

The Half Hour That Changes the World

Micah

Book 33

Basic Questions behind the book:

What does it mean for us to act justly, love mercy and to walk humbly with our God?

Summary of book:

Micah was a prophet and he was concerned with the threat of Assyria, with Samaria, the Northern Kingdom's capital city falling to the invaders in 722 BC. He warned Judah that this would be their fate unless they repented. There are many vivid passages about the Lord's power and judgment, but two passages, in particular, stand out. The first, Micah 4:1 – 5, is about the 'mountain of the Lord', and the peace that will come to all nations from it. The second is an oracle about Bethlehem, an insignificant village but for the fact that it was the ancestral home of King David. Micah 5:2 speaks of one coming from Bethlehem with the enigmatic phrase 'whose origins are from of old, from ancient times'.

In seven chapters, Micah presents this true picture of God; the almighty Lord who hates sin and loves the sinner. Micah pronounces judgement on both kingdoms and on all the earth and lists their sins. On the other hand, Micah gives hope and consolation because he also describes God's love. He also reminds God's people of every generation, and of every time and place, of an essential element of the mission that God calls us to share in. See key verse below.

Vital Statistics:

Purpose: To tell people of their sins, to remind them of an angry God, but also of a God that is love.

Author: Micah, a native of Moresheth, near Gath, about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. He is a contemporary of Amos, Hosea and Isaiah.

Recipients: The people of Israel and of Judah.

Dating: Possibly during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (742 - 687 BC).

Setting: The political situation is described in 2 Kings 15 - 20 and 2 Chronicles 26 - 30.

Reflections:

This is a beautiful example of classical Hebrew poetry. There are three parts, each beginning with 'Hear' or 'Listen' and closing with a promise.

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