

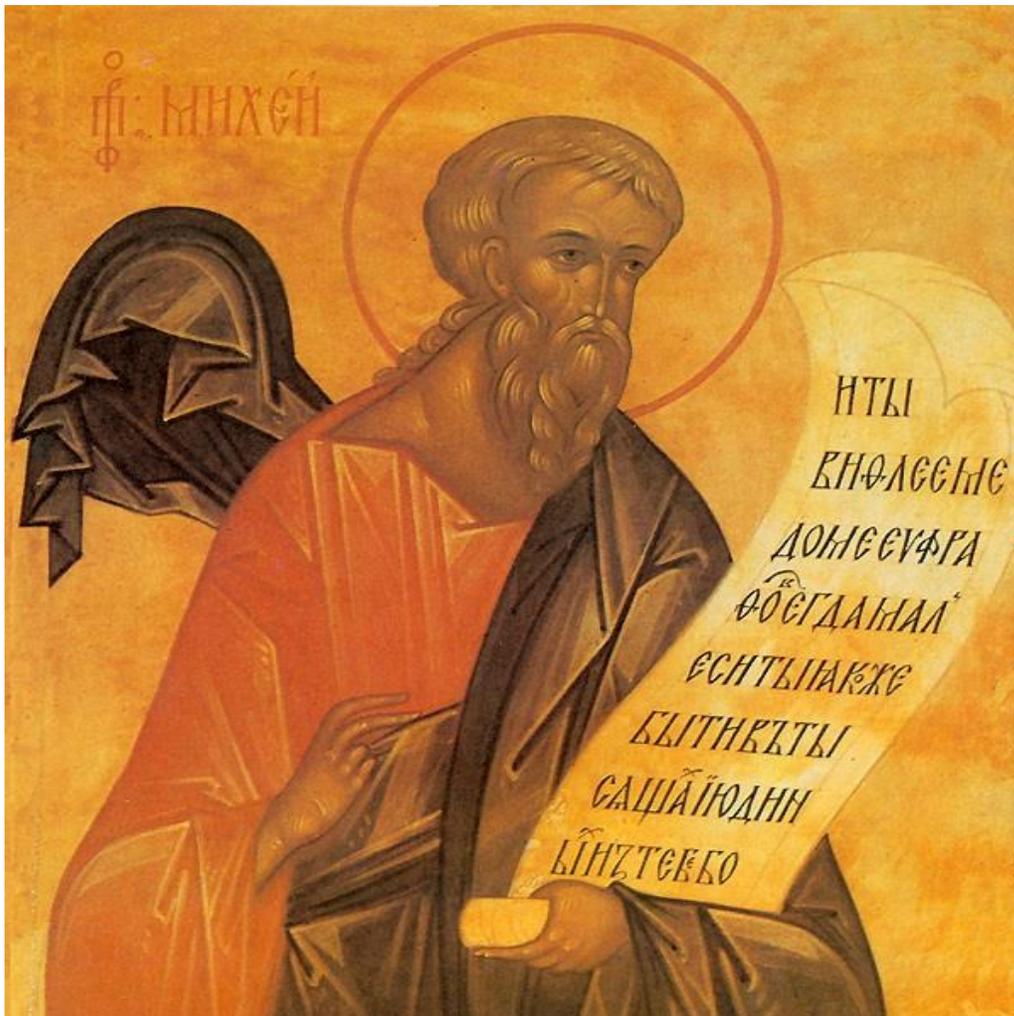
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# THE HOLY BIBLE NKJV REFERENCE GUIDE

OLD TESTAMENT

BOOK 33

MICAH



The Prophet Micah

## SUMMARY

The author of the Book of Micah was the Prophet Micah (Micah 1:1). The Book of Micah was likely written between 735 and 700 B.C.

The message of the Book of Micah is a complex mixture of judgment and hope. On the one hand, the prophecies announce judgment upon Israel for social evils, corrupt leadership and idolatry.

This judgment was expected to culminate in the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem. On the other hand, the book proclaims not merely the restoration of the nation, but the transformation and exaltation of Israel and Jerusalem.

The messages of hope and doom are not necessarily contradictory, however, since restoration and transformation take place only after judgment.

The prophet condemns the rulers, priests, and prophets of Israel who exploit and mislead the people. It is because of their deeds that Jerusalem will be destroyed.

The prophet Micah proclaims the deliverance of the people who will go from Jerusalem to Babylon and concludes with an exhortation for Jerusalem to destroy the nations who have gathered against her.

The ideal ruler would come from Bethlehem to defend the nation, and the prophet proclaims the triumph of the remnant of Jacob and foresees a day when Yahweh will purge the nation of idolatry and reliance on military might.

The prophet sets forth a powerful and concise summary of Yahweh's requirement for justice and loyalty and announces judgment upon those who have followed the ways of Omri and Ahab.

The book closes with a prophetic liturgy comprising elements of a lament. Israel confesses its sin and is assured of deliverance through Yahweh's mighty acts.

Micah 5:2 is a Messianic prophecy quoted when the magi were searching for the king born in Bethlehem. These kings from the East were told that from the tiny village of Bethlehem would come forth the Prince of Peace, the Light of the world.

Micah's message of sin, repentance and restoration finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ who is the propitiation for our sins and the only way to God.

God gives warnings so we will not have to suffer His wrath. Judgment is certain if God's warnings are not heeded and His provision for sin in the sacrifice of His Son is rejected.

For the believer in Christ, God will discipline us—not from hate—but because He loves us. He knows that sin destroys and He wants us to be whole. This wholeness which is the promise of restoration awaits those who remain obedient to Him.

## NKJV SELECTED SCRIPTURE

- 5:2** But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.
- 5:3** Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel.
- 5:4** And He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the Lord, In the majesty of the name of the Lord His God; And they shall abide, For now He shall be great To the ends of the earth;
- 5:5** And this One shall be peace. When the Assyrian comes into our land, And when he treads in our palaces, Then we will raise against him Seven shepherds and eight princely men.
- 6:8** He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?
- 6:13** *Therefore I will also make you sick by striking you, By making you desolate because of your sins.*
- 6:14** *You shall eat, but not be satisfied; Hunger shall be in your midst. You may carry some away, but shall not save them; And what you do rescue I will give over to the sword.*
- 6:15** *You shall sow, but not reap; You shall tread the olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil; And make sweet wine, but not drink wine.*
- 7:5** Do not trust in a friend; Do not put your confidence in a companion; Guard the doors of your mouth From her who lies in your bosom.
- 7:6** For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; A man's enemies are the men of his own household.
- 7:7** Therefore I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me.

## BIBLE TIMELINE

735 BC

The Word of the LORD to Micah

Micah 1 - 7

## CHARACTER Definitions

**MICAH** - The prophet Micah identified himself by his hometown, called Moresheth Gath, which sat near the border of Philistia and Judah about twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem.

Dwelling in a largely agricultural part of the country, Micah lived outside the governmental centers of power in his nation, leading to his strong concern for the lowly and less fortunate of society—the lame, the outcasts, and the afflicted.

Therefore, Micah directed much of his prophecy toward the powerful leaders of Samaria and Jerusalem, the capital cities of Israel and Judah, respectively (1:1).

## CHARACTERS Continued

As a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea, Micah prophesied during the momentous years surrounding the tragic fall of Israel to the Assyrian Empire (722 BC), an event he also predicted.

Micah stated in his introduction to the book that he prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah in Judah, failing to mention the simultaneous string of dishonorable kings that closed out the northern kingdom of Israel.

During this period, while Israel was imploding from the effects of evil and unfaithful leadership, Judah seemed on a roller-coaster ride—ascending to the heights of its destiny in one generation, only to fall into the doldrums in another.

In Judah at this time, good kings and evil kings alternated with each other, a pattern seen in the reigns of Jotham (good); Ahaz (evil); and Hezekiah (good).

The book of Micah provides one of the most significant prophecies of Jesus Christ's birth in all the Old Testament, pointing some seven hundred years before Christ's birth to His birthplace of Bethlehem and to His eternal nature.

Surrounding Micah's prophecy of Jesus's birth is one of the most lucid pictures of the world's future under the reign of the Prince of Peace. This future kingdom, which scholars call the millennial kingdom, will be characterized by the presence of many nations living with one another.

They will live in peace and security and come to Jerusalem to worship the reigning king, that is, Jesus Himself. Because these events have not yet occurred, we look forward to the millennial kingdom at some undetermined time in the future.

Much of Micah's book revolves around two significant predictions: one of judgment on Israel and Judah, the other of the restoration of God's people in the millennial kingdom.

Judgment and restoration inspire fear and hope, two ideas wrapped up in the final sequence of Micah's prophecy, a courtroom scene in which God's people stand trial before their Creator for turning away from Him and from others.

In this sequence, God reminds the people of His good works on their behalf, how He cared for them while they cared only for themselves.

But rather than leave God's people with the fear and sting of judgment, the book of Micah concludes with the prophet's call on the Lord as his only source of salvation and mercy, pointing the people toward an everlasting hope in their everlasting God.

Much of Micah's indictment against Israel and Judah involves these nations' injustice toward the lowly—unjust business dealings, robbery, mistreatment of women and children, and a government that lived in luxury off the hard work of its nation's people.

Micah's impassioned plea for God's chosen people to repent will cut many of us to the quick. Most of us don't decide daily to cut people down or find ways to carry out injustice. Instead, we do it out of habit.

## CHARACTERS Continued

Let's allow the words of Micah to break us out of our apathy about extending justice and kindness to others and press on toward a world that better resembles the harmonious millennial kingdom to come. Let's determine to live as God desires, to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

## MAP REFERENCES

