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Article 33: Micah at a Glance

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MICAH AT A GLANCE

This book records some bad news and good news as predicted by Micah. The bad news is the ten northern tribes of Israel would be captured by the Assyrians and the two southern tribes would suffer the same fate at the hands of the Babylonians. The good news foretold of the Messiah's birth in Bethlehem and the ultimate establishment of the millennial kingdom of God.

BOTTOM LINE INTRODUCTION

QUESTION (ASKED 4 B.C.): WHERE IS HE THAT IS BORN KING OF THE JEWS? (MT. 2:2)
ANSWER (GIVEN 740 B.C.): "BUT THOU, BETHLEHEM EPHRATAH, THOUGH THOU BE LITTLE AMONG THE THOUSANDS OF JUDAH, YET OUT OF THEE SHALL HE COME FORTH" (Micah 5:2).

The author of this book, Micah, was a contemporary with Isaiah. Micah was a country preacher, while Isaiah was a court preacher. Micah was God's final prophet to the Northern Kingdom. He was the only prophet sent to both the Southern and Northern Kingdoms, especially ministering to their capitals, Jerusalem and Samaria.

FACTS REGARDING THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK

1. Who? **Micah.** He predicted the birthplace of the Messiah would be Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Mt. 2:6).
2. What? The **Book of Micah.**
3. When and where? 735 B.C., from the town of Moresheth, some 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem.
4. Why? To warn both Jerusalem and Samaria to repent and turn back to God.
5. To whom? Both northern and southern kingdoms.

KEY EVENTS

1. Vision of earth's golden age
2. Prophecy of the Messiah's birth in Bethlehem
3. A description of Israel's God of grace

KEY INDIVIDUALS

1. **Micah:** Old Testament prophet who predicted Bethlehem would be the place of the Messiah's birth (5:2)

KEY PLACES

1. **Samaria:** capital city of the northern ten tribes, to be destroyed for its sin

2. **Jerusalem:** God's beloved city, to be destroyed for its sin but will eventually be established and magnified during the millennium
3. **Bethlehem:** birthplace of the future Messiah is predicted by Micah

UNIQUE FEATURES

1. Micah was the first prophet to predict the Babylonian captivity and restoration of the Southern Kingdom (4:9)
2. "Micah 4:1-3 and Isaiah 2:2-4 are practically identical. The Spirit of God gave both prophets the same revelation because of its surpassing importance." (*New Scofield Bible*, p. 946)
3. It is generally agreed that the above verse provide for us the most beautiful description of the Millennium in all the Bible! Note the words:

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever" (Micah 4:1-5).
4. Micah is unique for the number and precision of his prophecies:
 - The fall of the northern kingdom (1:6-7)
 - The invasion of Judah by Sennacherib in 701 B.C. (1:9, 12)
 - The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (3:12)
 - Judah's Babylonian captivity (4:10)
 - Judah's return from captivity (4:10)
 - The exact name of Christ's birthplace (5:2)
5. A quotation from the book of Micah may have saved the life of Jeremiah the prophet many years later (see Jer. 26:16-18; Mic. 3:12).
6. Both Micah and Isaiah were called upon to walk around ill clothed to illustrate how God would strip away the power and pride of those to be judged (compare Isa. 20:2-4 with Micah 1:8).
7. Micah, like David, did not want his people's misfortunes to be known by their enemies (compare 2 Sam. 1:20). Both men were especially concerned that it be kept from the Philistine city of Gath.
8. For its size, Micah has more to say about the sins of Israel's greedy rich rulers than any other Old Testament book (2:1-10; 3:1-4; 6:10-12).
9. His book gives us the bottom line summary of God in regards to His people:

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (6:8).

10. Micah describes in graphic fashion how the sin of a nation affects the various families in that nation.

"Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house" (7:5, 6).

11. The book of Micah closes with what may be the greatest, grandest, and most glorious description of God in all the scriptural record -

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old" (7:18-20).

COMPARISON WITH OTHER BIBLE BOOKS

Isaiah:

- Micah and Isaiah share one significant parallel passage (4:1-3; Isa. 2:2-4). These two contemporaries may have borrowed from Joel, an earlier prophet (see Joel 3:10, the opposite of Micah and Isaiah's message).
- Both prophets used nakedness to emphasize their message (1:8; Isa. 20:2).
- Both spoke of people coming to Israel from Assyria and Egypt (the two extremes of the ancient Near East) in the messianic age (7:12; Isa. 19:23-25).

Jeremiah:

- Jeremiah, writing more than a century later, quoted 3:12 (Jer. 26:18).
- Both spoke of greedy prophets and priests (3:11; Jer. 6:13) as well as of prophets who falsely promise peace (3:5; Jer. 6:14).
- Both spoke of a remnant of Israelites upon whom God will show mercy (7:18-20; Jer. 23:3; 44:28).

TITLES FOR AND TYPES OF JESUS

1. The God of Jacob (4:2)
2. The King of the Millennium (4:3, 4)
3. The Ruler from Bethlehem (5:2)
4. The High God (6:6)
5. The Merciful God who Pardons Sins and Casts Them into the Sea (7:18, 19)