

Study Prophecy – Become Prophetic (6) Micah – BUT AS FOR ME

Today is already week 6 of our sermon series on minor prophets.

We study prophecy to become prophetic – meaning, we speak as we hear, out of the burden of God’s own heart.

Last week we were in Jonah—a story.

This week, we are back to oracles. And oracles are not easy. It’s almost like a code—strong, poetic, and prophetic words. It can be very confusing.

So, to be honest with you—I wrestled with Micah this week.

Micah’s language is not simple. So I read it, reread it, and reread it again... asking, “Lord... what is Your heart for Smith Chapel in this?”

After about ten times, I felt like I finally touched Micah’s heart.

I felt closer to his own heart, to understand what he must have felt—the brokenness, the weeping heart for his own people to write this.

Hear me this.

Micah was a grieving man, a broken man,
a man who loves his people,
a man who has seen his neighbors oppressed by the nobles,
whose hometown was crushed by invaders.
So, probably, he may have looked around his world and said,
“God, what is going on? God... how did we get here?”

So, Micah is not just announcing God’s judgment.

Micah is weeping.

And sometimes...

that’s how prophecy begins.

Let’s pray.

Micah 1:1 begins:

“The word of the Lord that came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah—the vision he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.”

Here, we learn that Micah ministered during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. So this book covers three kings of Judah—spanning almost 50 years from around 740 to 700 BC.

To give perspective, that’s like someone ministering from Ronald Reagan... to Bill Clinton... to George W. Bush... to Barack Obama... to now. That’s eight administrations.

So, you know how things have changed all these years—politically, culturally, ethically, spiritually.

And that’s Micah’s world.

Micah ministered at the same time as Hosea and Amos.

And from the studies from these two books, you’ll remember that the problems God was not happy with were these people being religious but not righteous.

They sang worship songs, but ignored justice.

They offered sacrifices, but oppressed the poor.

They praised God on Sabbath but practiced apathy on the next day.

That’s why God says through Hosea: **“Return to Me!”** (Hos. 14:1) or, **“I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.”** (Hosea 6:6)

Also, Amos said: **“Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!”** (Amos 5:24)

Now Micah steps in and echoes the same heartbeat.

Who is Micah?

Micah’s name means, **“Who is like Yahweh?”**

He was from a small farming town called Moresheth, about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem.

Basically, Micah is the country preacher.

Maybe he liked country music.

Maybe he wore sandals with socks—who knows.

He grew up among farmers, laborers, and vulnerable people—and he saw corruption up close. He watched how wealthy elites stealing the land of the ordinary people, judges taking bribes, and prophets preaching for money.

So, look how Micah describes the leaders of his time (Micah 3:1–2, MSG):

“Listen, leaders of Jacob, leaders of Israel: Don’t you know anything of justice? Haters of good, lovers of evil: Isn’t justice in your job description? But you skin my people alive. You rip the meat off their bones. ...”

What about the prophets – the messenger of God?

Micah 3:5 (MSG):

“As long as they’re well paid and well fed, the prophets preach, ‘Isn’t life wonderful! Peace to all!’ But if you don’t pay up and jump on their bandwagon, their ‘God bless you’ turns into ‘God damn you.’”

So... basically, it’s prosperity gospel 1.0.

But Micah says it’s not just the leaders. It’s everyone.

Look at chapter 7:1-2:

“Right-living humans are extinct.

They’re all out for one another’s blood...” (MSG)

So, Micah is basically saying:

“Everyone is doing what’s right in their own eyes.”

They have no kings.

Then God says (Micah 6:16):

“You have observed the statutes of Omri
and all the practices of Ahab’s house;
you have followed their traditions ...”

In the Bible, when God says, “You’re acting like Ahab...” that’s not a compliment. Ahab and his father Omri were the worst examples who led Israel into: Baal worship, violence, sexual immorality, killing prophets, stealing land, persecuting the righteous.

So, God tells Judah:
 “You’re copying the worst examples.”

So judgment will fall.
 They will be destroyed.

And guess what?
 It did.

During Micah’s lifetime, the world collapsed around him. Now, it’s not just about moral decaying or rising spiritual idolatry as Hosea and Amos talked about, but internationally something dramatic happened.

The rising superpower, the Assyrian Empire, invaded them multiple times – first to Northern Israel.

Their first invasion was in 734–732 BC (by Tiglath-Pileser III). From this attack, many Galilean towns were captured (2 Kings 15:29), and thousands of Israelites were deported. And the Northern Kingdom became a vassal (a controlled state).

Another invasion came after in 725–723 BC (by Shalmaneser V). Now, Assyria besieged Samaria, Israel’s capital. And a year after, in 722 BC (you should remember that number), because that’s when Samaria fell completely, so the Northern Kingdom vanished afterwards.

Then, what about Judah where Micah lived?

In 701 BC, Assyrians (by Sennacherib) attacked Judah and destroyed 46 cities (Isaiah 36:1). Over 200,000 people were deported. Micah’s own hometown, Moresheth, was one of those cities taken by the Assyrians.

That’s why we hear in chapter 1:14, Micah says, “Therefore you will give parting gifts to Moresheth Gath.”

In other words, he is saying, “This land meant for God’s people is given over to invaders.”

So, hear me in this.

Micah’s words in this book are not just words he was crafting to impress others or using it as a sermon illustration. He’s describing what he watched as a first witness happen to his own people, his own hometown, his own nation.

So, he wrote this out of his broken heart. Probably, out of his trauma.

That’s why we hear him saying in Chapter 1:8:

“Because of this I will weep and wail;
I will go about barefoot and naked.
I will howl like a jackal
and moan like an owl.”

His heart is shattered.

He is weeping here.

I mean, who wouldn’t be?

Imagine your entire town burned. Your home gone. Your school gone. Your friends scattered.
That’s what happened to Micah. And his heart is broken.

And that is where his prophetic ministry really begins.

So, let’s hold for a moment here and think about this because we’ve been talking about being a prophetic people, right?

Ask this to yourself:

When was my heart broken for what breaks God’s heart?

When did I weep over my sin, or the injustice of this world, or people who are lost or hurting?

You see, God often gives His message to the ones who have genuine tears, who have suffering hearts for the sake of His people, His church, and His Kingdom.

But do we have that weeping, broken heart?

Returning to Micah, the beauty of this book, as well as all other prophetic books, is that it always gives us hope.

Think about this.

Micah is reporting terrible things as a first witness. All he sees, all he hears is a mess. The world is going bananas. And yet, he never loses the heart of hope – not because of this world but because of who God is.

Micah believed that God is merciful, abounding in love and compassion. His ultimate desire is not to destroy – but to save.

God's covenant faithfulness will never fail.

He also believed that this would happen through **a remnant**—

Who are the remnants? A small, faithful group of people who carries God's promises forward.

Let me say something to you:

God does not need a majority.

He never has.

God works through a remnant.

Let me give you a picture:

The Ocean

The ocean is 96.5% water and only 3.5% salt.

But that tiny bit of salt keeps the whole thing alive.

Because without that salt (3.5%), the oceans would decay, sea life would die, the currents would stop, the entire ecosystem would collapse.

In the same way, God's promise come alive because of the remnant – a small faithful people.

A few people praying.

A few families walking faithfully.

A few disciples obeying and dying with Jesus.
 A few hearts burning with holiness.
 That's how God works.

God says in Micah 2:12–13:

“I will surely gather all of you, Jacob;
 I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel.
 I will bring them together like sheep in a pen,
 like a flock in its pasture ...”

And again in Micah 4:6–7:

“In that day,” declares the Lord,
 “I will gather the lame;
 I will assemble the exiles
 and those I have brought to grief.
 I will make the lame my remnant,
 those driven away a strong nation.
 The Lord will rule over them in Mount Zion
 from that day and forever.”

And notice who the remnant are:

Not the strong.
 Not the wealthy.
 Not the influential.

The remnant are:

- the lame
- the broken
- the overlooked
- the ones who barely made it
- the ones the world easily ignores

God says, “These—THESE—are my remnant.”

And most amazingly...

God brings the salvation of this world out of one tiny remnant town called, Bethlehem.

Micah 5:2:

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”

People, **seven hundred years** before Jesus was born, Micah saw the vision that a remnant will remain, and from that remnant, and from that remnant city, the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would come.

I truly believe God really loves small beginnings.

God loves using what the world ignores.

Do you know why? Because He loves the humbles, not the prideful.

Here’s my highlight of this book.

Say with me: **“But as for me...”**

It appears twice:

The first one is in Micah 3:8:

“But as for me (referring to Micah himself), I am filled with power,
with the Spirit of the Lord,
and with justice and might,
to declare to Jacob his transgression,
to Israel his sin.”

The context here is Micah looking at all these corrupt prophets... all these greedy leaders... all these spiritual idolatries...

And yet he says:

“But as for me... I will stand for truth.”

That's the remnant spirit.

When everyone else drifts, you say:

But as for me, I will stay faithful.

When the world goes bananas, you say:

But as for me, I will follow God.

When leaders fail, you say:

But as for me, I will walk in integrity.

The **second “But as for me”** appears in Micah 7:7: **“But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.”**

The context is similar as the previous one.

Chapter 7 begins with Micah describing a world falling apart: There are no trustworthy friends, no faithful people, even families divided.

Look at what he says in verse 6:

“For a son dishonors his father,
a daughter rises up against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
a man’s enemies are the members of his own household.” (7:6)

Interestingly, Jesus quotes directly from this verse in Matthew 10.

Matthew 10:34-36 says:

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth.
I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.
For I have come to turn
‘a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’”

And He continues:

“Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.” (Matthew 10:37-39)

So, here, Jesus is using Micah talking about the remnant spirit.

He’s saying, “Following Me is costly. It costs even relationships.”

Loyalty to Christ sometimes entails standing alone even within your family.

My friends, you will need that remnant spirit to follow Jesus.

It’s like you’re saying, like Micah:

“But as for me, I will follow Jesus Christ – no matter what!”

Hear me this. **following Jesus, we may lose people’s approval, but we will never lose God’s presence.**

That’s why Jesus says this a few verses earlier:

“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”

(Matthew 10:28-31)

If you give your life to Me, I’ll take care of it.

Being a

Last week I went to Charleston, SC, for a multiplication training with Exponential. Three Global Methodist conferences joined – total of 19 people. Eight of them were from Virginia Conference, including me.

At the gathering, we talked about the future of the GMC, the future of our congregations, and the future of church multiplication.

One of the things I've learned from the training was that there are five levels of churches:

1. Subtracting
2. Plateauing
3. Adding
4. Reproducing
5. Multiplying

Most American churches live in levels 1–2.

Some churches reach level 3.

Level 4 and 5 churches are very rare.

And most churches' vision stops at level 3, right?

We want to grow in our membership.

We want to build a bigger church building so that we can have more people.

I do have that mindset – honestly.

But someone there dared to raise this question:

“What if we skip level 3 and aim straight for Level 4 and 5?”

In other words,

What if we stop worrying about becoming BIG

and start focusing on becoming FRUITFUL?

What if we stop worrying about our longevity or survival

And start focusing on leaving a legacy behind us?

And then came the real question:

What about finances?

Would people see a small church as legitimate?

Can we multiply without a big building?

But here's the bottom line:

Movements never begin with crowds.

They begin with remnants.
 With a handful who dare to say,
“But as for me—I will go first.”

This Saturday we have our Next Year Planning Meeting at this place.
 At this meeting, I’m planning to share what I have learned from the training in Charleston. I know it says six hours long. But don’t panic. It will be an eye-opening time for you. And we’ll provide food – good food, as always.
 So, please come. Because church is not the building, but you and I, we are the church.
We are, we should be the remnants God is forming.

Micah ends with this beautiful declaration:

“Who is a God like You...

You see, Micah’s name means, **“Who is like Yahweh?”**

And he ends his book by going back to who God is.

Then he says:

“(God) who pardons sin and forgives the transgression
 of the remnant of His inheritance?

You do not stay angry forever
 but delight to show mercy.

You will again have compassion on us;

You will tread our sins underfoot

and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.” (Micah 7:18-19)

Here, Micah ends his prophesy with the character of God that God doesn’t just tolerate sinners — He forgives them.

God doesn’t stay angry — He delights in mercy.

God doesn’t abandon His people — He has compassion on them.

God doesn’t remember their sins — He crushes them under His feet.

God doesn’t hold guilt over them — He throws their sins into the depths of the sea.

That's our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus forgives. He delights in mercy. He bore all of our sins and took them to the grave, died with them, and on the third day, He conquered the grave and rises again. And He declares **“You are free! Free indeed!”**

We have a wonderful news to tell.

We have an awesome God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we worship.

So now, Smith Chapel... with all this before us... I ask you:

Will you be part of God's remnant?

Not the crowd.

Not the culture.

Not the majority.

But the few who say:

“But as for me—I will follow Jesus.”

“But as for me—I choose mercy.”

“But as for me—I will walk humbly with my God.”

“But as for me—I will act with justice.”

“But as for me—and my house—we will serve the Lord.”

“But as for me—and my dear Smith Chapel—let's do this together.”

God is not looking for perfect people.

He is looking for humble ones—

with a broken and weeping heart...

and maybe a little bit of holy humor,

because joy is also a prophetic witness.

Closing Prayer

Thank You for speaking to us through Your servant Micah—through his broken heart, his tears, and his hope. Thank You for reminding us that You do not need a majority, but a remnant; not the impressive, but the humble; not the perfect, but the broken who say, “But as for me, I will follow the Lord.”

Today, we offer You our hearts:

Break our hearts for what breaks Yours.

Give us courage to stand for truth when others drift,
to choose mercy when the world chooses revenge,
to walk humbly with You when pride calls our name.

We pray for those who once walked closely with You but have wandered far. Lord, call them home. Let them hear Your voice again in this place: not of condemnation, but of mercy, of welcome, of new beginnings.

We pray for those who aren’t sure what they believe yet, but who are hungry for something real. Let them see Jesus clearly—a Savior who forgives, who loves, who died and rose again, and who says, “You are worth more than many sparrows.”

Make Smith Chapel Your remnant in this generation—a small but faithful people, praying, obeying, and saying with our lives, “But as for me—and as for us—we will serve the Lord.”

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and King, we pray.

Amen.

Short Reflection Questions

1. Where has my heart broken recently—and might God be speaking through that?
2. Are there places where I am religious, but not righteous, like Micah’s generation?
3. How is God calling me to be part of His remnant—not the crowd?
4. What is one area this week where I must say, “But as for me...”?
5. If I feel far from God (a prodigal or seeker), what step can I take toward Him today?