

MICAH

From the list of the kings in Micah 1:1 and Isa. 1:1 we know that Micah and Isaiah were prophets at the same time in Judah, but that Micah's prophetic ministry began after Isaiah's. Isaiah began during Uzziah's reign; Micah began under the next king: Jotham. Therefore, the time period would be approximately from 740 to 687 B.C. (the dates given in the NSRB, p. 408).

All we know about Micah is found in this prophecy.

His name means, Who is like Jehovah? It emphasizes the incomparable character of God.

He was a native of Judah, and lived in Moresheth-gath, about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem.

The divisions of his prophecy are very easy to see. He designates them with the use of the word, "Hear." Cf. 1:2; 3:1; 6:1. The word in 3:9 simply repeats what we have in 3:1 and so is not another division, but ~~simply~~ a continuation of the same division. In 6:2 we simply have a clarification concerning those who are addressed in 6:1. Thus, we have an outline like this:

- I. Introduction (1:1).
- II. Micah's First Message (1:2-2:13)
- III. Micah's Second Message (3-5).
- IV. Micah's Third Message (6, 7).

The Introduction makes it clear that Micah is prophesying "concerning Samaria and Jerusalem," the capital cities of Israel and Judah. "Micah is the only prophet whose ministry was directed to both the Kingdoms" (Scroggie, p. 176).

What, however, is the main point in each message?

Message #1 - Micah 1, 2.

Note:

1. It has to do primarily with Samaria (and Israel). Cf. 1:6.
2. It is addressed to all of the nations of earth--evidently as a warning to them that He will not spare the Gentiles if He deals so severely with His own people. Cf. 1:2.
3. In 1:9 we see how the sin of Israel had spread out so as to affect even Jerusalem. This would be inclined to awaken Judah as to what had happened to her.
4. There are two sins which the Lord singles out as provoking His wrath: one is primarily against God; the second is a sin of the people against each other. They are:

- a. Idolatry (1:7).
- b. Covetousness (2:2).

Note: There is some possibility that the fact that these are violations of Commandments #1 and #2, and then #10, points to a desecration of the entire Law.

5. Only when we get to 2:12, 13 do we find hope for the future. It concerns "the remnant of Israel." More light on this subject is given in the next two messages, but evidently the prophet never concluded on a note of despair. It is evidence of the grace of God and of the immutability of His purposes, and it was an essential part of the prophetic ministry. The servant of the Lord should never leave people without hope.

Message #2 - Micah 3-5.

Note:

1. This message is addressed to the leaders of Jacob, and of Israel (3:1). Cf. also 3:5-7, 9. As in the first message the capital cities are singled out as bringing judgment on all of the other cities, so in this message the leaders are charged with bringing judgment on the rest of the people. Sin in high places is very, very serious.

2. This is primarily a message of hope, ^{especially} ~~primarily~~ in chapters 4 and 5. Of particular emphasis is the relationship of the Gentile nations to Israel in "the last days" (4:1).

The Babylonian Captivity of Judah is predicted in 4:10. BUT THE GENTILES ARE NOT TO MISINTERPRET THIS. See 4:11, 12. In 4:13 we see that finally the "daughter of Zion" will have the supremacy.

Chapter 5 begins with a Messianic prophecy which includes both the first and second advents of Christ (5:1, 2). This is followed by a prophecy of // the dispersion of Israel among the nations, but with the final judgment of the nations by the Lord.

Micah is not necessarily concerned with the chronological order of events, but He is vitally concerned with the outcome of God's will for His people. We can only understand the present if we see it in the light of the future.

Message #3 - Micah 6, 7.

Note:

1. From 6:1, 2 it would seem that the nations again are to take note concerning what God has done for His people, and what He will do in the future.
2. It begins and end (6:4, 5 and 7:20) with references to God's work for them in the past, His promises, His redemptive provisions. This is a foundation which not even God will change.
3. Next, in 6:6-7:6 we see what has happened to Israel because they have not done what was pleasing to Him. They felt that sacrifices were sufficient. See 6:6, 7. In 6:8 we have the real answer--an answer which had been given to them many times before. Here we see the evidence of salvation. The picture is very dark and hopeless by the time we get down to 7:6.

THEN THE PICTURE SUDDENLY CHANGES.

4. Now we have what many expositors have called, The Way of Salvation.

In 7:7-10 Israel turns to the Lord.

In 7:11-17 we see what the Lord will do for Israel "in that day," and what effect this will have upon the nations.

The last three verses we have the Gospel from this OT prophet, and why, in spite of Israel's unbelief and rebellion against God, God will carry out His original purposes as promised to "Jacob," and to "Abraham" before him!