



Community Group Discussion Guide

Who can Ascend? – The Book of Micah

August 21, 2022 | Micah 1:2-16

I. Starter Question:

- What are some examples of idolatry throughout the history of Israel, leading up to the time of Micah's prophecy?
 - Examples: Golden calf (Exodus 32); Korah's rebellion (Numbers 16); Solomon's sin (1 Kings 11)

II. Discussion of Scripture:

Micah 1:1-16 (ESV)

¹ The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. ² Hear, you peoples, all of you; pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it, and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. ³ For behold, the LORD is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. ⁴ And the mountains will melt under him, and the valleys will split open, like wax before the fire, like waters poured down a steep place. ⁵ All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? ⁶ Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country, a place for planting vineyards, and I will pour down her stones into the valley and uncover her foundations. ⁷ All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces, all her wages shall be burned with fire, and all her idols I will lay waste, for from the fee of a prostitute she gathered them, and to the fee of a prostitute they shall return. ⁸ For this I will lament and wail; I will go stripped and naked; I will make lamentation like the jackals, and mourning like the ostriches. ⁹ For her wound is incurable, and it has come to Judah; it has reached to the gate of my people, to Jerusalem. ¹⁰ Tell it not in Gath; weep not at all; in Beth-le-aphrah roll yourselves in the dust. ¹¹ Pass on your way, inhabitants of Shaphir, in nakedness and shame; the inhabitants of Zaanan do not come out; the lamentation of Beth-ezel shall take away from you its standing place. ¹² For the inhabitants of Maroth wait anxiously for good, because disaster has come down from the LORD to the gate of Jerusalem. ¹³ Harness the steeds to the chariots, inhabitants of Lachish; it was the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion, for in you were found the transgressions of Israel. ¹⁴ Therefore you shall give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath; the houses of Achzib shall be a deceitful thing to the kings of Israel. ¹⁵ I will again bring a conqueror to you, inhabitants of Mareshah; the glory of Israel shall come to Adullam. ¹⁶ Make yourselves bald and cut off your hair, for the children of your delight; make yourselves as bald as the eagle, for they shall go from you into exile.

Context: After the opening introduction in verse 1, Micah's prophecy begins in verse 2 with a call to all people ("Hear, you peoples, all of you") to listen to the prophecy that Micah is about to deliver to them. He then moves directly into the declaration that God is a witness against the people of Israel for their sin and is going to deliver His judgment against them. In verse 5, we find out what this judgment

is for, as he explains it “is for the transgression of Jacob, and for the sins of the house of Israel,” as a result of their idol worship (v.7). They had rejected the covenant that God had made with them at Mount Sinai to worship God only and obey Him. Micah can only weep at the consequences of the people’s sins (v.8-9). Micah then goes into listing out several towns in Israel, and the resulting destruction that will happen to each because of God’s judgment on them and representing the failure of the people to honor their covenant with God. In naming each town, Micah also alludes to the coming overthrow of Judah by the Assyrians. Micah closes out chapter 1 warning that Israel is going to want to flee because judgment is coming against them, but there will be no place for them to flee, and instead they will be shamed (v.16).

Discussion Questions:

1. According to Micah, what will happen as a result of the people’s idolatry and pagan worship?
2. How does Micah describe the extent of God’s judgment (verses 3-7)? What is some of the imagery that he uses to describe the extent of God’s judgment?
3. What does this teach us about who God is?
4. What are some idols that you are prone to worshipping in your own life?
5. How has the worship of idols and disobedience to God led to bondage in your life? How has the worship of and obedience to God led to freedom in your life?
6. Read Matthew 6:24. Why is it not possible to love God and an idol at the same time?
 - a. Why is asking the Lord to accept co-existing with other “gods” in your life so easy to do?
7. How do we reconcile the way God’s anger and love work together to someone who is struggling with the idea that a loving God gets angry?
8. Micah lists out several towns of Judah in verses 10-15. What is ironic about the association or meaning of each, and the description of judgment that Micah provides for each?
 - a. Gath – David’s lament over Saul and Jonathan (2 Samuel 1:19-27)
 - b. Beth-le-aphrah – “House of Dust”
 - c. Shaphir – “beautiful”
 - d. Zaanan – “come out” or “going forth town”
 - e. Beth-ezel – “House of Taking Away”
 - f. Maroth – “bitter”
 - g. Lachish – “steeds” or chariots
 - h. Moresbeth-gath – “one who is betrothed”
 - i. Achzib – “deceptive” or “deceitful”
 - j. Mareshah – “dispossessor”
 - k. Adullam – David’s flee from Saul’s attack (1 Samuel 22:1)
9. What is Micah’s final warning in chapter 1 to the situation the people of Judah were in (v.16)?
10. Read Ephesians 2:1-8. How has Jesus responded to the situation we found ourselves in?

III. Responding in Prayer

- Pray that we would see the warning that Micah had for Judah, and us, as it relates to worshipping idols in our lives.
- Pray that we would see God’s righteous anger towards sin, and that He would shine a light on sin in our own lives.

- Thank God that he did not leave us dead in our sins, but “being rich in mercy...made us alive together with Christ.” Our Savior has come to deliver us from the judgment of God and give us new life in Him.
- Pray that our church would have a desperate dependence on God, knowing we can do nothing apart from Him.