in 2 Kings 18:7b – “And he [Hezekiah] rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him.”

The new Assyrian king, *Sennacherib* (705-681 BC), did not take kindly to Hezekiah’s rebellion. So, four years after ascending to the throne in Nineveh, Sennacherib came calling upon Judah in 701 BC. This crisis is the focal point for a significant portion of Scripture. 2 Kings 18:13-19:37 gives the account of Sennacherib’s Judean invasion. This passage is reproduced with virtually no variation (but one addition) in Isaiah’s prophecy (Is. 36-37). A summary version is given by the chronicler in 2 Chronicles 32:1-23. (A map showing the Judean campaign of Sennacherib in 701 BC is included in the notes on page 5.)

Sennacherib moved with great force into Judah, capturing forty-six towns and cities of the coastal plain and Judean hills, including the important fortified city of Lachish, which he made his base of Judean operations. Hezekiah sent a bribe of gold and silver from the Temple and the treasury to Sennacherib at Lachish, but that tribute did not stop the Assyrian king’s desire to destroy Jerusalem. And so he sent a large army to Jerusalem to conquer that city.

The Bible portrays this conflict, not as a political or a military war, but primarily as a spiritual war. Sennacherib’s mouthpiece ridicules the God of Hezekiah and blasphemes the Lord of Israel. “The gods of Damascus and many other lands were unable to withstand the fierce might of Assyria. Your God is just the same as them – He will not be able to deliver you. Don’t listen to Hezekiah – he is weak and hiding behind his walls. Instead, listen to the great Sennacherib of Assyria.”

³¹Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: ‘Make peace with me by a present and come out to me; and every one of you eat from his own vine and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you drink the waters of his own cistern; ³²until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive groves and honey, that you may live and not die. But do not listen to Hezekiah, lest he persuade you, saying, “The LORD will deliver us”’ (2 Kgs. 18:31-32; *cp.* Is. 36:16-18a).

This mouthpiece of Sennacherib is like another snake in the Garden, promising peace and plenty but dealing in death and destruction. Did you hear the incredible claims of Sennacherib, who is putting himself in the place of God to offer the people of Jerusalem peace, prosperity, and a new land of milk and honey to replace Canaan?

Hezekiah knows he cannot win the military war, so he gets on his knees to fight the spiritual war. His prayer is recorded in 2 Kings 19 and Isaiah 37:

¹⁵Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: “O LORD God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the

Minor Prophets: Micah & Haggai

earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁶Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. ¹⁷Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, ¹⁸and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands—wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. ¹⁹Now therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD God, You alone” (2 Kgs. 19:15-19; *cp.* Is. 37:15-20).

God answers Hezekiah's prayer through the prophet Isaiah in a miraculous fashion:

³²Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria:

‘He shall not come into this city,
Nor shoot an arrow there,
Nor come before it with shield,
Nor build a siege mound against it.

³³By the way that he came,
By the same shall he return;
And he shall not come into this city,’
Says the LORD.

³⁴‘For I will defend this city, to save it
For My own sake and for My servant David's sake.’

³⁵And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. ³⁶So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home, and remained at Nineveh. ³⁷Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place (2 Kgs. 19:32-37; *cp.* Is. 37:33-38).

History records that Sennacherib boasted about shutting up Hezekiah in the walled city of Jerusalem “like a bird in a cage.” However, nowhere in Sennacherib's own records does he ever mention getting inside that “bird cage.” Sennacherib's army was supernaturally destroyed, and he had no choice but to withdraw from his attempted conquest. Fifteen years later, he was assassinated by his own sons, just as Isaiah had predicted (2 Kgs. 19:7; *cp.* Is. 37:7). Hezekiah fought a spiritual battle, and God defeated His enemies.

Why dwell on the defeat of Sennacherib in 701 BC? Because it is the likely context for much of the book of Micah. Although the prophet Isaiah is on center-stage during this crisis, Micah was also working behind the scenes to address the spiritual nature of the conflict.

3. *Sinful Society*

Despite the attention that the book of Kings and Chronicles gives to Hezekiah's faithfulness and his activity in reforming the worship of Judah, the picture in the book of Micah is much different. Micah portrays Judah as a *sinful society*.

In a time of comparative wealth, the class-gap had widened because of the sinful practices of the wealthy in oppressing the poor. Waltke writes:

Minor Prophets: Micah & Haggai

A shocking contrast between extreme wealth and poverty was exacerbated by egregious injustices on the part of the elite rich and ruling class against the stalwart landowners, who were driven off their land and into a dependent economic status (2:1-3, 8-9; 3:1-3, 9-10). To be sure the nation looked religious as it thronged the Temple and offered lavish gifts, but the moral covenant, which mandated a loving spirit towards God and one's neighbor, had been replaced by a covenant between the powerful to spoil the poor (chs. 2-3).

Micah exposes the corruption of the judicial courts, the corruption of the priesthood, and the corruption of the so-called "prophets of God."

4. *Faithful Fellows*

Despite Micah's accusations against profiteering prophets, he did have a few colleagues that stood alongside him. Hosea and Amos were prophets to the northern kingdom of Israel. From the preceding generation, their ministries to the northern kingdom prior to the fall of Samaria overlapped with that of Micah. Although Micah's main message is to the people of Judah, his message to the northern kingdom (1:2-7) is consistent with his northern colleagues.

Isaiah was a direct contemporary of Micah in the kingdom of Judah. We've already seen how Isaiah was involved in the invasion of Sennacherib. But Micah was there as well. The testimony of Jeremiah 26:17-19 indicates that King Hezekiah listened to Micah, feared God, and sought the Lord. As a result, God's judgment against Judah was delayed. Although Isaiah tends to overshadow Micah (both in the 701 BC crisis and overall), Micah stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Isaiah. In fact, Micah quotes Isaiah (or does Isaiah quote Micah?) at one point (Mi. 4:1-3; *cp.* Is. 2:2-4).

These four *faithful fellows*—Hosea and Amos in the north, and Isaiah and Micah in the south—stood in the breach to declare God's word to a sinful and rebellious people in the second half of the eighth century BC.

B. Oracle Orientation (1:1)

The stage has been set. Now let us turn our attention toward *orienting* ourselves to Micah's *oracle*.

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

The superscription to the book of Micah gives us four pieces of information: 1) the *supernatural source* of the book; 2) an opportunity to *meet Micah*, the human author; 3) the *prophetic period* covered by the book; and 4) the *serious subject* concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

1. *Supernatural Source*

The first thing we notice in Micah's introduction is that his book contains **the word of the Lord that came**. In other words, the *supernatural source* of this prophecy is stressed at the very beginning. This is not a human message. True, there is a human messenger, but the words of this book are divine.

How was this divine word transmitted? The text says it "came" to our prophet. Prior points out that the Hebrew here more literally means "was" or "happened." In other words, the word of the

Minor Prophets: Micah & Haggai

Lord “happened” to Micah. God’s word came to Micah and He experienced it. God’s word became alive and was impressed upon Micah. There is an intensity to this word that comes to Micah. It is not a casual word – it is the word of the holy and righteous God of Israel – and it had such an impact upon Micah that he could do no less than bring that word of the Lord to the people of Judah.

2. Meeting Micah

“The word of the Lord that came to **Micah of Moresheth.**” Let’s *meet Micah* of Moresheth. His name means “Who is like Yahweh?” Micah makes a play on his name in the closing verses of his prophecy when he asks the question, “Who is a God like You?” (Mi. 7:18a). Obviously this is a rhetorical question which demands an answer of “no one!”

Micah is from the town of Moresheth-Gath, the full name of the town given in 1:14. This was a small village in the Shephelah southwest of Jerusalem. The Shephelah is an area of rolling hills between the coastal plain to the west and the Judean hills to the east. Moresheth-Gath was about twenty-one miles southwest of Jerusalem and six miles northeast of Lachish, the fortified city that Sennacherib conquered in 701 BC.

Other than his name and his hometown, we know little about the man Micah. We don’t know his father, his profession before becoming a prophet, or the details of his prophetic call. All we can learn about this prophet is from the town of origin and the content of his message. While Isaiah was from the big city (Jerusalem) and accustomed to moving in the highest circles of Judean society, Micah was from a rural town. Nonetheless, Micah moved to Jerusalem to deliver his messages, gaining the ear of King Hezekiah. His origin in this small, out-of-the-way place seems to imply that Micah was an outsider to the court and high society of Jerusalem. Allen puts it this way:

As a countryman from the fertile lowlands of southwest Judah, doubtless he had firsthand knowledge of the sufferings of the rural [folk] and was thus providentially prepared to voice God’s own indignation. Addressing himself to the nominal theocracy of Judah, the prophet attacked the establishment for abandoning divinely ordained standards in favor of self-interest, to the point of neglecting or actively ill-treating the underprivileged. He saw Judah to be on the brink of disaster, whose causes he interpreted in typical prophetic fashion not as solely political but as theological at heart.

Micah’s hometown was not spared in Sennacherib’s 701 BC invasion; like Lachish and many other Judean towns, Moresheth-Gath was overrun by the Assyrian army. Where was Micah? I’ve no doubt that he was conducting spiritual warfare behind the scenes in Jerusalem. Isaiah was the primary face of the prophets of God at that time, but Micah played an important role in shoring up the spiritual condition of the people of Judah. Therefore, in honor of Micah’s origins in Moresheth-Gath and his ministry of the word of the Lord in Jerusalem, I’ve entitled this lesson *Hometown Hero*.

3. Prophetic Period

“The word of the Lord that came to Micah of Moresheth **in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.**” We’ve already briefly looked at these three kings of Judah that define the *prophetic period* of Micah’s ministry. Jotham reigned from 750-731 BC. Ahaz reigned from 743-715 BC. Hezekiah reigned from 728-686 BC. You will notice that there is a

Minor Prophets: Micah & Haggai

significant overlap in the reigns of all these kings. It was customary for the crown prince to rule jointly with his father, thus accounting for the overlap of dates.

Micah's ministry to the southern kingdom of Judah probably began late in the reign of Jotham, or about 732 BC, and extended well into the reign of Hezekiah, probably beyond Sennacherib's invasion in 701 BC. Thus, Micah's ministry seems to span at least thirty years and perhaps closer to forty or even more.

Although the first half of chapter one seems to be dated during the reign of Ahaz before the fall of Samaria in 722 BC, much of Micah's prophecy seems to have been given during the reign of Hezekiah. Bentley notes: "Indeed some scholars believe that Micah may have been largely instrumental in bringing about the revival of true religion which occurred during the reign of Hezekiah." Again, here is that reminder of success that Micah, the *hometown hero*, achieved through his ministry.

4. Serious Subject

"The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, **which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.**" The *serious subject* of Micah's oracles, the focus of God's words in this book, concern both Samaria and Jerusalem. In other words, all of God's people are included in Micah's prophecy. Interestingly, if you study the contents of the book of Micah, you will discover that only the first message (1:2-9) addresses Samaria at all (1:6-7). The rest of the book deals exclusively with the kingdom of Judah, focusing in on Jerusalem.

Amos, the prophet of God to the northern kingdom, does the same thing, only in reverse. In the first oracle of his prophecy, he condemns the surrounding nations for their sin, coming closer and closer to the people of God. In his seventh oracle, he pronounces judgment upon Judah. But then in a surprise eighth oracle, Amos goes on to condemn the wickedness of Israel. And for the rest of his book, that is his theme.

Likewise, Micah starts out with a word of judgment against the wayward sister nation, in this case the northern kingdom of Israel. But quickly his focus turns to his primary subject, the nation of Judah. Historically, Micah would only have had a short period to preach against the sins of Samaria, for within about 10 years of the start of his ministry, Sargon III of Assyria had destroyed Samaria. Not only was Micah's prophecy about the fate of Samaria fulfilled, there was no more Samaria to preach against.

C. Overall Organization

In order to orient ourselves properly to Micah's message, let's take a look at the *overall organization* of the book of Micah. One way to analyze the contents of the book is to see it organized in three cycles. Each cycle begins with the call to "hear," contains a series of warnings and judgments, but ends with a promise of hope. The first cycle is 1:2-2:13; the second cycle is 3:1-5:15; and the third cycle is 6:1-7:20. Another way to look at the structure of the book is chiastically. The book of Micah is arranged in a seven-part structure that hinges upon the glorious promises in chapters 4-5. A simplified version of this chiastic structure is shown in the notes on page 2.

The first unit is in chapter 1, where Micah describes the *imminent immanence* of God coming in judgment upon Samaria and Jerusalem. This morphs into a geographical commentary on *twelve*

Minor Prophets: Micah & Haggai

towns that will receive God's punishment (apparently through Sennacherib's invasion of 701 BC). I've called this chapter *Coming Calamity*.

While the first unit focuses on judgment, the second unit in chapter 2 focuses on the reason for judgment. God pronounces woe on those who *devise disaster* and upon the *prattling prophets*. The unit closes with a promise of restoration for the *regathered remnant* in 2:12-13. To emphasize the message that sinful people can still return to God, I've entitled this lesson *Prodigal People*.

The third unit continues the condemnation of Judean society, particularly focusing on the leadership of the people. *Corrupt "cannibals"*, *peace prophets*, and *lousy leaders* are all alike condemned. Because of their lack of leadership, Jerusalem will become a plowed field. I've ironically called this lesson *Judean Justice*.

The central unit consists of chapters 4-5. The overall theme of this fourth section is God's future good plans for His people. Peace, restoration, judgment on enemies, and the leadership of God's *righteous Ruler* are all highlighted in this section. We will take two weeks to cover this section in lessons entitled *Global Glory* and *Mighty Messiah*.

The fifth unit in chapter 6 mirrors the third unit in its continued condemnation of the sins of Israel. In the first half of the chapter, we have a *court case*; in the second half of the chapter are the *criminal consequences*. Three times in 6:1-8 we are confronted by the word "what." God asks, "**What** have I done to you?" (6:3). The people ask, "With **what** shall I come before the Lord?" (6:6). And finally, the prophet tells us, "He has shown you, O man, **what** is good" (6:8). Appropriately enough, I've called this lesson *What's What*.

The sixth unit is Micah 7:1-8. This is the *prophet's profession* of faith contrasted with the faithless fruit of Israel. The seventh and final unit is Micah 7:9-20. This *salvation song* shifts the mood from judgment to forgiveness, from condemnation to comfort, from exile to restoration. We will consider these last two units together under the banner of *Great God*.

Conclusion

The shadow of Sennacherib looms over the prophecy of Micah. But even more terrifying than the wrath of Assyria is the wrath of a righteous God against His sinful people. Micah pulls no punches. He delivers the divine word of judgment that came to him, exposing the sin and corruption of an outwardly righteous society. There is a word of warning to the church in the message of Micah. Let us examine ourselves, lest we think our own religiosity is sufficient merit with which to approach a holy God:

With what shall I come before the Lord? ... 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? (Mi. 6:6a, 8).

But Micah also had the opportunity to deliver great messages of hope and deliverance. It is through Micah that the birthplace of the Messiah in Bethlehem was revealed. Micah also gives us a picture of the peace and expansion of the Messianic kingdom. Through *coming calamity* to *global glory*, our *great God* is in control. So, I hope you will join me for the next seven weeks as we unpack the message of Micah, our *hometown hero*.

Next week: Lesson 2 – Coming Calamity – Micah 1:2-16

Close in Prayer.