

The Book of Micah

Background And Introduction

Authorship and Setting

Micah's name means, "Who is like YHWH?"

Micah lived during the time of Isaiah, as noted in Micah 1:1,

Micah 1:1 "1 The word of Yahweh which came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he beheld concerning Samaria and Jerusalem."

Like Isaiah, his ministry encompasses the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah—a crucial transitional period in ancient Israel's history. This era signified the end of the intermingling between the northern and southern kingdoms, with the northern kingdom approaching collapse while the southern kingdom experienced rapid decline, briefly interrupted by Josiah's reign. Ahaz, regarded as one of Israel's worst kings, epitomized this downturn by endorsing national apostasy, a blend of political and spiritual failure, similar to Ahab's actions in the north, as noted in Hosea.

During this time, significant doxological and historical challenges arose. Unlike Isaiah, who spoke to the royal court to unveil God's plan with Yahweh as savior, Micah preached to the common people. While both prophets focused on the king, their audiences differed. Micah aimed to address the destabilization caused by the northern kingdom's impending fall and the southern kingdom's pressure to ally with Assyria, moves seen as spiritual adultery and idolatry by Hosea. He urged people to trust Yahweh's superior plan and remain loyal despite difficulties. This message, distinct from Isaiah's counsel to the court, resonated with the streets, highlighted in verses like Micah 6:8 and 7:7 "But as for me, I wait and hope for the Lord."

Theological Theme

No one is like YHWH, and He does not tolerate imposters.

Structure

I. Covenant Lawsuit Presented (1:2-5:15)

II. Covenant Law Suit Confirmed (6:1-7:20)

I. Covenant Lawsuit Presented (1:2-5:15)

1. Verdict Proclaimed (1:2-16)

A. God's Judgment (1:2-7)

Let's begin with verse 2,

Micah 1:2 “**2** Hear, O peoples, all of you; Give heed, O earth, as well as its fullness, And let Lord Yahweh be a witness against you, The Lord from His holy temple.”

Micah begins with a cosmic call to all people and the earth. This isn't limited to Israel—it's directed at the nations and the entire world. God presents a lawsuit against them from His holy temple, His throne room, asserting His sovereignty as king over a world that rejects Him. Why? Israel's failure creates a domino effect: if Israel fails to worship and obey Him, the world falls, too.

God's response is cataclysmic, verse 3,

Micah 1:3-4 “**3** For behold, Yahweh is going forth from His place. He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.” **4** The mountains will melt under Him, And the valleys will be split, Like wax before the fire, Like water poured down a steep place.”

He descends, mountains melt, valleys split—like wax before fire (1:3-4). This theophany, echoing Sinai, proves His unmatched power and kingship, overturning the planet in a judgment that shakes the cosmos.

The reason for Israel's failure as a kingdom of priests is their sin, centered in its capitals, verse 5,

Micah 1:5-7 “**5** All this is for the transgression of Jacob And for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? What is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?” **6** So I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the field, Planting places for a vineyard. And I will pour her stones down into the valley And will lay bare her foundations.” **7** And all of her graven images will be smashed, And all of her earnings will be burned with fire And all of her idols I will make desolate, For she collected them from a harlot's earnings, And to the earnings of a harlot they will return.”

Samaria for the northern kingdom, Jerusalem for Judah (1:5). These cities were intended to guide the people and the world in the worship of the One True God, but they have become centers of idolatry—high places of pagan sacrifice. God specifically targets the leadership, particularly the Davidic kings, whose failures pull Israel and the world down. The fall of Jerusalem is striking: from a secure, exalted city to a mere high place of idolatry. This degradation mirrors the nation's collapse, driven by its corrupt capital and leaders. Note the reference back to Hosea in verse 7, “All her images will be smashed... earned from a harlot's wages” (cf. Hosea 9:1). Israel and Judah sought to gain wealth and

security through spiritual idolatry, but God deems it worthless—judgment is their consequence.

B. Micah's Mourning (1:8-16)

Micah's reaction to this cosmic judgment reveals its human toll. He mourns with a funeral lament, walking barefoot and naked—perhaps literally. This isn't mere embarrassment; it signifies profound degradation, far exceeding modern sensibilities. He begins with an echo of a funeral dirge in verse 10.

Micah 1:10–12 “**10** Tell it not in Gath, Weep not at all. At Beth-le-aphrah roll yourself in the dust.” **11** Pass on by, inhabitant of Shaphir, in shameful nakedness. The inhabitant of Zaanan does not go out. The lamentation of Beth-ezel “He will take from you its support.” **12** For the inhabitant of Maroth Writhes in waiting for good **Because a calamity has come down from Yahweh To the gate of Jerusalem.**”

“Tell it not in Gath” (1:10) recalls 2 Samuel 1, which recounts Saul's death and the end of his dynasty. They sang this song to mourn the fall of a dynasty. Micah is singing it again in the city of David, which seems illogical in light of the Davidic covenant's promise of permanence.

2 Samuel 7:14–15 “**14** “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will reprove him with the rod of men and the strikes from the sons of men, “**15** but My lovingkindness shall not be removed from him, as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you.”

Yet Micah sings the funeral song for the dynasty as if God's wrath has shattered this “invincible” promise of a kingdom established forever (2 Samuel 7:13). Micah uses puns to drive his point home. In Beth-le-aphrah (“House of Dust”), he says, “roll in the dust.” Shaphir (“pleasant”) becomes shameful, Zaanan (“exit”) offers no escape—ironic twists illustrating God's power to undo even the meanings of these cities. Marot (“bitterness”) waits in vain for good, while Beth-ezel (“protection”) loses support. Why this upheaval? God's calamity will dismantle the gates of the city of David as his dynasty crumbles – verse 15.

Micah 1:15–16 “**15** Moreover, I will bring on you The one who takes possession, O inhabitant of Mareshah. **The glory of Israel will enter Adullam.**” **16** Make yourself bald and cut off your hair, Because of the children of your delight; Extend your baldness like the eagle, For they will go from you into exile.”

The glory of Israel – the Davidic dynasty- will return to Adullam. Remember that the cave of Adullam is where David first began to flee from Saul. The Davidic dynasty is so corrupt that the sword will never depart from it. It is as corrupt as its ancestor, David. It must be torn down to ground zero. They must start anew.

2. Indictments Made (2:1-3:12)

In chapter 2, he focuses not only on the entire nation of Israel but also on its wealthy elite specifically.

Micah 2:1–3 “**1** Woe to those who devise wickedness, Who work out evil on their beds! When the light of the morning comes, they do it, For it is in the power of their hands.” **2** And they covet fields and then tear them away, And houses, and take them away. And they oppress a man and his house, A man and his inheritance.” **3** Therefore thus says Yahweh, “Behold, I am devising against this family an evil demise From which you cannot remove your necks; And you will not walk haughtily, For it will be an evil time.”

Micah pronounces a woe, echoing Isaiah 5-6, against the powerful who support the king. Day and night, they scheme evil—plotting at night and executing by morning. Their power sustains this perverse cycle, far from Israel’s true calling. Their greed compels them to seize fields and rob inheritances, defying the king’s duty to uphold land boundaries—a promise rooted in Abraham’s covenant (land, seed, blessing) and reinforced by Moses (Num. 27) and the Jubilee (Lev. 25). It was vital for every Israelite to have a stake in the land. A stake in the land was akin to a stake in God’s plan. The king and his nobles were meant to preserve that. Instead, what do they do? They steal the land and the inheritance of future generations. Thus, God responds to their schemes with a plan of His own, a plan of inescapable judgment.

Yet, amid judgment, hope shines through, verse 12,

Micah 2:12–13 “**12** “I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel. I will put them together like sheep in the fold; Like a flock in the midst of its pasture They will be noisy with men.” **13** “The breaker goes up before them; They break out, pass through the gate, and go out by it. So their king goes on before them, And Yahweh at their head.”

When human kings and shepherds fail, Yahweh steps in as the Good Shepherd, leading His flock to safety as their King. The title “The Breaker” refers to 2 Samuel 5. In this chapter, David is first called the shepherd of God’s people. However, later in the chapter, after achieving victory over the Philistines and establishing Jerusalem as his capital, David declared,

2 Samuel 5:20 “**20**...and he said, “Yahweh has broken through my enemies before me, like the breakthrough of waters...”

There is no one like God. The Good Shepherd will deliver His people—He tolerates no imposter shepherds.

Chapter 3 concludes Micah’s critique of Israel’s failed leaders. Unlike Yahweh, the true Shepherd who protects and guides His flock to safety (2:12-13), these imposters devour their own, verse 1,

Micah 3:1–4 “1 And I said, “Hear now, heads of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know justice?”2 “You who hate good and love evil, Who tear off their skin from them And their flesh from their bones, “3 And who eat the flesh of my people, Strip off their skin from them, Break their bones, And spread them out as for the pot And as meat in a caldron.”4 Then they will cry out to Yahweh, But He will not answer them. Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time Because they have practiced evil deeds.”

They skin and eat the flesh of the people (3:2-3)—cannibals, not shepherds, slaughtering the sheep they should protect. When their judgment arrives, they will cry out like the sheep they have devoured, but Yahweh will remain silent, for their judgment comes from Him. The prophet Jeremiah pronounces a similar woe.

Jeremiah 23:1–2 “1 “Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares Yahweh.”2 Therefore thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who are shepherding My people “You have scattered My flock and banished them and have not attended to them; behold, I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds, “ declares Yahweh.”

Yahweh will be silent toward the imposter prophets as well. Their false words wage war against God, and He responds by blinding them—no visions, no answers (3:6-7). These “seers” who boasted of peace now face chaos—death and captivity—and cover their mouths in shame. Micah, empowered by God, stands apart, echoing Amos’ famine of God’s word: the wicked crave guidance on the day of their calamity, but silence will reign as David’s city is destroyed, verse 12.

Micah 3:12 “12 Therefore, on account of you Zion will be plowed as a field; Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, And the mountain of the house of God will become high places of a forest.”

3. Promises Kept (4:1-5:15)

A. Promises of Blessing (4:1-8)

Just when it seems all is lost— the Davidic covenant appears to be cast aside, Jerusalem is devastated, and Israel, along with the world, is doomed—Micah quickly shifts. It’s not over forever; it’s only over for a season. Fulfillment awaits in the “last days” – verse 1.

Micah 4:1–4 “1 Now it will be that in the last days The mountain of the house of Yahweh Will be established as the head of the mountains, And will be lifted up above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it.”2 And many nations will come and say, “Come and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may instruct us from His ways And that we may walk in His paths.” For from Zion will go forth the law, And the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem.”3 And He will judge between many peoples And will render decisions for mighty, distant nations. And they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation,

And never again will they learn war.”**4** And each of them will sit under his vine And under his fig tree, With no one to make them tremble, For the mouth of Yahweh of hosts has spoken.”

The mountain of the Lord’s house will rise above all, drawing nations to Yahweh’s reign and teaching. Past kings suppressed the truth and failed as shepherds (Mic. 3:1-7), leading to the demise of Jerusalem. However, in the Last Days, Yahweh, Israel’s ultimate King, will reverse this and restore Zion. From His Holy Mountain, He will proclaim a new law (4:2)—not from Sinai (Ex. 19-20), but from Jerusalem—righting Israel and, thereby, the world. Yahweh’s kingdom brings peace: swords become plowshares, nations submit to His rule, and streams flow to worship Him there. As we saw in Amos, this builds upon what David prophesied in the messianic Psalm 22.

Psalm 22:27 “**27** All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to Yahweh, And all the families of the nations will worship before You.”

There, Yahweh will judge with justice and truth. Micah’s contemporary, Isaiah, expands on this in the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 11.

Isaiah 11:1–4 “**1** Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.”**2** The Spirit of Yahweh will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and might, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh.”**3** And He will delight in the fear of Yahweh, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor render a decision by what His ears hear;”**4** But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with uprightness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will put the wicked to death.”

God’s people will find rest beneath their incredibly fruitful vines and fig trees, referring to the prosperous conditions during Solomon’s reign.

1 Kings 4:25 “**25** So Judah and Israel lived in security, every man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.”

Remember from Amos that these references to fruitfulness point to the reversal of the curse on the ground in Genesis 3 and the complete fulfillment of the Noahic Covenant, where the earth is finally at rest and restored. In that day, they will rest in a world filled with peace, with no one to make them tremble. This phrase connects back to the blessings promised to Israel when they entered the land if they upheld the covenant.

Leviticus 26:6 “**6** ‘I shall also give you peace in the land so that you may lie down, with no one making you tremble. I shall also eliminate wild beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land.”

This is powerful because Micah has just prophesied impending doom upon the inhabitants and the very land on which Jerusalem sits due to Israel’s covenant-breaking disobedience. In the last days, it will be as if Yahweh has *started afresh* and made *everything new*.

What's beautiful is that in verses 6-8, God promises not only to restore David, Jerusalem, peace, and fruitfulness but also to heal His broken people.

Micah 4:6–8 “6 “In that day, “ declares Yahweh, “I will assemble the lame And gather the banished, Even those upon whom I have brought calamity.”7 “I will make the lame a remnant And the outcasts a mighty nation, And Yahweh will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on and forever.”8 “And as for you, tower of the flock, Hill of the daughter of Zion, To you it will come— Even the former dominion will come, The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.”

God proclaims that He will gather the lame, those who have been profoundly battered and hurt, and the former dominion will return to the kingdom even stronger. The former dominion refers to the reign of David. The blessed days of David and Solomon will return even better than before.

B. Promises of Judgment (4:9-5:1)

Despite the glorious vision of the Davidic Covenant in the latter days, Micah reaffirms his message that pain must precede promise in verse 9.

Micah 4:9–10 “9 “Now, why do you make a loud shout? Is there no king among you, Or has your counselor perished, That writhing has taken hold of you like a woman in childbirth?”10 “Writhe and labor to give birth, Daughter of Zion, Like a woman in childbirth; For now you will go out of the city, Dwell in the field, And go to Babylon. There you will be delivered; There Yahweh will redeem you From the hand of your enemies.”

A day is coming when their enemies will surround them (4:11). On that day, they will cry out, but God asks, "Is there no king?" All this time, Israel has relied on impostor shepherds – failed kings – and in the end, they will writhe in pain as they are carried off to Babylon with no king to defend them, chapter 5:1,

Micah 5:1 “1 “Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; They have laid siege against us; With a rod they will strike the judge of Israel on the cheek.”

Remember that this is a pre-exilic prophecy, and what Micah is saying here is that after Babylon besieges Israel – as Babylon takes them out of the Promised Land into exile, they will strike the judge, not the king, the judge of Israel. They will have no king left; the Davidic line of kings will seem to have ceased, and this foreign nation will shamefully dominate the judge. This is a future reference to the non-royal steward, Zedekiah, who was the uncle of the last King of Israel, Jehoiachin, and was appointed as king by Nebuchadnezzar when his nephew, the true king, was taken into captivity. Jeremiah records (Jer 52:11) that in the end, Zedekiah was blinded and imprisoned until he died.

C. Promises of Deliverance (5:2-15)

To summarize, Micah begins with a funeral dirge for the house of the King (chapter 1), condemns the rulers of His people as unjust imposter shepherds who exploit their flock

(chapter 3), and then predicts a time of exile when the people will cry out for a king they no longer have. This will be a day when even their captors will shamefully strike the imposter king whom they installed in power (chapter 4). Nevertheless, Micah also prophesies that Yahweh, their true Shepherd, will lead His flock (Micah 2), and in the last days, He will establish His throne in Jerusalem where He will rule, judge, and instruct the entire world (Micah 4). Even in the passage foretelling the Babylonian exile, Micah states this in 4:10.

Micah 4:10 “...For now you will go out of the city, Dwell in the field, And go to Babylon. There you will be delivered; There Yahweh will redeem you From the hand of your enemies.”

Yahweh will redeem them from captivity, just as He did in the first Exodus. He will be their Shepherd, leading them back to the Promised Land, where He will reign over them and all the world in peace. There is no one like Yahweh, and He tolerates no imposter like that shameful Zedekiah. Yet what do we observe in the following verse of chapter 5?

Micah 5:2 “**2** “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from everlasting, From the ancient days.”

Notice the first phrase of the verse: Bethlehem Ephrathah. Why Bethlehem? The reason is that this One, this King, is the new and ultimate David. After David, kings were born in Jerusalem (e.g., Solomon, 2 Sam. 5:14), but the covenant collapsed (Mic. 1:5-7), and the Davidic kings became false shepherds (Micah 3:1-4). Remember, in Micah 1:15, God states that He will cause the glory of Israel to return to Adullam – the place where David began to flee from Saul and raised up a people after him. Returning to the beginning, resurrecting the fallen house of David (Amos 9), requires that we go back to the start – to the birthplace of David –humble, little Bethlehem.

From this town, Yahweh declares, “One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.” The term “ruler” denotes someone who holds authority and governing power, encompassing various figures throughout history, from the Philistines to Gideon. Jesus will indeed possess such power; He will govern and reign as a king. However, He is unique and extraordinary. The phrase states, “From you one will go out to be a ruler in Israel for Me”—with the “Me” referring to God. Unlike past rulers, who continuously failed to please God and were considered imposters, this ruler is the genuine article. He is the one who can fulfill God's mission and rule for His glory, embodying it Himself. This ruler stands apart as the ultimate leader, governing completely, utterly, and perfectly for God.

Micah continues, “His goings forth are from everlasting...” This explicitly refers to the eternal nature of this One. This phraseology is used exclusively for God,

Habakkuk 1:12 “12 Are You not from everlasting, O Yahweh, my God, my Holy One?...”

Psalms 90:2 “2 Before the mountains were born Or You brought forth the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

Psalms 93:2 “2 Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.”

Since God alone has no beginning, He is “from everlasting.” He is truly eternal, and this One who goes forth from God is also truly eternal, just like God. Verse 2 concludes with the phrase “from the ancient days.” Remember from Amos 9:11 that this expression refers to the golden era of Israel, the time when David ruled at the peak of his reign and Solomon ruled at his finest. As mentioned earlier, this was a time of victory, peace, rest, and Eden-like fruitfulness.

In verses 3-6, Micah ties everything together,

Micah 5:3–5a “3 Therefore He will give them up until the time When she who is in childbirth has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brothers Will return to the sons of Israel.” 4 And He will stand and shepherd His flock In the strength of Yahweh, In the majesty of the name of Yahweh His God. And they will remain Because at that time He will be great To the ends of the earth.” 5 And this One will be peace...”

His rule will usher in a New Exodus, where the remnant of this New David’s brothers will return. This alludes back to Joel and, more specifically, to Hosea.

Hosea 3:5 “5 Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek Yahweh their God and David their king; and they will come in dread to Yahweh and to His goodness in the last days.”

Hosea foresaw this reality. In the last days, Israel will return to “the Lord their God and David their king” – not the dead David, but the One who comes forth from Yahweh.

Micah’s message is that no one is like Yahweh, and He tolerates no impostor. When the kings and rulers of Judah fail to uphold His law, worship Him alone, and maintain justice and lovingkindness while shepherding God’s people, they reveal themselves as impostor shepherds. Yahweh declares through Micah that due to this failure, He will bring about the end of the Davidic dynasty through exile and will be the Shepherd of His people, going before them into exile and, one *day*, leading them out. However, because of His covenant faithfulness to David, Micah prophesies that Yahweh will resurrect the Davidic dynasty, starting anew with a New David, born in David’s town yet existing from everlasting. This One will return God’s people to the glorious days of old by ruling in the power, majesty, and glory of Yahweh’s name. There is no one like Yahweh; He tolerates no impostor. Thus, this One from Bethlehem, yet from everlasting, must be Yahweh, who will shepherd His people out of exile, restore them in the Promised Land, and rule over them and all the nations from Zion.

Christ Connection – I Am The Good Shepherd

This brings us to John 10. In this chapter, we have one of John's seven "I am" statements of Jesus,

John 10:11–15 “**11** “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” **12** “He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees—and the wolf snatches and scatters them—” **13** because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep.” **14** “I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, “**15** even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”

He is the Good Shepherd. He knows us; He calls us by name (John 10:3). He leads us beside still waters, going ahead of us yet always with us, and we follow Him because we hear His call. We know His voice (10:4). This teaching is presented in contrast to the impostor shepherds, who are like thieves seeking to kill and destroy the flock (10:10), and like hired hands who sacrifice the sheep to save themselves (10:12-13). However, the Good Shepherd sacrifices Himself to save the sheep whom He *knows*. He intimately *knows* each sheep by name with a covenant love that compels Him to lay down His life so we may live.

II. Covenant Lawsuit Confirmed (6:1-7:20)

Micah began his prophecy by introducing a covenant lawsuit against God's people, specifically due to the failure of their rulers to love Yahweh and care for His sheep. In the final two chapters, Micah revisits this covenant lawsuit motif to affirm the just judgment of God upon Judah and its leaders.

1. The Lawsuit Verdict (6:1-16)

In verses 1-5, Yahweh calls upon the mountains, the hills, and the earth's foundations as witnesses to His covenant love and faithfulness to Israel throughout history. Here, we can hear strong echoes of the Song of Moses from Deuteronomy 32. As in that song, Yahweh challenges His people by asking, “What have I done to you?” (6:3), referencing His deliverance from Egypt (6:4) and protection from Balak and Balaam (6:5). He has saved them from enemies, both visible and invisible. He sent them a deliverer in Moses and a priest in Aaron (6:4). Israel cannot fault God's covenant faithfulness; He has upheld His end of the covenant relationship.

Yet Israel has completely failed, verse 6,

Micah 6:6-7 “**6** With what shall I come before Yahweh And bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With yearling calves?” **7** Is Yahweh pleased with thousands of rams, With ten thousand rivers of

oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

Notice that God's people wonder whether they should give these offerings to Him. They have no clue how to worship Him or please Him. They're even willing to sacrifice their own children on His altar, which demonstrates their utter ambivalence toward God. For lack of knowledge, they will perish (Hosea 4:6). He has told them what He desires in verse 8,

Micah 6:8: "8 He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does Yahweh require of you But to do justice, to love lovingkindness, And to walk humbly with your God?"

They missed what God has desired all along: a devoted heart (Deut. 10:12-13). Proper sacrifices were commanded, but God prioritized internal obedience (1 Sam. 15:22). God requires justice, loving-kindness, and humility. What does He desire of His people but that they love their neighbor and love Him? To walk with God is to be in a relationship with Him – a relationship defined by a humble recognition that He is the Supreme and Holy God. This relationship of humble submission and devoted love should lead us to uphold what is just and right with one another and to show loving-kindness. See that God does not merely require the acts of showing justice and mercy; He requires that we *love* our neighbors. This is the language of obedience from the heart.

Instead, Israel's kings failed to uphold justice, unlike David's lovingkindness toward the lame Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 9:7); they devoured the weak and destitute. Rather than humbly walking with their God in obedient submission to Him, they boasted in the might of their cities and are therefore deserving of God's just judgment, as stated in verse 13.

Micah 6:13 "13 "So also I will make you sick, striking you down, Desolating you because of your sins."

2. The Prophet's Reaction (7:1-20)

As he did in Chapter 1, Micah begins chapter 7 mourning the judgment of Judah, verse 1,

Micah 7:1–6 "1 Woe is me! For I am Like the fruit pickers, like the grape gatherers. There is not a cluster of grapes to eat, Or a first-ripe fig which my soul desires." 2 The holy one has perished from the land, And there is no upright person among men. All of them lie in wait for bloodshed; Each of them hunts the other with a net."

Micah laments Israel's spiritual barrenness. He is like a fruit picker who finds no grapes on the vine and no figs on the tree. The reason for this barrenness is that no one is righteous; the godly have all perished. Instead of spiritual fruitfulness, Judah is filled with those who love violence, dishonest gain, and dissension, as stated in verse 4.

Micah 7:4 “4 The best of them is like a briar, The most upright like a thorn hedge...”

And yet, Micah does not lose hope, verse 7,

Micah 7:7–20 “7 But as for me, I will watch expectantly for Yahweh; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me.”8 Do not be glad over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise; Though I inhabit the darkness, Yahweh is a light for me.”9 I will bear the rage of Yahweh Because I have sinned against Him, Until He pleads my case and does justice for me. He will bring me out to the light, And I will see His righteousness.”

Micah trusts Yahweh and waits for salvation. Despite Israel’s fall and impending doom, Micah will wait like a watchman (vs. 4) for God’s restoration. He speaks for Jerusalem in these verses, warning her destroyers that she will rise again. Though she resides in the darkness of the dungeon she deserves for her sin, Yahweh will be her light, and one day, He will bring her out and vindicate the violent excesses of her captors. Then He will lead her home, verse 14.

Micah 7:14–15 “14 Shepherd Your people with Your scepter, The flock of Your inheritance Which dwells by itself in the forest, In the midst of a fruitful orchard. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead As in the ancient days.”15 “As in the days when you came out from the land of Egypt, I will show you wondrous deeds.”

Here, Micah calls on Yahweh to Shepherd His people back to the fruitful orchards of the promised land, to the lush hills of Bashan, leading them out with His scepter – a reference to the Messianic promise of Genesis 49:10, where the scepter will never depart from Judah. When Shiloh, the Prince of Peace, comes, He will rule over all the peoples in the Eden-like promised land flowing with wine and milk. That day of deliverance – this New Exodus – will resemble the first, where Yahweh, like the shepherd Moses, will lead His people to the Promised Land with wondrous deeds.

But how is this reversal possible? Throughout his prophecy, Micah transitions from mourning Israel’s destruction to rejoicing in its restoration. From the lamentation over the Davidic dynasty’s death to prophesying the birth of the New and Greater David. But how will God accomplish this shift from judgment to salvation? In verse 18, we finally see,

Micah 7:18–20 “18 Who is a God like You, who forgives iniquity And passes over the transgression of the remnant of His inheritance? He does not hold fast to His anger forever Because He delights in lovingkindness.”19 He will again have compassion on us; He will subdue our iniquities. And You will cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea.” 20 You will give truth to Jacob And lovingkindness to Abraham, Which You swore to our fathers From the days of old.”

There is no God like You who forgives sins. This is the linchpin. This transitions Israel from destruction to restoration, from judgment to salvation – the forgiveness of their sins. Despite their covenant-breaking disobedience and sinful unfaithfulness, Yahweh will uphold His covenant with Abraham and Jacob by forgiving His people's sins. He will not be angry forever, for He delights in – He loves – lovingkindness. Like a warrior pursuing an enemy, Yahweh will subdue – will crush under foot – Israel's sins and then cast them into the depths of the sea, completely removing them from His presence. And we know exactly how He will accomplish this forgiveness. The Good Shepherd will lay down His own life for the sins of His sheep.