



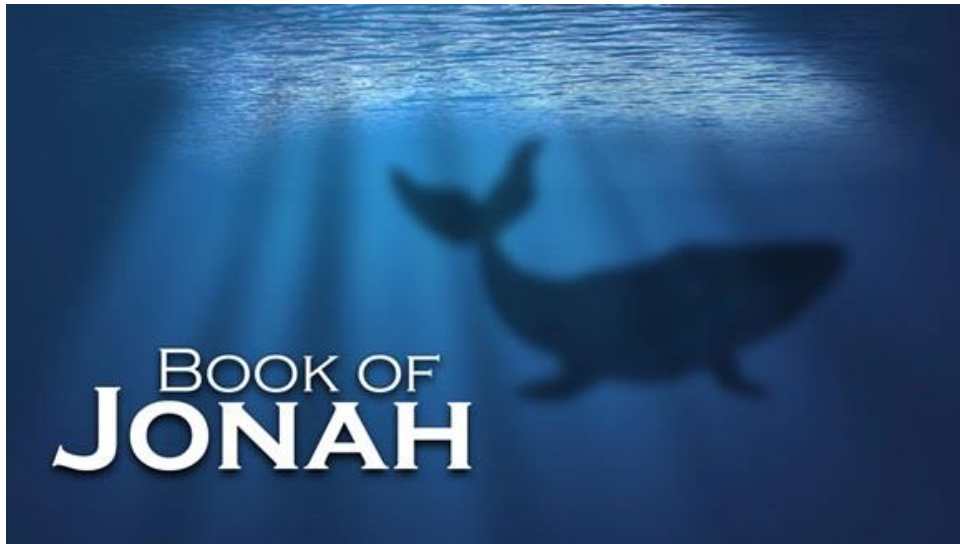
My Drift

Title: Bible – Books of Jonah and Micah

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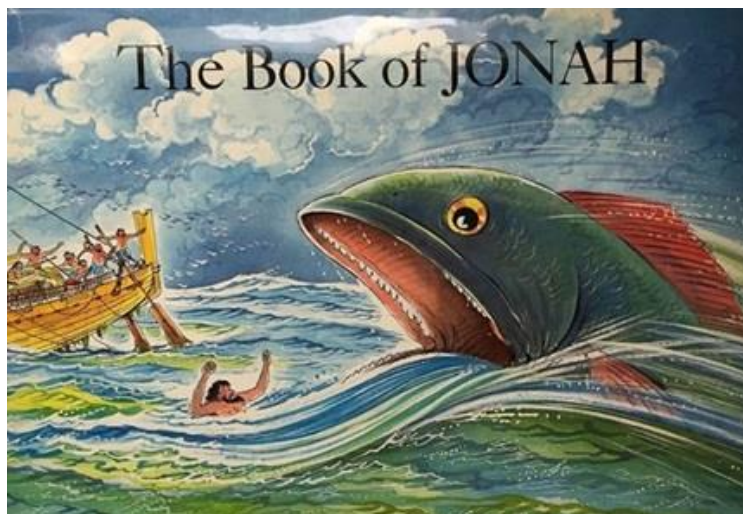
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SUMMARY

God calls Jonah to be a prophet to the wicked city Nineveh, but Jonah rebels and flees across the sea in the opposite direction. When God sends a storm to stop Jonah, the prophet is thrown overboard. God sends a fish to rescue Jonah, and in the fish's belly Jonah sings a song of thanks.



The fish spits Jonah up on the shore near Nineveh and God calls Jonah a second time.



Jonah goes to Nineveh, preaches a short sermon, and the whole city repents.



Afterward, Jonah admits to God that the reason he had fled in the first place was that he had known that God would be merciful to the city—and Jonah had wanted the city destroyed. God is not happy that Jonah is so selfish, so God uses a plant to try to teach Jonah that God loves all creatures.



*All creatures great and small
the Lord God loves them all*

QUESTIONS AND LESSONS

The book of Jonah ends with a question. God asks Jonah, “Should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?” Jonah does not answer. The question is left for the reader to answer. Should God be concerned even about such sinners as those who live in Nineveh? And if God is, shouldn’t we also be concerned?

WHO WROTE IT?

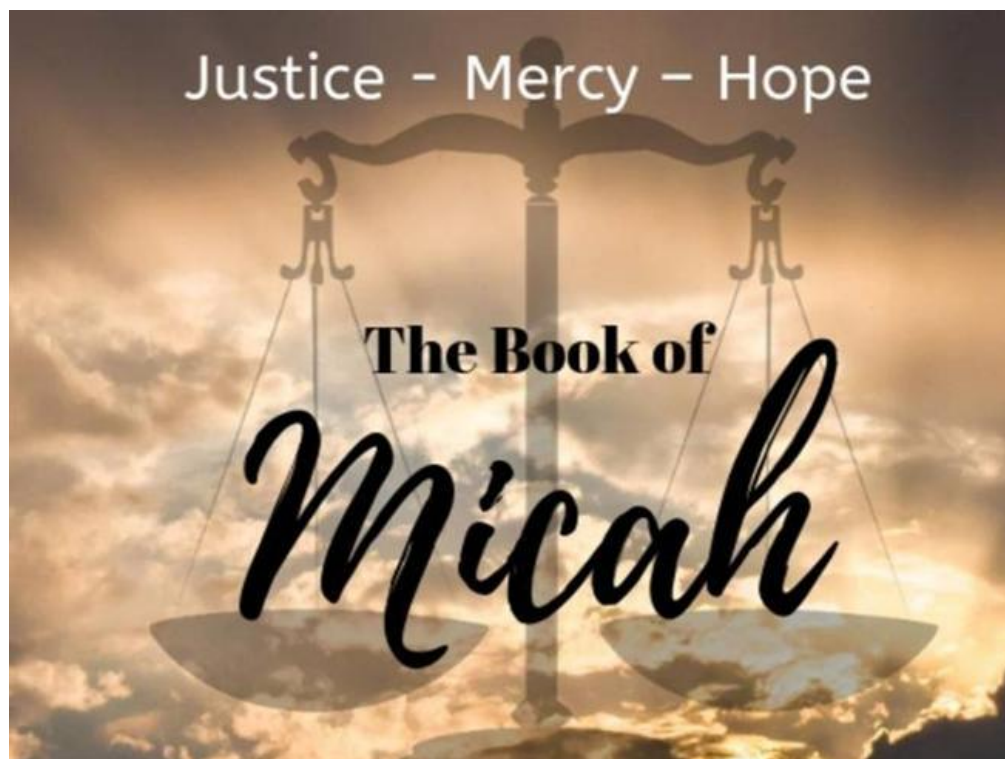
The author of the Book of Jonah is anonymous. We know nothing of the author other than what we can intuit from the book. Some people think that Jonah wrote this book, but unlike other prophetic books, the book of Jonah is entirely a story about Jonah and does not contain collections of messages spoken by the prophet. This makes it unlikely that Jonah was the author.

WHEN WAS IT WRITTEN?

The date when Jonah was written is uncertain. Because of certain features of the language of the book and because of its theological themes, many scholars conclude that the book was written sometime between 500-400 BC after the Babylonian exile. At that time, there was great tension between Jews and Gentiles in Judah and that is a major theme of the book.

HOW DO I READ IT?

Jonah is a story. When a person reads a story, he or she pays attention to things such as plot and characters. In terms of Jonah's plot, one basic issue is, "What will God do with a prophet who disobeys God's command?" A second central issue is, "On whom will God have mercy—just the Israelites, or also Nineveh and other places and people of great evil?" There are two central characters: Jonah and God. The basic issue with God is the question of whether God will have mercy on rebellious and wicked people—such as those who live in Nineveh or a prophet who rebels. The basic question with Jonah is whether he can learn to accommodate his own sense of right and wrong to the realities of God's mercy.



SUMMARY

Micah is one of the eighth-century prophets—a contemporary of Isaiah and a little later than Hosea and Amos. Like these other prophets, Micah speaks against false worship and for social justice. He proclaims harsh judgments against his own people (the nation of Judah) and is particularly offended by the leaders in business, government, and religion. Micah comes from a small town outside Jerusalem and addresses the centers of power as an outsider. He even boldly predicts the destruction of the holy city of Jerusalem. The book also provides words of hope beyond the judgment.

THE BOOK OF MICAH

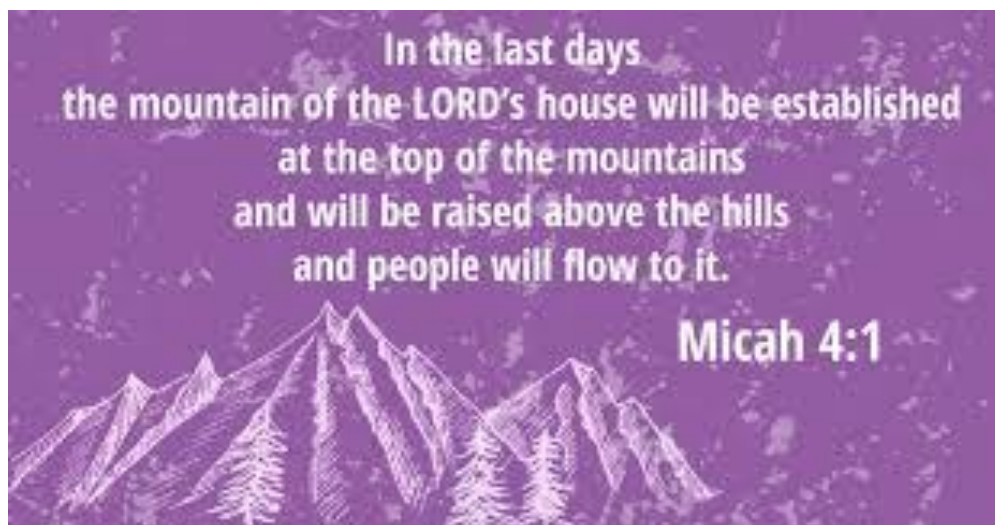
Overview

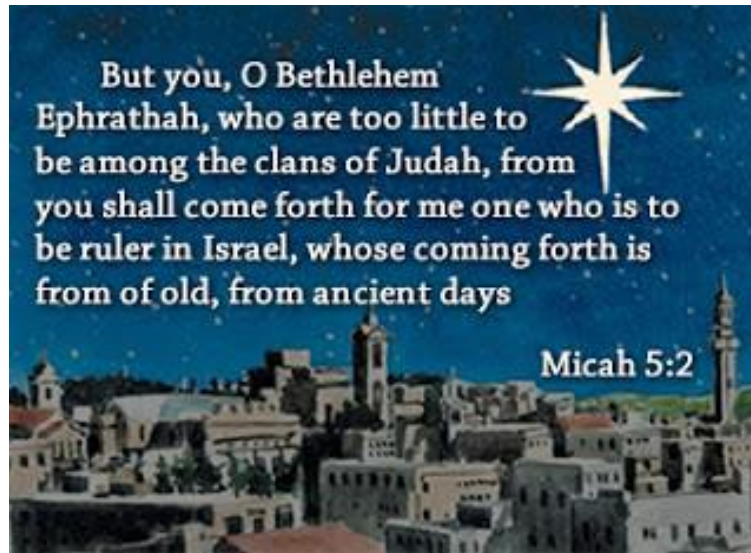
- Ch. 1: The Wages Of Sin Is Death
- Ch. 2: Victims Of Violence & Vice
- Ch. 3: Consequences Of Corruption
- Ch. 4: Micah's Monumental Message
- Ch. 5: The Blessed Birth In Bethlehem
- Ch. 6: Righteous Requirements
- Ch. 7: Passed Over & Pardoned

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW BEFORE READING THIS BOOK?

Micah would be worth our attention for the three best-known passages (4:1-4; 5:2-5a; 6:6-8), even if the rest of the book, with its harsh judgments, were left unused (as is usually the case). Harsh words of judgment are not what most people crave to hear, but these too come to us in the prophets as the word of God. Micah's critique of preachers who say only what people want to hear and society's general reluctance to recognize that there are consequences to bad behavior make Micah's words an important message for our time as well as his own.

HERE ARE A FEW OF THOSE BEST-KNOWN PASSAGES:





WHERE DO I FIND IT?

Micah is the thirty-third book in the Old Testament. It is the sixth of the so-called "minor" (or shorter) prophets, the twelve books that make up the final portion of the Old Testament.

WHO WROTE IT?

Micah wrote a good bit of what is contained in his book, but some passages, especially those that seem to be addressed to people who have already suffered a disaster, most likely come from a much later time.

WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

Micah is a book of judgment against God's people, mixed with words of hope that promise the possibility of renewal even after disaster comes.

HOW DO I READ IT?

The prophetic books are often hard to read. Most have little or no narrative. They are a collection of messages from God to the people by way of the prophet. In Micah there are abrupt changes from condemnation to hope and back again that make it difficult to follow. For most readers it is best to pick and choose whatever section looks interesting, knowing that there is often no apparent continuity from one passage to the next.

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