

Micah

The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Kings Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. Hear, you peoples, all of you; listen, O earth, and all that is in it; and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, the Lord from

5 his holy temple. For lo, the LORD is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. Then the mountains will melt under him and the valleys will burst open, like wax near the fire, like waters poured down a steep place. All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of

10 Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country, a place for planting vineyards. I will pour down her stones into the valley, and uncover her foundations. All her images shall be beaten to pieces, all her wages shall be burned with fire, and all her idols I will lay waste; for as

15 the wages of a prostitute she gathered them, and as the wages of a prostitute they shall again be used. For this I will lament and wail; I will go barefoot and naked; I will make lamentation like the jackals, and mourning like the ostriches. For her wound is incurable. It has come to Judah; it has reached to the gate of my people, to Jerusalem. Tell it not in Gath, weep not at all;

20 in Beth-leaphrah roll yourselves in the dust. Pass on your way, inhabitants of

Shaphir, in nakedness and shame; the inhabitants of Zaanan do not come forth; Beth-ezel is wailing and shall remove its support from you. For the inhabitants of Maroth wait anxiously for good, yet disaster has come down from the LORD to the gate of Jerusalem. Harness the steeds to the chariots, 5 inhabitants of Lachish; it was the beginning of sin to daughter Zion, for in you were found the transgressions of Israel. Therefore you shall give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath; the houses of Achzib shall be a deception to the kings of Israel. I will again bring a conqueror upon you, inhabitants of Mareshah; the glory of Israel shall come to Adullam. Make yourselves bald 10 and cut off your hair for your pampered children; make yourselves as bald as the eagle, for they have gone from you into exile. Alas for those who devise wickedness and evil deeds on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in their power. They covet fields, and seize them; houses, and take them away; they oppress householder and house, 15 people and their inheritance. Therefore thus says the LORD: Now, I am devising against this family an evil from which you cannot remove your necks; and you shall not walk haughtily, for it will be an evil time. On that day they shall take up a taunt song against you, and wail with bitter lamentation, and say, "We are utterly ruined; the LORD alters the inheritance 20 of my people; how he removes it from me! Among our captors he parcels

out our fields." Therefore you will have no one to cast the line by lot in the assembly of the LORD. "Do not preach" --thus they preach-- "one should not preach of such things; disgrace will not overtake us." Should this be said, O house of Jacob? Is the Lord's patience exhausted? Are these his doings? Do

5 not my words do good to one who walks uprightly? But you rise up against my people as an enemy; you strip the robe from the peaceful, from those who pass by trustingly with no thought of war. The women of my people you drive out from their pleasant houses; from their young children you take away my glory forever. Arise and go; for this is no place to rest, because of

10 uncleanness that destroys with a grievous destruction. If someone were to go about uttering empty falsehoods, saying, "I will preach to you of wine and strong drink," such a one would be the preacher for this people! I will surely gather all of you, O Jacob, I will gather the survivors of Israel; I will set them together like sheep in a fold, like a flock in its pasture; it will

15 resound with people. The one who breaks out will go up before them; they will break through and pass the gate, going out by it. Their king will pass on before them, the LORD at their head. And I said: Listen, you heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel! Should you not know justice?-- you who hate the good and love the evil, who tear the skin off my people, and

20 the flesh off their bones; who eat the flesh of my people, flay their skin off

them, break their bones in pieces, and chop them up like meat in a kettle,
like flesh in a caldron. Then they will cry to the LORD, but he will not
answer them; he will hide his face from them at that time, because they
have acted wickedly. Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who lead
5 my people astray, who cry "Peace" when they have something to eat, but
declare war against those who put nothing into their mouths. Therefore it
shall be night to you, without vision, and darkness to you, without revelation.
The sun shall go down upon the prophets, and the day shall be black over
them; the seers shall be disgraced, and the diviners put to shame; they shall
10 all cover their lips, for there is no answer from God. But as for me, I am
filled with power, with the spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might,
to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin. Hear this, you
rulers of the house of Jacob and chiefs of the house of Israel, who abhor
justice and pervert all equity, who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with
15 wrong! Its rulers give judgment for a bribe, its priests teach for a price, its
prophets give oracles for money; yet they lean upon the LORD and say,
"Surely the LORD is with us! No harm shall come upon us." Therefore
because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a
heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height. In days to
20 come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of

the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills. Peoples shall stream to it, and many nations shall come and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall

5 go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; 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 any more; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under

10 their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. For all the peoples walk, each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever. In that day, says the LORD, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away, and those whom I have afflicted. The lame I

15 will make the remnant, and those who were cast off, a strong nation; and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion now and forevermore. And you, O tower of the flock, hill of daughter Zion, to you it shall come, the former dominion shall come, the sovereignty of daughter Jerusalem. Now why do you cry aloud? Is there no king in you? Has your counselor perished,

20 that pangs have seized you like a woman in labor? Writhe and groan, O

daughter Zion, like a woman in labor; for now you shall go forth from the city and camp in the open country; you shall go to Babylon. There you shall be rescued, there the LORD will redeem you from the hands of your enemies. Now many nations are assembled against you, saying, "Let her be

5 profaned, and let our eyes gaze upon Zion." But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD; they do not understand his plan, that he has gathered them as sheaves to the threshing floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter Zion, for I will make your horn iron and your hoofs bronze; you shall beat in pieces many peoples, and shall devote their gain to the LORD, their wealth

10 to the Lord of the whole earth. Now you are walled around with a wall; siege is laid against us; with a rod they strike the ruler of Israel upon the cheek. But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them

15 up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. 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 live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians

20 come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven

shepherds and eight installed as rulers. They shall rule the land of Assyria
with the sword, and the land of Nimrod with the drawn sword; they shall
rescue us from the Assyrians if they come into our land or tread within our
border. Then the remnant of Jacob, surrounded by many peoples, shall be
5 like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, which do not depend
upon people or wait for any mortal. And among the nations the remnant of
Jacob, surrounded by many peoples, shall be like a lion among the animals
of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, which, when it
goes through, treads down and tears in pieces, with no one to deliver. Your
10 hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be
cut off. In that day, says the LORD, I will cut off your horses from among
you and will destroy your chariots; and I will cut off the cities of your land
and throw down all your strongholds; and I will cut off sorceries from your
hand, and you shall have no more soothsayers; and I will cut off your
15 images and your pillars from among you, and you shall bow down no more
to the work of your hands; and I will uproot your sacred poles from among
you and destroy your towns. And in anger and wrath I will execute
vengeance on the nations that did not obey. Hear what the LORD says: Rise,
plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear,
20 you mountains, the controversy of the LORD, and you enduring foundations

of the earth; for the LORD has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel. "O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD." "With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? The voice of the LORD cries to the city (it is sound wisdom to fear your name): Hear, O tribe and assembly of the city! Can I forget the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is accursed? Can I tolerate wicked scales and a bag of dishonest weights? Your wealthy are full of violence; your inhabitants speak lies, with tongues of deceit in their mouths. Therefore I have begun to strike you down, making you desolate because of your sins. You shall eat, but not

be satisfied, and there shall be a gnawing hunger within you; you shall put away, but not save, and what you save, I will hand over to the sword. You shall sow, but not reap; you shall tread olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil; you shall tread grapes, but not drink wine. For you have kept the

5 statutes of Omri and all the works of the house of Ahab, and you have followed their counsels. Therefore I will make you a desolation, and your inhabitants an object of hissing; so you shall bear the scorn of my people. Woe is me! For I have become like one who, after the summer fruit has been gathered, after the vintage has been gleaned, finds no cluster to eat;

10 there is no first-ripe fig for which I hunger. The faithful have disappeared from the land, and there is no one left who is upright; they all lie in wait for blood, and they hunt each other with nets. Their hands are skilled to do evil; the official and the judge ask for a bribe, and the powerful dictate what they desire; thus they pervert justice. The best of them is like a brier, the

15 most upright of them a thorn hedge. The day of their sentinels, of their punishment, has come; now their confusion is at hand. Put no trust in a friend, have no confidence in a loved one; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your embrace; for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law

20 against her mother-in-law; your enemies are members of your own household.

But as for me, I will look to the LORD, I will wait for the God of my
salvation; my God will hear me. Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy;
when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to
me. I must bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against
5 him, until he takes my side and executes judgment for me. He will bring me
out to the light; I shall see his vindication. Then my enemy will see, and
shame will cover her who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?" My
eyes will see her downfall; now she will be trodden down like the mire of
the streets. A day for the building of your walls! In that day the boundary
10 shall be far extended. In that day they will come to you from Assyria to
Egypt, and from Egypt to the River, from sea to sea and from mountain to
mountain. But the earth will be desolate because of its inhabitants, for the
fruit of their doings. Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock that
belongs to you, which lives alone in a forest in the midst of a garden land;
15 let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old. As in the days
when you came out of the land of Egypt, show us marvelous things. The
nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their
hands on their mouths; their ears shall be deaf; they shall lick dust like a
snake, like the crawling things of the earth; they shall come trembling out of
20 their fortresses; they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God, and they

shall stand in fear of you. Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of your possession? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in showing clemency. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot.

- 5 You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and unswerving loyalty to Abraham, as you have sworn to our ancestors from the days of old.*

* From the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.