

# Micah: The Case for an Authentic Faith

## The Background and Historical Setting:

1. Like his contemporaries in the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah) Micah was a fierce \_\_\_\_\_ of pure worship and authentic faith that reveals itself in a commitment to social justice.
2. This period in Judah's (the Southern Kingdom) history was marked by political stability and economic prosperity (King Uzziah reigned from 783-742 BC) but the inner decay was seen in ritualistic and syncretistic ("Baal" was a part of many names from this era, alluding to the influence of Baal worship in the religious practices) worship while the wealthy class became richer at the expense of the poorer classes.
3. The Assyrian Empire (*which reigned supreme in this region from ca. 900-600 B.C.*) experienced a remarkable resurgence of power under Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 BC) and under Shalmaneser V (727-721 BC) would defeat the Northern Kingdom (*the 10 tribes that split from Judah in 922 B.C. at Solomon's death*) in 722 B.C. The ancient Assyrians, whose capital was Nineveh, were Semitic people and most likely resembled the Israelites. The Assyrians were proud of military prowess and cruel treatment of their enemies, ruling with an iron fist of intimidation.
4. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was little more than a satellite nation of Assyria until King Hezekiah came to the throne in 715 BC (reigned until 687 BC) and made sweeping religious and social reforms (he was one of the few "good" kings of Judah). In 701 BC the Assyrian King Sennacherib (705-681 BC) attempted to overthrow Jerusalem but was defeated by the miraculous intervention of God (2 Kings 19:32-36; 2 Chronicles 32:21; and Isaiah 37:33-37).

## The Book as a Whole:

1. It is the 6th book in "The Book of the Twelve" in the Hebrew Bible and is like most of the other prophetic writings as it is written in the style of Hebrew poetry marked by a characteristic parallelism of expression. The use of wordplays and contrasts gives a distinctive vividness to the book and a significant contribution is doctrine of the remnant which highlights the ever-present prophetic theology of hope.
2. This book is most likely a collection of sermons that grew out of the

prophet's deep emotional concern for God's people desperate plight. There is a "consistency" to the messages so that key theological emphases emerge:

- 1) The sovereignty and self-consistency of God;
- 2) The remnant shall remain and be victorious;
- 3) The Kingdom of God shall prevail in the affairs of humanity and shall be a place of justice, kindness, and hope.

## The Prophet Himself:

1. Micah is an old Hebrew compound word that means "Who is like the LORD?"
2. "Micah of Moresheth" (very little is known about him other than what can be gleaned from his book) is a younger contemporary of Isaiah but was most likely from "\_\_\_\_\_" (unlike Isaiah who was probably related to the kings) in the small village of Moresheth, in the Judean \_\_\_\_\_ southwest of Jerusalem.
3. Micah most likely viewed the corruptions and pretensions in a different light than his contemporaries as seen by his prophecy of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jerusalem (3:9-12), a prophecy which long distinguished him from his peers (Jeremiah 26:18).

## The Outline:

- I. The First Oracle: God's \_\_\_\_\_ Judgment is Coming but so is His \_\_\_\_\_ (1:1 - 2:13)
- II. The Second Oracle: God Holds Leaders \_\_\_\_\_ while Promising \_\_\_\_\_ (3:1 - 5:15)
- III. The Third Oracle: God's Lawsuit against \_\_\_\_\_ and His Assurance of the \_\_\_\_\_ of His \_\_\_\_\_ (6:1 - 7:20)

## The Prophet's Purpose: To Communicate God's Requirement of Authentic Faith that Ushers in Justice, Mercy, and Humility.

**Key Verse:** "*He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you but to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?*" (6:8)

## God's Demand of an Authentic Faith...

1. Requires \_\_\_\_\_ (6:8)
2. Requires \_\_\_\_\_ (6:8)
3. Requires \_\_\_\_\_ (6:8)