

MICAH – The Message

Yahweh is planning Calamity

Micah spoke to the southern kingdom of Judah. King Ahaz brought great sin into Judah and God's judgment was about to come upon them. At this time in history, the Assyrian King was a mighty ruler. First, as the Assyrian general "Pul" (2 Kings 15:19; 1 Chr 5:26), he overthrew the government and became King Tiglath-Pileser. He defeated the Babylonians and was the Assyrian king as well as king of Babylon. King Ahaz used the silver and gold from the Temple as a gift to Tiglath-Pileser, seeking his help to defeat the Israeli/Syrian alliance that was at war with Judah. The king of Assyria listened to him, defeated the Syrians (Arameans), and put their king, Rezin, to death. The Assyrian kings that followed, Shalmaneser and Sargon, continued the conquest, defeating the northern kingdom of Israel as well. Now, Micah of Moresheth, prophesied of the coming judgment declared against Judah.

Micah 2:1-5

Yahweh is planning calamity against this family (Judah). They will take up a lamentation and say "We are completely destroyed."

Rulers Reproved

Micah 3:1-4

A message to the rulers who hate good and love evil. Yahweh will hide His face from them because they have practiced evil deeds.

Micah 3:5-7 A message to the prophets and seers who lead My people astray. They will be ashamed because there is no answer from God

Micah 3:9-11 The rulers abhor justice and twist everything. The "leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe. The priests instruct for a price. And her prophets divine for money."

Micah 3:12

Therefore Zion will be plowed as a field. Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins.

It Will Come About in the Last Days

Micah 4:1-3

(Isaiah 2:2-4)

Micah 4:4

"Each will sit under his vine and under his fig tree" – This phrase was used to mean living in a time of peace and safety.

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This was said of a time of Solomon, when for a brief period in their history, Israel had peace on all sides.

1 Kings 4:24-25

For he had dominion over everything west of the River, from Tiphshah even to Gaza, over all the kings west of the River; and he had peace on all sides around about him.

So Judah and Israel lived in safety, **every man under his vine and his fig tree**, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

This phrase is also used later in the prophecy of Zechariah regarding peace “in that day.”

Zechariah 3:10

“In that day,” declares the LORD of hosts, “every one of you will invite his neighbor **to sit under his vine and under his fig tree.**”

Micah 4:5-8

The LORD will reign over them in Zion.

Micah 4:9-10a

For a while, “the daughter of Zion/Jerusalem” will be without a king and will go into exile to Babylon.

The phrase “daughter of Zion” is a personification of Jerusalem and its inhabitants.

Micah 4:10b – 5:1

However, God will redeem His people. And the many nations assembled against Zion will be sheaves to the threshing floor.

Sheaves of grain would be opened up and the stalks spread across the threshing floor. Pairs of donkeys or oxen (or sometimes cattle, or horses) would then be walked round and round, often dragging a heavy threshing board behind them, to tear the ears of grain from the stalks, and loosen the grain itself from the husks.

After this threshing process, the broken stalks and grain were collected and then thrown up into the air with a wooden winnowing fork or a winnowing fan. The chaff would be blown away by the wind; the short torn straw would fall some distance away; while the heavier grain would fall at the winnower's feet. The grain could then be further cleansed by sieving.

Matthew 3:12

His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

They will lay siege, and with a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek.

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One out of Bethlehem will be Ruler in Israel

Micah 5:2-6

But out of Bethlehem, one will go forth to be ruler in Israel (Matthew 2:5-6). He will arise and shepherd his flock in the strength of Yahweh, in the majesty of the name of Yahweh. He will be great to the ends of the earth. He will be our peace, and he will deliver us from the Assyrian when he invades our land.

Micah 5:7-15

God will cut off the evil practices and execute vengeance on the nations that have not obeyed.

Micah 6:6-8

Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.

The Voice of Yahweh Calls to the City

Micah 6:9-12

Micah 6:13-16

I will make you sick. I will give what your preserve to the sword. Because the statutes of Omri and the wicked house of Ahab are observed, I will give you up for destruction.

Micah 7:2-4

The godly person has perished. Concerning evil, both hands do it well! The best of them is like a briar. The most upright is like a thorn hedge.

Micah 7:7

But as for me, I will watch expectantly for Yahweh. I will wait for the God of my salvation

Micah 7:18-20

Who is like Yahweh who pardons iniquity and delights in unchanging love? He will again have compassion on us.

Unlike some words from other prophets whose warnings were often not heeded, after Micah spoke, King Hezekiah and the rulers listened to Micah's words.

Jeremiah 26:17-19

Then some of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying, "Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus the LORD of hosts has said, Zion will be plowed as a field, And Jerusalem will become ruins, And the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest [Micah 3:12].' Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the favor of the LORD, and the LORD changed His mind about the misfortune which He had pronounced against them?"

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NAHUM

Background

Nahum 1:1
The oracle of Nineveh

The city of Nineveh was built by Nimrod in the land of Assyria (Gen 10:11). By the time Sennacherib became king, Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria, the city, to which Jonah was sent to preach repentance (Jonah 1:1-2). Now, over a hundred years later, Nahum is sent to prophesy of the city's demise. The destruction and captivity of Egypt is mentioned in Nahum 3:8-10. Historically, this defeat of Egypt came at the hands of the Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal, in 663 B.C. Nahum prophesied of the fall of Nineveh which occurred in 612 B.C. The book was most likely written sometime between these two dates.

Date (B.C.)	Kings of Judah	Assyrian Kings	Events
755	Jotham (752BC-736BC)	Ashur-nirari V (754BC -745BC)	
750			
745		Tilgath-Pileser III (745BC-727BC)	Assyria defeats Babylon
740	Ahaz (736BC-720BC)		Syria defeated – exiled to Assyria
735			
730		Shalmaneser V (727BC-722BC)	
725	Hezekiah (720BC-692BC)	Sargon II (722BC-705BC)	Israel defeated – exiled to Assyria
720			
715			
710			
705			
700	Manasseh (692BC-638BC)	Sennacherib (704BC-681BC)	185,000 Assyrians slain by angel of the LORD
695			
690			
685			
680			Sennacherib is murdered by his sons
675			
670			
665	Amon (638BC-637BC)	Esarhaddon (680BC-669BC)	
660			
655		Ashurbanipal (668BC-627BC)	663BC- Egypt/Thebes falls to the Assyrians
650			
645	Josiah (637BC-606BC)		
640			
635			
630		Sinsharishkun (627BC-617BC)	
625	Zephaniah		
620			
615			
610		Ashur-uballit II (617BC-605BC)	612BC – Nineveh Falls
605	Jehoiakim (606BC-596BC)	Babylonian Empire (King Nebuchadnezzar)	
600			
595	Zedekiah (596BC-586BC)		
590			586BC- Jerusalem falls to the Babylonians

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Assyria reached its greatest expansion under King Ashurbanipal. He defeated Egypt at Thebes and carried their people into exile (Nahum 3:8-10). He was the last of the great conquering Assyrian kings.



King Manasseh reigned in Judah during the seventh century B.C. for 55 years, the longest of any Judean king. He is mentioned in Assyrian records as being a loyal vassal of Esarhaddon, and Ashurbanipal lists Manasseh as one of the kings of who assisted in his campaign against Egypt. Judah prospered as a vassal state under Assyrian rule. From a secular point of view, Manasseh brought prosperity to Judah, similar to what Jeroboam II did for northern Israel. However, from a spiritual point of view, Manasseh brought great sin to the country from which Judah never recovered.

Throughout the eighth and seventh century B.C., the Assyrian kings had tremendous influence and interaction with both the northern kingdom of Israel and southern Judah. "God reigns over the nations" (Ps 47:8a). God's sovereignty can be seen in His dealings with Nineveh and the Assyrian kings. God had delivered the city of Nineveh from destruction through the preaching of Jonah and the subsequent repentance of the people. Later, God raised up Assyria as His "rod" to punish Israel and Judah for their sin.

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Isaiah 7:17

The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house such days as have never come since the day that Ephraim separated from Judah, the king of Assyria.

Isaiah 10:5-6

Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hands is My indignation. I send it against a godless nation and commission it against the people of My fury to capture booty and to seize plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets.

However, the Assyrian kings became haughty, and God promised to bring punishment on Assyria.

Isaiah 10:12

So it will be that when the Lord has completed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, *He will say*, "I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the pomp of his haughtiness."

Isaiah 14:24-26

The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, "Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand, to break Assyria in My land, and I will trample him on My mountains. Then his yoke will be removed from them and his burden removed from their shoulder. This is the plan devised against the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out against all the nations."

Now, the prophet Nahum brings this oracle against Ninevah, the capital of Assyria, and prophesies of its destruction.

Nahum 1:1-14

Yahweh is slow to anger. But, when it comes time for His punishment, who can stand before His indignation?

Nahum 1:15

On the mountains of Judah, there will be celebration. It is good news, the gospel of peace!

Isaiah 52:4-7

For thus says the Lord GOD, "My people went down at the first into Egypt to reside there; then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what do I have here," declares the LORD, "seeing that My people have been taken away without cause?" *Again* the LORD declares, "Those who rule over them howl, and My name is continually blasphemed all day long. Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, 'Here I am.' How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, *and* says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

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Nahum 2:1ff

The siege on Nineveh is declared. “Behold, I am against you,’ declares Yahweh of hosts.”

Nahum 3:1ff

Nineveh is devastated!

According to historians, in 612 B.C. an allied force of Babylonians, Chaldeans, Medes, Persians, Scythians, and Cimmerians laid siege on Nineveh and destroyed it with bitter house to house fighting. They razed it to the ground. Many of those in the city who did not escape were massacred. Modern archaeologists have found a vast amount of unburied skeletons at the location that was at one time the great city of Nineveh. The Assyrian Empire came to an end shortly after this in 605 B.C.