

Micah

Introduction

The prophet is contemporaneous with Isaiah and dates his period during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah (1:1, thus between 750 and 686). He foretold the judgment of Samaria (1:6, it will be made a heap of rubble). Therefore, his vision concerning Jerusalem and Samaria (1:1) shows that he preached well before the north fell to Assyria.

He thus prophesied both captivities (Samaria, 1:6; Jerusalem, 1:12; Assyria is an invader, 5:6; Babylon is where you, in the south, will go, 4:10).

The sins of God's people that will lead to captivity are documented along with the promise of restoration.

Micah contains some of the most familiar passages of the OT, especially 5:2 (**But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days**) and 6:6-8 (**With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? ⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" ⁸He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?**).

1A. Literary Analysis

1B. Genre

An anthology of prophetic messages of warning and hope; hence the sense that the material seems to ramble.

2B. Structure

The book can be roughly structured on the basis of alternating messages of threat and hope in two rounds:

Round one, 1-5

Round two, 6-7

2A. Theme

The theme is judgment against sin in the lives of God's people with hope for the future coming from Bethlehem of Judah.

Restoration will involve the coming of a ruler from the house of Judah who will unite the kingdom, and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. This is Jesus from Bethlehem (5:2-4). His kingdom will extend to the ends of the earth and he will be their peace (5:5, **And he shall be their peace. When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men**).

3A. Prophetic telescoping

How can Messiah be their peace at the time of the Assyrians? Note the prophetic foreshortening. Restoration is fulfilled in the coming of the prince of peace and the spread of the gospel to the utter most parts of the earth (Micah 5:1-5; Matt. 28).

In response to this word, the nations will turn in fear to the Lord our God (7:17). They will beat their spears into plowing hooks (4:3). The nations will learn his ways and walk in his paths (4:2).

We eventually reach the restoration to Eden described again in terms of Israel's land and vineyards (4:4; 7:8-9; 14-15). This is restoration to the new heaven and earth when the land has eternal sabbath rest.

Note what is telescoped together: Jesus is peace to the nations now and He will bring the peace of the new Eden.

There will be a remnant from all nations, from Israel and the nations (7:18; he will hurl our sins into the depths of the sea, 7:19). Why? because:

- 1) God delights to show mercy and compassion (7:18-19)
- 2) God is true to his covenant purposes revealed to Jacob and Abraham (7:20).

3A. Message for us

1. God is covenantally faithful. Great is thy faithfulness. Though we are sinful and unworthy.

2. This calls us to gratitude and lived praise per the Psalms.

3. We have a summons here to be faithful to our Lord to what he requires of us in grateful response to his faithfulness to us. What is good? What does he require? [**to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God**]. This is covenant fellowship; wherever you and I go He is with us and says I will never leave you nor forsake you, that you may say "I will not fear what man shall do unto me."