

June 25

Micah 1-2

This is Lori Eccleston, welcoming you to Project 4:4 for June 25. If this is your first time listening to the Daily Accelerators, I'd like to welcome you. As a church we are reading through the Bible in Chronological order. If you are looking for a church, I'd like to encourage you to check out CCC. We are a multi-site campus church with many different venues. I'm sure you'd find one you would be comfortable with.

Now, we are told right at the outset of this Book that Micah prophesied during the reigns of Jothan, Ahaz and Hezekiah. That would have made him a contemporary of Isaiah. Unlike Isaiah, Micah is not mentioned extensively in any other books of the Old Testament. Unlike Jonah and Jeremiah, he does not give us much in the way of autobiographical material in his own Book. The name "Micah" can be translated in a rhetorical question, "Who is like Yahweh?" and then conveniently ends the book in Micah 7:18 with the question, "Who is a God like you?.." It is important to keep these questions in mind as it gives perspective to us as we read about the actions of the Lord in this book.

In short, we don't know very much about Micah. He lived in Moresheth, a city just a little way south of Jerusalem. That would place him close enough to Judah's capital to have first-hand knowledge of the goings-on in that capital at about the time that the Assyrian armies were making their most threatening movements. His town was located on the major trade route going down to Egypt so he was well aware of the kinds of things that were driving the culture of his day.

Micah, down in Judah, prophesies judgment upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel. God is going to judge Samaria, but he is going to do it for the exact same things that Judah is practicing here. It is very clear that even though God is punishing Samaria for its own sins, He is also punishing Samaria so that Judah will wake up and realize that she is doing exactly the same things and will not escape exactly the same fate. As we read through Micah let's be mindful of the themes of judgment and forgiveness

There was a very clever bit of communication being given in the part of chapter 1 to naming various cities in Israel. These cities are mentioned because the Assyrian army either has already conquered them or is in the process of crushing them as Micah writes. But the message Micah gives in each case plays off of the meaning of the city's name. Micah says because of the judgment God is bringing, I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and naked (probably he means stripped to the waist.) I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl. I am, in short he says, going to make a public spectacle of myself just so that I can get your attention concerning what is going on here!!

It is equally evident from what we read today that the people of Judah were not overly anxious to listen to what the prophet had to say. They were more interested in finding a prophet who would tell them what they wanted to hear. "Do not prophesy

about these things" their prophets say. "Disgrace will not overtake us" (chapter 2:6). Micah says with more than a little irony, "If a liar and deceiver comes and says I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer, he would be just the prophet for these people!!" (2:11)

Have you ever wondered why people believe some of the really incredible and foolish things that some very popular TV preachers and evangelists say? It is because they are just like the people of Judah. They will believe anyone who tells them what they want to hear. Some things never change. "God wants you to be rich -- a millionaire" says one TV preacher. "God wants his children to drive Cadillac's and wear diamonds on their fingers after all," he infers, "you're a King's kid -- a child of the King." "If you take hold of God by faith" shouts another, "you don't ever need to be sick again. God wants to heal every single person right now!! Take it, brother!" It seems that the last decade of the 20th century is just about like the eighth century B.C.

Lastly, I wanted to draw your attention to another name of the Lord we are given in the book of Micah: Shepherd – King. We see in chapter 2 verse 12-13 that the Lord says of the remnant of Israel, "I will bring them together like a sheep in a pen, like a flock in a pasture...One who breaks open the way will go before them...Their king will pass through before them, the Lord at their head." Here we see the Lord gathering his people, protecting them and then victoriously leading them out as their king. What a beautiful picture of the coming Jesus who came to be our protector, our provider and our king of kings.