Introduction

There are many meanings in the Bible:

*Micah 1*

**What Makes Micah Different**

**C. Micah** = "Who is like God (El)?"

**Micah** = (as shortened form of Micaiah, of Micaiah): Who is like YHWH (Yah)?

Cf. Michael = "Who is like God (El)?"

This was no accidental name:

... hall of the 8th century B.C.

... about 20 mi. SW of Jerusalem, near Lachish. He prophesied in the latter

... of Isaiah 1:11 and an angle of the story of Isaiah 1:17: A place

... to Judah a younger contemporary of Isaiah.

... of Jerusalem which was connected with his name.

... "Micah 3:11:28."

... called to distinguish him from Micah the son

... "Micah 3:11:28."

A descendant of Zebulun, the Benjamin (1Ch 27:20); The firstborn of the tribe of the family of Kohathites (1Ch 24:3).

The son of Mehet-arial (Micah 1:1)

... 1Ch 24:3). The place of Judah in the story of Zebulun, the Benjamin (1Ch 27:20);

2. The son of Mehet-arial (Micah 1:1) Ch 24:3.

... the place of Zebulun in the story of the family of Kohathites (1Ch 24:3).

A man of Micah, whose history is introduced in Judg 17:1.

Introduction

Audio Listing

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Micah Summary


**Micah 7**

The "Pure Religion" Passage. The "Section on the Mount of the OT."

**Micah 6**

Background on the Magi. Christ's Preexistence, Incarnation, and Reign.

**Micah 5**

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**Micah 4**

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**Micah 3**

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**Micah 2**

Introduction. Signs Against God. The Call for Repentance.

**Micah 1**
Hosea and Amos were ignored. Jeremiah was imprisoned. In Micah's case, the message was heeded, repentance followed, and disaster was postponed for a century.

A more significant figure was the prophet Micah, who prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Micah's prophetic message was delivered in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, "Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest." (Mic 4:1)

Micah's message was harsh, warning of judgment and destruction if the people did not repent. He called for the destruction of the idols and the turning away from false gods. Micah's prophetic words were remembered and used by God to spare Jeremiah, the prophet who later prophesied over the impending destruction of Jerusalem.

The Hidden Hero?

Comparatively little is known of Micah's life. He was a rural prophet, not of the city or the palace like his contemporary, Isaiah. His writing is pungent and personal; he is touching and tender. Many of the passages will prove familiar to most Christians. Micah was the authority referred to by Herod's advisors during the visit of the Magi (Mt 2:1-6), and he was the authority referred to by the priests and false prophets who followed him. Micah's words were remembered and used by God to spare Jeremiah, the prophet who later prophesied over the impending destruction of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah gave his defense, citing the previous experience of Micah: "Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts... If ye will return, and seek the Lord your God, and shall pluck up the root of iniquity from the earth... Then shall your latter end be better than your beginning; saith the Lord, and your exportation shall be from the house of the enemy...Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest... Thus might we procure great evil against our souls." (Jer 26:18-19)

As a result, Jeremiah was spared. Even 120 years later, Micah's words were remembered and used by God to spare Jerusalem. In fact, it appears Micah lived to see the beginning of Hezekiah's reign.

Who Was He?

Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos. He probably was a friend of Isaiah, and his book has been called a "prophetic gem." In fact, Isaiah prefixed his second chapter with three verses from Micah's prophecy.

The capital of the northern kingdom was Samaria. It was built originally by Omri, King of Israel, and was the seat of idolatry. It was made infamous by Ahab and Jezebel, who built a temple to Baal. God sent Elijah, Elisha, and Amos to turn them from their practices.

Hosea, Micah's contemporary, also prophesied against the northern kingdom. His warnings went unheeded. (See Hosea, Can You See?, our briefing package on the parallels with America.) God used their enemies as His instrument of judgment.

In 734 B.C., the Assyrians carried away all of north Israel, and in 721 B.C., Shalmanezer of Assyria attacked the northern capital of Samaria and overthrew it, and deported the remaining people of the northern kingdom. (2 Kgs 17:6). In 719 B.C., Sennacherib, Shalmanezer's successor, attacked the southern kingdom ("Shoa" = "sea of Jordan", the boundary between Assyria and Babylonia), and deported the majority of the people of Judah, leaving only a remnant.

Hezekiah spread this letter before the Lord and received confirmation through Jeremiah that the city would be spared; Sennacherib would fall. Hezekiah gave his defense, citing the previous experience of Micah: "Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. Did Hezekiah king of Judah turn back the word of the LORD, which he had spoken by the prophet? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls." (Jer 26:18, 19)

Not only did Hezekiah spare Jerusalem, but the city was even strengthened. The capital of the northern kingdom was Samaria, the city which was attacked. The capital of the southern kingdom was Jerusalem, which was spared. The northern kingdom was destroyed, while the southern kingdom was strengthened. This is a miracle, and it demonstrates God's power over His people.

In the case of the northern kingdom, God used the Assyrians as His instrument of judgment, and in the case of the southern kingdom, God used the Babylonians. The northern kingdom was destroyed, while the southern kingdom was strengthened. This is a miracle, and it demonstrates God's power over His people.
Micah pronounced judgment on the cities of Israel and on Jerusalem: the urban centers of the nation; he can be labeled "the prophet of the city": condemning its violence, corruption, robbery, covetousness, gross materialism, spiritual bankruptcy, and illicit sex.

Yet, through the gloom of impending judgment, Micah clearly saw the coming glory of the redemption of Israel, which makes this book especially relevant to our time!

His grand question is, "Who is like unto Thee?"

Perhaps the Deity can forgive sins, but I don't see how.

Socrates, 500 B.C.

Key verse:

Psalm 18:7-10.

Similar language is found in the Scriptures from Judges to Habakkuk (Cf. 2 Kgs 12:3; 14:1; Ezek 6:6).

High places: "locations of idol worship (Cf. 2 Kgs 12:3; 14:1; Ezek 6:6)."

More broadly, the LORD comes out of his place and will come down, and all the mountains shall be moved as the valleys, and all hills shall be shaken.

Watch out, all you who inhabit the earth, and all you who dwell in it, that the LORD is God. Who can withstand his anger?"

The grand question is, "Who is like unto Thee?"

Heaven: "This divides the book into three messes (1:2-3; 3:1-6; 7:1-18)."


Micah 1

PART I (of III): The Avalanche of Disaster

The Lord leaves His holy temple to do battle Himself:

2

Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.

"Hear": This divides the book into three messes (1:2-3; 3:1-6; 7:1-18).

"O earth, and all the earth is the Lord's; O earth, and all who dwell therein."

The transgression of Jacob is all this, and the sins of the house of Israel.

PART II (of III): The Fall of Samaria

5

For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel.

What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?

Where is transgression of Jacob all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel.

His transgression is leading to the fall of Samaria, which is the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. After the fall of Samaria, Jerusalem will fall.

The word of the LORD came to Micah in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Moresheth was a small country in Palestine, about 20 miles SW of Jerusalem.

AlthoughMicah was made to pronounce judgment against the southern kingdom of Judah, his pronouncement (Micah 3:1-12) is especially relevant to us because he can be seen in the context of Israel as a whole.

PART III: The Bible's Prophetic View of Israel and Judah

Urban Focus

God hates sin, but loves the sinners and wants to save them (us). But His holiness requires Him to deal with any rebellion. He wants to save sinners, and He will save them if they come to Him in faith.

Who is like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy.

Micah 7:18

Ephesus, Pergamos, etc., were once the lifeblood of ancient empires. But they are now lying in ruins.

The fall of great empires of the past is a warning to us. We need to repent and turn to God before it is too late.

The Assyrians captured Samaria in 722 B.C., and the people of Israel were deported to Babylonia. This was the end of the northern kingdom of Israel.

In Micah, we see the Assyrians as a symbol of God's judgment on the cities of Israel and Jerusalem.
Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof.

Although Micah's primary target will be his own southern kingdom, he focuses on the northern kingdom first (vv.4-9). The capital of the northern kingdom actually fell in the memory of Micah's listeners. "Vineyard" It probably was a vineyard originally (1 Kgs 16:24). Today it lies in ruins as Micah so aptly describes. What the Assyrians began was fulfilled by John Hyrcanus (Josephus, Antiquities, xii.28.1).}

7] And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the hires thereof shall be burned with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot.

Amos, too, had denounced the northern kingdom for their sexual immorality, cultic prostitution, etc. (Amos 2:7, 8. Cf. Deut 23:18; Hos 9:1; Isa 23:17; et al.).

Our "new morality" is little more than a return to these pagan practices of antiquity. For another example of what "religion" has done, examine India—impoverished and bound by the fetters of religion. Christianity is not a religion: it is a person; Jn 8:36.

8] Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.

Micah is not asking them to do anything he isn't doing himself. "Going naked," (barefoot?) a sign of mourning (2 Sam 15:30). Wailing like jackals and ostriches (cf. Job 30:29).

9] For her wound is incurable; for it is come unto Judah; he is come unto the gate of my people, even unto Jerusalem.


Important note: Enosh, Seth's son, was the first to indulge in idolatry: Gen 4:26 is often mistranslated: Targum of Onkelos: "...desisted from praying in the name"; Targum of Jonathan: "surnamed their idols in the name..."; Kimchi, Rashi, and other ancient Jewish commentators agree. Jerome indicated that this was the opinion of many Jews of his day. Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishna (a constituent part of the Talmud), A.D. 1168, ascribes the origin of idolatry to the days of Enosh.

The evils of the north have infected the south. (The south had a century to learn from the judgment that fell on the north: 722 B.C. - 606 B.C.) Cf. Isa 10 & 36. The rest of the book will now focus on Judah and Jerusalem.

One of the reasons that Micah's ministry reaped results was his specificity: he applies six (of the 16) verses of this chapter to list the very cities that will participate in the coming disaster (including his own hometown; v.14). The cities listed in vv.10-15 were in west Judah, Micah's home territory, and were devastated by the Assyrians, along with the overthrow of the northern kingdom. The flow was from Samaria to Jerusalem (v.14).

The capital of the northern kingdom actually fell in the memory of Micah's listeners. (We, too, need to realize that the Bible is always speaking about "we" other than the Ancient Hebrews.) We need to realize that the Bible is always speaking about "we" other than the Ancient Hebrews.

The evil of the nations that had pierced the soul of Judah is...
Micah's intense dismay, and the sinister destinies of these cities, is reflected in their names: these puns were viewed as omens. [Puns are homonyms which can be used to imply an editorial comment. See Cosmic Codes, Appendix A, for examples of over 200 rhetorical devices used in Scripture.]

"Names are treated as omens which, once observed, haunt the localities until they are fulfilled. They are revealed as clues to the curse that is to come upon the country."

Leslie Allen

Beth Ophrah:

"[rp['apar = dust. The citizens will cover themselves with dust as a traditional rite of mourning."

11] Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir, having thy shame naked: the inhabitant of Zaanan came not forth in the mourning of Bethezel; he shall receive of you his standing.

Saphir: Sounds like the word for "beautiful," yet not for long: Their citizens will be marched away naked and in shame...

Zaanan: Sounds like the Hebrew word for "exit," "march," or "go out." Again, in contrast, they will be shut up inside their city like animals until it falls.

Beth Ezel: Means "the nearby city." But it will not be near in that day: it will be taken up with its own mourning that it will be of no help to the others...

12] For the inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good: but evil came down from the LORD unto the gate of Jerusalem.

Maroth ("bitterness") will writhe in bitterness.

13] O thou inhabitant of Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast: she is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion: for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee.

Lachish was a well-known military city about 30 miles SW of Jerusalem. It was the first introduced locality in Psalm 89:4: "Lachish was a well-known military city about 30 miles SW of Jerusalem.

The chapter closes with an appeal to Jerusalem as the parent of her children: the outlying villages... Since they were... their beards (Deut 14:1), nevertheless, this was an ultimate form of shame, grief, and remorse (Cf. Isa 15:2; Jer 16:19). They are to shave their heads in mourning for they are to be taken away; they are to have their heads in mourning for they are to die.

14] Therefore shalt thou give presents to Moreshethgath: the houses of Achzib shall be a lie to the kings of Israel.

Moresheth-Gath, Micah's home town, sounds like me'oreshet, "bethrothed"; so he speaks of giving the city wedding gifts as she passes from the rule of her own family to the authority of her cruel new husband. Achzib, sounds like 'aksab, "deceitful, disappointing." Micah says she will prove deceptive to the kings of Israel.

15] Yet will I bring an heir unto thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah: he shall come unto Adullam the glory of Israel.

Mareshah, is related to the word yoresh, "possessor, heir" and she will be possessed by someone else.

Adullam was the place of refuge to which David had gone during the dismal days when he was in flight from King Saul. Cf. Jos 15:35; 1Sam 22:1. It will happen again, says Micah, for the masses of the northern kingdom will be forced to take refuge in the wilderness.

16] Make thee bald, and poll thee for thy delicate children; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; for they are gone into captivity from thee.

Israel will be forced to take refuge in the desert. It will happen again, says Micah, for the masses of the northern kingdom will be forced to take refuge in the wilderness.

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Micah's rhetorical tour de force is intended to dispel their complacency and arouse in them a sense of their own sin and their liability to punishment.

The northern kingdom was taken into captivity by the Assyrians and deported. (The "ten lost tribes" is, however, a myth which has emerged from careless scholarship. The faithful of all 12 tribes had migrated to the southern kingdom, 2 Chr 11, et al. See the 8th tape concluding our Expositional Commentary on Joshua.

[13]} The LORD unto the gate of Jerusalem.

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The southern kingdom, a century after Micah's ministry, did ultimately also go into exile—but for a definitive period of time: 70 years (to the day!); Cf. 2 Chr 36:21. They were regathered in the second year of Ezra's ministry, under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Jeshua (Ezra 1:1-11), and the condition of community in Israel was restored. They were dispersed throughout the world as a result of their rejection of their Messiah; the "Diaspora" from 70 A.D., et al. When they are regathered "the second time" (Isaiah 11:11), it begins the final consummation.

Analysis

Why was Micah's ministry successful?

1) He identified himself personally with his people. He didn't ask them to do something that he refused to do himself (Cf. v.8 with v.16).

2) He was persistent. He didn't give up. He preached through three succeeding reigns: Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The first two each reigned 16 years each; it appears that he may have preached for 20 years without any apparent signs of success.

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Galatians 6:9

Churchill's reason for success?

Never give up. Never give up. Never give up. Never, never give up.

Winston Churchill

* * *

Study Questions:

1) List the minor prophets, their target audiences, and their apparent degrees of success.

2) What are some parallels between the condition of community in Micah's day and the conditions confronting us today?

Discussion Questions:

1) What are some parallels between the conditions confronting Micah and the conditions confronting us today?

2) What were the key factors contributing to Micah succeeding where other prophets had failed?

3) What are other examples of the use of puns in the Scriptures?

For Further Research:

1) Review the career of Hezekiah: his successes and his failures.

2) Review the tragic reign of Manasseh who followed Hezekiah. What were the results?

3) Review the career of Josiah and the results of his reforms, in contrast to the condition of the people's heart.

Preparation for Next Session:

Review the Palestinian Covenant of the Land: conditions of obedience, Deut 28-30.

Review the Ten Commandments, Deut 5:17, 18, 21; and the Six Woes of Isaiah 5 (v.8ff); Cf. Deut 27:17; 1 Sam 8:11; Prob 23:10,11.

Notes:


Micah 2

Chapter 1 boldly assails the sins of God's people against the Lord.

Chapter 2 rebukes the crimes against his fellow man.

God's intention is that those with whom He has taken into a covenant relationship with Himself should be overcomers. If it be otherwise, the fault is in them—not with Him.

But where unbelief and disobedience hold sway, spiritual paralysis must necessarily ensue.

Micah was sent to them because their "State of Soul" was in desperate need of repair. God would deal with them the way they had been dealing with their fellows...

Whenever the rights of God are lightly treated, the rights of man can fare no better.

1] Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.

There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Proverbs 19:21

They are not led into these sins by others: they themselves conceive their evil purposes. For them, might is right. There is nothing wrong with prosperity, but these people were increasing their wealth through force and fraud.

The root of the problem is that power is in the hands of the ungodly.

There is no greater tragedy for the future of our republic than for it to have fallen into the hands of the godless rich...

The abandonment of truth and loyalty to covenants undermines the leadership of a ruler:

Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.

Proverbs 20:28

The issue of bribery is at root the issue of private enrichment and the abandonment of public virtue:

The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

Proverbs 29:4

The abandoning of truth weakens the seat of government and the stability and security of the nation:

It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

Proverbs 16:12

The abandonment of righteousness weakens the entire government:

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Galatians 5:9; 1 Corinthians 5:6

Chapter 2 expresses the crimes against the Law in detail:

1] Review the Covenant of the Land: conditions of obedience.

And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Proverbs 27:12

If a man hearken to thee, all his verbs are wicked:

unless become corrupt.

Proverbs 27:14

The multitude of the poor is mighty, but he that ruleth by equity increaseth the strength of the people.

Proverbs 14:34

The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

Proverbs 29:4

If a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, then is a great fall.
A key word: Covet. The last of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:17).

To be dissatisfied; materialistic; greedy. A sin of the heart. A form of idolatry. Dominant today.

This was similar to the situation that Amos confronted in Samaria: They had built winter and summer houses (Amos 3:15); Their furniture was the finest quality (Amos 6:4); They had lush ... (Amos 6:4-6); ... but all was acquired by fraud, oppression, and corruption. Cf. Amos 2:6, 7; 5:7, 10, 12; 8:4-6.

We have a telling example in Ahab and Jezebel with respect to Naboth's vineyard (Cf. 1 Kgs 21). [This is also essential to understand Rev 2:20.]

All fraudulent methods—extortion, naked force, manipulation of the legal system, or other forms of dishonesty are condemned (Isa 52:4; Jer 50:33; Lev 6:2, 4; 19:13; Deut 1:17; 17:8-13).

"Oppress": qv; ['ashaq: the Hebrew word involves the use of violence.


3] Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil.

The punishments will fit the crimes.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

4] In that day shall one take up a parable against you, and lament with a doleful lamentation, and say, We be utterly spoiled: he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed it from me! turning away he hath divided our fields. The three Hebrew words (hyh.nI yhin> hhnw nahah, nehi, niheyah) are an expressive emphatic play on words—a monotonous wail: "lament with a lament of lamentation." They had taken the fields and possessions of the poor; now they would suffer the same fate. In seizing the portion of others, they lost their own security.

5] Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the LORD.

Their ruin would be so complete that when the time came for the land to be redistributed, there would be no one to represent them and their place in the nation would be lost forever.

6] Prophesy ye not, say they to them that prophesy: they shall not prophesy to them, that reproach may not overtake them. Difficult translation. Better: "Prophesy not! [say they; but] they shall prophesy: they shall not prophesy [indeed] to them, that reproach may not overtake them."

Silence the messenger and forget the message (Cf. Isaiah 30:10; Amos 7:16).

7] O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the LORD straitened? are these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?

Surely this was not due to any lack on the part of the Spirit of the Lord! Has His compassion been any less than it has been in the past? Surely He would have recognized any repentance (if manifested) and would shown Himself strong on their behalf.

[Similarly, Amos was oppressed by Amaziah, the priest in the cult city of Bethel, who attempted to accuse him of treason and conspiracy against King Jeroboam. Amos pronounced a terrible judgment over this king and his house; Amos 7:15. The prophets of Judah were helpless before these attacks (Cf. 2 Sam 1:17).]

[America's fate may also lie before because of its own silence (or ineffectual) pulpit.]

Therefore thus saith the Lord: Behold, I will effectually execute judgment upon this place; and the house of the king shall not be exalted in this city. Amos 7:17.
Unless the Laodicean church wakes up and repents, the soon-coming doom of haughty Christendom will fare no better...

The Lord will always "do good to him that walketh uprightly." There is always a way to escape to those who seek it:

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6, 7

8 Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy: ye pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war. God's people were so gross it was as if they had "risen up as an enemy" against Him!

The "robe," was a wide cloak, a mantle sufficient to wrap the whole person and which was often of very costly material. The "garment," was the principal inner garment or tunic. This may be an allusion to the prohibiting of a creditor retaining the pledged garment during the night (Ex 22:26, etc.). They would rob those who were peaceably disposed as they pass quietly along the road, as if they were prisoners of war...

Does that describe any you know?

9 The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever. They had robbed men of their clothes, women of their homes, and children of their inheritance.

"forever" = No contrition apparent. Widows and orphans are special charges of the Lord (Psalm 68:5; Isaiah 1:29; Joel 4:2). We often make the mistake that we can have one relationship with God and a totally different relationship with other people. God declares that this is impossible. Jesus refuted this in His sermon on the Mount of Olives (Mt 25:31-46).

Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Matthew 25:40

10 I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men.
This presupposes the dispersion among the heathen. With emphatic language, Micah predicts the restoration of Israel after her dispersion. ("All" => all 12 tribes.) Notice that when God speaks of them in the flesh, it is "Jacob." Here it is an indication that He is going to show mercy to them, not because of their worthiness or because of their merit, but entirely of His grace (Cf. Ezekiel 36:19-24).

[Note: This was not fulfilled after the Babylonian captivity ("all of thee"). Nor is it fulfilled yet: there are more Jews in New York than in the whole land of Israel. But it is in progress.]

When God speaks of the faithful remnant, it is "Israel." It is for the sake of the remnant that God was gracious to the nation.

One who rules the future is coming! And the faithful remnant will be gathered and defended—specifically at Bosrah!

I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly.

Hosea 5:15

"...return" indicates He had left it! "Their offence": singular and specific: their rejection. The purpose of the "Time of Jacob's Trouble" (Jer 30:7) is their repentance.

Bozrah

In Hebrew; "Sheepfold." A protected enclosure, with a narrow entrance.

Three additional key passages:

Isaiah 34:1-7:

The country where all nations will be smitten is identified as the land of Edom, in the city of Bozrah. (Southern Jordan).

The ancient city of Bozrah is localized in the region of Mount Seir ("hairy mountains"); in the wilderness section on the western side of ancient Edom, extending southeast from the Dead Sea down to the city of Akaba. It towers over the Arabah, part of the rift valley from the south shore of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Eilat.

[Some also point to the present Arab village of Buseira nearby (?).] Petra is located in a basin within Mount Seir and is totally surrounded by mountains and cliffs. The only way in and out of the city is through a narrow entrance. "Gate of Edom" is the entrance to the city of Petra, located in the same mountain range of Mount Seir. Three additional key passages:

Isaiah 63:1-6:

Only one man has the power that is "mighty to save": Jesus, the Messiah. "Day of Vengeance": Isaiah 61:1,2 (vs. Luke 4:19!); Cf. Psalm 2.

Habakkuk 3:1:

"For though our heart is hardened, yet will I make it soft in this generation.

Isaiah 2:12:

Jezreel, the "Messianic" Day of Vengeance. (Isaiah 61:12; vs. Luke 4:19.]

Psalm 11:1-4:

God will go and return to His place. "When God speaks of the faithful remnant, it is "Israel." It is for the sake of the remnant that God was gracious to the nation.

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will, once again, "go before" them (Cf. Ex 13:21; Deut 1:30, 33; Isa 52:12).

For a detailed study of the events at the Second Coming, see our briefingpack, The Next Holocaust and the Refuge in Edom.

Study Questions:

1) List the various covenants as to which were:
   a) conditional
   b) unconditional

Discussion Questions:

1) What does the Book of Hebrews mean by "entering God's Rest"? (Heb 3:11-4:11)

For Further Research:

1) Reconcile the various descriptions of the Second Coming in: Isaiah 63:1-6; Zechariah 14:4; Matthew 24:27; Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62; Revelation 1:7 vs. 1 Thessalonians 4:17, et al.

Preparation for Next Session:

vs. 1 Thessalonians 4:17, et al.

Revelation 1:7

Micah 3

Introduction

An Example: The Trial of Alfred Dreyfus

Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), English statesman, writer & politician, was noted for his elaborate dress, vivid oratory, and was a master of politicalforcing.

Influence is a mysterious phenomenon in literature:

When do we really mean by "influence for all time"?

Influence =ability to hear; impact: form, quality, power of the mind;

How do you define "influence"? Predict the impact; influence the quality.

Chapter 1: Signs by Their Readers

Chapter 2: Signs Against Each Other

Chapter 3: Signs Against God

preparation
Micah was shocked by the conditions in the capital city of Jerusalem—as we were when we visited our capital under the previous administration: the corruption of our leadership...

Evil among the ruling classes: the courts; the palaces; and the Temple. (And they worked hand-in-hand among themselves...)

Balance of Power: Our three branches—the legislative, executive and judiciary—were inspired by Isaiah 13:22.

The Lord is our judge establishing our judiciary;
The Lord is lawgiver establishing the legislative;
The Lord is our King establishing the executive.

Cf. Isaiah 5...Micah Chapter 3 has three sections: vv1-4: judges and the corruption of the courts; vv.5-8: prophets market-driven; vv.9-12: politicians for hire.

Corrupt leadership, with emphasis on three groups:

Group 1: Corrupt Judges
(Cf. Moses' appointments, Exodus 18.)

1] And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment?" Isaiah 1:10

2] Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; Their attitudes (hate... love...) were habitual (so the Hebrew verbs).

3] Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD. Psalm 14:4

4] They also provide for themselves helmets, and make them long shields of…Psalm 14:7

Like cannibals, feeding on those whom it is their responsibility to defend. This is far worse than the issues in Chapter 2: here they are attacking the people themselves, feeding on the lifeblood of the nation.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. Romans 2:1

Their condemnation is the greater when their deliberate failure lies in the very realm of their special duty.

What a contrast to the Shepherd of Micah 2:12, 13! This theme is carried in the other prophets: Cf. The condemnation of Ezekiel 34:1-10 and the glorious prediction of Ezekiel 34:23-24.

[What a contrast to the Shepherd of Micah 2:12, 13! This theme is carried in the other prophets: Cf. The condemnation of Ezekiel 34:1-10 and the glorious prediction of Ezekiel 34:23-24.]

These offenders are not left to speculate on what the judgment of God will be.

So it is not only our duty, but our responsibility to know justice. This is our special duty and responsibility to know justice.
Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Micah again sees the poetic justice in the day when the Lord will not hear them. This cry which God refuses to hear is the cry of false repentance over sin. Since they refused to heed the cries of the needy, the Lord will recompense them in like kind.

Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.

Jeremiah 11:11

Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

Proverbs 21:13

[This is the essence of hell: God hiding His face from them…]

Group 2: The Prophets

5] Thus saith the LORD concerning the false messengers that were prophets. They knew better. They were no prophets for Baal; they were prophets of the Living God, who knew the truth and preferred to speak the truth.

They knew better. They were no prophets for Baal; they were prophets of the Living God, who knew the truth and preferred to speak the truth.

The conduct of the false messengers was no better.

5] Thus saith the LORD concerning the false messengers that were prophets.

6] Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall perish from the face of them.

Since they have outraged the office of the prophet, there are four different ways that calamities will fall on them.

7] Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their mouths; for there is no answer of God.

And Amos also prophesied a famine of the Word:

And a famine also of the word of the LORD, and of the word of the land of the prophets.

Amos 8:9, 11-12.

And the coast of the sea shall be the place of darkness, and the darkness shall be the place of the coast; and the coast thereof shall be darkness and twilight, saith the Lord.

Amos 9:18

And darkness was a common figure for calamity and distress.

And darkness was a common figure for calamity and distress.
But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Matthew 18:6, 7

Micah, however, is put in contrast to them:

8] But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

How, then, could Israel ever have failed to recognize the spurious from the genuine? Their luxurious living, their low moral conditions, and their unconcern for the things of God blinded their eyes and dulled their sensibilities to these vital issues.

The hour in which we live is a tragic commentary on the same conditions here!

Cf. Paul's charge to Timothy:

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; ... having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables.

2 Timothy 4:1-4

Group 3: Corrupt Politicians

Hamlet, Act III, Scene 1

"...The insolence of office..."

Hamlet, Act III, Scene 1

"...The insolence of office..."

2 Timothy 4:1-4

The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.

In a grand indictment of all three classes: judges, priests, and leaders—he nails all three.

Judges were making judicial pronouncements for reward. This was distinctly forbidden in the Torah: Ex 23:8 and Deut 16:19. Impartial meting out of justice is impossible when once a bribe has been received.

Priests were no better: they tailored their messages to the market. (The word "divine" is never used in the OT in a good sense.) Like Balaam and the other heathen prophets, they were willing to make favorable pronouncements for a price. The "way", "error", etc. were used to entrench the selfish and wicked interests of the leaders; Cf. Jer 22:13; Ezek 22:29; Hab 2:12.

The Leadership was prostituted to materialism: reward, hire, money. The justices were going to cry for mercy and not get it. The prophets were going to tell the people what they wanted to hear. "Now they had the best[est] money good by, the justices were well pleased, the priests were well pleased, the prophets were well pleased," declares the prophet, Micah—"...and all these things will come in good season. Let the ruins and the broken walls, and the desolate places, be filled up, the city be built up, and the temple of the LORD be built again in glory."

They boasted that God was blessing them despite their wicked ways. Consider how offensive this was to Him! Their pretense was a cloak for the absence of the Lord.

Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD... Behold, ye have relied on lying words. Ye have said, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD... Behold, even I have seen lie with the LORD, that it is but a tresser that speaketh lying words, to make君斯 believe, that the abomination of lewdness is lawful. And they have taken kings of the land, and princes of the people, unto them for a prey. Ye have sold yourselves to the Greeks, that ye might eat their bread. Yea, ye have taken your fathers and your princes, the chief of their people, and ye have sold yourselves to the lewdness of the Gentiles, that ye might eat of their bread. Yea, for a何必, ye are become a prey. Ye are sold away to destroy, and not redeemed. Year for year ye have eaten up the vine of your land, and the fruit thereof. And ye have slain your sons and your daughters for your idols, which neither profit nor be a delight unto you.Ye have multiplied your sorceries, as women that have no heart: therefore ye have bought a pitiful price.

Jeremiah 7:4-11

Office holders supposed that because of their exalted position they were above the law. How then could they dare to obstruct the process of justice and order, and keep the truth from the people?

Who should offer one of these little ones which believe in the name of the Lord a sin offering? for he shall come to judgment with none to receive him. Wherefore should I take upon me to be a judge of these things? Nay, my brethren, let every one be speedily turned from the evil of his way, that the Lord our God be merciful unto us, according to his great goodness, and according to the multitude of his mercies; for we have sinned in an evil manner. And the Lord hath dealt with us据 the greatness of his fierce anger, since the days of our fathers, in all our evil works and in all our evil ways. Jehovah should be moved to merciful compassion and to fickle anger, and he would have mercy upon us.

Micah 7:18-7
Preparation for Next Session:

Review the Millennial Reign in Isaiah 65 and Revelation 20.

Study Questions:

1. Make a list summarizing the six “woes” in Isaiah 5 and compare them with our contemporary society.
2. Define a “false teacher.” How can one discern a false teacher from someone who simply espouses a deviant viewpoint?
3. Why are some of the ways in which we all may be unknowingly open adversaries of the Gospel?
4. What are the dangers of “false teachers” today? Contrast them with examples of influence from contemporary experiences.
5. Describe examples of violations of Matthew 18 within the Body of Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. Someone who simply espouses a deviant viewpoint.
2. Define a “false teacher.” How can one discern a false teacher from a genuine expositor?
3. Make a list summarizing the six “woes” in Isaiah 5 and compare them with our contemporary society.

For Further Research:

1. Discuss examples of violations of Matthew 18 within the Body of Christ.
2. Explore examples of “false teachers” today. Contrast them with open adversaries of the Gospel.
3. Compare examples of influence from contemporary experiences.

Chapter 4 will pick up on this dark closing of Chapter 3 and focus on the last days.

Study Questions:

1. Make a list summarizing the six “woes” in Isaiah 5 and compare them with our contemporary society.
2. Define a “false teacher.” How can one discern a false teacher from someone who simply espouses a deviant viewpoint?

Discussion Questions:

1. Compare examples of injustice from contemporary experiences.
2. Explore examples of “false teachers” today. Contrast them with open adversaries of the Gospel.
3. What are the dangers of “witch hunts” (excessive or otherwise)?
4. What are some of the ways in which we all may be unknowingly open adversaries of the Gospel?
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For Further Research:

1. Discuss examples of violations of Matthew 18 within the Body of Christ.
2. Explore examples of “false teachers” today. Contrast them with open adversaries of the Gospel.
3. Compare examples of influence from contemporary experiences.
But in the last days, it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many nations shall go and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.' For the word of the Lord of hosts shall be in every mouth, and he will establish in the earth a measure of truth and righteousness.

And the work of righteousness shall be Peace; and the result of righteousness shall be quietness and security forever.

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken. It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.' For the word of the Lord of hosts shall be in every mouth, and he will establish in the earth a measure of truth and righteousness.

And the work of righteousness shall be Peace; and the result of righteousness shall be quietness and security forever. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken.
Verse 4 is not found in the corresponding Isaiah passage, but it continues the thoughts of peace, prosperity and security (Cf. 1 Kings 4:25; 2 Kings 18:31; Zech 3:10).

Both the vine and the fig tree were native to the area and common fruits (Cf. Ex 23:11; Lev 19:10; 25:3-4; Deut 20:6). The vine was often a symbol of the nation of Israel among the prophets and was used idiomatically by Jesus Himself (Mt 21:19-21; 24:32; Lk 13:6,7. Cf. Rev 6:13).

5] For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and [but] we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

A verse easily misunderstood: although heathen peoples worship their own particular gods now, Israel will be worshiping the Living God.

[On January 6, 1941, Franklin Delano Roosevelt gave a speech to the United Nations.] Freedom of speech:

Freedom of Religion:

Freedom from want:

Freedom from fear:

Micah’s list is similar, but begins with Freedom from ignorance (of the law of God) (v.2); Freedom from war (v.3); Freedom from want (v.4); Freedom from fear (v.4).

6] In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted;

Before peace can enjoy the glories of the Messianic Kingdom, she must be regathered from her worldwide dispersion and placed in her land. This is another passage with the perspective of the Great Shepherd (Ps 23:1-4; 100:3; Isa 40:11; Jer 11:10).

The remnant is a key focus of Scripture (Isa 9:6, 7; Dan 9:6; Jer 5:1; Ezek 34:27; Acts 2:41). Scripture speaks of a time when the remnant will be the primary focus of God’s work (Cf. Jer 31:35-37).

7] And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever. 1 [Jer 31:35-37 refutes “Reconstructionism” and similar heresies.]

Death in the Millennium?

Cf. Luke 1:32; The Throne of David

8] And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the end of the rod, the sceptre of the daughters of Zion.

Migdal-Eder, Tower of the Flock, Shepherd’s Tower: Gen 35:21 mentions the Tower of Eder as near Bethlehem. According to Jerome (who lived in Bethlehem in the 4th century A.D.) it was about a mile from Bethlehem, the birthplace of David. (The next chapter will also identify it as the birthplace of the Messiah.)
The Babylonian Captivity

Micah now turns from the ultimate glory of the Millennium to the dark future immediately before them: the Babylonian invasion and the captivity of Judah. (Yet this would not come until a century after Micah’s day!)9 Now why dost thou cry out aloud? is there no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished? for pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail. These subsequent verses are those of Joel 3:1-9. He will be done for the glory of God (Isa 60:1-9). He will then be known as “the Lord of the whole earth.”

The Final Siege

Many commentators assume that the following is a continuation of the Babylonian siege. Others, the Assyrians are in view. They would be cruel to the Jews. “The Holocaust in Germany took one Jew in three. The next holocaust will take two out of three: Zech 13:8, 9.”

The Armageddon campaign will be refused and dashed into the dust. The Armageddon campaign will be refused and dashed into the dust. The Babylonians will be scattered and cast away. The Babylonians will be scattered and cast away. His purpose is to defile Jerusalem. The Babylonians will be scattered and cast away. The Babylonians will be scattered and cast away. For now judgment is on the city, and the Edomites and Moabites, and the rest of the people, because they have paid no attention to the law of the Lord, but have done according to their own counsel, and have followed the counsel of their own heart. 11 Now why don’t you get your heart and connection? Why don’t you get your heart and connection?

The Babylonian Captivity
Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. This would seem to be a reference to the shameful treatment of King Zedekiah at the time of the Babylonian invasion of Judah. (Some view the "judge of Israel" as the Messiah, and this verse as a foreshadowing of the humiliation of Christ. However, He was not smitten in a "siege," etc. He was, however, smitten in the face (Matt 26:67-68; 27:30).) However, as Jesus said in John 19:30: "It is finished." the Messiah is highlighted in the most famous verse in Micah 5:2 which follows and this will be reviewed in our next session.

Study Questions:

1) Make a list of the problems with an Amillennial eschatological viewpoint.
   a) Attacking the character of God.
   b) The Doctrine of Imminency.
2) Compile a perspective of the 50-mile mountain top described in Ezekiel.
3) Did the "Throne of David" exist during the days of Christ?
4) Why are judgments so often called "birthpangs"?
5) Outline the Armageddon campaign geographically.

Discussion Questions:

1) Outline the Armageddon campaign chronologically.
2) How does an "Amillennial" view affect the character of God?
3) Was Sunday the Sabbath? When was the Sabbath instituted?
4) "We refer the Sabbath day to the open courts of the Millennial Temple only." How does an "Amillennial" view affect the character of God?

Preparation for Next Session:

Notes:


Preparation for Next Session:

1) When is the role of death in the Millennium?

For Further Research:

1) What is the role of death in the Millennium?

Discussion Questions:

1) Why was Jesus born in Bethlehem?
2) Who owned the fields where the shepherds encountered the angels?
3) How could Samuel, who knew that the ruler was to come from the tribe of Judah, anoint Saul from the tribe of Benjamin?

Notes:

Micah 5

Background Issues:

Why was Jesus born in Bethlehem? Why was Bethlehem known as the "city of David"? Who owned the fields where the shepherds encountered the angels?

1. Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

Most commentators see this as a reference to the shameful treatment of King Zedekiah at the time of the Babylonian invasion of Judah (2 Kgs 25:7).

Jeremiah had predicted that his "eyes should see the eyes of the king of Babylon" (Jer 32:4; 34:3), yet Ezekiel foretold that he should "not see Babylon" (Ezek 12:13), though he would die there (Jer 39:6; 52:11; 30:3). If was the prophet who had predicted that he should "not see Babylon" (Ezek 12:13), yet he was the one who was taken to Babylon and put in chains (Jer 39:6; 52:11; 30:3).

(Review v.1 from previous session)

2. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

"But" (adversative conjunction) puts the following in contrast to the previous passage. Another in David's line is still yet to come...

Who Were the Magi?

Eastern tradition: 12 Magi (Christmas: Jan 6)
Western tradition: 3 Magi (Epiphany: Jan 6)
3rd century: "Kings" bearing gifts: Ps 72:10, 68:29
6th century chronicle, Excerpta Latina Garbari, suggested names:
Bithisarea, Balthasar, Melchior, Gathaspa, Gasper
Bede (673-735), suggested that they represented the three sons of Noah:
Asia, Africa, Europe: Shem, Ham, Japheth
14th century Armenian tradition:
Josephus indicates that Zedekiah thought the two prophecies so inconsistent with each other that he believed neither; yet both were exactly fulfilled, and the enigma of Ezekiel ... at Riblah, where he had his eyes put out, and was then carried to Babylon, and there he died (Jer 39:6; 52:10, 11). If was the

The Real Magi

Rab-mag, Chief of the Magi. 1. Title of Daniel (Dan 4:9, 11; 5:11); His Jewish appointment may have been the cause of the repercussions among the hereditary Median priesthood which led to the plot of the lion's den in Daniel 6.

The Persian magi were credited with profound and extraordinary religious knowledge. (Babylonian magi often considered imposters.) Magi of lesser rank in Dan 2:10; 4:9, 10, 11; 8:23; 10:11; 12:3; 14:4; 22:4; 27:2; 31:20, 22; 32:14.

Those who owned the fields where the shepherds encountered the angels.

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Those who owned the fields where the shepherds encountered the angels.
Hereditary priesthood, vs. Chaldeans.) Some scholars believe that Daniel founded a secret cabal within the Magi as custodians of a private prophecy concerning the birth of the Messiah, the "star," et al., which led to the visit by the Magi in Matthew Chapter 2.

The Magi were established as the state religion of Persia by Darius the Great, after some Magi who were considered to be expert in the interpretation of dreams had been attached to the Median court. (Oneiromancy, not astrology, was their field of special gifting; see below.)

It was in this dual capacity whereby civil and political counsel was invested with religious authority, that the Magi became the supreme priestly caste of the empire. This developed into an hereditary priesthood, serving several religions; the priestly caste during Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanian periods.

In the trilingual inscription of Bisitun: Darius I (The Great) (550-486 B.C.; reigned 522-486); Three languages: Elamite, Akkadian/Babylonian, Old Persian/Aramaic). Speaks of his speedy and final triumph over a revolt of Magi in 522 B.C.

Since the days of Daniel, the fortunes of both the Persia and the Jewish nation had been closely intertwined. They were not originally followers of Zoroaster (Encyclopaedia Britannica 7:691). The subsequent syncretistic Magian religion of Archaemenid days had much in common with the religion of the Jews: Each had its monotheistic concept of one beneficent creator, author of all things, a benevolent God or Allah or Ahura Mazda, who created the universe and made man, who could be visited and appeased by his followers through prayer, sacrifices, and interpretation of dreams. Both nations had in their turn fallen under Seleucid domination in the wake of Alexander's conquests. Subsequently, both had regained their independence: the Jews under Maccabean leadership, and the Persians under their own kings and later under Roman rule. The struggle for empire was now divided between Rome and Persia with the Persians holding sway in the Levant.

Matthew 2:1-12

1] Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king,
2] behold, there came Magi from the east to Jerusalem,
3] saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.
4] When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Political Background:

Roman-Persian rivalries developed during the lifetime of Herod the Great, when one second of the Old Testament was rekindled on the ruins of Hellenistic royalty. Herod's war against the Parthians was one of the major events that resulted in the division of the kingdom of the Persian Empire.

In his campaign to reunify the kingdom, Herod spent a great deal of money and military resources to secure the kingdom. He was successful in establishing a strong centralized government, but his efforts also led to resentment among the Jewish people.

When Herod the Great had died, these things were told in the temple of the Roman emperors. And they were wondering concerning them. And they came to Jerusalem, and entered into the temple; and when Herod saw them, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
With Parthian collaboration, Jewish sovereignty was restored and Jerusalem was fortified with a Jewish garrison.

Herod by this time secured from Augustus Caesar the title of “King of the Jews.” However, it was not for three years, including a five months’ siege by Roman troops, that the king was able to occupy his own capital city.

Herod had thus gained the throne of a rebellious buffer state which was situated between two mighty contending empires. At any time his own subjects might conspire in bringing the Parthians to their aid.

At the time of the birth of Christ, Herod may have been close to his final illness. Augustus was also aged, and Rome, since the retirement of Tiberius, was without any experienced military commander.

Pro-Parthian Armenia was fomenting revolt against Rome (which was successfully accomplished within two years). The time was ripe for another Parthian invasion of the buffer provinces, except for the fact that Parthia itself was racked by internal dissension.

Phraates IV, the unpopular and aging king, had once been deposed and it was not improbable that the Persian Magi were already involved in the political maneuvering requisite to choosing his successor. The lack of popularity to further their own interests with the establishment of a new dynasty which could have been implemented if a sufficiently strong contender could be found.

At this time it was entirely possible that the Messianic prophecies of the OT, culminating in the writings of Daniel, one of their own Magians, may have been of profound motivating significance. The promise of divinely imposed world dominion at the hands of a Jewish king was a sentiment that would have been acceptable to many Jewish leaders and their followers. (The king himself may have been of Jewish blood.)

In Jerusalem the sudden appearance of the Magi, probably traveling in force and with imaginable oriental pomp, and accompanied by adequate cavalry escort to insure their safe penetration of Roman territory, certainly alarmed Herod and the populace of Jerusalem.

It could have seemed as if these Magi were an impending threat to his authority and the security of his throne. Their request of Herod regarding him who “has been born king of the Jews” (Mt 2:2) was a calculated insult to him who had contrived and bribed his way into that office.

4. And when Herod the king heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

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45. And when Herod the king heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. They were not astrologers: Oneiromancy, not astrology, was their principal skill, as mentioned by Herodotus, et al.3

When they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. They were no longer in the stable; they had since moved, by then, into a home somewhere in town. The three gifts have led to the presumption of three principal visitors. The gold speaks to His deity; the frankincense, His priesthood; myrrh, a burial ointment, for His death.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. The Magi "being warned in a dream" (a form of communication most acceptable to them) departed to their own country with empty hands.

Within two years Phraataces, the parricide son of Phraates IV, was duly installed by the Magi as the new ruler of Parthia. (Later: Philo of Alexandria, Cicero, and Philo, and others, record that Magi had become attached to senior Roman courts with acknowledged gifts and standing.)

* * *

The Location of the Messiah’s Birth

Included in this hymn passage:

**2** But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

There were other Bethlehems (Jos 19:15). Ephratah makes it specific to the one six miles SW of Jerusalem and the birthplace of David (Cf. Ruth 1ff). It means "House of Bread," and it would bring forth "the Bread of Life" (Jn 6:33-51).

"Though thou be little among the thousands of Judah." It was too insignificant to be mentioned among the cities of Judah in Joshua 15 or in the list of cities in Nehemiah 11. It was a little hamlet.

Clearly, it is astonishing to realize that the birthplace of the Messiah was specified so precisely 700 years before the event! It was undeniably part of the Septuagint Translation of the OT in 270 BC and thus well documented centuries in advance.

The Scriptures appear to be full of "contradictions:" He was prophesied to be a Nazarene (Mt 2:23; Isa 11:1 "Branch" = netser); He would be called out of Egypt (Hos 12:1); He was to be born in Bethlehem (here). He would be all three!

Caesar Augustus issued a edict which required everyone to return to their registration place, which was the Roman world. Joseph and Mary, traveling for a reason of religion, were warned in a dream to go to Bethlehem. They chose to be obedient to the Eternal King.

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"Out of thee [Bethlehem] shall he come forth unto me": the words "unto me" indicate that this One was coming to do the will of the Father. This was a plan committed to before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4; Acts 2:23; et al.).

His Preexistence

His existence preceded His birth!

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His Preexistence

His existence preceded His birth!
"Whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting": The Preexistent One—The Creator Himself: His genealogy is in Jn 1:1-3; Cf. Col 1:16, 17.

The phrases of the text are the strongest possible statement of infinite duration in the Hebrew language:

Psalm 90:2; Cf. Prov 8:22-23ff.

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

Psalm 90:2; Cf. Prov 8:22-23ff.

His "goings forth" were in the creation, in His appearances to the Patriarchs, and throughout the OT. He came forth from the Father (Jn 16:28); He told the Pharisees, "Before Abraham was, I AM" (Jn 8:58); His was the voice from the burning bush (Ex 3:14)!

His Incarnation.

The Preexistent One clothed Himself with humanity when He came to Bethlehem. Isaiah, a contemporary of Micah, verified this:

Isaiah 7:14

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

This goes far beyond the travail of Mary; it is the travail of "the woman" whose "Seed" was predicted in Gen 3:15 and reconfirmed in Christ's Incarnation:

Isaiah 9:6

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

"A child is born"—His humanity. "A Son is given"—His Preexistent Divinity.

The "child" was born in Bethlehem, but the "Son" was "from everlasting.

Psalm 110:1, 2

"The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

"All the earth shall worship him, every mouth shall confess thee, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the blessed God." (Phil 2:10-11)

And Israel has even more to say:

Isaiah 9:6

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

"And the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa 9:6)

"And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth." (Isa 11:1-4)

Here the Lord Jesus is depicted as the Great Shepherd who feeds and cares for His flock. There is no more expressive designation of Christ than that of Shepherd of His Flock (Cf. 2 Sam 5:2; 7:7; Isa 40:11).

And in the context of the quotation from the burning bush (Ex 3:14): "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

The Preexistent One clothed Himself with humanity when He came to

His Reign.

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"Whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting": The Preexistent One—The Creator Himself: His genealogy is in Jn 1:1-3; Cf. Col 1:16, 17.
And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him sevenshepherds, and eight principal men.

[It was an Assyrian that oppressed Israel during their sojourn in Egypt: the Pharaoh (a title of the ruler) of that day was not an Egyptian! (Isa 52:4). That was why the Pharaoh was so insecure with the growth of thenon-Egyptian population thus rendered into slavery (Ex 1:8-10).]

"The Assyrian": a title of the Antichrist? Sennacherib was but a type; this could be but a generic reference, or it could be a hint more specific (Cf. Isa 10:5, 24; 14:25, 26). From Joel 3, Zech 12 & 14, et al., it is clear that the final climax will be a confederated movement on the part of the nations of the earth to blot out God's chosen people Israel.

"This man shall be the peace"? A false peace? Dan 8:25! "7 shepherds, 8 principal men"? Could be a Hebraic rhetorical device (cf. Prov 6:16; Eccl 11:2; et al). However: "Principal" = נְשִׁי אֲרָם (nēshī'ārām) = 7, 8.

1) poured out, molten image, one anointed.

a) libation, drink-offering
b) molten image
2) prince, anointed one.

Compare: And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

Rev 17:11

a clone?a Nephilim? (Gen 6; Num 13:33; et al.)

6] And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.

The confederation of nations that will come against Israel in the Tribulation period. "Waste" = literally, "eat up" Nimrod was the original founder of both Babylon (Babylon) and Assyria (Gen 10:13).

7] And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarryeth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

The dew and rain refer to the blessing the people of Israel will be among the nations. Since rain does not come during the months of May to the latter part of October, the dew, the night mist of the summer months, is essential to the summer crops.

8] And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he goeth through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

This certainly does not depict the Israel of today: in a precarious predicament. But God has a destiny for them.

Their situation derives from their attitude toward the will of God: when in the secret of their heart will be a source of esteeming, power and pride.

The remnant of Jacob will be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he goeth through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. But God has a destiny for them.
Ultimate victory is assured.

10] And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots:

To be usable in the hand of the Lord, He will remove all carnal supports in which she trusted; Cf. Isa 47:6-22 for a contemporary parallel passage. Horses and chariots were forbidden even in the time of Moses (Deut 17:16).

In case an amillennialist attempts to apply this to some other time, Micah emphasizes that this will come to pass "in that day," which is yet future.

15] And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

"The heathen" refer to the nations arrayed against Jerusalem in the "Day of the Lord," the Great Tribulation period. Cf. Psalm 2, Joel 2, et al. "Such as they have not heard": they haven't been listening!

Habakkuk 1:5

We will deal more about the "Great Tribulation" when we get to Chapter 7. But first, in the next session, Chapter 6, we will deal with what comes before.

Study Questions:

1) On the eve of Christ's birth, shepherds were treated to a special announcement from angels—"The first Noel." Who originally owned those fields? (Ruth 1, 4).

2) Summarize the two alternatives views of Micah 5:1.

3) What are the four main declarations about the Messiah in Micah 5:2?

4) Why to many commentators regard it as the most important proph-ecy in the Bible?

5) Why did God have the entire Roman world mingle to 10th Town of Bethlehem into the hour, when (Dan 9:7)?

6) Why wouldn't the Magi of the Persian Empire come to have Daniel帝王?

7) Why would the Magi of the Persian Empire come to have Daniel帝王?

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9) Why did God have the entire Roman world mingle to 10th Town of Bethlehem into the hour, when (Dan 9:7)?

10) Give four reasons why Herod was distressed by the vision of the Magi seen in the Bethlehem area.

Discussion Questions:

1) How could Samuel, who knew that the ruler was to come from the tribe of Judah, anoint Saul from the tribe of Benjamin? (Cf. Ruth 4:12, 18-22).
2) Discuss the contrast between the tradition of the "three wise men" and the Magi of history. Give other examples of venerated traditions that have been shattered by facts subsequently discovered.

3) What was the Star of Bethlehem? Why did the Magi follow it?

4) Christ was to be from Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Egypt. What other ostensible "contradictions" reveal treasures hidden behind the Biblical text?

For Further Research:

1) Explore the political background of the rivalry between the Roman Empire and the Parthian Empire to the east.

2) Explore the possibilities of a secret cabal, initiated by Daniel, as the custodians of private prophecies concerning the birth of the Messiah, the star, et al.

3) Explore the consistent role of gold as symbolic metal in the gifts of the Magi, and in the various parts of the Tabernacle and the Temple.

Preparation for Next Session:

Study Micah Chapter 6. Also, Numbers 22-24, the saga of Balaam and Barak; and 1 Kings 16, the reigns of Omri, Ahab and Jezebel.

Notes:


2. It is interesting that in a subsequent rebellion (132 AD), Simon Bar Cocheba was dubbed, "Son of the Star."

3. Herodotus, I.107, 120; VII.19.


Micah 6

1] Hear ye now what the LORD saith: Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice.

The language implies that this third and final message of Micah is to all the nations of the world, with Israel center stage. God's contention is with His people Israel, but we can all learn important lessons...

2] Hear ye, O mountains, the LORD'S controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the LORD hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel.

God is calling Israel to court, with the nations as spectators. And then God does an astonishing thing: instead of lodging a charge against them, He asks, "What am I guilty of?" What condescension of Almighty God Himself!

3] O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.

This is similar to the situation before the prophet Malachi: after their return from captivity, they became prosperous and complacent!

God lays out the record of His dealings with them. Had He wearied them by excessive demands (Isa 43:23)? Cf. Isa 43:24. Or by unfulfilled promises (Jer 2:31)?

4] For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

It is interesting to notice how often God points to the Exodus from Egypt as one of His most conspicuous demonstrations...

Miriam is included as a leader sent by God.

...
O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the LORD.

The Israelites were forced to go all the way around Edom and then they came to Moab. Shittim was the last camping spot before they entered Moab. Gilgal was the first camping spot when they entered the Promised Land.

Balak ("empty"; "spoiler"): A son of Zippor, and king of the Moabites (Num 22:2, 4). From fear of the Israelites, who were encamped near the confines of his territory, he applied to Balaam to curse them; but in vain (Josh 24:9).

Balaam ("lord of the people;" foreigner or glutton): The son of Beor, he was a man of some rank among the Midianites (Num 31:8; 31:16). Here he sided at Pethor (Deut 23:4) in Mesopotamia (Num ... was held in such reputation that it was supposed that he whom he blessed was blessed, and he whom he cursed was cursed.

When the Israelites were encamped on the plains of Moab, on the east of Jordan, by Jericho, Balak sent for Balaam "from Aram, out of the mountains of the east," to curse them, but by the ... was supposed that how he blessed Israel was blessed, and how he cursed Israel was cursed.

But God did not permit them to be cursed (Num 22–24). Balak took Balaam on four mountain tops, one by one, but Balaam could not curse Israel. God will not allow any man to curse His people (Ps 105:14, 15). (As Balaam looked down upon the camp of Israel from a mountain top, he would have seen the encampment as a cross! See **Signs in the Heavens, or "Hour 5" of Learn the Bible in 24 Hours**, for an explanation.)

Though Balaam could not curse Israel, yet he suggested a mode by which the divine displeasure might be caused to descend upon them. God will not allow any man to curse His people (Ps 105:14, 15). (As Balaam looked down upon the camp of Israel from a mountain top, he would have seen the encampment as a cross! See **Signs in the Heavens, or "Hour 5" of Learn the Bible in 24 Hours**, for an explanation.)

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We must be born again.

Amos 5:15; 1 John 2:3.

External religion without an internal experience is absolutely without
good effect.

Contrast:

Next, note the following assumptions embodied in their questions:

1. An assumption that God requires a series of sacrifices of a certain sort.
2. An assumption that anything that is enough is adequate.
3. An assumption that God requires some act on our part.
4. An assumption that God requires that man do something before God.

Now the people have four questions they ask—
and they are good questions.

6] Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God?
Every person who believes in God asks this question: "How am I going to approach Him?"

Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? In Leviticus a series of offerings are specified; will they be adequate? Nothing reveals a proud heart more than man's insistence on "doing something for God." This has it all backwards:

Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.

John 6:28, 29

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Acts 16:30, 31

7] Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
The Lord doesn't need our generosity. We can't add to the completed work of the cross. It is blasphemy to even try! In Leviticus, the presentation of the meal offerings, and the peace offerings had to be preceded by the burnt offering. The presentation of ourselves and our substance could only be made after the sins had been dealt with and a relationship had been established. Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? This was an understandable question since they were surrounded by pagan people who offered human sacrifices to Molech and Baal (Jer 19:5; 32:35).

Two of the most godless kings of the Southern Kingdom indulged in human sacrifices: Ahaz (2 Kgs 16:3; 2 Chr 28:3) and Manasseh (2 Kgs 21:6). Child sacrifice was expressly prohibited (Lev ... give Him the firstborn male of everything that was born to them: a cow, sheep, ox, or their son. However, anything that was valuable they were to redeem.

Ex 13:1-10). God's design was to give the high God the highest sacrifice. Two of the most godless kings of the Southern Kingdom indulged in human sacrifices: Ahaz (2 Kgs 16:3; 2 Chr 28:3) and Manasseh (2 Kgs 21:6). Child sacrifice was expressly prohibited (Lev ... give Him the firstborn male of everything that was born to them: a cow, sheep, ox, or their son. However, anything that was valuable they were to redeem.

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Redemption: the purchase back of something that had been lost by the

Christ: His blood or life, which he surrendered for them, is the "ransom" by which the deliverance of His people from the servitude of sin and from its penal consequences is secured. It is the plain doctrine of Scripture that God saves no one unless he is "born again.

Christ's blood or life, which he surrendered for them, is the "ransom" by which the deliverance of His people from the servitude of sin and from its penal consequences is secured. It is the plain doctrine of Scripture that God saves no one unless he is "born again.

Note: The only assumption ever required to be made was Jesus' death on the cross. Only that was sufficient to redeem the sinner. Every person who believes in God asks this question: "How do I approach Him?"

And the Philippian jailer asked the same question:

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Acts 16:30, 31

The "Sermon on the Mount of the OT"

2,000 years later. Even here God informed, having made His point. He taught:

He had not been taught the Word of God.

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Acts 16:30, 31

He had not been taught the Word of God.
You are not saved by good works because you do not have any good works!

It is addressed to "O Man"; that includes 21st century Man—Mr. and Mrs. Man. God requires three things:

1) to do justly—that is, you must have a righteousness to present to God; that will pass muster before God. You are to be honest and true.

2) to love mercy—to be merciful in your dealings with others.

3) to walk humbly before thy God.

How are you going to do these things? By your own strength? Do you think you can do them without God's help? These are the fruit of the Holy Spirit:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22, 23 (NIV)

Remember Peter's summary of "the Law" at the Council of Jerusalem:

"Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Acts 15:10, 11

Paul also made it clear:

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. (Rom. 8:5-8)

But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. John 1:12

The condition of man is summarized in Romans 3:10: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The natural result of being a sinner is death. Rom. 6:23; 3:22-23 (NIV)

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23 (NIV)

The condition of man is summarized in Romans 3:9-18. His clinical analysis is that he is sick, nigh unto death: "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1). This is not just a "NT concept." It is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. (Romans 3:10)

Therefore the way we can gain acceptance with God because we have no righteousness is when God teaches us both OT and NT makes it clear:

Rom 3:10-13: "This is not just a "NT concept.""

[The Predicament of Man]

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[The Predicament of Man]
Unlike Amos, Micah is an urban prophet writing to the city dwellers...

"The Rod" is an emblem for judgment. Cf. Ps 2:9; Isa 10:5, 24. Our country is ripe for judgment:

"I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Thomas Jefferson, 1781

Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable?

"Treasures of wickedness" = wealth accumulated through their unjust dealings.

Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?


For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.

We have lost the sanctity of a commitment—in our business dealings and in our marriages...

Could you find any better example of depravity, abuse of power, and violence than in the previous 8-year administration? Can you find any real credibility in the news media today? Among ... that the United States is not mentioned in Bible prophecy. I do not expect us to be a major power in the final countdown.

Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins.

See our briefing pack, The Twilight's Last Gleaming, or Hosea Can You See for a state of our union...

200 years later...
Beth-omri, "the house" or "city of Omri," is the name usually found on Assyrian inscriptions for Samaria. In the stele of Mesha (the "Moabite stone"), which was erected in Moab about twenty or more centuries before Christ, it is recorded that "Omri took the land of Medeba, and occupied it in his day and in the days of his son forty years."

Robert Bork, in his book, *Slouching Towards Gomorrah*, insists that only a spiritual revival can save America. Since September 11, 2001, there is a strikingly different mood in America: people, who never before had any interest in spiritual things, are seeking answers. There is a new openness. There may, indeed, be "grace before judgment." We need to work for the night is coming.

The freedoms we enjoy are slowing eroding to the pressures of global terrorism, and the exploitation of the pagan left towards a "new world order." Being a "Biblical Christian" is becoming increasingly "politically incorrect."

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**Preparation for Next Session:**

- Read Micah 6-7, 1-3, 1-4, 1-7.
- Read Genesis 12, 15, 17.

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**For Further Research:**

1. Summary the role of redemption throughout the Bible (N.T. examples).
2. Identify the role of Omri in the history of Israel.
3. Compare and contrast the reigns of Omri, Ahab, and Jezebel.
4. Contrast and compare the reigns of Omri, Ahab, and Jezebel in the Northern Kingdom (Israel) with those in the Southern Kingdom (Judah).
5. Discuss the relationship of the church to the world and the need to keep the ordinances.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Explore the career of Balaam. Differentiate between the "way" of Balaam (2 Pet 2:15), the "error" of Balaam (Jude 1:11), and the "doctrine" of Balaam (Rev 2:14).
2. How is the message of Micah 6:8 widely misunderstood? How does this passage imply a form of legalism?
3. How do the letters to Pergamos and Thyatira in Revelation 2:14-17 reflect the marriage of the church to the world?
4. Can a Jew who has received Christ still keep the ordinances of the Torah?
5. Do you think a Jew who has received Christ should still keep the ordinances of the Torah?
6. Are the ethical standards among Christians higher than those in the world?

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**Notes:**


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**Study Questions:**

Next Time: The Final Chapter of Micah, Chapter 7.

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**For Further Research:**

1. Summarize the role of redemption throughout the Bible (N.T. examples).
2. Contrast and compare the reigns of Omri, Ahab, and Jezebel in the Northern Kingdom (Israel) with those in the Southern Kingdom (Judah).
3. Why was the Northern Kingdom eliminated from history altogether by the Assyrians and the Southern Kingdom restored after their conquest and occupation?
4. What are the implications of the Council of Jerusalem on Gentiles?

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**Preparation for Next Session:**

- Re-read Micah 6 & 7 as a unit. Refresh yourself on the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12, 15, & 17).
- Read Genesis 12, 15, 17.

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**Notes:**

This last chapter is similar to Jeremiah's Book of Lamentations. It also echoes the prayer of the repentant remnant in the "Days of Jacob's Trouble."

The Soliloquy of Penitence (vv.1-9)

1] Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage:

2] The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.

3] That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up.

4] The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge:

5] Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

6] For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.

7] Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my soul will wait for him.
Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Luke 21:26, 28

And that's exactly what Micah is saying: "Therefore I will look unto the LORD..."

8 Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.

Micah’s "faith in the night seasons." [That's a plug for our book by the same name!]

9 I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.

His confidence comes from the only place it should: from complete submission to God. He is confessing his individual—and national—sins. We have gone along with the affluent society and all it entails; we have participated in the spiritual, moral, and economic enclave that has been parallel to, and has enabled, the "surrounding" nations to prosper.

In Israel's case, God used the "rod" of Assyria to punish them for their sins... In Judah's case, it will be Babylon that will be His "rod..."

11 In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day shall the decree be far removed.

Vv.11 and 12 look to a later and final fulfillment. [It is interesting that Daniel's "69 weeks" were triggered by the decree that the walls were to be built (not the Temple as many have erroneously assumed); Cf. Daniel 9:25.

12 In that day also the blind shall enter into the house of the Lord, even the deaf and the lame from mount Zion, to Zion, even heart former enemies.

As we saw in Chapter 4, during the Millennial Kingdom all nations shall come to Zion, even their former enemy Assyria.

"And many nations shall come, and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Micah 4:2

Cf. Isaiah 19:23-25, et al. [We are appending a study of the Millennium in Session 8 of this series.]

In Israel's case, God used the "rod" of Assyria to punish them for their sins. Indeed, for us to confess our sins.

If we close our eyes to all the gross immorality that is around us. It is here, before our very eyes. We need to realize the difference between the overt and the covert sins we have been showing with the Israelites and the nations... submission to God is confessing the prior—admitting our guilt—of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. Because he has mercy upon him, and will show great kindness to us when our days are few. Psalms 89:14

And hearken especially when Micah is saying: "Therefore I will look unto the LORD."

Micah 7:7

"Gird yourself, and come out: for your redemption draweth near, when the voice of the mighty shall be as still a calm wave, no more restless, when he shaketh the nations, and the peoples are come to Mount Zion, and to Jerusalem; with thorns and briers shall they come, and thorns and briers shall go up into the mountains of mine heart:" Isaiah 35:2

And the last thing we mentioned, when we arrive at the end of Hosea, is a light that will still shine in a dark age:

And the answer is yes. "The same thing." That's a plug for our book by the same name! [That's a plug for our book by the same name!]

Closing Prayer

Significant changes have been made in this document so that it is appropriate for a study of the Millennial Kingdom. [As we did in Session 8 of this series.]

Cf. Isaiah 19:23-25, et al. We are appending a study of the Millennium.


"And I, and all the rest of the inhabitants of this earth, shall be turned unto the LORD my God, and will serve thee..." Isaiah 1:3-5
God again references the Exodus as one of His most important achievements...

16 [Verse:] The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. All nations will be defeated; and astounded. Recall Rahab's confession: Josh 2:10-11. Israel will be regathered in order to possess the land (v.14); and this regathering will be accomplished by miracles (v.15). When the Gentiles see this, they will cease reproaching the Jews and have a reverential fear of the Jews. They will then submit to the God of Israel (vv.16-17).

17 [Verse:] They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of thee.

Liking the dust? An allusion to Gen 3:14? Moving out of their holes? And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and all the nations, shall have their eyes upon the Lord of hosts, upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah. Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: Revelation 6:15, 16


Praise for God's Grace

18 [Verse:] Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.

There is something that God has not seen but which you and I see every day (!). What has God not seen? His equal. Cf. Ex 15:11 (first asked); 1 Kgs 8:23; Ps 113:6 (this asked).

God is unique:
1) He is the Creator. The gods of the heathen are creatures; created things (Rom 1:21-23; Isa 44:16, 17; 46:5-7).
2) He is holy and righteous. Our God is a holy God, and He reveals His anger against sin.

The national regeneration of Israel will result in the total forgiveness of Israel's sins. God's loyal love for Israel will cause Him to pardon and to pass over the sins of Israel; the national restoration of Israel will result in the total forgiveness of the national sins of Israel.

19 [Verse:] He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.


His forgiveness is pictured as the cleaning of a pollution.

His forgiveness is pictured as the doing away of a debt: Isa 43:25; Acts 3:19; Col 2:14.

His forgiveness is pictured as the healing of a disease: Jer 3:22; Isa 61:1.

His forgiveness is pictured as the cleansing of a pollution, a contamination: Titus 3:5; John 1:7.

There will be no more parts from the days of old; Thou wilt perform the truth in Jacob, and the mercy in Abraham, whom thou hast chosen.

20 [Verse:] Thou wilt perform the truth in Jacob, and the mercy in Abraham, which thou hast promised unto our fathers from the days of old.

God will perform on the basis of His covenant: To Abraham (Gen 12:2,3); to Isaac (Gen 26:24); to Jacob (Gen 28:13-14). The things God has sworn to Abraham and their heirs are irrefutable and immutable. Yet in love He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and He will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

God will perform toward Israel as recorded by the nation. God will perform in order to possess the land (v.14) and to pass over the sins of Israel. The national regeneration of Israel will result in the total forgiveness of the national sins of Israel.

He never forgives until the debt is paid. Christ paid my debt on the cross. How about yours?

21 [Verse:] Thou wilt perform the truth in Jacob, and the mercy in Abraham, which thou hast promised unto our fathers from the days of old.

The national regeneration of Israel will result in the total forgiveness of the national sins of Israel.
Addendum: The Vision

The shocking events of the past few months have dramatically impacted every one of us. Across our land we see an almost universal openness and searching for meaning. People who had never attended church, who did not know the Lord, and who had never before thought of sin,God, and salvation are now questioning their spiritual beliefs and inquiries, both at the ministry and on our various speaking trips, are both encouraging and yet extremely provocative.

In reviewing this amazingly changed horizon, I was startled recently to recall an event that had occurred in the early days of our relocation to Coeur d'Alene.

Our first granddaughter was born on April 17, 1994. Nan and I were in the delivery room that Saturday night—in fact, all that night. It was a very long delivery, but it all turned out well.

When12 PM arrived, I was in the driveway of our first rented house...

I must confess that I usually receive such well-intentioned "visions" with a grain of salt, and simply file them away with as much courtesy as I can muster to hide any cynicism or skepticism. This one was decidedly different. What they had no way of knowing was that theirs was the third such message delivered to me since we had arrived in Idaho!

When our moving van was in the driveway of our first rented house...

I was, frankly, amazed. We chatted intimately for several hours and they left.

I was stunned. I needed to address my church and share with them what I had just learned. In essence, "Nothing at all. We were just being responsive to the Lord's dear instructions to us."

I recalled that on the Sunday just a few weeks prior, I had received a vision...

I was astonished. I had assumed they were receiving up.

I received the message. We just came to deliver this message.

Yet I received extraordinary instruction. But when is that you want from...

me?.....I accept responsibility. Will the Lord guide you from there.

The Lord guided us to tell you that there is going to be a major revival in the Pacific Northwest.

The shocking events of the past few months have dramatically impacted your and others' lives. For some, it has been a time of...
ible movements of the Holy Spirit alone, usually in a grass-roots form of some kind. We believe that it is now emerging through home Bible study groups. That has been our focus ever since we started the Monday Night Studies in the Fellowship Hall at Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, which continued until we moved to Idaho.

We have been well aware that there have been literally hundreds of study groups across the country—in fact, even in many foreign countries—that have been using our weekly “K-Rations” tapes, as well as other resources, as a principal means of study. It was to further encourage “beginning groups” that we compiled our rather audacious Learn the Bible in 24 Hours, to provide a foundational perspective upon which to build.

The astonishing barrage of new inquiries since the September 11 events has also led to the four-session series, Prophecy 101, for those seeking that initial exposure to Bible prophecy, which has now become so timely for so many.

Between the advanced electronic media—CD-ROMs and the like—and the Internet, a home Bible study group can now tap resources that exceed most of the traditional seminaries! Robert Bork, in his book, Slouching Towards Gomorrah, concluded that the only thing that can save America is a grass-roots spiritual revival. And there certainly is no doubt about that. Joseph was given a vision—some years in advance—of seven good years. He was to prepare for the good years. He was to store up seven good years. We have been well aware that those have been healthy hundreds of years we presently have are remarkably qualified and God-fearing leadership. We shudder to think where we would be without them!

But all administrations are subject to change, and replacements will inevitably come over time. Remember the defeat of King Hezekiah was

We here at Koinonia House intend to continue the focus of our energies doing exactly what we have been doing: stimulating, encouraging, and facilitating the serious study of the inerrant Word of God, in every way we can. We have been ever more open to the idea of home groups, and we have retained freedoms that, unfortunately, will continue to be eroded now by the exigencies of global terrorism and the subsequent exploitations by the pagan left at every opportunity.

Joe de Courcy, whose family, for several generations, has published The Intelligence Digest—which arguably has been the premier commercial source of geopolitical intelligence—made an interesting remark to me recently. He said, “You know, Chuck, I believe that... and the tide toward globalism, will ultimately prove irresistible. And that is what the Bible has predicted all along.

So many极限 expressions to biblical prophecy, which may now become so timely.

The astonishing barrage of new inquiries since the September 11 events has also led to the four-session series, Prophecy 101, for those seeking that initial exposure to Bible prophecy, which has now become so timely for so many.

We need to “seize the day!” We believe that God is presently opening the door for a revival in America—and we believe that the night is coming... Carpe diem! We need to work for the night is coming. We, too, need to work for the night is coming...
The Second Coming

Micah 4:1, 2

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and people shallflow unto it..."

The Abrahamic Covenant

"There are 1,845 references in the Old Testament; 17 books give prominence to the event. There are 318 references in the New Testament; 27 books give prominence to the event. For every prophecy of Christ's First Coming there are eight of His Second Coming!"

Augustine

"Pious, popular, and persuasive, one of the great figures of the 3rd century church. His influential De Principiis presented Christian doctrine in Hellenic terms. Tragically established an extreme pattern of allegorizing Scripture that was to influence Augustine in subsequent years."

Origen


The Return of Christ to Rule

"Of the LORD from Jerusalem."

Note:


Study Questions:

1) Why is the Great Tribulation period called the "Time of Jacob's Trouble" (Jer 30:7)?
2) How is the incident of Naboth's vineyard relevant to subsequent church history? (1 Kings 21; Cf. Rev 2:20).
3) Thoroughly understand God's Covenant to Abraham (Gen 12:2, 3); reconfirmed to Isaac (Gen 26:2-5); and to Jacob (Gen 28:13-14); and to Joseph (Gen 39:1-4); and to Ezekiel (Ezek 28:12-19).

Discussion Questions:

1) What did Jesus mean in Matthew 10:34?
2) Why are the nations of the world so bent on Israel's destruction?
3) What is implied by the "bulls of Bashan" in Psalm 22:12 regarding the crucifixion?

For Further Research:

1) What is unique about the geography of Bashan, and the Golan heights? Is there a spiritual history of the Og, the Rephaim, etc.? Were they Nephilim?
2) Is there a hidden significance of "dust" in Scripture (Cf. Gen 3:14, Dan 2:43, etc.)?
Ezekiel 40 - 48

The Millennial Temple

Millennial Longevity?

Physical Changes

Creation Changed:
- Physical changes: Zech 4:9-10, Isa 35:1-10
- Curse lifted: Isa 11:6-9
- Creation redeemed: Gen 3 - Rom 8:20-22

Yet, not eternity: Isa 65

Death, sin: Isa 65:20

Each to have land: Mic 4:13

Fruitful: Amos 9:14;

Cursed to the Lord: Gen 3 - Rom 8:20-22

The Millennial Limitations

Not "heaven:" vs. Eternal State which follows.


Not "where righteousness dwells": limited amount of evil, judged.

Millennial Longevity?

Death for unbelievers only (Isa 65:20)? Nowhere is there a resurrection of Millennial saints. Tribulation saints complete the "first resurrection" (Rev 20:4-6). No Jewish unbelievers? (Jer 31:31-34); all accept by 100th year (Isa 65:20); thus, death only among Gentiles?

The Millennial Temple

Ezekiel 40 - 48: 10 miles/side; 4 gates; etc.

"City of peace" => "YHWH is there."

Ezek 40: 48; 10 million souls; 4 gates; etc.

Millennial Longevity?

The Millennial Temple

1000-year reign (Isa 65:20): thus, death only among Gentiles?

Rev 20:4-6: No resurrection of unbelievers (Rev 11:13-14); all acceptable? Inon Millennialism: tribulation simultaneously, instantaneous. Death for unbelievers only (Rev 20:6:17); nowhere is there an eternity.

Millennial Temple

Ezekiel 40-48

Millennial Longevity?

The Millennial Temple

Promised to David: 2 Sam 7:12-15; under David: Ps 89:3-4; under Solomon: 2 Sam 1:1-10.

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Ezekiel 40: 48; 10 million souls; 4 gates; etc.

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Ezekiel 40: 48; 10 million souls; 4 gates; etc.

Millennial Longevity?
Supplemental Bibliography on the Millenium

7. Von Orelli, C., The Twelve Minor Prophets (reprint of T& T Clark, 1897), Klock & Klock Christian Publisher, Minneapolis MN, 1977.  
10. Von Orelli, C., The Twelve Minor Prophets (reprint of T& T Clark, 1897), Klock & Klock Christian Publisher, Minneapolis MN, 1977.  

For Further Research:


Discussion Questions:

1) What is the purpose of Ezekiel in the Millenium?
2) What are the paradoxes of the Millenium (in contrast to the ideals of Ezekiel 40-48)?
3) When are the inanimate possibilities of Ezekiel 40-48 satisfied?

Study Questions:

2) Develop your own "model" of Ezekiel 40-48.

Bibliography

Living Quarters


Food Growing

Jerusalem

Portion of the Prince

Temple

Portion of the Prince

Temple

50 miles

50 miles

20 miles

20 miles

10 miles

10 miles

To the Mediterranean Sea

To the Dead Sea
About The Cover Design

(on the tape cassette volumes)

The "Front" cover: (the "front" to the Jewish reader)

The spine:

The center design represents the burning bush, made up of Hebrew letters which proclaim the Eternal One (Almighty). The word of God illumined by the Holy Spirit, the unsearchable eternal symbols (Revelations 1:8). The center design is one with what is written, and what has happened, and what is to come.

The Greek border, "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End." (Revelations 1:8)

The spine includes a Menorah from the Old Testament, a Maranatha logo.

The "Back" cover: (the "front" to the Jewish reader)

The Hebrew border, "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.

The "Front" cover:

Do not confuse the New Testament and the Koinonia House logo with the Jewish reader.

The "Front" cover:

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