

MICAH

Not a lot is known about the prophet Micah, not even his father's name. We do know that he came from the town of Moresheth, Gath, a small Judaean town about halfway between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean Sea, and very close to the border with Philistine territory. He lived during the time of three kings of Judah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. Micah was a southern prophet bringing God's message to Jerusalem, capital of the southern kingdom of Judea, and Samaria the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel.

In contrast to the so-called major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel), he gives us no autobiographical info about his call to prophesy. He simply, in verse one, assures us that the “word of the Lord came to [him] Micah”.

And in contrast to his false peers, he spoke the whole truth, preaching justice and judgment, against the rebellious ways of God's people. He exposes the moral and social evils of the day, including the disparity between the wealthy and the poor, and the pagan practices that had become prevalent.

Three times Micah presents the future hope for a remnant who will be preserved by divine grace. At a time when the northern kingdom was under constant threat the kings of Israel foolishly tried to match strength with strength, and 'false religion' with false religion. Yet Micah stood his ground and declared that salvation belonged to the Lord, and demanded repentance and renunciation of sin.

Israel in Context

Read Micah 1:1-16

It's interesting, but not totally surprising because he was from the south, that Micah dates his message only by the southern Judaean Kings, Jotham (742-735BC), Ahaz (735-715BC) and Hezekiah (715-686BC). Who were the kings of Israel during this time, and who were they vassals of (who allowed them to rule)? See 2 Kings 15:27-31 and 17:1-6. The map below might be helpful to get things into a time and geographical perspective.



Micah doesn't ask for any credit for having thought up the message. Who was it that Micah was speaking on behalf of, and how did he come of the message? (v1)

God's judgment isn't a new thing. It's been pronounced many times before. Check out the similarities between verse 2 and other earlier messages from God.

v2	<i>Hear, O peoples, all of you, listen, O earth and all who are in it, that the Sovereign Lord may witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.</i>
Deut32:1	
Ps50:7	
Is1:2	
Deut4:26	
Ps11:4	

Micah's prophetic message is for everyone, from Jerusalem, to Samaria, to the whole earth vv1,2. "*O people's, all of you*" suggests that God's dealings with Israel had an important bearing upon the destiny of all the surrounding nations as well. Everyone and everything in all the world is required to listen God's words given to Micah. God is the Lord of all.

Micah's message begins with the summons "Hear" v.2. The summons is repeated c.f. 3:1, 6:1 & 6:9. Micah's seeking the attention of those around him to listen to the actions of the Sovereign Lord as he comes in judgment. Compare Micah's summons with the opening of Psalm 49.

Read Psalm 49.

Who is it that should listen?

What sort of words are spoken and what will the utterances achieve?

Why doesn't the Psalmist 'fear when evil days come'? vv5-9

What are some of his conclusions? vv10-15

What further encouragement can we get from verses 16-20?

What is about the message that the Prophet and the Psalmist bring to all peoples at all times?
Ps49:7-9 & Micah 7:18-20, cf 1Timothy 2:5,6