

## **MICAH: GOD'S PUNISHMENT AND HIS RESTORATION**

### **I: God's Punishment Of The Common People For Idolatry**

(Micah 1:1-16)

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Micah, who was “a Judean from Moresheth in the SW of Palestine, preached to the common people of Judah.” (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1283, “Introduction to the Book of Micah: The Prophet.”)
- B. In Micah 1:1-16, God's prophet revealed God's coming judgment on the common people for their idolatry, be they of the Northern Kingdom of Israel or of the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
- C. We view the passage for our insight and application (as follows):

#### **II. God's Punishment Of The Common People For Idolatry, Micah 1:1-16.**

- A. God was going to send the Assyrians to punish all of God's people in the land for their idolatry, Micah 1:1-16:
  - 1. Micah spoke to all the people of Samaria, signifying the Northern Kingdom, and of Jerusalem, signifying the Southern Kingdom (Micah 1:1) to bring God's indictment against them from His temple, Micah 1:2.
  - 2. In highly figurative language, Micah predicted God's arrival to punish the people in His fury, Micah 1:3-4.
  - 3. He would express His wrath over His peoples' sins, Micah 1:5a. The northern kingdom is represented in its capital city of Samaria and Jerusalem represented the southern kingdom of Judah, Micah 1:5b. Micah addressed “the sins of the people throughout both nations,” Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1478.
  - 4. God would [use the Assyrian invaders to] make Samaria like a heap in a field, a place for vineyards, and He would pour down the stones of the city into the valley below it, laying its foundations bare, Micah 1:6.
  - 5. Since Israel had practiced pagan temple prostitution for wages, God would let the invading Assyrians smash these temple moneys and use them again in their own idolatrous prostitution, Micah 1:7; *Ibid.*
  - 6. In Micah 1:8-9a, God's prophet said he would lament over Samaria's fall, for her wound was incurable meaning her punishment was inevitable, and since the Northern Kingdom's sins had so influenced the Southern Kingdom, [the Assyrians as tools of God's judgment] would reach the gate of Jerusalem, Micah 1:9b. This prediction was fulfilled when the Assyrians surrounded Jerusalem but did not conquer it, *Ibid.*
  - 7. Then, in Micah 1:10-16, Micah traced “the route of the invading army from the Philistine coastal plain through the Judean hills to Jerusalem,” *Ibid.*, Ryrie, *ftn.* to Micah 1:10-16:
    - a. Micah's call for the invasion not to be declared in the Philistine city of Gath is a “proverbial expression for disaster (1 Sam. 1:20),” *Ibid.*; Micah 1:10a.
    - b. However, the people of Beth Ophrah, meaning “house of dust,” were to roll in the dust in grief, Micah 1:10b. (cf. Jeremiah 25:34; *Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1479)
    - c. The women would be taken first as captives, for the word for “inhabitants” in Micah 1:11-12 is feminine, and Micah used puns to denounce the captured cities: “Saphir (v. 11) sounds like the Hebrew word for beauty and is contrasted with their shame; Zaanah (v. 11) sounds like a verb meaning ‘to go out’ and is contrasted with the fear of the people to go outside their houses; Beth-ezel (v. 11) sounds like word meaning ‘foundation,’ and they had none; Maroth (v. 12), like a word meaning ‘to wait for good, whereas they were waiting for evil.” (*Ibid.*, Ryrie)
    - d. Micah urged the people of Lachish “which sounds . . . like the word for a team (*rekesh*) of horses, to get a chariot ready for escaping from the Assyrians,” what would be in vain, *Ibid.*, B. K. C., O. T.; Micah 1:13a. Lachish evidently influenced Jerusalem for idolatry, so it would suffer greatly, *Ibid.*; Micah 1:13b.
    - e. As a father would give parting gifts to his daughter when she marries, Jerusalem would give the town of Moresheth Gath to Assyria's king who would capture her citizens (Micah 1:14a), and the town of Aczib (“deception”) would become “deceptive” (*akzab*), unable to help Israel's kings, Micah 1:14b; *Ibid.*
    - f. A “conqueror,” Assyria's king Sennacherib, would attack Mareshah, meaning “possessor,” the town becoming possessed by the invading conqueror, Micah 1:15; *Ibid.*
    - g. Even the small children of the inhabitants of these Judean towns would be taken captive by the invading Assyrians, leading to great mourning and expressions of mourning, Micah 1:16; *Ibid.*
- B. Significantly, though much of Judah was conquered by Assyria at this time (*Ibid.*), Jerusalem under king Hezekiah was spared since he relied upon the Lord and not false gods for deliverance, Isaiah 36:1-37:38.

**Lesson:** *God punished the common people of Israel and Judah for their own sins independent of their leaders.*

**Application:** *Since God holds each of us accountable to Him, may we each sense our accountability to the Lord!*