

# MICAH 5



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Micah is one of several minor prophets who spoke to God's people before they were sent into exile. Each book has a very similar theme-God's people sinned, they deserved judgment, and God would carry it out. The warnings were intense and severe. The prophets also contain some of the most beautiful images of the fulfillment of God's promise to save sinners and fix this broken world. Hundreds of years before Jesus' birth, the prophet Micah connected this coming One to God's promises from long ago-He would be from the clan of Judah and a ruler like David. Micah also pointed forward to the fact that this One would come from Bethlehem. Centuries later, a baby lying in a manger fulfilled this prophecy. One of the primary ways we know the truthfulness and trustworthiness of the Bible is how specific it is about details in history that actually happened.

# AMOS 3



The majority of books like Amos, Obadiah, and Zephaniah consists of warnings about the coming judgement and inviting the people to turn back to God. They reminded God's people that, although the warnings about judgment were dire, they had not yet come to pass. If Israel or Judah would repent and commit themselves once again to obeying God with all their hearts, the coming judgment could be avoided. Though the people had a track record of failure, God was still willing to forgive should they change. Amos accused the people of not listening. They were like a kid with his fingers in his ears so he wouldn't hear his mom telling him to do his chores. They could hear, but they refused to listen. It's not as if God was unjust in His judgment or too swift in His wrath. He gave them every opportunity to repent and be saved. Sadly, we often do the very same thing. We know the good we should be doing, but we fail to listen to God and to those who seek to point us to His Word.

# JONAH 1



The book of Jonah is a familiar story to many. God called Jonah, one of His prophets, to go to Nineveh and speak to them about God's coming judgment. Jonah did the exact opposite and chose to flee from God's coming judgment. Jonah did the exact opposite and chose to flee from God's plan. We find out later one of the main reasons Jonah didn't go to Nineveh- he feared that the people of this pagan city would repent and turn to God. Jonah wanted God to wipe them out and not accept them after their repentance. Jonah's fears came true. After God altered Jonah's path with the help of a big fish, Jonah delivered the word of God to the people, many repented and God relented from destroying the city. However, their change of heart was short-lived. Soon after the prophet Nahum would once again speak concerning the coming destruction of Nineveh. God's patience in judgment shows us that He longs to see people turn to Him and be saved. Every day you live is another day God graciously gives you to turn to Him and be saved from His wrath.

## HABAKKUK 3:17-19



Destruction was looming on the horizon for Israel. They had witnessed God's power when He judged others for sin, and Israel themselves had experienced consequences for their sin in the past. But what they would experience in the days ahead was unlike anything they'd seen to this point. The prophet Habakkuk looked toward the awaiting devastation and spoke truth that is critical for all people to understand when experiencing pain and suffering. Habakkuk understood that the most important aspect of life wasn't momentary fulfillment-it wasn't food, clothing or anything this life had to offer. What's most important is the salvation of God. Even when all of life seemed to spiral out of control, Habakkuk found joy in God and His salvation. Prophets like Joel reminded the nation that, in the days ahead, God would restore the fortunes of His people. For the time however, even in pain, Habakkuk could find joy simply in knowing God and experiencing His love.

# HOSEA 3



Hosea pictures God's love in a way that's virtually unforgettable-God told Hosea to marry Gomer, a prostitute. After she left him for other men, Hosea pursued Gomer continually to reclaim her as his wife. Though she committed adultery over and over, God told Hosea not to give up on her. Hosea's refusal to abandon his wife is a demonstration of the way God loves is people as a husband claims his bride, and they are meant to be one. In our sin, however, people pursue other loves and abandon God. God's love is shown by His response to our adultery-He does not abandon us. Instead, He pursues us when we're unfaithful, inviting us back into a restored relationship. God proved His unfailing love to Israel and Judah, and through Jesus, He continues to love adulterers like you and me as well.