

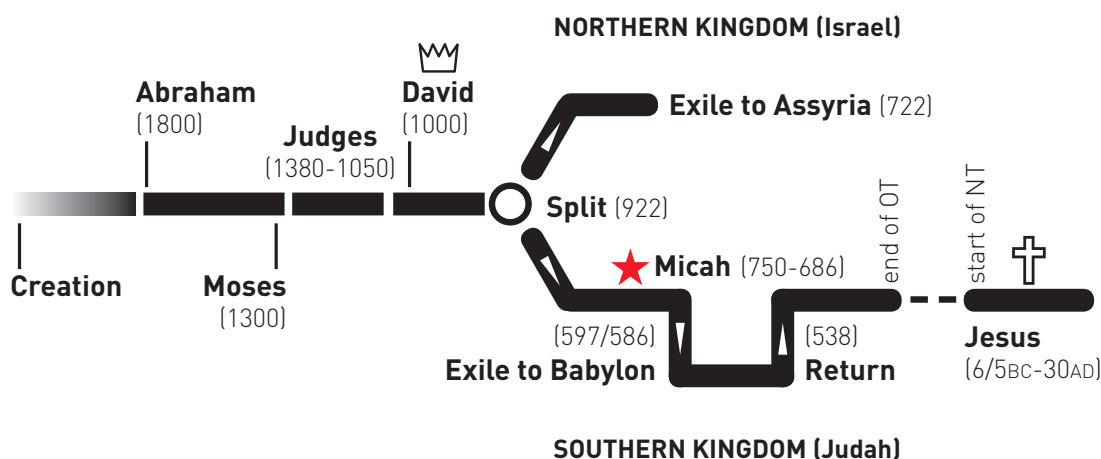
NAVIGATING MICAH



FROM WHOM? The word of the Lord came to Micah from the town of Moresheth, 35 km South-West of Jerusalem (1:1). Micah’s name means, “Who is like Yahweh?” (compare with 7:18).

TO WHOM? The prophetic message of the book is addressed to Samaria and Jerusalem, Jacob and Israel (1:1; 3:1), yet all the peoples of the earth are called to listen and witness the Lord’s indictment against his people (1:2; 6:1-2).

WHEN? Micah prophesied in the 8th C. BC, during the reigns of the Judean kings: Jotham (750-735 BC), Ahaz (735-715 BC), and Hezekiah (715-687 BC).

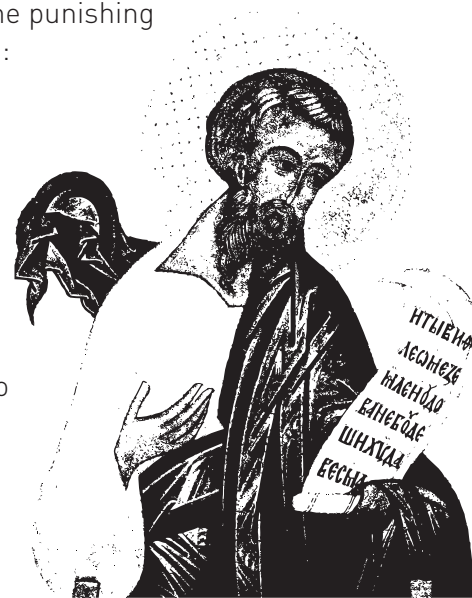


WHY? Micah seeks to set forth God’s case against his people, to “declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin” (3:8). In a time of great affluence and prosperity, Israel and Judah were deeply infected with religious corruption and social injustice. God’s leaders – civil, religious and prophetic - had failed to lead righteously, and God’s people consequently were consumed by idolatry, violence, and the abuse of the weak and poor.

WHAT? The twin themes of Micah’s prophecy are judgement and hope. On account of Samaria and Jerusalem’s covenant unfaithfulness, the Lord God promises to bring judgement on his people through their enemies, Assyria and Babylon. Yet in his covenant faithfulness, God also promises to deliver, gather and care for a remnant of his people, in a restored Zion through his Davidic king. From Micah’s prophecy, it’s clear that the punishing divine judge, Yahweh, is also the gracious and merciful, shepherd king:

“Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance?” (7:18)

We see the prophecy ultimately fulfilled in the one born in Bethlehem, blessed with divine strength and majesty and whose “origins are from old” (5:2): Jesus, the great Lord, judge, shepherd and king. He alone is the true deliverer of everlasting security and peace for his people (e.g. Matthew 2:6; 12:15-21; John 7; 10:16). For no God is like him.



JUDEAN TOWNS OF MICAH 1

Verse	Name	Meaning
1:10	Gath	= "tell"
1:10	Beth-le-aphrah	= "house of dust"
1:11	Shaphir	= "beautiful"
1:11	Zaanah*	= "come out"
1:11	Beth-ezel*	= "house of taking away"
1:12	Maroth*	= "bitter"
1:13	Lachish	= "to the steeds"
1:14	Moresbeth-gath	= "one who is betrothed"
1:14	Achzib	= "deception"
1:15	Mareshah	= "conqueror"
1:15	Adullam	= symbolic of hostility, i.e. David's exile in 2 Sam 23:13
	* location unknown	



THE STRUCTURE OF MICAH



After the introductory title (1:1), the book of Micah consists of three cycles of God's *judgement* against his people, including the *evidence* cited for the indictments, before turning to the promise of future *hope* (1-2; 3-5; 6-7).

Each cycle is introduced by the refrain to "hear" the word of God (1:2; 3:1 & repeated in 3:9; 6:1).

