

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

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Micah

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Micah

1 These are the messages that Yahweh gave to Micah, who was from *the town of* Moresheth *in Judah*. Yahweh gave these messages to Micah during the time when Jotham, *then* Ahaz, and *then* Hezekiah ruled as kings of Judah. These are messages about what Yahweh showed Micah would happen to Samaria and to Jerusalem.

[2] Hear this, all you people everywhere on the earth!
The Lord Yahweh is about to testify against you
from the holy place where he rules *in heaven*.
[3] But now look! Yahweh is about to come out from
heaven and come down to the earth
where he will walk on the tops of the mountains.
[4] *He is so powerful that it will be as though* the
mountains will melt beneath him
as easily as wax melts near a fire
and as quickly as water rushes down a hillside,
and the valleys will split apart.
[5] All of this will happen because the people of
Israel, the descendants of Jacob, have
sinned *against Yahweh*.
It was *the leaders of the people in* the city of Samaria who
led all of the descendants of Jacob to sin!
It was *the leaders of the people in* Jerusalem who led the
people of Judah *to worship idols* on the hilltops!
[6] So Yahweh says, "I will turn the city of Samaria into
a heap of rubble in the countryside;
it will be a place for planting vineyards.
I will roll the stones of its buildings down into the valley
and strip the buildings down to their foundations.
[7] Enemies will smash all of the idols in Samaria to pieces
and burn up all the gifts that people gave
at the idol temples.
I will make all of the idols there into ruins
because the people of Samaria collected these
precious things by their business of
prostitution at the temples,
so enemies will carry them off and use them
to pay prostitutes elsewhere."
[8] Because of all of this, I will weep and wail.
I will walk around without my sandals and
without my clothes.
I will howl like a jackal
and cry out like a family of owls.
[9] This is because nothing now can stop Yahweh
from destroying Samaria.
And because the same thing will also happen to Judah;
it is as though the enemy army has arrived *already*
at the gates of Jerusalem,
the city where my people live.
[10] Do not tell *our enemies in the city of* Gath *about this*!
Certainly do not cry aloud!
Instead, roll in the dust at Beth Leaphrah.
[11] You people who live in Shaphir
will march away naked and ashamed.
The people of Zaanan
will not go out *to help you*.
The people of Beth Ezel will mourn,
and by their mourning *you will know that* Beth Ezel
will not help you stand *against the enemy*.
[12] Indeed, the people of Maroth wait anxiously for
something good to happen,
but nothing good will come.
Instead, Yahweh has caused terrible things to happen,
all the way to the gates of Jerusalem.
[13] You people of Lachish,
hitch your swift horses to your war chariots *and flee*!
You were the first ones to lead the people of Zion to sin,
because you caused the people of Israel to
rebel against Yahweh.
[14] So you *leaders in Jerusalem* will have to send farewell gifts
as you part with the town of Moresheth Gath, *as a
father does when giving a daughter in marriage*.
The town of Achzib
will prove to be deceptive to the rulers of Israel.
[15] You people of Mareshah,
Yahweh will bring a conqueror to take over
your town, as well.
The honored leaders of Israel
will go to Adullam *once again to hide in the cave*.
[16] *You leaders of Israel,* completely shave your
heads *in mourning*
for the children whom you love.
Shave yourselves completely bald, like an eagle,
because your enemies will take your children
far away from you into exile.

2 Terrible things will happen to you who lie
awake in bed at night
planning how to do evil things.
You get up at dawn and you do those things,
simply because you are able to do them.
[2] You want fields that belong to other people, so
you forcefully take them;
you want their houses, so you steal them.
You cheat people and take away their property,
including what their families have owned
for generations.
[3] So this is what Yahweh says, "Listen to me! I am
planning to destroy you people, and you will
not be able to escape from it. You will no
longer be able to act proudly, because you
will be experiencing terrible things. [4] At that
time, your enemies will mock you by singing
this very sad song about you, 'Yahweh has
completely destroyed us *Israelites*! Yahweh is
taking the portions of land away from us
that he had given to us! We are extremely
distressed because he is giving our fields to
our enemies!'" [5] So when Yahweh's people
return to divide up the land *again*,
no one from your families will be there to
receive any of it.

6 False prophets *who hear me say this* prophesy to me,
"Do not prophesy!"
They do not prophesy about these things, therefore
Yahweh will certainly dishonor *them*.
7 You descendants of Jacob should not say such things as,
"Yahweh does not become impatient."
Or "These are not the kinds of things that he does."
What I say certainly helps those who do what is right.
8 *However, Yahweh says,*
"Recently my people have turned against me
and become my enemies.
When people pass by feeling safe,
like soldiers returning from battle *to their own people*,
you strip the fine outer garments right off their fronts.
9 You force the women among my people
out of the homes that they love,
and you take away from their children forever
the good things that I wanted to give them.
10 So get up and leave!
This land is no longer a place where you can live.
You have made it unacceptable to me by your sins,
so I will destroy it in a way that is severe."
11 If someone who speaks nothing but lies were to say,
"I will preach that you should drink wine and beer!"
that is the kind of prophet you people would accept.
12 "However, some day I will certainly gather all
of you descendants of Jacob.
I will certainly bring together the Israelite
people who survive.
I will bring them together in one place, as a shepherd
gathers a flock of sheep into a good pasture.
They will make a lot of noise because there
will be very many of them.
13 I will send someone who will open the way in front
of them, and they will follow behind
him, going out through the gate. Their
king will go before them, and *I,* Yahweh,
will be the one leading them."

3 Then I said,
"You leaders of the people of Jacob
and you rulers of the people of Israel, listen to me!
You are the ones who should know all about
how to treat people fairly.
2 Yet you hate what is right and love what is evil!
You violently rob my people
as though you are stripping off their skin and flesh.
3 You greedily strip my people of everything that they have
as though you are a butcher who strips off their skin,
breaks their bones,
chops them up,
puts them into a cooking pot,
and eats them."
4 Someday, *when bad things happen to those leaders,* they
will call out for Yahweh *to help them*,
but he will not help them.
He will be as diligent to ignore them at that time,
as they were to do evil deeds.
5 This is what Yahweh says,
"This is about the prophets who are
misleading my people.
They prophesy good things for anyone giving
them something to eat.
However, they declare holy war against anyone
who does not give them food.
6 Because of that, it will be *as though it is* always
night for you prophets because you will
no longer be able to see visions,
and you will no longer be able to practice divination.
Yes, *it will be as though* the sun has set for you
prophets even during the day,
because I will show you nothing."
7 Those who claim to see the future will feel ashamed,
and those who practice divination will feel disgraced.
They will all cover their faces to express how
ashamed they are,
because God will not answer them.
8 But as for me, Yahweh's Spirit greatly empowers me
to do what is right and to be strong
so that I can tell the people of Jacob how they
have rebelled *against God*
and tell the people of Israel how they have sinned.
9 You leaders of the people of Jacob
and you rulers of the people of Israel, listen to this!
You are the ones who hate it when people
do what is right,
and when people say what is true, you change
it into something false.
10 You are getting the wealth to build up Jerusalem
by murdering people and treating people unjustly.
11 The city's leaders decide cases *favorably* only for
those who give them bribes.
The city's priests teach only when people
pay them *well*.
The city's prophets require people to pay them
money in order to tell them what they
think will happen to them.
Yet those same leaders trust in Yahweh and say,
"Yahweh is among us,
so nothing bad will happen to us."
12 So, because of what you leaders are doing,
enemies will make Mount Zion look like a field
that a farmer has plowed.
Jerusalem will become a pile of rubble,
and the temple hill will become an overgrown forest.

4 But Yahweh says that in the latter days,
the mountain where his temple stands will become
the most important of all the mountains.
Yes, Yahweh will cause it to be the most important place,
and a lot of people from many different people
groups will come there *to worship*.
2 *People from* many nations will gather and
say *to each other*,
"Let us go to the mountain where Yahweh is,
to the temple where we can worship the God
whom Jacob worshiped.
There God will teach us how he wants us to live,
and we will do what he tells us to do."
Indeed, Zion is the place from which God will
send out his instructions,

and from Jerusalem Yahweh will announce
his messages.
3 Yahweh will settle disputes among many peoples
and will make decisions for powerful nations
that are far away.
Then those peoples will reshape their implements of war
into implements for farming.
Armies of nations will no longer fight against
armies of other nations,
and people will no longer train to be soldiers.
4 Everyone will sit *peacefully* under his own grapevines
and under his own fig trees,
and no one will cause any of them to be afraid.
That will certainly happen because Yahweh,
the commander of the heavenly armies,
has commanded it.
5 Even though each one of all of the other people
groups obeys its own god,
as for us, we will obey Yahweh our God forever.
6 Yahweh says, "At that time
I will gather the people who are injured
and those who are scattered,
that is, everyone whom I have caused to suffer.
7 I will cause the injured ones to be the faithful
survivors of my people
and I will cause all of those whom I drove away
to become a mighty nation.
Then *I,* Yahweh will rule over them on Mount Zion,
now and forever.
8 You people of Zion, who are like a watchtower on
the hill guarding my people,
I will again authorize you to rule.
Jerusalem will once again be the capitol
of my kingdom.
9 *But* now you are crying out,
and it is not because you have no king,
or because your advisors have all died.
You act as though you are suffering greatly, as much
as a woman who is birthing a child!
10 People of Zion, you should agonize and wail like
a woman birthing a child,
because now you must leave this city
and live out in the open fields.
You will go all the way to Babylon.
However, while you are there,
I, Yahweh will rescue you.
That is where he will take you away from
your enemies.

11 But now *the armies of* many nations have
gathered to attack you.
They are saying, 'We are here to destroy *this city*!
We want to see the ruins of Zion!'
12 But as for them, they do not know what *I,*
Yahweh am thinking.
They do not understand that this is what I
have planned *for them*.
In fact, I have gathered them together *to destroy them*,
just as a farmer gathers grain onto a threshing
floor *to crush it*.
13 So you people of Zion, become active and
defeat your enemies!
You can do this because I will cause you
to be very strong.
So destroy *these* many peoples
and give to *me,* Yahweh, the Ruler of the whole earth,
everything valuable that your enemies possess."

5 Now, people *of Jerusalem*, gather yourselves into a troop!
Even though you have a wall to protect your city,
enemy soldiers have surrounded it.
They are here to overpower and humiliate
the ruler of Israel.
2 However, *I have something to say about* Bethlehem
in the region of Ephrathah.
Even though the clan that lives there is the
smallest of the clans of Judah,
someone who will rule Israel for me will
come from that town.
He has been active since ancient times, from eternity.
3 So God will allow Israel's enemies to conquer them,
until the time when she who will bear gives birth.
Then the rest of those who, with him, are part of Israel
will rejoin their fellow Israelites.
4 Yahweh will strengthen him to rule and to
care for his people
as majestically and authoritatively as if Yahweh, his
God, were doing those things himself.
His people will live *safely*,
because, at that time, people all over the
earth will honor him.
5 He will cause his people to prosper.
When *the army of* Assyria attacks our land
and breaks through our fortresses,
we will appoint many leaders
to lead our army to fight against them.
6 They will lead our army to rule the land of Assyria,
that is, the territory that Nimrod founded *long ago*.
The ruler will rescue us from the Assyrians
when they cross our borders to invade our land.
7 Then the descendants of Jacob who have
survived will live
among many other peoples.
They will be a blessing for those peoples, just as
the dew and the rain *are*
that Yahweh sends for the grass.
They will depend on Yahweh *to sustain them*
just as the grass does,
and not on other people.
8 Yes, the descendants of Jacob who have survived
will be in other nations,
living among many other peoples.
But they will be *powerful,* like a lion is among
the other animals.
If they need to do so, they can easily defeat those peoples,
just as a young lion pounces on sheep and
tears them apart,
and no one can rescue them.
9 *Yahweh,* we want you to powerfully defeat
all of your enemies
and to destroy them completely!

10 Yahweh declares, “At that time,
I will take away your *war* horses
and I will destroy your chariots.
11 I will tear down the cities in your land
and I will destroy all of your fortresses.
12 I will stop you from practicing witchcraft,
and there will be no more fortune tellers among you.
13 I will destroy your idols
and your sacred stone pillars,
and then you will no longer worship
things that you yourselves have made.
14 I will remove the *poles that you use to worship
the goddess* Asherah,
and I will destroy your cities.
15 Because I am very angry,
I will severely punish *the people of* the nations
that have not obeyed *me*.”

6 Listen, *everyone,* because Yahweh has something to say,
“*Micah,* stand up and present *my* case,
and let the mountains and the hills be witnesses
to what you say.”
2 *It as though* the mountains and the enduring
foundations of the earth are listening as
Yahweh contends *against his people*.
Indeed, Yahweh is bringing charges against his people;
he is about to argue his case against Israel.

3 *Yahweh says,*“My people, you act as though
I have harmed you!
You treat me as though I have made things
difficult for you!
If you can accuse me of anything, then do it now!
4 Instead of doing bad things,
I brought your ancestors out of Egypt,
rescuing them from the place where they
had lived as slaves.
I sent Moses to lead them,
along with *his older brother* Aaron and *his
older sister* Miriam.
5 My people, remember when Balak, the king of Moab,
wanted to conspire with Balaam son of Beor
to curse your ancestors,
and think about how Balaam answered him.
Remember what happened *as your ancestors traveled*
from Shittim to Gilgal,
so that you may recognize that *I,* Yahweh, have
always done the right things for you.”
6 *An Israelite asks,* “What should I bring
when I come to Yahweh, the God who
lives in the highest *heaven*,
and bow down before him?
Should I bring offerings to burn;
should I bring one-year-old calves *as sacrifices*?
7 Will Yahweh accept thousands of rams
or vast quantities of olive oil?
Should I sacrifice my firstborn child to pay for my sin?
Can a sacrifice from my physical body compensate
for my spiritual sin?”
8 *No!* Yahweh has already told you, human
person, what is good
and that he wants from you only this:
He wants you to do what is just, to love being
faithful to others,
and to conduct yourself humbly as you live
before your God.
9 Yahweh is calling out a message to the people
of the city *of Jerusalem*.
(Truly wise people revere you, Yahweh.)
Listen carefully, you tribe *of Israel* and all *leaders*
that Yahweh has appointed!
10 “It disgusts me that wicked people still have
wealth in their houses
that they got by cheating others,
and that they use measures that are smaller
than they should be.
This is something that I have cursed.
11 No one is innocent who uses dishonest scales
or a bag of deceptive weights.
12 The rich people in this city always act violently to others.
All of the people who live here tell lies.
Yes, they always speak deceitfully.
13 For my part, I will attack you severely.
I will ruin you because of your sins.
14 As for you, you will eat *food*, but it will not satisfy you
because it will rush right through you.
You will try to save *people*,
but you will not be able to rescue *anyone*
and even if you do rescue a few, I will allow
enemies to kill them.
15 As for you, you will plant crops,
but you will not harvest them.
As for you, you will press olives,
but you will not get to use the olive oil.
Yes, also with the wine—you will crush grapes,
but you will not get to drink any of it.
16 These things will happen because you follow the *wicked*
laws that King Omri established
and do all of the *evil* things that King Ahab and
his descendants practiced.
You have lived according to what they advised,
so I will destroy your city
and cause people of other nations to scorn
everyone who lives there.
Other peoples will detest you, because that is
what my people deserve.”

7 I am very miserable!
It is because I am *very frustrated* like someone
who looks for fruit to pick
after everyone else has already picked all of the
summer fruit and harvested all of the grapes.
I am like someone who cannot find a single
cluster of grapes to eat
or an early fig, which he longs for.
2 *I am looking for* faithful people, but all of them
have disappeared from the land,
and there are no longer any honest people among us.
All of the people who remain are eager to kill others;
each person tries to find ways to exploit
his fellow citizens.
3 They are energetic and skillful in doing evil things.

Government officials and judges demand bribes.
Powerful people tell others what they want
for themselves,
and they all plot together to get it done.
4 Even the best people among them are harmful,
and even those who seem the most honest,
cause people pain.
The time that the prophets foretold,
the time when God will punish those who do
evil things, is coming soon.
This is when they will panic.
5 So, do not trust anyone, not even a neighbor or a friend.
Be careful what you say
even to your own wife!
6 Indeed, even sons treat their fathers contemptuously,
and daughters defy their mothers.
Daughters-in-law defy their mothers-in-law.
A person's enemies
are the people who live in his own household.

7 But as for me, I will watch to see what Yahweh
will do *to help me*.
I intend to wait confidently for God, who saves me.
The God whom I worship will listen when I call to him.
8 You who are our enemies,
do not celebrate over what has happened to us,
because even though you have defeated
us, we will recover.
Even though it looks like everything is bad for us,
Yahweh will take care of us.
9 We will patiently endure whatever Yahweh
does to punish us,
because we have sinned against him.
Eventually he will defend us
and make things right for us.
He will change everything bad around us to good,
and we will see that he always does what is right.
10 I want my enemies to see the same thing,
and then everyone will completely despise them.
They are the ones who mocked me by saying,
"Yahweh your God is not helping you at all!"
But at that time I will watch
as people destroy the homes of my enemies,
making them just like the mud in the streets.

11 *People of Zion,* the day is coming when you will
rebuild your walls!
On that day, your city will extend far beyond
its present boundaries.
12 On that day people will come to you
from everywhere. The places they will come from
will be from Assyria to Egypt,
and from Egypt all the way to the Euphrates River,
from one sea to another and from every mountain.
13 *In contrast the rest of* the earth will become
an empty wasteland
because of the *evil* things its people have done.
14 *Yahweh,* protect and guide your people, as a
shepherd does for his sheep!
They are the people whom you have chosen
to belong to you.
They are like sheep that live apart from others
in a wooded area of Mount Carmel,
but give them the rich pasturelands
of the Bashan and Gilead regions
that they enjoyed long ago.

15 *Yahweh says,*

"Yes, just as I did long ago when I rescued your
ancestors from Egypt,
I will do amazing things for you."

16 People from many nations will see *what Yahweh
does for his people*,
and what they see will humiliate them
because they thought that they were powerful,
but they are not.
They will be so amazed that they will be unable to say
or hear anything.
17 They will grovel on the ground like a snake,
like an insect in the dirt.
They will be so afraid that they will come
trembling from their fortresses.
They will be very afraid as they approach Yahweh,
the God whom we worship.
They will be afraid because of you, *Yahweh*.
18 *Yahweh,* no other God is like you!
You forgive the sins of the people who have
remained faithful to you, those who belong to you.
You do not stay angry forever
because you are the one who delights in
faithfully loving us.
19 You will be merciful to us once again.
You will completely forgive all of our sins,
as though you are throwing them into the
deepest part of the ocean.
20 You will show the descendants of Jacob that
you are trustworthy,
and you will faithfully love the descendants
of Abraham,
just as you solemnly promised to our ancestors
long ago.