



# World Christian Fellowship

[www.wcflondon.com](http://www.wcflondon.com)  
[wcflondon@gmail.com](mailto:wcflondon@gmail.com)

## Book of Micah

**Name meaning:** Micah is the shortened form of Micaiah or Michaiah. In Hebrew the meaning of the name is Salvation. “Who is like the LORD?”

**Micah 7:18,** Micah uses a play on his own name, saying “*Who is a God like You?*”

**Year Written:** The Book of Micah was likely written between 735 and 710 B.C. He preached these sermons over 25 years before Israel go into captivity.

He comes from the town of Moresheth (1:1,14), located in the foothills of Judah, approximately 25 miles south west of Jerusalem, on the border of Judah and Philistia, near Gath. Micah is also like Amos from the agricultural background yet chosen by God to deliver His message of impending Judgement of God of the Kings and people of Jerusalem.

### **Historical background:**

Micah’s prophecy during the reigns of the following Kings. Jotham (750–731 B.C.), Ahaz (731–715 B.C.), and Hezekiah (715–686 B.C.).

We have looked at the book of Amos and found that both the Northern Kingdom of Israel as well as Southern Kingdom of Judah is flourishing with prosperity and they have been experiencing the best of their life time since the time of King Solomon.

The northern kingdom fell to Assyria in 722 B.C., during the Micah time but yet he spoke to Judean Kings only. His main focus was only the Southern Kingdom where he lived but he did mention about the Northern kingdom.

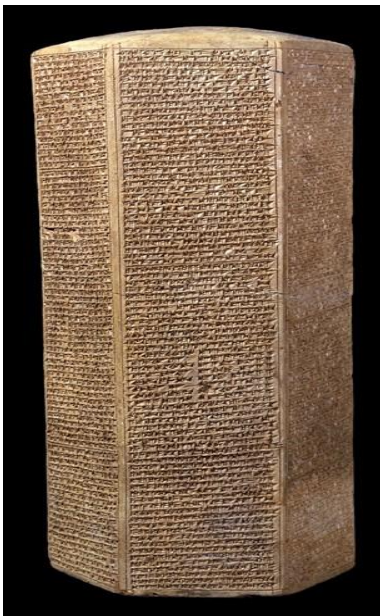
Syria and Israel invaded Judah taking the wicked Ahaz temporarily captive ( 2 Chronicles 28:5–16; Isaiah 7:1,2). After Assyria had overthrown Syria and Israel, the good king Hezekiah withdrew his allegiance to Assyria, causing Sennacherib to besiege Jerusalem in 701 B.C. ( 2 Kings 18,19; 2 Chronicles 32).



Gypsum wall panel relief: Sennacherib watches the capture of Lachish. He sits on a throne and watches as prisoners are brought before him and executed. A tent is behind him; there is a chariot in the foreground and bodyguards stationed around. The king's face has been deliberately damaged, perhaps at the fall of Nineveh in 612BC. The relief bears an inscription written in cuneiform script.

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details/collection\\_image\\_gallery.aspx?partid=1&assetid=354010001&objectid=366876](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?partid=1&assetid=354010001&objectid=366876)

Lachish is the second largest city after Jerusalem which was defeated by Sennacherib. The images you see are from the British Museum how he did and how subjected the civilians.



Hexagonal clay prism, foundation record lists campaigns of Sennacherib until the start of his final war against Babylon, and includes a description of the tribute received from Hezekiah, King of Judah in 701 BC; 82 + 83 + 82 + 80 + 85 + 75 lines of inscription.

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=295077&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=295077&partId=1)

The Lord then sent His angel to deliver Judah (2 Chronicles 32:21). Hezekiah was used by God to lead Judah back to true worship.

Uzziah, who died in 739 B.C., his son Jotham continued the same policies of his father but he failed to remove the pagan worship. They were prospering outwardly but inwardly they were corrupted socially, morally and spiritually.

Baal, the fertility god of Canaanite was worshipped very much the days of Ahaz. When Samaria fell thousands of refugees fled to Judah bringing their Baal god with them.

Micah addressed this issue like Hosea, it was the disintegration of personal and social values to which he delivered his most harsh rebukes and firm warnings (Micah 7:5-6).

Assyria was the dominant power and a constant threat to Judah, so Micah's prediction that Babylon, then under Assyrian rule, would conquer Judah (4:10) seemed impossible. Thus, as the prophet Amos was to Israel, Micah was to Judah.

Isaiah also prophesied at the same time, there are few passages are similar word by word. (Isaiah 4 and Micah 2)

Jeremiah wrote about the prophet Micah in **Jeremiah 26:18**, *“Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, And the mountain of the temple Like the bare hills of the forest.”*

God gave the same message through two preachers both Isaiah and Micah.

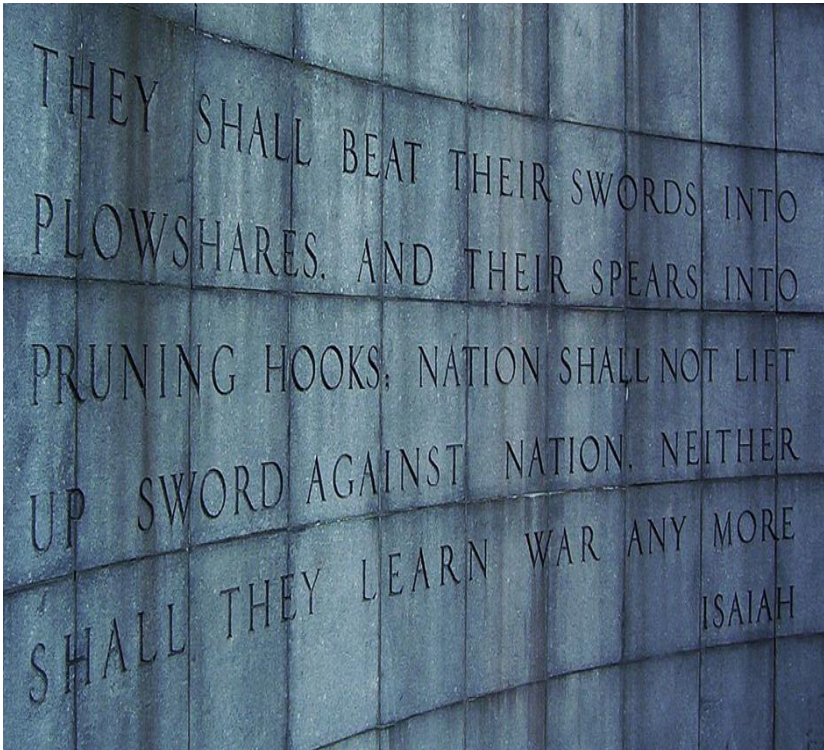
Apart from Isaiah 2:2–4, three other passages from Micah are quoted elsewhere in Scripture. Micah 3:12 is quoted in Jeremiah 26:18, thereby saving Jeremiah’s life from King Jehoiakim’s death sentence.

Micah prophesied in 5:2 about the birth place of Messiah Jesus Christ approximately 700 years ahead. (Matthew 2:6). Micah 7:6 is employed by Jesus in Matthew 10:35-36 when commissioning His disciples.

This statue is installed outside the building of United Nations building in New York, United States of America. United Nations were founded to bring peace upon all the nations and they chose to display the verse from the Prophecy of Micah and Isaiah.



**Micah 4:3**, *He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.*



## **Purpose:**

The message of the Book of Micah is a 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 end 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 the restoration and transformation will take place only after judgment.

His righteous reign over all the earth is described in 2:12-13; 4:1-8; 5:4-5

## **Brief Outline of the book:**

Micah presented his message like a courtroom terminology (1:2; 6:1,2). The prophecy is arranged in 3 rounds or cycles, each beginning with the warning to “hear” (1:2; 3:1; 6:1). Within each round Micah moves from doom to hope.

Doom: because they have broken God’s law given at Sinai.

Hope: because of God’s unchanging covenant with their forefathers (7:20).

- One third of the book targets the sins of his people.
- Another third looks at the punishment of God to come; and
- Another third promises hope for the faithful after the judgment.

The theme is divine judgment for sin is coupled together with God’s immutable commitment to His covenant promises.

The combination of God’s

- 1) Absolute consistency in judging sin and
- 2) Inflexible commitment to His covenant through the remnant of His people

Through divine intervention God will bring about both judgment on sinners and blessing on those who repent.

## Section 1

### Chapters 1-2

#### Round I

##### Judgment and Restoration of Israel and Judah (1:2—2:13)

- Judgment on Israel and Judah (1:2—2:11)
- The predicted destruction (1:2–7)
- Crying over the destruction (1:8–16)
- Sadness to oppressive land-grabbers (2:1–5)
- Condemnation of the wicked leaders and their false prophets (2:6–11)
- *Restoration of a Remnant (2:12–13)*

God was going to punish Samaria, explains Micah, because they not only forgot God but also indulged themselves in various sins.

Micah also explains how God was going to punish Judah. He uses the names of the cities, each having a unique meaning, to describe how the the ruin was to come upon. Therefore, he pleads with them to repent.

Micah has seen what is going to happen to these nations and understands that the situation is hopeless unless the people turn from the idols back to the living God. God's judgement was certain! Punishment was looming from their enemy Assyrians.

History tells us that in 701 B.C., King Sennacherib advanced towards Jerusalem and he attacked 46 towns and cities taking control. What God spoke through Micah had come to pass.

Remember, David spoke of this using the same phrase '*Do not tell it in Gath*' when Saul and Jonathan had died (2 Samuel 1:20).

'Shaphir' is the name of a city, which means 'beautiful', but its people will soon be prisoners.

'Zaanan' means 'go forward', but the people in the town will not go to help their neighbours in the battle. Instead, they will hide behind their walls.

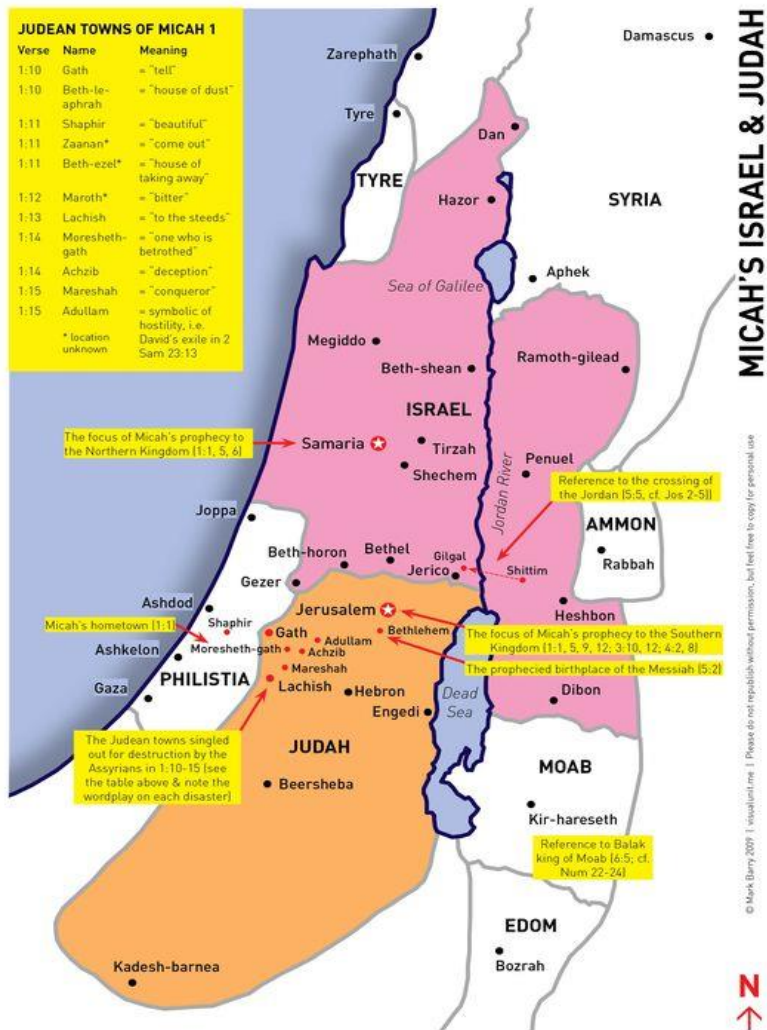
'Bethzelel' means 'house where they take away' and its people will 'take away' their help. Meaning they will not protect Judah any longer.

'Maroth' means 'bitter', and the people of this town are bitter. Bitter people need hope.

'Lachish' means a 'team of horses', and the people here trusted in their strong army. Lachish was an important town just 4 miles away from Micah's home, and it was the strongest in the region, with a powerful army who were to defend the western hills. The men in the army used chariots that had fast-running

horses. Chariots in battle are fast and powerful, something that could even terrify brave soldiers.

‘Achzib’ means ‘cheat’ and was a wealthy town. They will be wealthy no longer and have nothing at all.



## **Section 2**

### **Injustice by the Rulers & Leaders      Chapters 3:1-4:8**

### **Coming Judgement: Sin and Its outcome, Incurable**

#### **Round II**

#### **Accusation of Judah's Leaders, but Future Hope for God's People (3-5)**

- Accusation of Judah's Leaders (Ch 3)
- Guilty civil leaders (3:1-4)
- False prophets of peace and Micah's response (3:5-8)
- Corrupt leaders and Zion's fall (3:9-12)

#### **Qualities of leaders and Prophets**

- Plotting Evil 2:1
- Fraud, Coveting 2:2
- Stealing, Dishonesty 2:8
- Chasing widows from home 2:9
- Despising Justice 3:9
- Murder 3:10
- Taking bribes 3:11

#### **Future Hope for God's People (Ch 4-5)**

- The coming kingdom (4:1-5)
- Restoration of a remnant and Zion (4:6-8)
- From distress to deliverance (4:9-10)
- From siege to victory (4:11-13)

- From helpless ruler to perfect king (5:1–4)
- The Perfect king delivers his people (5:5–6)
- *The remnant among the nations (5:7–9)*
- Elimination of military might and pagan worship (5:10–15)

Israel's rulers are responsible for the law of the land since they also functioned as the judges. Unfortunately, they were as corrupt and instead of protecting the poor and the weak, they started abusing them.

God speaks through Micah to all the leaders of the land.

1. Judges who are rulers (verse1)
2. False prophets (verse 5)
3. Priests who are evil (verse11)

If the leaders are all corrupt, then its incurable and the only outcome is judgement. Because of evil leaders, the people would have to suffer and the enemies are going destroy them.

Micah now describes the New Jerusalem that will be built by someone in the future.

However, there is a hope after the suffering; they will be restored. The Lord Himself will reign in Jerusalem. Israel will come back to their country. The old Jerusalem suffered bad things because of wicked leaders. There will be a New Jerusalem. The Messiah will be there. He will overcome all His enemies and will rule over them. However, only a few people

who will be saved by their Messiah will remain and they will love God and obey him (Micah 4:1-8).

Interestingly, the scriptures give both doom and hope. Verses 9-10 talk about the trouble they are going to have now and then verses 11-13, the bright future. God calls Jerusalem as the 'Daughter of Zion'.

God commands them to shake themselves off since the pain will be so intense because of the judgement. However, in verse 13, God tells them to break the enemies like when people break wheat to separate the inner grains from the rest.

### **The Coming King:**

God now speaks about the salvation through the Messiah. But prior to that, there is an attack on Jerusalem like at the time of Sennacherib.

One other prophetic message about Jesus is that His enemies will hit Him. The army will strike the King of Jerusalem. Particularly, they hit him on his cheek by a rod. But the King cannot defend himself.

**Isaiah 50:6**, *I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. (NKJV)*

**In Micah 4:9-5:1**, we see the word 'pain' four times – four different kinds of pain, and the people have to endure it because of their disobedience to God.

- We have pains, like that of a woman when she is delivering a baby (4:9).
- We are separate from God. And we are separate from his people (4:10).
- Everything seems to cause difficulty for us. It seems as if things are striking our bodies (4:11).
- We feel the walls surrounding us. We cannot escape. We hate the way that we live. We even hate ourselves (5:1).

**Micah 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.”*

Today, people all over the world know the name Bethlehem. That is because Jesus, the Messiah, was born there. However, people did not know about Bethlehem so well when Jesus was born. When King Herod heard about Jesus’ birth, he was worried. The king therefore asked the leaders where the Messiah would be born. They replied that it would be in Bethlehem, in an area called Judea. That was what the prophet had written. The leaders then repeated part of this verse, Micah 5:2 (Matthew 2:3-6).

Bethlehem and Ephrathah are one and the same. There were two Bethlehems: one in the Southern kingdom and the other in the North. So he is making sure that he is pointing out to the

one, formerly known as Ephrathah, that is six miles away from Jerusalem.

David's father Jesse was from Ephrathah (1 Samuel 17:12). A cut down tree from whose (David's family) roots a branch (a new King) was going to emerge. And on that branch, fruit will grow (Isaiah 11:1).

In chapters 4 and 5 is a message about the hope of a King and His Kingdom. This message refers to a certain time in the future. This is the time when the Messiah will win over the nations. He will bring together the remnant. They will be under the shepherd from Bethlehem. Now here, after those promises, we read the words 'the LORD says'.

The message here means that God will protect Israel in two ways:

1. God will make Israel spiritually clean (vv10-14) – cleansing from the inside.

Each part of this message starts with these words, 'I will destroy' (verses 10-14). God will free the city from all evil things. He will destroy certain things in order to make the nation spiritually clean. There are four types of evil things people of Israel trust in:

- a) Their own power and strength
- b) Military power
- c) Magic which they were using to see their future
- d) Idolatry, the false gods.

2. God will also punish the nations severely that refuse to obey (V15)

## Section 3

### Sorrow for Sin and Comfort and Restoration: Chapters 6-7

### Coming Comfort: The Lord and His Justice: Inescapable

#### Round III

#### God's Charges against His People and the Ultimate Triumph of His Kingdom (6-7)

- God's Charges against His People (6:1—7:7)
- A divine covenant lawsuit (6:1-8)
- Further charges and the sentence (6:9-16)
- A lament over a corrupt society (7:1-7)
- *The Ultimate Triumph of God's Kingdom (7:8-20)*
- An expression of trust (7:8-10)
- A promise of restoration (7:11-13)
- A prayer, the Lord's answer, and the response (7:14-17)
- A hymn of praise to God (7:18-20)

#### Kingdom of God

- Perfect 4:1
- Worldwide 4:1-2
- Based on righteous and practice 4:3

- Peace 4:3
- Security & Prosperity 4:4
- Assured by the Word of God 4:4
- All will walk in the name of our Lord God 4:5

This section is like a court scene. Micah is speaking on behalf of God. God commands to call the witnesses. However, the witnesses are NOT humans but mountains and hills.

God asks these questions:

1. 'Have I done anything wrong to you?'
2. 'How have I made life too hard for you?'

The people have not answered Him so again God accuses them but with great love for His people. His speech is full of kindness and truth. God's purpose is to bring his people, the nation called Israel, back to himself. He wants them to remember His covenant with them. God wants His people to obey their part of the agreement. He speaks to them about two main subjects:

1. God reminds his people about how he saved the Israelites before. God brought his people out of Egypt. They had been slaves there and He freed them. God gave special leaders to his people. Moses was the chief leader. Aaron was the chief priest. Miriam was a prophetess and also a poetess (Exodus 15:20-21).

2. God reminds them about His other wonderful works. These were acts that He did with great power. This took place when Israel was still a weak nation. God protected the people from evil political leaders. Balak, the king of Moab, was one such leader. God also protected them from evil spiritual leaders such as Balaam, Beor's son. God now tells Israel's people to remember the time when Balak and Balaam lived. Balak, the king of Moab, fought against Israel's people then. He asked Balaam to curse Israel. But God would not listen to Balaam. God would not let Balaam curse Israel. The result was that God did good things for Israel. He rescued His people from Balak's power (Joshua 24:9-10).

Then, there is a discussion about what gift would satisfy the LORD (verses 6-7). God tells them what He requires of them,

*Micah 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? (NKJV)*

This is how God's covenant requires people to live:

1. You must do what is fair and right. The leaders did not do that; rather, they oppressed the poor and helpless. (Micah 2:1-2, 3:1-3, 5-7 & 9-11)
2. You must love kindness and show kindness to the weak, not grudgingly but happily.
3. You must live humbly before the Lord God.

The first two are about the relationship with others; the last one is about how to live before God. What God wanted of them was that their moral life be more important than their religious life.

In spite of their wickedness, God showed Himself as a good and faithful one; yet, they did not change their ways so judgement was coming upon the people:

- Jerusalem city (v9)
- False measures (vv10-11)
- Lie (v12)
- People will suffer of hunger (v14)
- Others will steal their crops (v15)
- Further punishment (v16)

In chapter 7:1-7, Micah speaks about the wickedness and how not one was right before God; and hence, Jerusalem's social structures will break apart because of God's judgement. However, the prophesy ends with a high note about how the Lord will restore at the end as per the promise He had made to the patriarch Abraham. The last 12 verses are like a song in the Hebrew language.

V10-11: People will confess their sin and declare their love for God. Then, God will make us to stamp upon our enemies.

V11-17: Jerusalem will become like a field that has sheep in it – the people of God. They will be like the sheep and the LORD will be their Shepherd. The world will suffer God's punishment but

the people of Israel will help the other nations. They will show to the other nations how to have a right relationship with God; although they are now God's enemies but in the future, they will be able to become his friends.

*V18-20: Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea. You will give truth to Jacob And mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old. (NKJV)*

What a glorious way to end declaring their thankfulness to God and His immense power. God will remove their sins, throwing them into the deepest parts of the sea. He will deal with them like how He dealt with the patriarch Abraham, making him a promise.

## **Conclusion:**

God made a covenant with Abraham, to which He has been faithful in spite of failure from the other side. So far, in this letter, Micah prophesies about Jacob; in fact, this is the 10th time his name is being mentioned. However, he finishes off for the first time with the name of Abraham.

God fulfilled His promise to Abraham and He carried out His promise through Moses and Joshua. He led the people to their promised land Canaan.

Micah lived under the fulfilled promise to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That great love of God is the same for us today because He dealt with our sins on the cross 2000 years ago.

God's great love and kindness have continued through all time. He raised Christ from the dead. Millions have believed in Jesus. They have believed because of his death on the cross. These believers come from all the nations of the earth. In a spiritual way, they become Abraham's 'children' (descendants) (Romans 4:17; Galatians 3:6-29).

All people who believe in Jesus are of great value to God. They can trust this wonderful God in every situation. Hence, these people today are like Israel's remnant in the Old Testament.

## **Application for today:**

### **1. God is faithful**

All through history, despite all the bad things the people have done, God has remained faithful to His word.

### **2. God is love**

We see how well God had planned everything out, not just from Hosea but also from Micah, because of His great love towards His people.

### **3. God chooses the weak**

Centuries ago, God told Samuel to go to this small town called Bethlehem to anoint a son of Jesse's as king. But Samuel did not

choose anyone from among his older sons. He chose David, the youngest son (1 Samuel 16:1-13). God often chooses the weak things of the world – the not so wise and the not so strong (1 Corinthians 1:18-31).

The Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, that God had promised would come from this little town called Bethlehem – from the least important town would come the most important person.

#### **4. What God expects from us?**

Micah 6:8, But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women. It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbour, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take yourself too seriously— take God seriously. (MSG)



Be fair to your neighbour.

Be compassionate and show constant love.

And take God seriously!

5. Micah prophecies and accusations are against the nation of Israel and Judah injustice towards the poor and the lowly people.

Take a moment how do you treat the lowly and the poor? Do you treat them properly?

Jesus said in **Matthew 25: 45**, *Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'*

Are you look out for the unjust of poor and the lowly people? If you are then the judgement is also very harsh, Jesus said in **Matthew 25:40 & 46**,

*And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

*<sup>46</sup>And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

6. Unjust business dealings, robbery, mistreating women and children by the corrupt leaders and the prophets to justify their dealings.

What kind of leader you are?

What kind of leader do you follow?

7. Where does the injustice dwell in your own life? Do you need a call toward repentance, like the people of Israel and Judah did?

Micah's emotional request for God's chosen people to repent will cut many of us to turn to the Lord instantly. 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. Let's allow the words of Micah to break us out of our laziness about extending justice and kindness to others.