

Questions that come to us in connection with the study of Micah include the following: What national conditions have arisen to produce the abusive ideas that are commonly seen in the land? What are the similarities of the message of Micah and Jeremiah (Jeremiah is much later, of course)? What is the eventual role of Zion among the nations? How will God be able to restore the kingdoms and establish a period of peace and blessing?

In the area of archaeological study there is not a great deal of direct connexion save the destruction of the cities as predicted by Micah was an actuality (1:10-16). Certainly the state he predicted for Samaria came to pass but in terms of actual concurrence with archaeological data, I am not familiar with anything other than general information.

Keys for a better understanding of Micah will probably begin with an attempt to see what the role of the prophet was in the cultural/societal settings of his time. A fuller study of the eschatological ideas of blessing will also help. The dialogue between the Lord and His people, with the prophet as a kind of moderator, in chapter 6, may open a fuller understanding to the "debative" nature of much of the text.

Study aids include our well-worn "read it at one sitting" observation and be sure to have an atlas on hand to look up the cities mentioned. Try to position yourself in the role of a person of the times and think what the messages of judgment and blessing were intended to tell.

For further reading..in addition to works we have mentioned earlier, J.M. Boice, THE MINOR PROPHETS (Zondervan), Vol. II offers a nice and practical commentary. Likewise C.L. Feinberg: THE MINOR PROPHETS (Moody)

b. Items of further discussion:

(1) Note Micah's emphasis on the social order of things. He discusses the general oppression of the peoples in 2:1-2 and spells out the details in 2:7-9. The carnivorous attitude of greed is treated in 3:2-3, and the joint corruption of the civil and religious leaders is noted in 3:11. In 6:7 he laments the corruption of the idea and principle in sacrifice while in 6:10-12 he notes the corruption of buying and selling and evil social trade practices. The move in 7:3 is to note the lack of honest judgment in the face of faulty civil courts and in 7:6 the dissolution of the home and family structure is seen. Micah is very much concerned with the societal ills as they are the product of the spiritual ills. He indicates that the chief problems are:

- failure to worship properly...
- corruption of civic practice...
- oppressive attitudes of theft and greed
- lack of mercy for the needy and unfortunate
- complacent and indulgent living
- failure in respect of authority
- dissolution of the family
- exploitational self-gain. He joins with Amos in the spiritual denunciation of these things.

(2) The Messianic and Kingdom prophecies, chapters 4 and 5

(3) The desire of God for His people, chapter 6

A fascinating book, finally, for the study of prediction and fulfillment