

CbC to July 18

July 12 Su Reading B193 — Micah 1 — Judging Israel and Judah

Audio: [Micah 1 \(ESV\)](#)

One Object of Worship — Micah (meaning “Who is like Yahweh?”) was from Moresheth, a town southwest of Jerusalem. His prophecies were aimed first at Samaria, the capital of northern Israel, and then at Jerusalem, Judah’s capital. The primary cause of Israel’s looming destruction was because of their spiritual idolatry, with “*her carved images ... and all her idols*” (v. 7). They had prostituted the worship of Yahweh. Twice it is said that the punishment of Israel had reached “*the gate of Jerusalem*” (vv. 9, 11). God would bring judgment to Jerusalem 136 years after Samaria for similar unfaithfulness: “*for in you were found the transgressions of Israel*” (v. 13). God said that He would “*bring a conqueror to you*” (v. 15), which would be Babylon, and tragically, “*the children of your delight ... shall go from you into exile*” (v. 16). God hates idolatry because it takes away the honor and worship that only He deserves. He is the only God, our Creator. He created us for worship, but that worship must be directed only to Him because He is the only object of our attention that will bring us completeness. We must not share our devotion to anything or anyone other than Yahweh.

July 13 M Reading B194 — Micah 2 — Do Not Preach!

Audio: [Micah 2 \(ESV\)](#)

Choosing Whom to Serve — The depths to which Israel had fallen is described in this chapter. Powerful people “*devise wickedness ... on their beds ... [and] perform it*” (v. 1). As Jezebel did with Naboth, “*They covet fields and seize them*” (v. 2). Because of these kinds of sins, God said, “*I am devising disaster*” (v. 3). The people did not want to hear that message because they proudly believed that “*disgrace will not overtake us*” (v. 6). They were God’s chosen people and He was good, so they felt that they should have no fear. Some Christians today have a similar attitude that, because they belong to God, they have nothing to fear because of their continued sin. But the writer of Hebrews warns us that “*the Lord disciplines the one he loves*” (Heb. 12:6). Rather than hearing God’s warning from Micah, however, those ancient Hebrews urged him to “*preach ... of wine and strong drink*” (Micah 2:11). They wanted sermons that were pleasing to their ears so they could remain in their sinful habits. Although disaster would come to them, the chapter ends with God’s promise that He would “*gather the remnant of Israel*” (v. 12). This is the grace of God that follows His discipline. It is much preferred, however, to avoid the discipline by refusing to be immersed in sinful practices. Choose to obey God!

July 14 Tu Reading B195 — Micah 3 — Politicians, Prophets, and Priests

Audio: [Micah 3 \(ESV\)](#)

Greedy Leaders — Micah continues to pronounce judgment on both Israel and Judah in this chapter, and his focus is on their faulty civil and religious leadership. The main problem with the first group, the *political leaders* in verses 1-4, was their distorted sense of justice. They “*hate the good and love the evil*” (v. 2). God’s judgment on them is to “*hide his face from them*” (v. 4) when they cry for help, just like they wouldn’t listen to the cry for justice from people they had abused in the courts. The sin problem for the second group, their *prophets*, was primarily greed (vv. 5-7). They prophesied for money, declaring good news when they were paid (“*when they have something to eat*”—v. 5a) but predicting bad news when their clients would not pay them (“*...puts nothing into their mouths*”—v. 5b). Their judgment would be “*night ... without vision*” (v. 6). God would give them no message about future things: “*...there is no answer from God*” (v. 7). The third group of leaders, Jerusalem’s *priests*, are presented with judgment statements. Their sins also centered on greed: “*...the priests teach for a price*” (v. 11). It wasn’t a ministry; it was a business. All three groups are summarized in verse 11: “*Its heads give judgment for a bribe; its priests teach for a price; its prophets practice divination for money*” (emphasis added). Here, it says that all three kinds of leaders are driven by

greed, not service. They were wrong not only in *what* they did but also in *why* they did it. What do you do to serve the Lord? Ask yourself *why* you do it. Are you seeking recognition and praise? God supports and makes us effective in ministry to the degree that we are doing it only for Him.

July 15 W Reading B196 — Micah 4 — Yahweh's Reign in Jerusalem

Audio: [Micah 4 \(ESV\)](#)

From Exile to Safety — Micah looks far forward in this chapter to a time when Jerusalem will be the center of righteousness in government and worship. In Micah's day, they were coming close to being exiled to Babylon because of their sin, but God showed him a future time of grace far beyond the time when His people would return from Babylon. It would be a time when God ruled from Jerusalem so powerfully that "*strong nations far away ... shall beat their swords into plowshares...*" (v. 3). This is still in the future for us. The Messiah came to earth with the offer of salvation to all nations, but He left the choice up to mankind regarding serving Him. Most people in our times have rejected Jesus. In the future, however, Jesus will act not only as Savior but Ruler. His reign will be so powerful and convincing that whole nations will gladly turn to Him. We will be part of that experience because it will happen after "*the first resurrection ... [when] we will reign with him for a thousand years*" (Rev. 20:6).

July 16 Th Reading B197 — Micah 5— Deliverance from Bethlehem

Audio: [Micah 5 \(ESV\)](#)

Israel's Punishment and Hope — The predictions of this chapter go backwards chronologically. First, there is the prediction of the coming Messiah with His birth in Bethlehem. In this small, insignificant place where Israel's first king, David, was born, would also be the birthplace of Jesus (v. 2). Isn't that just like God to choose unexpected, unimportant circumstances to display His glory? He specializes in surprises. Jesus' reign began after His ascension following His crucifixion, and we are experiencing that spiritual kingdom right now: "*...he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace*" (vv. 4-5). The second prediction steps back to the time when "*the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces*" (v. 5b). The dispersion of the people of Israel by the Assyrians into multiple countries is described here: "*...the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people ... among the nations*" (vv. 7-8). The third prediction goes back to God's reason for cleansing His people's self-reliance ("*I will cut off your horses ... chariots ... strongholds*"—vv. 10-11) and their false religion ("*I will cut off your sorceries ... carved images ... pillars ... Asherah images*"—vv. 12-14). Although Israel was severely punished by being scattered, a remnant of them would eventually return to God and to the Promised Land.

July 17 F Reading B198 — Micah 6 — Plead Your Case

Audio: [Micah 6 \(ESV\)](#)

What God Wants — A trial is envisioned in this chapter as God invites Israel to "*plead your case*" (v. 1) against "*the indictment of the LORD ... against his people*" (v. 2). Three sections follow: what God has done, what He requires, and why He punishes. The first question is, what has God done? He reviewed His past rescue of Israel from Egypt and transfer to the Promised Land (vv. 4-5). When we are unsettled about circumstances in our lives that look like God is not caring for us, we should also look back to what He has done for us in the past. That will make us thankful and hopeful. The second question is, what does God want from us? There was something far more important than the people's ritual sacrifices that applies equally to us today: "*what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God*" (v. 8). Jesus reminded the hypocritically religious Pharisees not to neglect "*the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness*" (Matt. 23:23). Treating others well and obeying God is far more important to God than our worship practices. The third question is, why does God punish? He summarizes this simply by saying, "*I strike you with a grievous blow, making you desolate because of your sins*" (Micah 6:13).

He describes these people as cheating in business and lying (v. 11). Although they would work hard to prosper, God would thwart their efforts by giving them zero results (vv. 14-15). Our proper conduct is to thank God and obey Him wholeheartedly. That is ultimately what He wants from us.

July 18 Sa Reading B199 — Micah 7 — Punished but Pardoned

Audio: [Micah 7 \(ESV\)](#)

Wonderful Grace — Micah takes us through a cycle of God’s punishment and restoration in this chapter. It begins with God’s people being severely punished because of their sins. It seemed to Micah that the *“godly has perished from the earth”* (v. 2), even though he remained there. How would he react, and how should *we* respond to God’s discipline for our sin? Micah said, *“as for me, I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation”* (v. 7). We should *“look”* because we expect God to do something good, and *“wait”* because we don’t know when or how it will come. That is exhibiting faith and patience. Micah said, *“I will bear the indignation of the LORD because I have sinned against him”* (v. 9a). He would wait for the time of punishment to be over, and he also said that he would wait for God to *“bring me out to the light”* (v. 9b). After the punishment period was finished, God gave His people a three-part hope for *security* (*“A day for the building of your walls!”*—v. 11a), for *expansion* (*“...the boundary shall be far extended”*—v. 11b), and for *influence* (*“...they will come to you”*—v. 12). Those who would come were Gentiles, people who *“shall come trembling ... [and] turn in dread to the LORD our God”* (v. 17). That is evangelism, people coming to God because they see the way His people humble themselves in repentance and the Lord blessing them. Micah’s book ends with this great question that expresses awe: *“Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity...”* (v. 18). He is a God of wonderful grace!