

Micah 1 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

MICAH - WHO IS LIKE JEHOVAH?
Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
Chart by Charles Swindoll

OVERVIEW OF MICAH: WHO IS LIKE JEHOVAH? Micah 7:18					
RETRIBUTION Micah 1:1-2:13		KINGDOM Micah 3:1-5:15		WORSHIP Micah 6:1-7:20	
First Message: Judgment Will Come		Second Message: Blessing will follow Judgment		Third Message: An Indictment of Sin & A Promise of Blessing	
Judgment Micah 1:1-2:11	Promise Micah 2:12-13	Judgment Micah 3:1-12	Promise Micah 4:1-5:15	Judgment Micah 6:1-7:10	Promise Micah 7:11-20
Sin and Judgment		Hope and Comfort		Controversy and Pardon	
Sin & It's Outcome Incurable		The King & His Kingdom Inevitable First Coming - Mic 5:2-3 Second Coming - Mic 5:4-15		The Lord & His Justice Inescapable	
Message of Destruction for Samaria & Judah		Message of Doom & Deliverance		Message of Denunciation	
God Gathers to Judge and Deliver		God Judges Rulers and Comes to Deliver		God Brings Indictments and Ultimate Deliverance	
Question 1: Is God Responsible for the Destruction we face?		Question 2: How Do We Know God is with Us?		Question 3: What Does God Want from Us?	
About 25 Years 735-710 BC Approximated					
Ryrie: The Prophet Whereas Hosea prophesied to the northern tribes of Israel, and Isaiah to the court in Jerusalem, Micah, a Judean from Moreseth in the SW of Palestine, preached to the common people of Judah. His name means "who is like Yahweh?" Ryrie has an excellent outline...					
Key Verses: Micah 6:8, Micah 7:18					
William Moorehead: We may summarize the predictions of Micah thus: (1) The fall of Samaria and the dispersion of Israel, Micah 1:6-8, 9-16; 5:7, 8. (2) The cessation of prophecy, Micah 3:6, 7. (3) Destruction of Jerusalem, Micah 3:12. (4) Deliverance of Israel, Micah 4:10; 5:8. (5) Messiah’s birth place, Micah 5:2. (6) God’s kingdom established over the whole world, Micah 4:1-7. (Ref)					

KEY TO UNDERSTANDING: GOD uses men to proclaim His message. Here, through the instrumentality of a chosen man, some amazing details of future history are given to all who will hear. As always, GOD warns before He sends punishment.

THEME: Little is said of his personal history, the book is given over to reproof and warning to both Kingdoms. Micah has been called the "prophet of social reform" due to his emphasis on the sins of the rulers and false religious leaders against the people. National shortcomings are also emphasized with judgment promised. There is a better day coming for God's people. ([William Orr](#))

OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:

It was to Micah's prophecy the scribes of Jerusalem referred when the wicked King Herod sought to know concerning the birth of the new King (Matthew 2:2-6; Micah 5:2). A glorious passage (somewhat identical with Isaiah 2:2-4) is found in Mic 4:1-5 as the prophet speaks of a warless, prosperous, godly world with God's chosen people in the foreground. Other prophetic subjects include the invasion by Shalmaneser (Mic 1:6-8); invasion by Sennacherib (Mic 1:9-16); the dispersion of Israel (Mic 5:7, 8); the cessation of prophecy (Mic 3:6, 7); the utter destruction of Jerusalem (Mic 3:12). ([William Orr](#))

A T Pierson on the importance of context - As in any organism, no member or part, however minute, can be fully understood aside from its relation to the whole; so, in Scripture, every paragraph and sentence is part of its totality, and must be studied in relation to all the rest. The text will be illumined by the context, or scripture immediately preceding and following. Every occurrence and utterance should be studied in its surroundings. How, why, when a word was spoken or an act done, helps to explain it, is its local coloring. Hidden relationships must be traced like underground roots and subterranean channels.

GREAT TRUTHS IN MICAH - by Sidlow Baxter

Some of the mightiest truths in the Old Testament are expressed in Micah. As our prophet relates the sovereignty of Jehovah to human life and history he recognizes and emphasizes resultant realities of immense importance.

Note first the profound significance of the Divine dealings with the Hebrew nation. Micah addresses a small people in a strip of land merely about the size of Wales, yet in Micah 1:2 and Micah 6:1,2, he commands the whole earth, the mountains, the hills, to attend (in Scripture usage mountains and hills frequently symbolize kingdoms). This is no mere rhetoric. Micah realized that the covenant people were brought into their unique relationship with Jehovah so that through them the sovereignty of the true God, in its governmental administration among the nations, might be objectified to all peoples and for all time. Had Israel remained faithful she would have displayed the munificence of the Divine government. Alas, Israel exhibits a tragically different yet vastly significant aspect of the Divine government; and well may the nations of today heed it!

Note, too, the solemn yet glorious significance of the contrast which Micah strikes by the unmasking of false rulership versus the unveiling of true rulership in Christ. God delegates authority to human rulers. Micah recognizes this fact in the Divine economy, and addresses the princes, priests, and prophets as the ordained representatives of the Divine administration. Their responsibility is commensurately great. See Micah's scathing indictment of false rulership in chapter 3 versus the arresting description of the true "RULER," in Micah 5, who was yet to come. Christ is God's ideal of rulership. Micah traces the perversion and adversity of the people to the misrule of those over them; and all who abuse such authority incur equal penalty. Let the rulers of today take heed!

Finally, we revert to Micah's august declaration as to the true essence of religion. A great scholar has said of Mic 6:1-8: "These few verses in which Micah sets forth the true essence of religion may raise a well-founded title to be counted as the most important in the prophetic literature." Underline that eighth verse. Note that God "REQUIRES," for He is God. And God also REVEALS, for "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good..." (a reference to the Law of Moses Deut 10:12). Yet even this is not enough. If we would know the full chord in the music we must turn on to the New Testament, and learn there that God REDEEMS. **He "requires" because He is God. He "reveals" because He is good. He "redeems" because He is love.** The Christ of God has been already to **redeem**. He will come again to **restore**. Meanwhile let us view all our life in the light of the Divine purposes and the future reappearance of the great "RULER" whose goings forth have been "from of old, even from everlasting." ([Baxter's Explore the Book- J. Sidlow Baxter - Recommended Resource](#))

A M Hodgkin
Christ in Micah
([Christ in All the Scriptures](#))

Micah's home was the village of Mareshah, in the maritime plain of Jonah, near the borders of the Philistines. He was a contemporary of Hosea and Isaiah, and prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and the earlier years of Hezekiah, kings of Judah. He prophesied concerning both Samaria and Jerusalem, but the burden of his prophecy was for Judah.

Micah bore the same name, abbreviated, as Micaiah, the son of Imlah, the prophet of Israel, who stood alone for God against the 400 false prophets, 150 years before this, in the days of Ahab, when he and Jehoshaphat went against Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kings 22). Micaiah had concluded his prophecy with the words, "Hearken, O people, every one of you." Micah begins his prophecy with the same words. The three divisions of his book each begins with this call to Hear: Micah 1:2; 3:1; 6:1. Micaiah had seen "all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd." Micah's prophecy abounds in allusions to the Good Shepherd and His pitiful care over His flock.

With much brokenness of heart Micah denounces God's judgments upon Judah for their sins, but he seems to hasten over the words of judgment, and to linger over the message of God's love and mercy, concluding his prophecy with a specially beautiful proclamation of it, with which he identifies his own name, Micah, which means "Who is like God?" "Who is like the Lord, the Pardoner of sin, the Redeemer from its guilt, the Subduer of its power? For no false God was ever such a claim made. This was the one message that he loved above all to proclaim; and his own name was the herald to the people in his day" (Dr. Pussy).

Samaria and the Cities of Judah. Micah proclaims the coming judgment first upon Samaria, and then upon the cities of Judah. These were all speedily fulfilled by the armies of Assyria.

The idolatry of Israel had spread to Jerusalem, and the strong city of Lachish seems to have been the connecting link, "the beginning of the sin of the daughter of Zion" (Micah 1:13). It is this spread of idolatry, and all its attendant evils, to Judah, under king Ahaz, which Micah specially deplores. He rebukes the extreme oppression of the poor, women and little children being driven from their homes; covetousness and self-aggrandizement, even at the price of blood, which he graphically likens to cannibalism. He specially denounces the sins of the rulers, bribery among the judges, false weights and balances.

Micah further proclaims the captivity in Babylon (Micah 4:7), and the destruction of Jerusalem (Micah 3:12), even to the plowing up of the city, which was fulfilled by the Emperor Hadrian. We are distinctly told in the book of Jeremiah that this prophecy led to the great turning to the Lord of King Hezekiah and his people, at the beginning of his reign, which averted the destruction of the city, it may be for 136 years, and led also to the great reformation under that king. The elders of Judah reverted to this prophecy of Micah about 120 years after it was uttered, when the priests would have put Jeremiah to death for predicting the same doom.

"Bethlehem of Judah." But for us the great interest of the prophet Micah centers round its clear prophecies of the Savior who was to come. It was from this book that "all the chief priests and scribes of the people," gathered together by Herod, proclaimed unhesitatingly that it was at Bethlehem of Judah that the Christ, the King, should be born. This prophecy proclaims His eternity. He who was to go forth from Bethlehem as the Ruler, was He whose goings forth were "from the days of eternity." Micah 5:3 is closely connected with Isaiah 7:14.

"He shall stand and feed (or rule) in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God." Here we have the majesty of the Royal Shepherd caring for His flock.

Micah's picture of the restoration of Zion and many nations flowing to it, and the glory and prosperity of Christ's Kingdom, with its reign of universal peace, was introduced by Isaiah into his prophecy.

BOOK OF MICAH

"WHO IS LIKE THE LORD"

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH

Sidlow Baxter ([Explore the Book](#)): Some Bible teachers have it that the little work consists of **three addresses**, each opened by the word "Hear" (Micah 1:2; 6:1). This is simply division according to literary form rather than subject-matter. If we would get the message of the book as a whole we must analyze according to subject-matter; and when we do this we find, as just shown, a triple message, the logical sequence of which is clear:

1. IMMINENT JUDGMENT DECLARED (Micah 1-3)
2. ULTIMATE BLESSING PROMISED (Micah 4-5).
3. PRESENT REPENTANCE PLEADED (Micah 6-7).

Key Words: Jacob (11x/10v), Israel (12x/12v), Jerusalem (8x/8v), Zion (9x/9v), Samaria (3x/3v) Walk (8x/7v), Hear (7x/6v), Nations (6x/6v), Remnant (5x/5v), Righteousness, Destroy/Destruction (6x/5v), People (My, Thy, His) (12x/12v), That day (4x/4v) **See related discussion - key words and marking key words**

Micah on a Timeline: [Chronology of History of Israel](#)

Wilkinson - In some ways, Micah is an Isaiah in miniature. Both prophets addressed the same people and problems: compare

- Micah 1:2 <> Isa. 1:2
- Micah 1:9–16 <> Isa. 10:28–32
- Micah 2:8–9 <> Isa. 10:2
- Micah 2:12 <> Isa. 10:10–23
- Micah 2:13 <> Isa. 52:12
- Micah 3:5–7 <> Isa. 29:9–12
- Micah 4:1 <> Isa. 2:2
- Micah 5:2 <> Isa. 7:14
- Micah 5:4 <> Isa. 40:11
- Micah 6:6–8 <> Isa. 58:6–7
- Micah 7:7 <> Isa. 8:17
- Micah 7:12 <> Isa. 11:11

But Micah focused on moral and social problems while Isaiah placed greater stress on world affairs and political concerns. A quote from Micah 3:12 a century later in Jeremiah 26:18 concerning the coming destruction of Jerusalem was instrumental in delivering Jeremiah from death.

Micah is quoted in the New Testament:

- Micah 5:2 <> Mt. 2:5–6; Jn 7:42)
- Micah 7:6 <> Mt. 10:34–36; Mk 13:12; Lk 12:53)

Compared with other prophets, Micah's proportion of foretelling relative to forthtelling is high. He has much to say about the future of Israel and the advent and reign of Messiah. ([Wilkinson, B., & Boa, K.. Talk thru the Bible](#))

OUTLINE OF MICAH

- I. The Superscription, Micah 1:1
- II. A Message of Destruction for Samaria and Judah, Micah 1:2-2:13**
 - A. The Revelation of the Coming Judgment, Micah 1:2-16
 - B. The Reasons for the Coming Judgment, Micah 2:1-13
- III. A Message of Doom and Deliverance, Micah 3:1-5:15**
 - A. **Doom:** The Coming Judgment, Micah 3:1-12
 - 1. Judgment on the leaders, Micah 3:1-4
 - 2. Judgment on the false prophets, Micah 3:5-8
 - 3. Judgment on Jerusalem, Micah 3:9-12
 - B. **Deliverance:** The Coming Kingdom, Micah 4:1-5:1
 - 1. The glories of the Kingdom, Micah 4:1-8

2. The suffering that precedes the kingdom, Micah 4:9-5:1

C. **Deliverer:** The Coming King, Micah 5:2-15

1. His First Coming, Micah 5:2-3

2. His Second Coming, Micah 5:4-15

IV. A Message of Denunciation, Micah 6:1-7:10

A. God's First Indictment, Micah 6:1-5

B. Israel's First Reply, Micah 6:6-8

C. God's Second Indictment, Micah 6:9-16

D. Israel's Second Reply, Micah 7:1-10

V. Epilogue: Blessings for Israel, Micah 7:11-20

([Byrie Study Bible, Expanded Edition NASB 1995](#))

Micah 1:1 The word of the LORD which came to Micah of [Moresethin](#) in the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

- **Micah** 14,15; Jeremiah 26:18
- **Jotham** 2 Chronicles 27:1-32; Isaiah 1:1; Hosea 1:1
- **which** Amos 1:1; Habakkuk 1:1
- **concerning** 5; Hosea 4:15; 5:5-14; 6:10,11; 8:14; 12:1,2; Amos 2:4-8; 3:1,2; 6:1

Introduction: The following notes are a compilation from Scofield and various other resources as well as Bible Dictionary articles (hyperlinks = blue)

Book Introduction - Micah

Micah, a contemporary of [Isaiah](#), prophesied during the reigns of [Jotham](#), [Ahaz](#) and [Hezekiah](#) over Judah, and of [Pekahiah](#), [Pekah](#), and [Hoshea](#) over Israel 2Kings 15:23-30; 2Kings 17:1-6. He was a prophet in Judah [Jeremiah](#) 26:17-19 but the book called by his name chiefly concerns [Samaria](#).

Micah falls into three prophetic strains, each beginning, "Hear":

1. Micah 1:1 to Micah 2:13
2. Micah 3:1 to Micah 5:15
3. Micah 6:1 to Micah 7:20

The events recorded Micah cover a period of 40 years (Ussher).

MICAH 1 SUMMARIZED

G Campbell Morgan's Summary of Micah 1

The first message of Micah consists of a summons, a proclamation of Jehovah, and a prophetic message based on the proclamation. This division ends with an account of the interruption of the false prophets, and finally the promise of ultimate deliverance.

In the summons the prophet had clearly in mind the attitude of Jehovah toward the whole earth. All peoples are called upon to attend. Israel was Jehovah's medium of teaching, if not in blessing, then in judgment. He witnesses among the nations by His dealings with Israel. The description of His coming forth from His place is full of poetic beauty. Under the figure of a great upheaval of nature the prophet described the advent of God.

The proclamation of Jehovah first declares the cause of judgment. It is for the transgression of Jacob . . . for the sins of the house of Israel." The reason for judgment is the apostasy of the nation as evidenced in the cities. Jehovah next describes the course of judgment, commencing with the destruction of false religion. The city wherein was gathered the wealth and wherein authority was exercised was to be demolished, and the

religion of apostasy swept away.

On the basis of this proclamation the prophet delivers his message. It opens with a personal lamentation expressive of his own grief concerning the incurable wounds of the people. This is followed by a wailing description of the judgment. The passage is a strange mixture of grief and satire. At the calamity the prophet was grieved. Because of the sin he was angry. This merging of agony and anger flashes in satire. The connection of contrast is not easy to discover. A translation of the proper names appearing in this section may enable the reader to discover the remarkable play on words which runs through it.

GLOOM AND GLORY INTERMINGLED

John Piper - Micah is a hard prophet to understand because the book alternates back and forth between threats of doom and promises of hope. It is hard to figure out what situations he is referring to and how the hope and doom relate to each other. Probably the reason the book is arranged like this is to make the point that where God and His people are concerned there is always hope, even in the darkest catastrophe. So Micah mingles gloom and glory through his book. ([From Bethlehem in the Majesty of the Name of the Lord](#))

Charles Swindoll - Much of Micah's book revolves around two significant predictions: one of judgment on Israel and Judah (Micah 1:1–3:12), the other of the restoration of God's people in the millennial kingdom (Micah 4:1–5:15). Judgment and restoration inspire fear and hope, two ideas wrapped up in the final sequence of Micah's prophecy, a courtroom scene in which God's people stand trial before their Creator for turning away from Him and from others (Micah 6:1–7:20). In this sequence, God reminds the people of His good works on their behalf, how He cared for them while they cared only for themselves. But rather than leave God's people with the fear and sting of judgment, the book of Micah concludes with the prophet's call on the Lord as his only source of salvation and mercy (Micah 7:7), pointing the people toward an everlasting hope in their everlasting God. ([Book of Micah Overview](#))

ALWAYS THE BEST PLACE TO BEGIN

The word of the LORD - This reminds us of Peter's words "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." (2Pe 1:20-21-note) Micah was moved by the Holy Spirit to bring this prophetic word from Jehovah to His errant, apostate people in Judah.

The Word of the LORD which came - 11 verses - Josh 15:8; 18:16; 2 Kgs 23:10; 2 Chr 28:3; 33:6; Neh 11:30; Jer 7:31f; 19:2, 6; 32:35

The Word of the LORD came - 139 verses -

Gen 15:1, 4; 1 Sam 15:10; 2 Sam 7:4; 24:11; 1 Kgs 2:30; 6:11; 13:1, 9, 17, 20; 15:29; 16:1, 7; 17:2, 8; 18:1, 36; 19:9; 21:17, 28; 2 Kgs 6:18; 10:17; 20:4; 22:9; 1 Chr 11:3; 12:23; 22:8; 2 Chr 11:2; 12:7; Ps 105:19; Isa 38:4; 66:2; Jer 1:2, 4, 11, 13; 2:1; 13:3, 8; 14:1; 16:1; 18:5; 21:1; 24:4; 26:1; 27:1; 28:12; 29:30; 32:1, 6, 8, 26; 33:1, 19, 23; 34:1, 12; 35:1, 12; 36:1, 27; 37:6; 40:1; 42:7; 43:8; 46:1; 47:1; 49:34; Ezek 1:3; 3:16; 6:1; 7:1; 11:14; 12:1, 8, 17, 21, 26; 13:1; 14:2, 12; 15:1; 16:1; 17:1, 11; 18:1; 20:2, 45; 21:1, 8, 18; 22:1, 17, 23; 23:1; 24:1, 15, 20; 25:1; 26:1; 27:1; 28:1, 11, 20; 29:1, 17; 30:1, 20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:1, 23; 34:1; 35:1; 36:16; 37:15; 38:1; Hos 1:1; Joel 1:1; Jonah 1:1; 3:1; Mic 1:1; Zeph 1:1; Hag 1:1, 3; 2:1, 10, 20; Zech 1:1, 7; 4:8; 6:9; 7:1, 4, 8; 8:1, 18

Micah falls into three prophetic strains, each beginning, **"Hear"**: (Mic 1:2, 3:1, 9, 6:1, 9, 7:7)

1. Micah 1:1 to Micah 2:13
2. Micah 3:1 to Micah 5:15
3. Micah 6:1 to Micah 7:20

Who? [Micah = Who is Like Jehovah?](#)

Micah - Mark Copeland characterizes the Prophet Micah

Copeland: Characterization of the Prophet Micah

A. "He was the prophet of the poor and downtrodden." (Homer Hailey)

B. "He had Amos' passion for justice and Hosea's heart for love." (J. M. P. Smith)

C. Comparing Micah to his contemporary Isaiah (as suggested by Hailey)

1) Micah was a man of the fields, Isaiah was of the city

2) Micah took little interest in politics, giving himself to the concern over spiritual and moral problems; Isaiah was in close contact with world affairs, the associate of kings and princes

3) Both Micah and Isaiah...

a) Saw God as the infinite Ruler of nations and men

b) Recognized the absolute holiness and majesty of God

c) Stressed that violating principles of God's divine sovereignty and holiness would bring judgment and doom

Where? [Moreseth](#)

When? Contemporary of Isaiah = See Isa 1:1 for mention of the same 3 Kings of Judah the Southern Kingdom- [Jotham](#); [Ahaz](#); [Hezekiah](#)

Why? Micah's word was directed to the capital cities of Israel and Judah respectively (both serving as representative of each nation) - [Samaria \(Northern Kingdom\)](#) and [Jerusalem \(Southern Kingdom\)](#)

Wiersbe - Micah hoped that the people of Judah would learn from the sad experience of Israel, but they did not. His is a message of judgment mingled with mercy and hope. Micah's name means "who is like the Lord?" The prophet Jeremiah's life was saved by a quotation from Micah (Jer. 26:18; Mic. 3:12). The Lawsuit = Micah 1:1-7; The Lament = Micah 1:8-16

Micah 1:1-16 - TODAY IN THE WORD - It's a scene straight out of a Leave It to Beaver rerun. Two brothers are misbehaving, both equally at fault. But when Dad arrives he ignores one of the boys and heads for his brother, saying something like, "I saw what you did!" In the meantime, the first brother breathes a quiet sigh of relief, thinking dad was overlooking his part in the fiasco. His relief melts away when his father suddenly turns to him and says, "And now for you, young man!" The kingdom of Judah may have felt relief when God miraculously delivered Jerusalem from Sennacherib, king of Assyria (2Kings 18:13-19). This occurred in 701 B.C., a full twenty years after Israel and its capital had fallen to Assyria. But God had a message of judgment for Judah as well. One of the prophets charged with delivering that message was Micah, a messenger to the common people. He served as a prophet during the reigns of three kings. **Jotham** was generally a good king, although he failed to remove Judah's **'High Places'** where God's people practiced idolatry (see 2Kings 15:35). God would take care of these evil places Himself when He came in judgment (Micah 1:3). Jotham's son **Ahaz**, a wicked man, inherited a kingdom that was strong both militarily and politically. But Ahaz greatly corrupted God's people, adopting the evil worship practices of the northern kingdom. Ahaz's son **Hezekiah** was one of Judah's greatest kings. He turned the nation back to serving the Lord. Although Micah prophesied primarily to Judah, his frequent references to Israel show that God had given Micah a word of warning for the entire nation. **APPLY:** Americans are fond of pointing to 200 years of God's blessing as evidence that He will not really judge us in the same way He judged His ancient people. (**Ed:** Clearly those who point to God's past blessing have not read or understood Pr 14:34! Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin [**Ed:** "unrighteousness"] is a disgrace to any people!)

Micah 1:2 **Hear**, O peoples, all of you; **Listen**, O earth and all it contains, and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, the Lord from His holy temple.

- **all ye people** Heb. ye people all of them. hearken. Micah 6:1,2; Deuteronomy 32:1; Psalms 49:1,2; 50:1; Isaiah 1:2; Jeremiah 22:29; Mark 7:14-16; Revelation 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22
- **all that therein is** Heb. the fulness thereof. Psalms 24:1; 50:12
- **let** Psalms 50:7; Jeremiah 29:23; Malachi 2:14; 3:5
- **the Lord from** Psalms 11:4; 28:2; Jonah 2:7; Habakkuk 2:20

I. (Micah 1:2-7) THE COMING DEVASTATING JUDGMENT OF A HOLY GOD LAYS BARE THE IDOLATRY OF HIS OWN REBELLIOUS PEOPLE (Paul Apple)

Warren Wiersbe's Summary of Micah 1

Micah 1:2 The court is convened

Micah 1:3-4 The Judge arrives

Micah 1:5-16 The Judge names the defendants

Hear...listen (cp Isa 3:13) - These are divine commands, not suggestions! God's commandments always include His enablements. Hear and listen sound very similar. It is as if God knows He has to speak twice to get their attention, like we so often have to do with our children! However God is always a "Gentleman" and will not force rebels to do something they are not willing to do!

Patterson - This imperative verbs (hear...listen) introduces a summons-to-listen formula (cf. Deut 4:1; 6:4; Hos 4:1; Amos 3:1). In prophetic contexts the word typically means "listen to, heed by acting upon, or putting into practice what has been said" (NIDOTTE 5.178). The formula signals that an important message is forthcoming or a divine truth is about to be revealed. Micah uses the imperative "listen!" elsewhere in 3:1, 9; 6:1, 2, 9.

Peoples...all of you...earth...all it contains (Hebrew, "whatever fills it") - Note that this description of God's judgment relates to the entire world! So while this is a book addressed to Israel, it is clearly a message to which all peoples throughout the world need to pay heed! Are you listening **earth**?

Matthew Henry - Where God has a mouth to speak we must have an ear to hear we all must, for we are all concerned in what is delivered. ([Commentary](#))

Kaiser - The announcement of God's forthcoming judgment for the sin of His people is set against the background of world judgment. Micah does not summon just Israel or Judah, but "**all you peoples**" and "**O earth**," to pay attention to what is going to be said. The God of the Old Testament is no local provincial deity, but is the Lord over all nations and history. Even if Israel will not function in her priestly role as a "light to the nations" (Isa 42:5), she will nonetheless function as an involuntary witness to judgment from the hand of God to all nations (cf. Lev. 18:28). So, let the whole earth witness what Yahweh is now going to do in the imminent judgement.

Goins - It is important to pay special attention to the fact that this initial call to hear is addressed to all the nations of the earth. Every human being needs to see and hear what God is doing, not just the Hebrew people in Judah . His words have universal application. He appears as the Sovereign of the entire earth and he comes from his kingly palace in heaven to dispense justice. God is holy, so all of his activity is holy and just. He comes to judge his overt enemies, those in active opposition to him, but also to witness against anyone who practices injustice. Nothing escapes his notice or his fair response. ([Here Comes the Judge](#))

Lord God - "This epithet literally means "my Master Yahweh"; the title expresses the intimate connection between Yahweh and the acts of judgment threatened in the prophet's sermons. God's rule of creation and the nations is embodied in this compound divine name." (Patterson)

Be a witness against you - This conveys a picture of a courtroom scene. God will not only be witness, but judge and executioner against Israel!

Matthew Henry - Let the Lord God be witness against you, a witness that you had fair warning given you, that your prophets did their duty faithfully as watchmen, but you would not take the warning let the accomplishment of the prophecy be a witness against your contempt and disbelief of it, and prove, to your conviction and confusion, that it was the word of God, and no word of his shall fall to the ground." Note, God himself will be a witness, by the judgments of his hand, against those that would not receive his testimony in the judgments of his mouth. ([Commentary](#))

From His holy temple (cf Psalm 11:4 Hab 2:20 Jonah 2:7) - His throne room in heaven not earth (as determined from the **context** [always "king" in interpretation!]) - the next passage begins with "**For**" a **term of explanation** , which says Jehovah will "**come down**."

Kaiser - God, as **transcendent** (beyond comprehension, rising above the universe or material existence) , is "**The Lord from His holy temple**" (Micah 1:2b). But He is also **immanent** (remaining or operating within a domain of reality), '**For behold, the Lord is coming out of His place**' (Micah 1:3a). Accordingly, those who depict our God as Someone Who is way off in space and removed from the daily events of our world are incorrect. Here is the great Old Testament theme of theophany, the appearance of God. It depicts our Lord suddenly coming in all His power and majesty to help His beleaguered people or to dispense justice regardless of the persons upon whom that judgment must come. So awesome is His presence that even nature itself threatens to come apart as it responds to Him...If God's inanimate creations are this responsive, why is it that we who are created in the image of God, and in some cases are also redeemed, are more recalcitrant and slower to perceive the coming of our Lord? This Lord of all the nations will indeed come and manifest His power among the nations as He has in nature. (**Ed: Meditate on this thought of the awesome**

nature of His presence and power - it is good impediment against sin and a strong encouragement for despair!)

G Campbell Morgan - Micah was a prophet to the people of God contemporary with Isaiah and Hosea. His messages were concerned with Samaria and Jerusalem, the capitals respectively of the Northern and Southern kingdoms, as being the centres of national thought and action. Their burden "was that of authority. He denounced the false, and announced the true. The book contains three discourses, each commencing with the same formula "Hear" (see Mic 1.2; Mic 3.1 and Mic 6.1). The words we have emphasized constitute the introduction to the first of these. Necessarily the message was for the nation to which he spoke, but he couched it in the form of an address to all nations; and to the whole earth. The burden of the message is that of declaring the coming judgment of God upon the chosen nation on account of its apostasy. The nations are called upon to listen to this message, and to witness the Divine judgment. Micah recognized the Divine purpose of the chosen nation. It was to be the medium through which God bore witness concerning Himself to all the nations of the world. Israel, obedient to the Divine government, realized the blessings of the Divine government, and revealed its beneficence to the world. Israel disobedient to that law must be judged and punished, and thus the righteousness of the Divine government would be manifested to all the nations of the earth. Either in blessing or in blasting, Jehovah reveals Himself to the nations by His dealing with His ancient people. This is still so, if men have minds to apprehend. Let the rulers among the nations consider the history of the Hebrew people; let them ponder the reason of their long-continued suffering and scattered condition. God is speaking yet to the nations through the Jew. (Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

Micah 1:3 For behold, the LORD is coming forth from His place. He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.

- **cometh** Isaiah 26:21; 64:1,2; Ezekiel 3:12; Hosea 5:14,15
- **place** Psalms 115:3
- **and tread** Job 40:12; Isaiah 2:10-19; 25:10; 63:3,4; Amos 4:13
- **the high** Deuteronomy 32:13; 33:29; Habakkuk 3:19

For - always be willing to slow down and query this strategic **term of explanation**. You will often be richly rewarded by your Teacher the Spirit as He illuminates aspects of the text and context you did not observe as you were "speed reading" the sacred text!

In Micah 1:1 it was the **Word of the LORD** that came forth to Micah and now it is the **LORD coming forth** in a "theophany" if you will. When God created His world, He did not withdraw from His sovereign rule, but to the contrary is actively involved in bringing this age to its full and final consummation in the return of Jesus Christ. This truth should comfort the uncomfortable (in distress), but will bring distress to the "comfortable" (in their sin)

Behold - The LORD coming forth should always attract our attention! "**Behold**" (hinneh) occurs some 1058 times in the OT and serves to call the reader's attention to the subsequent text, implying that the following words are deserving of special attention. It's as if the Spirit is saying "Don't speed read this next section (so to speak)"! The specific phrase "**for behold**" seems to call special attention to understanding the explanation and is used frequently by the major and minor prophets - Isa 3:1, 26:21; 60:2; 65:17, 18; 66:15; Jer 1:15; 8:17, 16:12, 25:29; 30:3, 10; 45:5; 49:15, Jer 50:9; Ezek 8:17, 30:9; 36:9; Hos 9:6 Joel 3:1 Amos 4:13, 6:11, 14, 9:9, Micah 1:3, Hab 1:6, Zech 2:9, 10; 3:8, 9, 11:16, Malachi 4:1.

Spurgeon has an interesting discussion of the Hebrew word "**Behold**" - "**Behold.**" It is a word of wonder; intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation. Here, indeed, we have a theme for marveling. "Behold" is intended to attract particular attention. There is something here worthy of being studied.

Matthew Henry - They boasted of themselves and their relation to God, as if that would secure them but, though God never deceives the faith of the upright, he will disappoint the presumption of the hypocrites, for, behold, the Lord comes forth out of his place, quits his mercy-seat, where they thought they had him fast, and prepares his throne for judgment his glory departs, for they drive it from them. God's way towards this people had long been a way of mercy, but now he changes his way, he comes out of his place, and will come down. He had seemed to retire, as one regardless of what was done, but now he will show himself, he will rend the heavens, and will come down, not as sometimes, in surprising mercies, but in surprising judgments, to do things not for them, but against them, which they looked not for, Isaiah 64:1,26:21. ([Commentary](#))

High Places (see also comments on Mic 1:5) - God comes down from "His place," the true "High Place" (His majestic, exalted throne in heaven, read Isa 57:15) to judge the idolatrous **high places** on earth! God immutably hates idols -

Is there any "idol" that I have allowed onto the altar of my heart? You can be sure that if you let an idol

get a foothold it won't remain at the periphery, but will seek supremacy on the altar of your heart, in effect usurping the Lord Jesus Christ! Even as OT saints were encouraged to ruthlessly tear down the places of idolatry, so too we must do likewise, lest our spiritual walk be direly effected.

J Vernon McGee - "Tread upon the high places of the earth." You recall that the high places were the locations of idol worship. Idols were set up in groves upon the hills and mountains. Also in that day the cities were situated on elevated places. Both Samaria and Jerusalem were built on mountains. The Lord Jesus mentioned that a city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid, and the city has a tremendous influence upon the area around it (see Mt 5:14-note). When the city is the seat of government, it has a tremendous influence not only upon the immediate area but often upon the entire world. That is the case of many great cities in the past and present. Also cities are centers of great sin. For these reasons God is coming down upon them in judgment—He will "tread upon the high places of the earth." ([Micah 1:3-4 Commentary - Mp3](#))

Kaiser - The scene is very similar to when the Lord touched down on Sinai: there were earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and other similar examples of the infinite power of God (Ex. 20:18–21).

Apple - Similar descriptions of such awe-inspiring manifestations of Jehovah occur in Ex. 19:18,19; Jdg 5:4-5; Isa. 64:1; Hab. 3:6. The Lord can come in blessing or He can come in judgment Here God is angry at His people because they have broken the covenant (referring to the Mosaic Covenant, not the Abrahamic Covenant). (Ed: See also Ps 18:7–10; 68:8; 65:9–13; 114:3–8)

Scofield thinks that "These words predict [Shalmaneser's](#) destruction of the northern kingdom, [Sennacherib's](#) invasion, and [Nebuchadnezzar's](#) invasion."

Micah 1:4 The mountains will melt under Him and the valleys will be split, Like wax before the fire, Like water poured down a steep place.

- **the mountains** Judges 5:4; Psalms 97:5; Isaiah 64:1-3; Amos 9:5; Nahum 1:5; Habakkuk 3:6,10; 2 Peter 3:10-12; Revelation 20:11
- **the valleys** Zechariah 14:4
- **as wax** Psalms 68:2
- **a steep place** Heb. a descent.

Mountains will melt under Him (cp Ps 68:2; 97:5; Nah 1:5; Hab. 3:6) - **NET Note** says "This is a figurative description of earthquakes, landslides, and collapse of the mountains, rather than some sort of volcanic activity (note the remainder of the verse)."

Like wax...Like water - Vivid pictures of the effect on the topography when Jehovah treads the earth in judgment! Woe! (cf Omnipotence) See **discussion of importance of observing and interrogating "similes"**

Matthew Henry - Do men trust to the height and strength of the mountains and rocks, as if they were sufficient to bear up their hopes and bear off their fears? They shall be molten under him, melted down as wax before the fire, Psalm 68:2. Do they trust to the fruitfulness of the valleys, and their products? They shall be cleft, or rent, with those fiery streams that shall come pouring down from the mountains when they are melted. They shall be ploughed and washed away as the ground is by the waters that are poured down a steep place. ([Commentary](#))

Micah 1:4 - Our Daily Homily - F B Meyer - WE must stay to admire the sublimity of these words. Of course, it is a very human way of describing the movements of the Eternal: but how forcibly the prophet's words suggest the interest of God in human life. He comes out of His place to deliver His own, and to judge the ungodly: to remove obstacles to the fulfillment of His purposes. Are you looking out to-day on a range of mountains that block your passage and screen off the rays of the sun? Do your difficulties seem to have accumulated till they act as insuperable obstacles to the fulfillment of your most cherished purposes? Perhaps, divided from your friends; hemmed and blocked in from the fair sunny lands of the vineyard and the goldening corn; despairing of tunnelling or scaling the Himalaya and the Alps. It is a sad and drear prospect, enough to daunt the most courageous spirit, and break down the most heroic courage. But look again at this text.

"Behold, the Lord cometh forth out of His place. He steps forth from His pavilion, intent on some great and glorious project. He treads on thy high mountains as on the furrows of a ploughed field. They are nothing to Him. Beneath His tread the mountains melt, and the valleys cleave. Wax melting before the fire is the simple but sublime image of the instant subsidence of whole ranges of difficulty. Wilt thou not walk with Him? Dare to believe that He can make His mountains a way. Who art thou, great mountain before Zerubbabel? Thou shalt become a plain. (Zech 4:7)

For whom the heart of man shuts out,

Sometimes the heart of God shuts in;
And fences them all round about
With silence 'mid the world's loud din.

Micah 1:5 Commentary All this is for the rebellion of Jacob And for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the rebellion of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? What is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?

- **the transgression of Jacob** 2 Kings 17:7-23; 2 Chronicles 36:14-16; Isaiah 50:1,2; 59:1-15; Jeremiah 2:17,19; Jeremiah 4:18; 5:25; 6:19; Lamentations 5:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:15,16
- **is it** 1 Kings 13:32; Hosea 7:1; 8:5,6; Amos 6:1; 8:14
- **they** 2 Kings 16:3,4,10-12; 2 Chronicles 28:2-4,23-25

All this is for the rebellion of Jacob (= Israel the northern 10 tribes) **and for the sins of the house of Israel** - **Matthew Henry** - If it be asked, "Why is God so angry, and why are Jacob and Israel thus brought to ruin by His anger?" the answer is ready: **Sin** has done all the mischief. Sin has laid all waste. All the calamities of Jacob and Israel are owing to their transgressions. If they had not gone away from God, He would never have appeared thus against them. Note, **External privileges and professions will not secure a sinful people from the judgments of God.** If sin be found in the house of Israel, if Jacob be guilty of transgression and rebellion, God will not spare them. No, He will punish them first, for their sins are of all others most provoking to Him, for they are most reproaching. ([Commentary](#))

Guzik adds - The principle stands: For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God (1Peter 4:17note). However, we also do well to remember the second part of that verse: And if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the Gospel of God?

Rebellion ("revolt")(06588)(**pesha'** from **pasha** [06586] = to rebel, transgress) means transgression, rebellion or revolt against authority (rising up in clear defiance of authority), guilt (incurred by transgressing). **Pesha'** is derived from a root describing the breach of relationship between two parties (civil or religious). The idea of this noun is that the individual makes a willful choice to reject God's authority and hence to deviate from the path of godly living. Defection from God's standard. Pesha' is "a stepping aside from the (correct) path." Pesha' speaks of willful sin.

Pesha' can be a transgression of one individual against another (Ge. 31:36; 50:17; Ex. 22:9) or of one nation against another (Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1) but is used primarily to describe Pesha' denotes a willful, criminal breaking of a covenant (1Ki 12:19; Jer 2:29) In Psalm 103:12 pesha' is used [metonymically](#) for the guilt such actions produce.

Note the repetition in Micah - Mic 1:5, 13; 3:8; 6:7; 7:18

Vine on **pesha'** - Basically, this noun signifies willful deviation from, and therefore rebellion against, the path of godly living. This emphasis is especially prominent in Amos 2:4. Such a willful rebellion from a prescribed or agreed-upon path may be perpetrated against another man: (Ge 31:36). Jacob is asking what he has done by way of violating or not keeping his responsibility (contract) with Laban. A nation can sin in this sense against another nation: (Amos 1:3). Usually, however, **pesha'** has immediate reference to one's relationship to God. This word sometimes represents the **guilt** of such a transgression: (Job 33:9). **Pesha'** can signify the punishment for transgression (Da 8:12, 13). Finally, in Mic. 6:7 **pesha'** signifies an offering for "transgression"

Mounce notes that pesha' "is one of the three primary words for sin in the OT. While sin is any act of offense against God, from willful rebellion to unintentional sin, **pesha'** normally denotes **intentional disobedience**, especially against God's law. The prophecy of Amos makes this clear, as he speaks out first against Judah (Amos 2:4 = transgressions) and then against Israel (Amos 2:6 = transgressions). To the latter he declares, "For I know how many are your offenses and how great your sins. You oppress the righteous and take bribes and you deprive the poor of justice in the courts" (Amos 5:12 = transgression). **Committing pesha'** may involve social, political, or cultic acts and can occur on an interpersonal level (e.g., Ex 22:9; Amos 5:12), a political level (1Ki 12:19), or a religious level (Isa 1:2 = "revolted against"). In all occurrences of pesha' the common thread is the breach of a covenant responsibility. To trespass God's instruction is to rebel against God. On the annual Day of Atonement the pesha' of Israel is atoned (Lev 16:16, 21). ([Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words](#))

Baker - Since it is possible for humanity to recognize this transgression (Ps. 32:5; 51:3[5]), God's first step in dealing with it is to reveal it and call His people to accountability (Job 36:9; Mic. 3:8). He then punishes the guilty (Isa. 53:5, 8; Amos 2:4, 6) in the hope of restoring the relationship and forgiving the transgressors who repent (Ezek. 18:30, 31). In addition to the act of transgression itself, this term can also be used to convey the guilt that comes from the transgression (Job 33:9; 34:6; Ps. 59:3[4]); the punishment for the transgression (Dan. 8:12, 13; 9:24); or the offering that is presented to atone for the transgression (Mic. 6:7).

NET Note - To rebel carries the idea of “covenant treachery.” Although an act of מַשָּׂא (pesha’, “rebellion”) often signifies a breach of the law, the legal offense also represents a violation of an existing covenantal relationship. (In Lam 1:5 the phrase “because of her many transgressions”), the plural of pesha’, rebellions is an example of the plural of repeated action or characteristic behavior.

Patterson - Pesha’ means to commit a legal offense and signifies an act of rebellion in the form of social transgression. 08). Andersen and Freedman (2000:170) further note, “in a political setting it means ‘treason,’ in religion ‘apostasy.’ Both ideas merge in idolatry as Israel’s worst violation of covenant obligations to Yahweh...**Pesha’** means to commit a legal offense and signifies an act of rebellion in the form of social transgression. Such treacherous “conduct constituted rebellion against Yahweh himself” (NIDOTTE 3.708).”

Boice says **pesha’** “refers to crossing a forbidden boundary with the thought that this is a serious rebellion.”

TWOT - This masculine noun designates those who reject God’s authority. In the indictments of the first two chapters of Amos, peša is done by non-Israelites to other people, but overwhelmingly the Hebrew people were the ones who were guilty of peša against the authority and covenant of their God. In a few Psalms, the book of Pr and a few instances in Ezek the individual is emphasized, instead of the corporate body, guilty of this sin. Lam personifies Jerusalem three times and Isa says the earth (a figure for its inhabitants) was involved in peša. In a few secular contexts, this term refers to violations of personal and property rights of others (Ge 31:36; 50:17; 1Sa 24:11; 25:28). In a religious context, this term refers to involvement in fertility cult practices (Isa 57:4), active persecution of God’s people (Ps 5:10; 59:3) and telling falsehoods (Pr 12:13; 17:9). Predominantly peša is rebellion against God’s law and covenant and thus the term is a collective which denotes the sum of misdeeds and a fractured relationship. The measure of this kind of sin is the character of God himself, for if there were no such God, there could not be peša. Some passages highlight the contrast between God and man’s rejection of him, especially his desire to correct the estrangement (Ex 34:7; Num 14:18; Josh 24:19; 1Ki 8:50; Pr 19:11; Mic 7:18). Not only does peša create a gulf between God and man, it generates distortions within himself, i.e. a tendency to hide his actions (Job 34:6), deceitfulness (Pr 28:24), apathy (Ps 36:1), illness (Ps 107:17), a love for strife (Pr 17:19), a sense of enslavement (Pr 12:13), easily angered (Pr 29:22), hypocritical worship (Isa 58:1) and a sense of defilement (Ezek 14:11). In one case, peša is depicted as a heavy, crushing weight (Isa 24:20). As far as God is concerned, there are two ways the rebellion may be ended; it may end with punishment or a renewal of the relationship. God’s first step is to indict his people and expose their sin as a rebellion. Some key passages with this theme are Job 36:9; Mic 3:8. Through his servants, God warns his people of their danger (Ps 89:32; Amos 3:14), and takes pains to designate their transgression as the cause for their punishment (Ezek 39:24; Mic 1:13; Dan 8:12–13). The references given above on the character of God indicate that God wants to pursue a different course of action; he wants to save his people. In the ceremonies of the Day of Atonement he provided a scapegoat (Lev 16:16, 21) and in Isa 53:5, 8 promised redemption through the Suffering Servant. Through his servants he promised forgiveness (Job 7:21; Isa 43:25; Ezek 18:22; 37:23). God also makes man’s role of choice clear (Ezek 33:12; cf. Job 8:4). Before God actually grants his pardon, man is called upon to act (Ezek 18:30–31) with a warning attached and that man must personally repudiate his rebellion and the idolatry that was an integral part of it (Ezek 18:28, 37:23). An examination of several prayers of supplication reveals that the one who prays does indicate awareness of sin (Isa 59:12) and does engage in confession of sin (Ps 51:3; Ezek 33:10). Yet, it is clear that human effort can not bring salvation, so these prayers also exhibit an earnest plea for God to act (Job 13:23; 14:17; Ps 19:13; 25:7; 51:1). Best of all, testimonies are recorded that God did indeed pardon and redeem his people (Ps 32:1; 65:3; Pr 19:11; Isa 43:25; 44:22; 53:5; 59:20). Historically, Israel as a nation and as individuals knew God’s acts of judgment and his acts of salvation. Man’s rebellion was the cause of the judgments, but God’s compassion was the grounds for their salvation.

[\(Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament\)](#)

Isaiah uses **pesha’** twice in his description of the Messiah in chapter 53 declaring that...

But He was pierced through for our **transgressions**, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. (Isa 53:5)

By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the **transgression** of my people (Israel) to whom the stroke was due? (Isa 53:8)

In **Proverbs** we read that...

Proverbs 28:13 (**Note**) He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

Here is one of the most significant uses of **pesha’** to us as believers -

Psalm 32:1 (**Spurgeon's Note**) A Psalm of David. A Maskil. How blessed is he whose **transgression** is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!...Ps 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my **transgressions** to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

There are 3 primary Hebrew words for "sin". Each is defined based on the existence of God's standard of righteousness (all that God is, all that God commands, all that God demands, all that God approves, all that God provides in Christ Jesus 1Co 1:30) established by God.

- 1). **Chattat/chattath** [02403] = miss the mark or to fall short of the divine standard; to err and wander
- 2). **Pesha'** [06588] = rebellion or transgression, and indicates revolt against the standard.
- 3). **'Avon** [05771] = iniquity or guilt is a twisting of the standard or deviation from it; crooked dealing

It is notable that all three of these Hebrew words for "**sin**" (pesha', 'avon, chattah) are used by David to describe his personal sin in Ps 51:1-3, a section which represents the greatest statement on the nature of sin in the Old Testament. David's greatest sins did not keep God from using him to teach one of the greatest teachings on sin! **Perhaps you think you have sinned to such a degree (or depth) that God could never use you! You are wrong and David is living proof of this truth!**

Perowne comments on David's use of all 3 Hebrew words for sin in Ps 32:1-2 - Sin is here (as in Ex 34:7) spoken of under three appellations, so as to include the whole idea of sin in all its manifestations: First, as "transgression" (**pesha'**) or departure from God and open defection from His covenant. Secondly, as "a coming short of the mark," (**chattah'**) a deflection from an aim, a not doing of our duty. Thirdly, as including the idea of wrong doing (**'avon**), the guilt, and also the punishment. ([The book of Psalms](#))

KJV also translates **pesha'** as **trespass** (5x) which is from trans = beyond, across + passer = to pass, and "Literally, to pass beyond; hence primarily, to pass over the boundary line of another's land; to enter unlawfully upon the land of another. A man may trespass by walking over the ground of another, and the law gives a remedy for damages sustained. To commit any offense or to do any act that injures or annoys another; to violate any rule of rectitude to the injury of another. In a moral sense, to transgress voluntarily any divine law or command; to violate any known rule of duty." (Webster, 1828)

Transgress is from trans = beyond, across + gradior = to pass and means to pass over or go beyond some set limit. "In a moral sense, to overpass any rule prescribed as the limit of duty; to break or violate a law, civil or moral. To transgress a divine law, is sin. **Transgression** = The act of passing over or beyond any law or rule of moral duty; the violation of a law or known principle of rectitude; breach of command." (Webster, 1828)

Rebel (rebellious) (Webster, 1828) - One who willfully violates a law. One who revolts from the government to which he owes allegiance, either by openly renouncing the authority of that government, or by taking arms and openly opposing it.

Rebellion is inherent in the word **pesha'**. The English word **rebellion** is ugly and describes open, usually unsuccessful defiance or resistance to an established government, in this case God. An open and avowed renunciation of the authority of God to Whom one owes his allegiance. **Do we really understand that this is what we do when we willfully choose to sin against a law or commandment that we clearly know? It is utter spiritual insanity! Like one person said when we act this way we are in essence "practical atheists!"**

Pesha' - 91v - **Pesha'** is translated (NAS) as breach of trust(1), rebellion(6), rebellious(1), rebellious act(2), rebellious acts(2), transgression(37), transgressions(45).

Genesis 31:36 Then Jacob became angry and contended with Laban; and Jacob said to Laban, "What is my transgression? What is my sin that you have hotly pursued me?"

Genesis 50:17 'Thus you shall say to Joseph, "Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong.'" And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

Exodus 22:9 "For every breach of trust, whether it is for ox, for donkey, for sheep, for clothing, or for any lost thing about which one says, 'This is it,' the case of both parties shall come before the judges; he whom the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor.

Exodus 23:21 "Be on your guard before him and obey his voice; do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him.

Exodus 34:7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."

Leviticus 16:16 "He shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities.

21 "Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness.

Numbers 14:18 'The LORD is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generations.'

Joshua 24:19 Then Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression or your sins.

1 Samuel 24:11 "Now, my father, see! Indeed, see the edge of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the edge of your robe and did not kill you, know and perceive that there is no evil or rebellion in my hands, and I have not sinned against you, though you are lying in wait for my life to take it.

1 Samuel 25:28 "Please forgive the transgression of your maidservant; for the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD, and evil will not be found in you all your days.

1 Kings 8:50 and forgive Your people who have sinned against You and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You, and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive, that they may have compassion on them

Job 7:21 "Why then do You not pardon my transgression And take away my iniquity? For now I will lie down in the dust; And You will seek me, but I will not be."

Job 8:4 "If your sons sinned against Him, Then He delivered them into the power of their transgression.

Job 13:23 "How many are my iniquities and sins? Make known to me my rebellion and my sin.

Job 14:17 "My transgression is sealed up in a bag, And You wrap up my iniquity.

Job 31:33 "Have I covered my transgressions like Adam, By hiding my iniquity in my bosom,

Job 33:9 'I am pure, without transgression; I am innocent and there is no guilt in me.

Job 34:6 Should I lie concerning my right? My wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.'

37 'For he adds rebellion to his sin; He claps his hands among us, And multiplies his words against God.'"

Job 35:6 "If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against Him? And if your transgressions are many, what do you do to Him?

15 "And now, because He has not visited in His anger, Nor has He acknowledged transgression well,

Job 36:9 Then He declares to them their work And their transgressions, that they have magnified themselves.

Psalms 5:10 Hold them guilty, O God; By their own devices let them fall! In the multitude of their transgressions thrust them out, For they are rebellious against You.

Psalms 19:13 Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins; Let them not rule over me; Then I will be blameless, And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.

Psalms 25:7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; According to Your lovingkindness remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O LORD.

Psalms 32:1 A Psalm of David. A Maskil. How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!

5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

Psalms 36:1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD. Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes.

Psalms 39:8 "Deliver me from all my transgressions; Make me not the reproach of the foolish.

Psalms 51:1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.

3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me.

Psalm 59:3 For behold, they have set an ambush for my life; Fierce men launch an attack against me, Not for my transgression nor for my sin, O LORD,

Psalm 65:3 Iniquities prevail against me; As for our transgressions, You forgive them.

Psalm 89:32 Then I will punish their transgression with the rod And their iniquity with stripes.

Psalm 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Psalm 107:17 Fools, because of their rebellious way, And because of their iniquities, were afflicted.

Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all transgressions.

19 When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise.

Proverbs 12:13 An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will escape from trouble.

Proverbs 17:9 He who conceals a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.

19 He who loves transgression loves strife; He who raises his door seeks destruction.

Proverbs 19:11 A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, And it is his glory to overlook a transgression.

Proverbs 28:2 By the transgression of a land many are its princes, But by a man of understanding and knowledge, so it endures.

13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

24 He who robs his father or his mother And says, "It is not a transgression," Is the companion of a man who destroys.

Proverbs 29:6 By transgression an evil man is ensnared, But the righteous sings and rejoices.

16 When the wicked increase, transgression increases; But the righteous will see their fall.

22 An angry man stirs up strife, And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.

Isaiah 24:20 The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard And it totters like a shack, For its transgression is heavy upon it, And it will fall, never to rise again.

Isaiah 43:25 "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins.

Isaiah 44:22 "I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud And your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."

Isaiah 50:1 Thus says the LORD, "Where is the certificate of divorce By which I have sent your mother away? Or to whom of My creditors did I sell you? Behold, you were sold for your iniquities, And for your transgressions your mother was sent away.

Isaiah 53:5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?

Isaiah 57:4 "Against whom do you jest? Against whom do you open wide your mouth And stick out your tongue? Are you not children of rebellion, Offspring of deceit,

Isaiah 58:1 "Cry loudly, do not hold back; Raise your voice like a trumpet, And declare to My people their transgression And to the house of Jacob their sins.

Isaiah 59:12 For our transgressions are multiplied before You, And our sins testify against us; For our transgressions are with us, And we know our iniquities:

20 "A Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 5:6 Therefore a lion from the forest will slay them, A wolf of the deserts will destroy them, A leopard is watching their cities. Everyone who goes out of them will be torn in pieces, Because their transgressions are many, Their apostasies are numerous.

Lamentations 1:5 Her adversaries have become her masters, Her enemies prosper; For the LORD has caused her grief Because of the multitude of her transgressions; Her little ones have gone away As captives before the adversary.

14 "The yoke of my transgressions is bound; By His hand they are knit together. They have come upon my neck; He has made my strength fail. The Lord has given me into the hands Of those against whom I am not able to stand.

22 "Let all their wickedness come before You; And deal with them as You have dealt with me For all my transgressions; For my groans are many and my heart is faint."

Ezekiel 14:11 in order that the house of Israel may no longer stray from Me and no longer defile themselves with all their transgressions. Thus they will be My people, and I shall be their God," declares the Lord GOD."

Ezekiel 18:22 "All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live.

28 "Because he considered and turned away from all his transgressions which he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct," declares the Lord GOD. "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you.

31 "Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel?

Ezekiel 21:24 "Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your deeds your sins appear-- because you have come to remembrance, you will be seized with the hand.

Ezekiel 33:10 "Now as for you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus you have spoken, saying, "Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we are rotting away in them; how then can we survive?"'

12 "And you, son of man, say to your fellow citizens, 'The righteousness of a righteous man will not deliver him in the day of his transgression, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he will not stumble because of it in the day when he turns from his wickedness; whereas a righteous man will not be able to live by his righteousness on the day when he commits sin.'

Ezekiel 37:23 "They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God.

Ezekiel 39:24 "According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I dealt with them, and I hid My face from them."'''

Daniel 8:12 And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper.

13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?"

Daniel 9:24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

Amos 1:3 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Damascus and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they threshed Gilead with implements of sharp iron.

6 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Gaza and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they deported an entire population To deliver it up to Edom.

9 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Tyre and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because

they delivered up an entire population to Edom And did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.

11 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Edom and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because he pursued his brother with the sword, While he stifled his compassion; His anger also tore continually, And he maintained his fury forever.

13 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of the sons of Ammon and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead In order to enlarge their borders.

Amos 2:1 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Moab and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.

4 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Judah and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they rejected the law of the LORD And have not kept His statutes; Their lies also have led them astray, Those after which their fathers walked.

6 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Israel and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they sell the righteous for money And the needy for a pair of sandals.

Amos 3:14 "For on the day that I punish Israel's transgressions, I will also punish the altars of Bethel; The horns of the altar will be cut off And they will fall to the ground.

Amos 5:12 For I know your transgressions are many and your sins are great, You who distress the righteous and accept bribes And turn aside the poor in the gate.

Micah 1:5 All this is for the rebellion of Jacob And for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the rebellion of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? What is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?

13 Harness the chariot to the team of horses, O inhabitant of Lachish-- She was the beginning of sin To the daughter of Zion-- Because in you were found The rebellious acts of Israel.

Micah 3:8 On the other hand I am filled with power-- With the Spirit of the LORD-- And with justice and courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, Even to Israel his sin.

Micah 6:7 Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, In ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

Micah 7:18 Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in unchanging love.

Sins (02403)(**chattath**) is the main OT word for sin. **Chattath** literally describes deviations from a target (Jdg 20:16; Pr 19:2), God's holiness in this case. This word was often used of covenant violations (especially idolatry; cf. Lev 26:18, 21; Deut 9:21; Jer 17:3).

TWOT on chattath - The verbal forms occur in enough secular contexts to provide a basic picture of the word's meaning. In Jdg 20:16 the left-handed slingers of Benjamin are said to have the skill to throw stones at targets and "not miss." In a different context, Pr 19:2 speaks of a man in a hurry who "misses his way" (RSV, NEB, KJV has "sinneth"). A similar idea of not finding a goal appears in Pr 8:36; the concept of failure is implied. The verb has the connotation of breach of civil law, i.e. failure to live up to expectations, in Ge 40:1....In the many instances in which the verb occurs in the Qal stem the object is either God or his laws, or else the verb is intransitive. In so acting, man is missing the goal or standard God has for him, is failing to observe the requirements of holy living, or falls short of spiritual wholeness.

What is the rebellion of Jacob? - Matthew Henry answers - It is idolatry it is the high places that is the transgression, the great transgression which reigns in Israel that is spiritual whoredom, the violation of the marriage-covenant, which merits a divorce. Even the high places of Judah, though not so bad as the transgression of Jacob, were yet offensive enough to God, and a remaining blemish upon some of the good reigns. Howbeit the high places were not taken away. ([Commentary](#))

Sins - Robert Culver (Systematic Theology) = Several other words in the biblical vocabulary represent **sin** as something negative, something omitted: missing a target when one should hit it, failing when one should succeed, ignorance of what one should know, falling when one should stand, neglect of duty when one should attend to it, defaulting a debt when one should pay it. (**Ed**: Note that the middle letter of sin is "I"! The application is obvious!)

Is it not Samaria?... Is it not Jerusalem? - Both rhetorical questions call for an affirmative reply! Therefore the **NET Bible** translates the reply to both questions "It certainly is!"

McKay explains the names of **Samaria** and **Jerusalem** "emphatically locate those responsible as being in the capital city. It is from the attitudes of those in government and in the ruling classes of Samaria that evil influences have spread through the land. Those

who should have been nourishing the life of the nation have instead been poisoning it."

Matthew Henry adds - It is the idolatry of **Samaria** and **Jerusalem**, the royal cities of those two kingdoms. These were the most populous places, and where there were most people there was most wickedness, and they made one another worse. These were the most pompous places there men lived most in wealth and pleasure, and they forgot God. These were the places that had the greatest influence upon the country, by authority and example so that from them idolatry and profaneness went forth throughout all the land, Jeremiah 23:15. **Note:** Spiritual distempers (diseases, maladies) are most contagious in persons and places that are most conspicuous. If the head city of a kingdom, or the chief family in a parish, be vicious and profane, many will follow their pernicious ways, and write after a bad copy when great ones set it for them. The vices of leaders and rulers are leading ruling vices, and therefore shall be surely and sorely punished. Those have a great deal to answer for indeed that not only sin, but make Israel to sin. **Those must expect to be made examples that have been examples of wickedness.** If the transgression of Jacob is Samaria, therefore shall Samaria become a heap. Let the ringleaders in sin hear this and fear. ([Commentary](#))

High place of Judah - Micah gives us a striking contrast between the beautiful **high place** of the **Most High God** (Mic 1:3) and the despicable **high places** of men!

High Place (01116) (**bamah**) can refer to a literal (physical) height (high place) such as a mountain or a high place used for worship. Samuel offered acceptable worship to God in the high place (1Sa 9:13). However most OT uses (see first three uses by Moses = Lev 26:30; Nu 22:41; 33:52) refer to places of abominable idol worship or syncretistic worship (~"God plus gods" which is really NOT worship of the One True, Living God!) Habakkuk used **bamah** in his last words in which he gave powerful declaration of his renewed faith "The Lord GOD is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my **high places**. For the choir director, on my stringed instruments." (Hab 3:19) (May his tribe increase! Amen)

TWOT - The idiom of "treading on the heights" conveys the notion of possessing key terrain and thus signifies "being in firm control." To tread **bāmâ** is a promise given to Israel (Dt 33:29; cf. Isa 58:14); it is descriptive also of God (Mic 1:3). The pagan cultic places were usually located on natural heights (1Sa 9:13ff.; 1Sa 10:5; 1Kgs 11:7; 2Kgs 17:9, 29; 23:5, 8). They were supplied with idols (2Chr 33:19), an **āšērâ** ([See Asherah](#)), a wooden pole symbolizing the goddess of fertility and **amassēbâ** (04676 = "something set upright. The word most often refers to a standing, unhewn block of stone utilized for religious and memorial purposes.), one or more stone pillars symbolizing the male deity (2Kgs 3:2). The altar (2Kgs 21:3; 2Chr 14:3) built of stones, was either separate from the **bāmâ** or part of it. The **bāmâ** contained a tent or room where the cultic vessels were stored and where the sacrificial meals were eaten (1Kgs 12:31; 13:32; 2Kgs 17:29; 23:19)]

Six activities seem to be related to HIGH PLACES: burning of incense, sacrificing, eating of sacrificial meals, praying, prostitution, child sacrifice (cf. Jer 7:31). Here the LORD compares His Holy City Jerusalem to the abominable idolatrous high places! **Woe! Do I have any "high places" I have refused to tear down? (cf Hezekiah - 2Ki 18:1-4,5)** (cf 1Cor 10:14, 1Jn 5:21. And remember that "greed" equates with **idolatry!** = Col 3:5-note)

Bamah - 91v - Lev 26:30; Num 22:41; 33:52; Deut 32:13; 33:29; 1 Sam 9:12ff, 19, 25; 10:5, 13; 2 Sam 1:19, 25; 22:34; 1 Kgs 3:2ff; 11:7; 12:31f; 13:2, 32f; 14:23; 15:14; 22:43; 2 Kgs 12:3; 14:4; 15:4, 35; 16:4; 17:9, 11, 29, 32; 18:4, 22; 21:3; 23:5, 8f, 13, 15, 19f; 1 Chr 16:39; 21:29; 2 Chr 1:3, 13; 11:15; 14:3, 5; 15:17; 17:6; 20:33; 21:11; 28:4, 25; 31:1; 32:12; 33:3, 17, 19; 34:3; Job 9:8; Ps 18:33; 78:58; Isa 14:14; 15:2; 16:12; 36:7; 58:14; Jer 7:31; 17:3; 19:5; 26:18; 32:35; 48:35; Ezek 6:3, 6; 16:16; 20:29; 36:2; Hos 10:8; Amos 4:13; 7:9; Mic 1:3, 5; 3:12; Hab 3:19

Judah - name of the southern kingdom after the split of the united monarchy upon the death of Solomon (Read**why** this happened in 1Ki 11:1-12, circa 930 BC).

Micah 1:6 For I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the open country, Planting places for a vineyard. I will pour her stones down into the valley and will lay bare her foundations.

- **I will make** 3:12; 2 Kings 19:25; Isaiah 25:2,12; Jeremiah 9:11; 51:37; Hosea 13:16
- **and I will pour** Jeremiah 51:25; Lamentations 4:1; Ezekiel 13:14; Habakkuk 3:13; Matthew 24:2

For ("therefore" in NIV) - As noted above, always pause and ponder this **term of explanation**.

Therefore ("for" in NAS) - In Micah 1:6-16 the Assyrian invasion is described. Cf. 2Ki 17:1-18. This is the local circumstance which gives rise to the prophecy of the greater invasion in the last days. Micah 4:9-13 and of the Lord's deliverance at Armageddon.; Revelation 16:14; Revelation 19:17. (Scofield)

I will make Samaria a heap of ruins - This is one of those "promises" we don't like, but it is one that God fulfilled through pagan

human instruments when the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom in 722BC (2Ki 17:3-6). Note that while God uses evil men to carry out His chastisement, He is never Himself evil. In addition those evil men will be held accountable for their sinful actions! God is sovereign, holy and just!

Make Samaria a heap of ruins - Fulfilled when the Assyrians besieged Samaria for three years, finally defeating King Hoshea and his forces, and carrying them away to Assyria (2Ki 17:6). Since this event took place during the reign of [Ahaz](#) in Judah, the prophecy itself was evidently made during the previous reign of [Jotham](#). [Samaria](#), built to a state of opulence by [Omri](#) and [Ahab](#), as the capital of Israel, was completely demolished by the Assyrian armies of [Sargon](#). It stood on a hill, but its building stones were thrown down into the valley, just as Micah had prophesied, and its entire area eventually cultivated with vineyards, olive trees and fig trees. God's Word never fails! (Josh 23:14, Josh 21:45, Nu 23:19, Lk 1:37ASV) ([Henry Morris - Defender's Study Bible](#))

Pour her stones down - This refers to the fact that the walls of ancient cities were made of stones. God says they will come "tumbling down!"

Matthew Henry - Neither men of high degree, as the mountains, nor men of low degree, as the valleys, shall be able to secure either themselves or the land from judgments of God, when they are sent with commission to lay all waste, and, like a sweeping rain, to leave no food, Pr 28:3. This is applied particularly to the head city of Israel, which they hoped would be a protection to the kingdom (Micah 1:6): **I will make Samaria**, that is now a rich and populous city, as a heap of the field, as a heap of dung laid there to be spread, or as a heap of stones gathered together to be carried away, and as plantings of a vineyard, as hillocks of earth raised to plant vines in. God will make of that city a heap, of that defended city a ruin, Isaiah 25:2. Their altars had been as heaps in the furrows of the fields (Hosea 12:11) and now their houses shall be so, as ruinous heaps. The **stones** of the city are poured down into the valley by the fury of the conqueror, who will thus be revenged on those walls that so long held out against him. They shall be quite pulled down, so that the very foundations shall be discovered, that had been covered by the superstructure and not one stone shall be left upon another. ([Commentary](#))

Micah 1:7 All of her idols will be smashed, All of her earnings will be burned with fire And all of her images I will make desolate, For she collected them from a harlot's earnings, And to the earnings of a harlot they will return.

- **all the graven** Leviticus 26:30; 2 Kings 23:14,15; 2 Chronicles 31:1; 34:6,7; Isaiah 27:9; Hosea 8:6; 10:5,6
- **the hires** Jeremiah 44:17,18; Hosea 2:5,12
- **for** Deuteronomy 23:18; Joel 3:3; Revelation 18:3,9,12,13

NLT - All her carved images will be smashed to pieces. All her sacred treasures will be burned up. These things were bought with the money earned by her prostitution (cf Ge 38:17,18, Ezek 16:10,11, Hos 2:8,9, 10), and they will now be carried away to pay prostitutes elsewhere."

All...idols...all...earnings...all...images - No exception clauses! Jesus exhorts us to "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Mt 6:20-21-note) **Do not let idols steal your heart, for they will never satisfy your heart and ultimately they will break your heart!** See related discussion on **true contentment**.

Waltke - Golden images, of such monetary value yet so spiritually and politically worthless, were constructed from the wages of cult prostitutes. The conquerors will break them up and use the money to repeat the same cycle. Only the heart of depraved man could worship gods like that!

Martin - In [Baalism](#), a pagan fertility religion, ["sacred" prostitutes](#) were set apart for the "worship" of pagan fertility deities. (**Ed**: What a deception! Worshiping God under the guise of perverted sexual activity! It is amazing how far one will wander from the truth when we begin with a little sin!)

Idols (06456)(**pasil**) is a masculine noun derived from the verb **pāsal** (06458), meaning to hew or to cut, as when one carved an image. The Law was clear - "burn their graven images with fire." (Dt 7:5, 25, cp Dt 12:3 = God is serious! He knows how enticing and ensnaring this sin is!). Utter destruction is the only "cure" for this sin, which reminds us of Jesus' strong words in Mt 5:27-30

If your right eye makes you stumble, **tear** (aorist imperative = command to do this now! Do not delay!) it out and **throw** (aorist imperative) it from you; for (term of explanation) it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. "If your right hand makes you stumble, **cut it off** (aorist imperative) and **throw** (aorist imperative) it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell. (Mt 5:29-30-note)!

Pasil - 23v -

Deut 7:5, 25; 12:3; Jdg 3:19, 26; 2Kgs 17:41; 2Chr 33:19, 22; 34:3f, 7; Ps 78:58; Isa 10:10; 21:9; 30:22; 42:8; Jer 8:19; 50:38; 51:47, 52; Hos 11:2; Mic 1:7; 5:13

Earnings (3x in this verse) (0868)(**ethnan**) the wages (of a harlot).

Ethnan - 8x - Dt 23:18; Isa 23:17f; Ezek 16:31, 34, 41; Hos 9:1; Mic 1:7

Under **King Ahaz** they even began child sacrifice (2Ki 16:3) and the erection of a pagan altar in the temple (2Ki 16:10-16). One of the reforms of Hezekiah's reign was to remove the high places (2Ki 18:4).

The Northern 10 tribes (Israel) had become so apostate (cf God's clear warning - Dt 23:17,18) that the people were actually involved in pagan cultic prostitution (See [Harlot](#)), supposedly under the guise of carrying out "religious worship!" Sin deceives and debases and degrades and this genre of practice is a perfect example of the power of **sin** to destroy a soul! **This axiomatic truth begs the question...Am I "toying" with sin, thinking it's only a "baby boa constrictor" and it would never harm me? Wrong! (See Illustration)** Read Solomon's advice (Pr 5:22-note), ironically and tragically, advice he himself failed to heed - you can know the truth, not heed the truth and continue in bondage to sin (Compare Jesus' words in Jn 8:31-32, 34, 36, James 1:22-24- note)! (**See also Deceitfulness of sin**)

Sin will take you further than you ever wanted to stray!
Cost you more than you ever dreamed you would pay!
Keep you longer than you ever thought you would stay!

Harlot (prostitute) (02181) (**zanah**) is a verb meaning to commit fornication, to be a harlot or to play the harlot. This was a problem with Israel from the very onset of the nation living in Canaan, Moses recording "While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to **play the harlot** with the daughters of Moab." (Nu 25:1) God saw this as "spiritual adultery" because He was their faithful Husband (Isa 54:5; Jer 3:14; Je 31:32 cf Ho 2:2; Isa 62:4-5) and called them to also be faithful. Beloved, this principle has not changed! We all need to continually search our hearts asking "Am I a faithful Bride to my faithful, loving Bridegroom Christ Jesus?"

Patterson - This is probably a reference to the ritual prostitution characteristic of Canaanite fertility cult worship incorporated into Hebrew worship by means of **religious syncretism** (the combination of different forms of belief or practice). According to Allen (1976:273–274), the Israelites had degraded Yahweh into a fertility cult god and "the destruction of its material representations is Yahweh's vindication of himself and his true character."

Zanah - 83v -

Ge 34:31; 38:15, 24; Ex 34:15f; Lev 17:7; 19:29; 20:5f; 21:7, 9, 14; Num 15:39; 25:1; Deut 22:21; 23:18; 31:16; Josh 2:1; 6:17, 22, 25; Jdg 2:17; 8:27, 33; 11:1; 16:1; 19:2; 1Kgs 3:16; 22:38; 1Chr 5:25; 2Chr 21:11, 13; Ps 73:27; 106:39; Pr 6:26; 7:10; 23:27; 29:3; Isa 1:21; 23:15ff; 57:3; Jer 2:20; 3:1, 3, 6, 8; 5:7; Ezek 6:9; 16:15ff, 26, 28, 30f, 33ff, 41; 20:30; 23:3, 5, 19, 30, 43f; Hos 1:2; 2:5; 3:3; 4:10, 12ff, 18; 5:3; 9:1; Joel 3:3; Amos 7:17; Mic 1:7; Nah 3:4

Scofield: These "temple gifts" probably were costly vessels that had been given to heathen temples.

Matthew Henry - What they gave to their idols, and what they thought they got by them, shall be as the hire of a harlot the curse of God shall be upon it, and it shall never prosper, nor do them any good. It is common that what is squeezed out by one lust is squandered away upon another. ([Commentary](#))

The irony of this passage is that the gold and silver taken from Israel's places of idol worship were used by the Assyrians to make their own idols for worship! As **Kaiser** says "All too often evil is like a treadmill that keeps on repeating itself apart from the dramatic intervention of the Spirit of God."

Constable: God would smash Samaria's idols proving them incapable of defending themselves much less helping others. He would burn the luxurious ornaments that the people offered as temple gifts in the conflagration that would accompany Samaria's overthrow. All the pagan images that the people had made would perish. The Lord viewed these physical treasures as the earnings of harlot Israel who had been unfaithful to Him (cf. Hosea). The Israelites had committed adultery with temple prostitutes, but the Assyrians would destroy the gifts that they had brought into their temples and use them for their own idolatrous worship. ([Micah Commentary](#))

Micah 1:8 Because of this I must lament and wail, I must go barefoot and naked; I must make a lament like the jackals and a mourning like the ostriches.

- **I will wail** Isaiah 16:9; 21:3; 22:4; Jeremiah 4:19; 9:1,10,19; 48:36-39
- **I will go** Isaiah 20:2-4
- **a wailing** Job 30:29; Psalms 102:6
- **owls** Heb. daughters of the owl.

THE PROPHET'S EMPATHY AND AGONY

Because of this - Always pause and ponder phrases such as "**because of this**" ("**because**" = explains the reason for something and this word occurs >1400x in NAS functioning as a **term of explanation**). **Interrogate these "code words" with "5W/H type" questions** such as what is **this**? What is Micah explaining (which usually "forces" us to examine the preceding **context**)?

I must go barefoot and naked - Micah is identifying himself with the nation. Captives in combat were often subjected to the humiliation of nakedness. **Patterson** "This was one of several rituals for mourning the dead in the biblical world. The stripping away of clothing and footwear signified the laying aside of one's former status and was a symbolic admission of defeat (Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas 2000:781; cf. the enacted prophecy of Isaiah, Isa 20:2)."

Guzik - Micah didn't just announce judgment and then yawn. He cared so deeply that he wept with God's people. The preacher's duty is more than to just announce judgment and to walk away. He has to care. "Many who have rejected a Christian's logic have been won by his tears." (Boice)

Matthew Henry - We have here a long train of mourners attending the funeral of a ruined kingdom. The prophet is himself chief mourner (Micah 1:8,9): *I will wail and howl I will go stripped and naked*, as a man distracted with grief. The prophets usually expressed their own grief for the public grievances, partly to mollify (soothe) their predictions and to make it appear that it was not out of ill-will that they denounced the judgments of God (so far were they from desiring the woeful day that they dreaded it more than anything), partly to show how very dreadful and mournful the calamities would be, and to stir up in the people a holy fear of the calamities, that by repentance they might turn away the wrath of God. **Note:** We ought to lament the punishments of sinners as well as the sufferings of saints in this world the weeping prophet did so (Jeremiah 9:1) so did this prophet. ([Commentary](#))

Jesus said "**Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted**" (Matt 5:4-note)

David description would apply to Micah's heart - "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." (Ps 51:17-note)

I must lament and wail - It is easy to read this description and miss the very real pain Micah felt at the coming destruction which he was called upon to prophesy. And so we get a brief glimpse into the heart of a prophet. Micah is compelled ("**I must**" - 3x) not just to use one word but four related words, so deep was his grief at the sin of his people and the devastating judgment God declared He must bring against them! And so as Micah received the word of the LORD (Micah 1:1), he grieved deeply by the truth it revealed.

How do I respond to God's Word of truth, especially when His Spirit uses that truth to expose my sin?(cf Heb 4:12-13-note).
The truths in this one verse would make a powerful sermon!

Lament (05594)(**saphad**) means to mourn aloud expressing deep sorrow by weeping, sobbing, even flailing one's arms. Many of the uses are found in the context of mourning over someone's death (Ge 23:2; 50:10; 1Sa 25:1; 28:3; 2Sa 1:12; 3:31; 11:26; 1Ki 13:29-30). In a sense Micah is mourning over the death of a nation, because God's Chosen People had for the most part rejected God and chosen other gods which are really not gods at all! (1Cor 8:4, cp Ps 106:20!)

Septuagint (Lxx) translates **saphad** with **kopto** which in the middle voice (as in this verse) means to beat one's self on the breast as a passionate expression of grief and remorse (as when the world sees Jesus in His glory in Mt 24:30, Rev 1:7-note, cf world's response to fall of Babylon = Rev 18:9-note)

Saphad - 29v -

Gen 23:2; 50:10; 1 Sam 25:1; 28:3; 2 Sam 1:12; 3:31; 11:26; 1Kgs 13:29f; 14:13, 18; Eccl 3:4; 12:5; Isa 32:12; Jer 4:8; 16:4ff; 22:18; 25:33; 34:5; 49:3; Ezek 24:16, 23; Joel 1:13; Mic 1:8; Zech 7:5; 12:10, 12 **Usage NAS:** beat(1), lament(9), lamented(5), mourn(8), mourned(6), mourners(1), mourns(1).

Wail (03213)(**yalal**) means to howl (to emit a loud sustained doleful sound like dogs are known to cry). To cry out loudly, even with "shrill shouting noises of sorrow." To wail with loud weeping, cries of sorrow, deep lamentation.

Lxx translates with **threnéo** = to express grieve as in a dirge, with sorrowful tones, to shriek out, to sing funeral songs (Mt 11:17, to

mourn for someone (Lk 23:27).

Yalal - 29v -

Isa 13:6; 14:31; 15:2f, 8; 16:7; 23:1, 6, 14; 52:5; 65:14; Jer 4:8; 25:34; 47:2; 48:20, 31, 39; 49:3; 51:8; Ezek 21:12; 30:2; Hos 7:14; Joel 1:5, 11, 13; Amos 8:3; Mic 1:8; Zeph 1:11; Zech 11:2. **Usage NAS:** howl(1), turn to wailing(1), wail(25), wailed(1), wailing(2), wails(1).

Lament (04553)(**misped** derived from **saphad**-see note above) describes deep, despairing emotional reactions by persons and animals at some calamity.

Lxx translates **misped** with **kopetos** = beating the breast as a sign of grief and lamentation (Acts 8:2 at the martyr Stephen's burial; used of Joseph and his family's reaction to the death of the patriarch Jacob/Israel - Ge 50:10; also used in Zech 12:10 when Israel sees Messiah return).

Misped - 13v - Ge 50:10; Esther 4:3; Ps 30:11; Isa 22:12; Jer 6:26; 48:38; Ezek 27:31; Joel 2:12; Amos 5:16f; Mic 1:8, 11; Zech 12:11. **Usage NAS:** lament(1), lamentation(4), mourning(5), wailing(4).

Here is an encouraging use of **misped** by David who testifies to the power of God's Spirit...

You have turned for me my **mourning** into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness (Ps 30:11-[Spurgeon's exposition](#))

Mourning (060)(**ebel**) describes the feeling and/or expression of grief or sorrow, often accompanied by ritual actions that signify that one is mourning.

Lxx translates **ebel** with **penthos** (cf verb **pentheo**) which means to experience and/or express grief, sadness, sorrow (as used in James 4:9-note = *mourn*).

Ebel - 22v - Ge 27:41; 50:10-11; Deut 34:8; 2Sa 11:27; 14:2; 19:2; Esther 4:3; 9:22; Job 30:31; Eccl 7:2, 4; Isa 60:20; 61:3; Jer 6:26; 16:7; 31:13; Lam 5:15; Ezek 24:17; Amos 5:16; 8:10; Mic 1:8 **Usage NAS:** mourn(1), mourning(23)

I must make a lament like the [Jackals](#) and a mourning like the [Ostriches](#).- The "ostrich" was known to have "a peculiar mournful cry that is sometimes mistaken by the Arabs for that of the lion." (Smith's Dictionary). ISBE describes "their night cries that were guttural, terrifying groans, like the roaring of lions. The birds were brought into many pictures of desolation, because people dreaded their fearful voices."

To help you understand Micah's two similes listen to...

- [The shrill cry of the Jackal](#)
- [The haunting cry of the Ostrich](#)

Micah 1:9 For her wound is incurable, for it has come to Judah; It has reached the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem.

- **her wound is incurable** or, she is grievously sick of her wounds. Isaiah 1:5,6; Jeremiah 15:18; 30:11-15
- **it** 2 Kings 18:9-13; Isaiah 8:7,8
- **he** 12; 2 Chronicles 32:1-23; Isaiah 10:28-32; 37:22-36

For - Always pause and ponder this **term of explanation**. Micah continues to explain why he is so heart broken over his people. He foresees the coming Assyrian invasion.

Her wound - Some think this refers to Samaria's punishment from God. Others think it refers to Samaria's sin which **has come to Judah** much like gangrene which spreads in the human body and kills unless it is cut out. The NET translation has "It has infected Judah; it has spread to the leadership of my people and has even contaminated Jerusalem!"

Samaria's sin was both communicable and terminal and Judah had become infected! There is no such thing as a "little sin." Sin is always terminal (Ro 5:12-note), unless covered by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Wound (04347)(**makkah**) refers literally to a blow delivered by a weapon. It describes the punishment due someone in a legal case (40 stripes - Dt 25:3, cp Pr 20:30). God is occasionally the subject of **makkah** (Josh 10:10 Lev 26:21) **Lxx** translates **makkah** with

the Greek noun **plege** = blow, stripe, wound, bruise.

Makkah - 44v - Lev 26:21; Num 11:33; Deut 25:3; 28:59, 61; 29:22; Josh 10:10, 20; Jdg 11:33; 15:8; 1 Sam 4:8, 10; 6:19; 14:14, 30; 19:8; 23:5; 1Kgs 20:21; 22:35; 2Kgs 8:29; 9:15; 2Chr 2:10; 13:17; 28:5; Ps 64:7; Pr 20:30; Isa 1:6; 10:26; 14:6; 27:7; 30:26; Jer 6:7; 10:19; 14:17; 15:18; 19:8; 30:12, 14, 17; 49:17; 50:13; Mic 1:9; Nah 3:19; Zech 13:6. **Usage in NAS:** blow(1), casualties(1), crushed(1), disasters(1), inflicted(1), injury(1), plague(3), plagues(4), slaughter(14), stripes(1), strokes(2), wound(8), wounded(1), wounds(9).

Reached the gate of my people - **Morris** comments "Micah could also foresee the future time when the same Assyrian invaders ([Sennacherib](#) in 701BC would come to the very "gate of my people, even to Jerusalem" during the later reign of [Hezekiah](#) (2Ki 18:17, 13-27)."
([Defender's Study Bible](#))

Another nuance of this passage is that the **gate** was the place where leaders conducted civic business (see 1Ki 22:10), so that this phrase could also refer to the leaders who would be present at the city gate.

Apple - "City Gate -- refers to the place of counsel and power; the king's counselors or cabinet -- this sin had reached to the very top and defiled the entire nation."

Micah 1:10 Tell it not in Gath, Weep not at all. At Beth-le-aphrah roll yourself in the dust.

- **Declare** 2 Samuel 1:20; Amos 5:13; 6:10
- **Aphrah** i.e., dust. Joshua 18:23; Job 2:8; Jeremiah 6:26; Lamentations 3:29

Micah 10:1-15 lists 11 cities, indicating the scope of the human shame and the divine sentence. Many of the names of the cities represent word plays in that they sound like (or have a related meaning to) what they symbolize.

Stewart Briscoe (Hearing God's Voice Above The Noise) says that it would be like an American preacher on prime time TV saying, "Living in Pittsburg is the pits.... Los Angeles is no city of angels. Wisconsin should only be pronounced Wiscon-SIN." That would sort of get attention, don't you think? (**Ed:** This was Micah's methodology at least in part.)

Here is **John Phillips'** summary of Micah's word plays on the names of the towns to be destroyed...

- **Gath:** "Tell it not in Tell-town."
- **Aphrah:** "Roll in dust at Dust-town."
- **Saphir:** "beauty shamed at Beauty-town"
- **Zaanan:** "no going out from Out-town"
- **Beth-ezel:** "no neighborliness at Neighbor-town"
- **Maroth:** "bitter tears at Bitter-town"
- **Jerusalem:** "no peace at Peace-town"
- **Lachish:** "horsepower gone from Horse-town"
- **Achzib:** "Falsehood reigns at False-town."
- **Mareshah:** "no possessions left at Possession-town"
- **Adullam:** "no testimony in Testimony-town"

Tell it not in [Gath \(a Philistine city\)](#) ("Don't gab about it in Gath!" - Davis) - The Hebrew word for "tell" (nagad) sounds like the name of the city, Gath (gat). Micah's point is much like David in 2Sa 1:20, where neither wanted the destruction of Israel to be a source of gloating or reveling by Israel's enemies.

[Click here for Bible Map - Mareshah, Lachish, Adullam, etc](#) - All of the cities mentioned are generally south and west (toward the Mediterranean Sea side) of Jerusalem and "lay along the route normally traveled by invading forces from the north, who typically followed the Great Trunk Road south until they reached Gath." (ESVSB)

Roll yourself in the dust ("wallow about in mourning in the dust") ("In Dust-town [Beth-le-aphrah] roll yourself in dust!" - Davis) - Speaks of sitting on the dust which was an outward sign of mourning in the ancient world. (cf Ps 44:25-[note](#))

Beth Leaphrah means "House of Dust" (thus it is a play on the Hebrew word for "dust" = 'apar). The inhabitants of this town would "roll...in the dust" as a symbol of deep despair and humiliation as a result of their defeat. To sit in the dust was an outward sign of mourning. Micah's exhortation reminds me of the psalmist's words regarding the positive aspect of **affliction** (See Ps 119:67, 71-[note](#)).

Peterson's paraphrase picks up on Micah's multiple Hebrew word plays...

Micah 1:10

Don't gossip about this in Teltown.

Don't waste your tears.

In Dustville,
roll in the dust.

In Alarmtown,
the alarm is sounded.

Micah 1:11

The citizens of Exitburgh
will never get out alive.

Lament, Last-Stand City:
There's nothing in you left standing.

Micah 1:12

The villagers of Bittertown
wait in vain for sweet peace.
Harsh judgment has come from God
and entered Peace City.

Micah 1:13

All you who live in Chariotville,
get in your chariots for flight.
You led the daughter of Zion
into trusting not God but chariots.
Similar sins in Israel
also got their start in you.
Go ahead and give your good-bye gifts
to Good-byeville.

Micah 1:14

Miragetown beckoned
but disappointed Israel's kings.

Micah 1:15

Inheritance City
has lost its inheritance.
Glorytown
has seen its last of glory.

Micah 1:16

Shave your heads in mourning
over the loss of your precious towns.
Go bald as a goose egg—they've gone

into exile and aren't coming back.

Micah 1:11 Go on your way, inhabitant of Shaphir, in shameful nakedness. The inhabitant of Zaanan does not escape. The lamentation of Beth-ezel: "He will take from you its support."

- **Pass** Isaiah 16:2; Jeremiah 48:6,9
- **thou inhabitant of Saphir** Mic 1:8; Isaiah 20:4; 47:2,3; Jeremiah 13:22; Ezekiel 16:37; Nahum 3:5

Go on your way, inhabitant of Shaphir, in shameful nakedness ("Pass on for yourselves, resident of Beautyburg [Shaphir], in shameful nakedness!" Davis) - This description describes the citizens of Shaphir marching into exile after being humiliated by the Assyrian warriors. Sin is costly beloved! Sin unconfessed assures shame (cp Pr 28:13-note)

Ryrie - "Micah uses puns in denouncing these cities: e.g., [Shaphir](#) (Micah 1:11) sounds like the Hebrew word for beauty (Ed: or "pleasant") and is contrasted with their shame (**shameful nakedness**); [Zaanan](#) (Micah 1:11) sounds like a verb meaning "to go out" (or "come out") and is contrasted with the fear of the people to go outside their houses; [Beth Ezel](#) (Micah 1:11) resembles a word meaning "foundation," and they had none; [Maroth](#) (Micah 1:12), sounds like a word meaning "to wait for good," whereas they were waiting for evil."

Zaanan -- sounds like a verb meaning "to go out" Micah is saying in essence "The inhabitants of Zaanan will not go out (escape)." Davis - "The residents of Marchville [Zaanan] do not march forth."

[Beth Ezel](#) - **Wiersbe**: "Beth Ezel means "house of taking away," and the city would be taken away."

Micah 1:12 For the inhabitant of Maroth becomes weak waiting for good, Because a calamity has come down from the LORD To the gate of Jerusalem.

- **Maroth** Ruth 1:20
- **waited carefully** or, was grieved. 1 Samuel 4:13; Job 30:26; Isaiah 59:9-11; Jeremiah 8:15; 14:19
- **but** 9; Isaiah 45:7; Amos 3:6

See Spurgeon's Sermon - [Maroth-or, The Disappointed \(3184\) - Micah 1:12](#)

ESV Study Bible says - "[Maroth](#) (Micah 1:12) conveys the concept of bitterness. Thus a "bitter" town longs for good." (Hebrew word for bitter = marah [04785](#) - see Ex 15:23. [Maroth](#) would desire "sweet" but would experience "bitter" from the hand of Jehovah in the day of her calamity.

Calamity has come down from the LORD - Jehovah Himself is behind the destruction! They may have been His chosen people, but when chosen people (and this applies to believers today) choose sin, they are choosing to begin to walk on the path of destruction! Yes, we can always confess our sins (1Jn 1:9-note, Pr 28:13-note), but we must remember that God is an **Impartial Judge** judge Who does not play favorites and Who does not change His laws of sowing and reaping (cf Gal 6:7-note, Gal 6:8-note; See also the "painful" passages - Heb 12:5-10-note, Heb 12:11-note regarding the disciplining hand of Jehovah).

Calamity ([07451](#)) (**ra'**) first use in the eternal contrast = Ge 2:9!) describes that which is opposite of good and is a **key word** in Micah used 7 times in 6 verses - Mic 1:12, Mic 2:1 (evil), Mic 2:3 (used twice - "calamity" and "evil"), Mic 3:2 (evil), Mic 3:11 (calamity), Mic 7:3 (evil). Upshot? **Sow evil, reap calamity! Why do we so often discount (fail to believe) this truth? (Jer 17:9 is probably the best answer!)**

To the gate of Jerusalem - **Davis** - "Jerusalem comes like a thud at the end of Micah 1:10–12, for if **Jerusalem** goes under the whole show is over, the game is up for everyone. What hope can these outlying communities have if the premier city is herself under assault?"

Micah 1:13 Harness the chariot to the team of horses, O inhabitant of Lachish-- She was the beginning of sin To the daughter of Zion-- Because in you were found yhe rebellious acts of Israel.

- **Lachish** Joshua 15:39; 2 Kings 18:13,14,17; 2 Chronicles 11:9; 32:9; Isaiah 37:8

- **bind** Genesis 19:17; Isaiah 10:31; Jeremiah 4:29
- **she** Exodus 32:21; 1 Kings 13:33,34; 14:16; 16:31; Revelation 2:14,20; 18:1-5
- **for** 2 Kings 8:18; 16:3,4; Jeremiah 3:8; Ezekiel 23:11

Harness the chariot to the team of horses, O inhabitant of [Lachish](#) – "Team of horses" is the Hebrew phrase *larekesh* ("team of horses"). **Lachish** would need riding steeds for a fast getaway.

Davis - Lachish guarded important access routes into the interior of the land. It was heavily fortified—during the divided kingdom it had double defensive walls, the upper one nineteen feet (just under six meters) thick, the lower thirteen (four meters). When Sennacherib finally took Lachish in around 701 BC, he took up seventy linear feet (over twenty-one meters) of his palace wall to depict his conquest. (What else could he do? He had failed to conquer Jerusalem.)...Sadly, the prophet accuses Lachish of being infectious—she had apparently embraced the 'rebellions of Israel', the twisted, syncretistic worship of the northern kingdom, and then became a conduit that transmitted this corrupt worship into the life of the southern kingdom. I take 'Israel' here as referring to the northern kingdom.

Wiersbe: Since **Lachish** sounds like the Hebrew word for "a team of swift horses," he warned them to harness their horses to the chariots and try to escape.

She was the beginning of sin - MacArthur writes that "Lachish was a key military fortress (2Chr 11:9) whose 'sin' was dependence on military might."

Beginning (07225)(**reshith - word study** from **rosh** = head) means beginning, first, chief, best, first-fruits. Here in Micah it is translated in Lxx with **archegos** which strictly speaking means one who goes first on the path and thus describes the leader or the pioneer (as in Heb 2:10), to one who cause something to begin.

Reshith can have one of two meanings - (1) The beginning or the first step in a course of action (as in Ps 111:10, Pr 17:14, Mic 1:13) or (2) The chief thing as the principal aspect or component of something (Pr 4:7).

HCSB Study Bible - Reliance on military might as the beginning sin leading to acts of rebellion among God's people. (Isa 30:15-17)" ([HCSB](#))

Constable - Sarcastically, Micah urged the people of Lachish (Heb. lakish), a town known for its horses, to hitch a team (Heb. rekesh) of horses to a chariot to escape from the enemy. They would not be able to escape, however, because Lachish had led Jerusalem, as horses lead a chariot, into the sin of idolatry. ([Ref](#))

MISSING GOD'S MARK!

Sin (02403)(**chattat/chattath**) means wrong, iniquity, sin. **Chattat**, like it's NT counterpart (**hamartia**), means to miss or fall short of the mark, which ultimately is the will and plan of God as revealed in Scripture. Sin is whatever misses the will of God for man doctrinally or morally. The result of chattat/chattah is that man misses the goal God has for him by failing to observe the requirements of holy living and thus falls short of spiritual wholeness. We are all sinners. We all miss the mark, and none of us are perfect nor will we ever be perfect in this life. This is why Christ had to die for our sin so we might have His righteousness (see 2Cor 5:21).

Chattat can be an offense against man (1Sa 20:1 Ps 59:3, Ge 31:36 which also has word **pesha'**) but more often represents an offense against God, and is found mainly in the historical and prophetic literature. It is interesting that even pagan Pharaoh recognized his sin against Jehovah and against Moses (Ex 10:16 where sinned = verb chata, [02398](#)), and ask Moses to intercede with God to "remove this death from me." (Ex 10:17)

We get a word picture of the meaning of **miss the mark** by the use of the related verb **chata'** ([02398](#)) in Judges 20:16 where we read that "Out of all these people 700 choice men were left-handed; each one could sling a stone at a hair and not **miss** (**Lxx** = **examartano** [**ex** + **hamartano**] means to miss one's aim, to err, to sin.)." The Hebrew verb chata is used 221v in in OT and is translated "sin" 55x and "sinned" 87x (First use = Ge 20:6, 9). In a different context, chata is used in Pr 19:2 to describe a man in a hurry who "misses his way" (Pr 19:2ESV)

The **NET Note** on Pr 1:10 (which has the cognate word "sinners" - [02400](#)) is interesting, explaining that "the idea of sin is often explained as "missing the moral mark". But the term should not be restricted to the idea of a sin of ignorance or simply falling short of the moral ideal. Its meaning is more likely seen in the related Akkadian term "to revolt, rebel." It is active rebellion against authority. It is used here (Pr 1:10-note) in reference to a gang of robbers."

TWOT - like other words related to the notion of "sin" **chattat** assumes an absolute standard or law. But, whereas **pesha'** signifies a "revolt against the standard," and **'avon** means either "to deviate from the standard" or "to twist the standard," **chattat** means "to miss, to fall short of the standard."

Chattat is translated by the Lxx here in Micah 1:13 with the noun **hamartia** which describes a departure from doing what is right, especially as it relates to God's standard of righteousness. In fact the **chattat** is most commonly translated in the Lxx with **hamartia**, although occasionally it is translated with **anomia** (Neh 4:5, Job 13:23 uses both **hamartia** and **anomia**) which describes that which is without the law and signifies, not merely the abstract idea, but disregard for, or actual breach of, the law of God.

In Ex 29:14 we see that **chattat/chattath** can refer not only to sin but also to the **sin offering**. This latter meaning takes on special significance in Leviticus 16 which describes in detail the annual **Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)**, **chattat** is used 8 times to describe the **sin offering** (Lev 16:3, 5-6, 9, 11, 15, 25, 27). How fascinating that the same word **chattat/chattath** describes not only the problem but also the remedy for the problem. Indeed, it was the blood of the **sin offering** that brought atonement (Lev 16:6, 11, 27)! **Mounce** writes that this "has profound implications for understanding Paul's statement in 2Cor 5:21 **note**, that the One Who knew no sin was made sin for us, that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. Did Jesus become sin, or did He become a sin offering? Given Paul's thorough acquaintance with the OT, perhaps both are implied." (**Ed comment**: See Ro 8:3 **note** = "in the likeness of sinful flesh and [as an offering] for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh")

The first use of **chattat/chattath** in Genesis personifies **sin** as if it were a fierce animal like a lion getting ready to pounce on Cain, its victim. One might also think of sin here as having a snare (like a trap getting ready to spring) with an attractive power or luring force (See the "**snare**" aspect of Jeroboam's idolatrous calves = 1Ki 12:30; 13:34 = both use **chattat**). What is fascinating is that God tells Cain he must master it (**chattat/chattath**) which means he could have mastered it (God never calls us to do something He does not enable us to carry out), which means that there was surely sufficient grace available to Cain to enable obedience (had his heart wanted to obey)! Amazing grace indeed! And so we read Gen 4:7 = "If you do well, will not [your countenance] be lifted up? (Rhetorical - answer of course is "Yes!") And if you do not do well, **sin** is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master (Heb = *mashal* = "govern" in Ge 1:18) it." We see another aspect of **chattat** in Pr 5:22 where Solomon warns (and sadly failed to heed his own warning - see 1Ki 11:1-11) "His own iniquities (**'avon**) will capture the wicked, and he will be held with the cords of his sin."

In the second use of **chattat** God says "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their **sin** is exceedingly grave." (Ge 18:20)

In Pr 5:22 Solomon warns (and sadly failed to heed his own warning - see 1Ki 11:1-11) of the power of sin using two of the Hebrew words for sin - "His own **iniquities** (**'avon**) will capture (Heb - *lakad* = catch in a net, trap or pit, figuratively of entrapment of men caught in snares laid by enemies as in Jer 5:26; 18:22; Ps 35:8; Lxx translates *lakad* with verb **agreuo** used in " hunting or fishing = to take, catch; figuratively of taking advantage of someone in an unguarded moment, seeking to catch them in a mistake, try to get them to make a wrong statement as in Mk 12:13) the wicked, and he will be held (Heb = *tamak* = basic idea = "grasping securely")! with the cords of his sin (**chattat/chattath**)."

ISBE - A fairly exact definition of **sin** based on Biblical data would be that sin is the transgression of the law of God (1 John 3:4). Ordinarily, sin is defined simply as "the transgression of the law," but the idea of God is so completely the essential conception of the entire Biblical revelation that we can best define sin as disobedience to the law of God. It will be seen that primarily sin is an act, but from the very beginning it has been known that acts have effects, not only in the outward world of things and persons, but also upon him who commits the act. Affects the Inner Life: Hence, we find throughout the Scriptures a growing emphasis on the idea of the sinful act as not only a fact in itself, but also as a revelation of an evil disposition on the part of him who commits the act (Genesis 6:5). ([See full article on sin](#))

Webster (1828) on **iniquity** - 1. Injustice; unrighteousness; a deviation from rectitude; as the iniquity of war; the iniquity of the slave trade. 2. Want of rectitude in principle; as a malicious prosecution originating in the iniquity of the author. 3. A particular deviation from rectitude; a sin or crime; wickedness; any act of injustice.

Webster (1828) on **sin** - The voluntary departure of a moral agent from a known rule of rectitude or duty, prescribed by God; any voluntary transgression of the divine law, or violation of a divine command; a wicked act; iniquity. Sin is either a positive act in which a known divine law is violated, or it is the voluntary neglect to obey a positive divine command, or a rule of duty clearly implied in such command. Sin comprehends not actions only, but neglect of known duty, all evil thoughts, purposes, words and desires, whatever is contrary to God's commands or law.

Webster (1828) on **wrong** - Not morally right; that deviates from the line of rectitude prescribed by God; not just or equitable; not right or proper; not legal; erroneous ; as a wrong practice; wrong ideas; a wrong course of life; wrong measures; wrong inclinations and desires; a wrong application of talents; wrong judgment. Hab. 1.

Vine - The basic nuance of this word is “sin” conceived as missing the road or mark (155 times). Chattat can refer to an offense against a man: (Ge 31:36). It is such passages which prove that chattat is not simply a general word for “sin”; since Jacob used two different words, he probably intended two different nuances. In addition, a full word study shows basic differences between chattat and other words rendered “sin.” For the most part this word represents a sin against God (Lev 4:14). Men are to return from “sin,” which is a path, a life-style, or act deviating from that which God has marked out (1Ki 8:35). They should depart from “sin” (2 Kings 10:31), be concerned about it (Ps. 38:18), and confess it (Num. 5:7)....In a few passages the term connotes the guilt or condition of sin = (Ge 18:20). The word means “purification from sin” in two passages = (Nu. 8:7; cf. 19:9). Chattat means “sin offering” (135 times). The law of the “sin offering” is recorded in Lev 4- 5:13; 6:24-30. This was an offering for some specific “sin” committed unwittingly, without intending to do it and perhaps even without knowing it at the time (Lev. 4:2; 5:15).

Baker on chattat - A feminine noun meaning sin, transgression, sin offering, punishment. The word denotes youthful indiscretions (Ps. 25:7); evil committed against another (Gen. 50:17); trespasses against God (2 Chr. 33:19; Ps. 51:2[4]; Amos 5:12); a general state of sinfulness (Isa. 6:7); and the specific occasion of sin, particularly in reference to idolatry (Deut. 9:21; Hos. 10:8). It also implies an antidote to sin, including purification from ceremonial impurity (Num. 19:9, 17); the sacrificial offering for sin (Ex. 29:14; Lev. 4:3); and the punishment for sin (Lam. 4:6; Zech. 14:19). In the story of Cain and Abel, sin appears as a creature, ready to pounce, lurking “at the door” of Cain’s heart (Gen. 4:7).

Chattat - 267v in **NAS** = offering for the sin(1), punishment(3), purification from sin(2), sin(93), sin offering(117), sin offerings(2), sinful(1), sinned(1), sinner(1), sins(70).

Chattat - 272v in **KJV** = sin 182, sin offering 116, punishment 3, purification for sin 2, purifying 1, sinful 1, sinner 1; 296

Chattat/chattath - 267v - Most of the uses are in Leviticus and Numbers and then in the prophets. -

Ge 4:7; 18:20; 31:36; 50:17; Ex 10:17; 29:14, 36; 30:10; 32:30, 32, 34; 34:9; Lev 4:3, 8, 14, 20f, 23ff, 28f, 32ff; 5:6ff; 6:17, 25, 30; 7:7, 37; 8:2, 14; 9:2f, 7f, 10, 15, 22; 10:16f, 19; 12:6, 8; 14:13, 19, 22, 31; 15:15, 30; Lev 16:3, 5-6, 9, 11, 15-16, 21, 25, 27, 30, 34; 19:22; 23:19; 26:18, 21, 24, 28; Nu 5:6f; 6:11, 14, 16; 7:16, 22, 28, 34, 40, 46, 52, 58, 64, 70, 76, 82, 87; 8:8, 12; 12:11; 15:24f, 27; 16:26; 18:9; 19:9, 17; 28:15, 22; 29:5, 11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38; 32:23; Deut 9:18, 21, 27; Josh 24:19; 1 Sam 2:17; 12:19; 14:38; 15:23, 25; 20:1; 2 Sam 12:13; 1 Kgs 8:34ff; 12:30; 13:34; 14:16, 22; 15:3, 26, 30, 34; 16:2, 13, 19, 26, 31; 2 Kgs 3:3; 10:31; 12:16; 13:2, 6, 11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 24, 28; 17:22; 21:16f; 24:3; 2 Chr 6:25ff; 7:14; 28:13; 29:21, 23f; 33:19; Ezra 8:35; Neh 1:6; 4:5; 9:2, 37; 10:33; 13:26; Job 10:6; 13:23; 14:16; 34:37; 35:3; Ps 25:7, 18; 32:5; 38:3, 18; 51:2f; 59:3, 12; 79:9; 85:2; 109:14; Prov 5:22; 10:16; 13:6; 14:34; 20:9; 21:4; 24:9; Isa 3:9; 6:7; 27:9; 30:1; 40:2; 43:24f; 44:22; 58:1; 59:2, 12; Jer 5:25; 14:10; 15:13; 16:10, 18; 17:1, 3; 18:23; 30:14f; 31:34; 36:3; 50:20; Lam 4:6, 13, 22; Ezek 3:20; 16:51f; 18:14, 21, 24; 21:24; 33:10, 14, 16; 40:39; 42:13; 43:19, 21f, 25; 44:27, 29; 45:17, 19, 22f, 25; 46:20; Dan 9:20, 24; Hos 4:8; 8:13; 9:9; 13:12; Amos 5:12; Mic 1:5, 13; 3:8; 6:7, 13; 7:19; Zech 13:1; 14:19

Isa 6:7 And he touched my mouth [with it] and said, “Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity (**'avon**) is taken away, and your **sin (chattah)** is forgiven.”

There are 3 primary Hebrew words for “sin”. Each is defined based on the existence of God's standard of righteousness (all that God is, all that God commands, all that God demands, all that God approves, all that God provides in Christ Jesus 1Co 1:30) established by God.

1. Chattat/chattath [02403] = miss the mark or to fall short of the divine standard; to err and wander
2. Pesha' [06588] = rebellion or transgression, and indicates revolt against the standard.
3. 'Avon [05771] = iniquity or guilt is a twisting of the standard or deviation from it; crooked dealing[/FONT>

Other Resources on Sin -

- [Sin \(1\) - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Sin - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Sin - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#)
- [Sin \(2\) - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#)
- [Sin - Torrey's Topical Textbook](#)
- [Sin - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)

To the daughter of Zion— Pictures Jerusalem as a young lady, at her beginnings (see comment on Mic 4:10).

Because in you were found The rebellious acts of Israel.

Micah 1:14 Therefore you will give parting gifts On behalf of Moresheth-gath; The houses of Achzib will become a deception To the kings of Israel.

- **give** 2 Samuel 8:2; 2 Kings 16:8; 18:14-16; 2 Chronicles 16:1-3; Isaiah 30:6
- **to** or, for. houses. Psalms 62:9; 118:8,9; 146:3,4
- **Achzib** that is, a lie. Joshua 15:44

Moresheth Gath - Even Micah's hometown would be destroyed! Have you ever preached a word that you did not want to preach because it was "too close to home?" Micah would understand! (cf his reaction in Mic 1:8) [HCSB-SB](#) adds that "Like a father giving away his betrothed daughter (cf Dt 22:23), Judah would have to give away Moresheth-gath (sounds like Hebrew meorashah; meaning "betrothed") to Assyria."

Wiersbe: **Moresheth Gath** sounds like a Hebrew word meaning "betrothed"; and brides were given farewell gifts. In other words, the town would no longer belong to Judah but would "leave home" and belong to the invaders.

Achzib - Davis- "Achzib (from kāzab, to lie; hence, 'Deceitville')...The houses of Deceitville [Achzib] have proven deceitful to the kings of Israel." Though it promised help, Achzib ("deception") would not come through.

David Guzik has an interesting discussion of the "puns" on the names of the towns in Micah 1:10-16

Though Micah uses puns, this isn't about clever word games - it goes back to the ancient idea that a name isn't just your "handle" but describes - sometimes prophetically - your character and your destiny. In showing how the name of these cities is in some way a prophecy of their destiny, Micah shows how our character becomes our future.

- a. Tell it not in **Gath**: The city of Gath belonged to the Philistines, and it hurts Micah to think that the Philistines will rejoice at the pain of God's people.
- b. In **BethAphrah** roll yourself in the dust: Following to the end of the chapter, Micah uses puns and plays on words to talk about the judgment coming upon the cities of Judah. These towns are clustered in the Shephelah - the lowlands between the coastal region and the mountains of Judah.
- c. **Beth Aphrah**: To Micah, Aphrah sounds like the Hebrew word for dust, so he told the citizens of Beth Aphrah to roll in the dust in anticipation of coming judgment.
- d. **Shaphir**: The name of this town sounds like the word for beautiful. It won't be beautiful for long, and Micah warns the citizens of Shaphir to prepare for judgment.
- e. **Zaanan**: The name of this town sounds like the Hebrew word for exit or go out. When the siege armies come, they won't exit at all - they will be shut up in the city until it falls.
- f. **Beth Ezel**: The name of this town means the nearby city. When the army of judgment comes, it won't be near and helpful to any other city.
- g. **Maroth**: The name of this town means bitterness, and when the army of judgment comes the citizens of Maroth will know plenty of bitterness.
- h. **Lachish**: The name of this town sounds like the Hebrew word for to the horses. Lachish was an important fortress city, and they should go to the horses to fight, but ironically they will go to the horses to flee the army of judgment.
- i. **Moresheth**: The name of this - Micah's hometown - sounds like the Hebrew word for betrothed. Here he speaks of giving the city wedding gifts as she passes from the rule of one "husband" (Judah) to another (the invading army).
- j. **Aczib**: The name of this town sounds like the Hebrew word for deceitful or disappointing. This city will fall so quickly it will be a deception and a disappointment for Israel.
- k. **Mareshah**: The name of this town is related to the Hebrew word for possessor or heir. The invading army will soon possess this city.

I. **Adullam**: The was the place of refuge for David when he fled from King Saul. It will again be a place of refuge for the high and mighty among Israel, when they are forced to hide out in Adullam.

Micah 1:15 Moreover, I will bring on you the one who takes possession, O inhabitant of Mareshah. The glory of Israel will enter Adullam.

- **will** Isaiah 7:17-25; 10:5,6; Jeremiah 49:1
- **Mareshah** Joshua 15:44
- **he, etc** or, the glory of Israel shall come to, etc. 1 Samuel 22:1; Isaiah 10:3
- **Adullam** Joshua 15:35; 2 Chronicles 11:7

I will bring on you - Jehovah is speaking

Glory of Israel - Glory probably refers to the people of Israel (see Hos 9:11-13), presumably the nobility. Like David centuries before, they would flee for refuge to the caves of [Adullam](#) (1Sa 22:1, 2Sa 23:13)

Mareshah ("possession") - This name sounds like the Hebrew word *yoresh* meaning "conqueror" (or possessor). Jehovah would bring on **Mareshah** the Assyrian conquerors who would take possession of the city. Ironically the Hebrew word *yoresh* had been used to describe Israel's dispossession of Canaan. The *dispossessors* would now themselves be *dispossessed*!

NET Note says the **NIV** translation "**He** who is the glory of Israel will come to Adullam," sounds as if an individual is in view, and could be understood as a messianic reference." The context however does not support this interpretation.

Micah 1:16 Make yourself bald and cut off your hair, Because of the children of your delight; Extend your baldness like the eagle, For they will go from you into exile.

- **bald** Job 1:20; Isaiah 15:2; 22:12; Jeremiah 6:26; 7:29; 16:6; Amos 8:10
- **thy delicate** Deuteronomy 28:56,57; Isaiah 3:16-26; Lamentations 4:5-8
- **for** Deuteronomy 28:41; 2 Kings 17:6; Isaiah 39:6,7

Make yourself bald and cut off your hair - Although forbidden in Lev 21:5 and Dt 14:1, in this context baldness was allowed as a sign of their deep mourning over the exile of their children. (See Ezra 9:3, Job 1:20, Isa 22:12, Ezek 7:18 = latter verse in view of the coming destruction of Jerusalem).

DISCLAIMER: Before you consult commentaries, sermons or other resources, first consult the Word of God, studying the Scriptures diligently (2Ti 2:15-note) and inductively (See inductive Bible study) in dependence on your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, Who Jesus promised would [guide](#) us into all truth (John 16:13).

THOUGHTS ON INTERPRETATION OF PROPHETIC BOOKS

In regard to the **OT Prophetic books** such as **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and the 12 "Minor" Prophets**, remember that the most accurate interpretation is derived by applying the following principles:

(1) Read the Scripture **literally** (unless the text is clearly figurative, e.g., Jesus said "I am the door..." Jn 10:9). If one interprets a text symbolically ([allegorically](#), figuratively, spiritualizing) when that text makes **good sense** literally, one potentially opens themselves to the danger of inaccurate interpretation, for then the question arises as to who's "symbolic" interpretation is correct and how imaginative one should be in evaluating a "supposed symbol"? Many of the commentaries and sermons on the OT prophetic books unfortunately are replete with **non-literal** interpretations (except when it comes to Messianic Passages, which are usually interpreted literally). Therefore the watchword when reading any commentary on Old Testament prophecy is caveat emptor ("buyer beware"). Read all commentaries like the Bereans (Acts 17:11-note).

(2) Study the **context** which is always "king" in interpretation (don't take verses out of context.)

(3) Passages addressed to **Israel** should be interpreted as directed to the literal nation of Israel and should not be interpreted as addressed to the **NT Church**, an entity not mentioned in the Old Testament. The promises of **Jehovah** to the **nation of Israel** (e.g., see **Millennial Promises**) remain **valid** (Jer 31:35, 36, 37, Nu 23:19, Lk 21:33) and have not been passed on to the **NT Church** because Israel has "defaulted" (See study Israel of God). Remember that while Scripture has only **one correct interpretation**, there can be many legitimate **applications** (See Application), and therefore the OT prophetic books are extremely applicable in the lives of NT believers.

(4) Scripture is always the best commentary on Scripture. While an attempt has been made to list resources that adhere to these basic interpretative guidelines, not all the works listed in these collections have been read in detail. Therefore should you discover a resource you feel is NOT conservative and/or orthodox, please email your concerns.

Related Resources:

- Inductive Bible Study - Guidelines to Assure Accurate Interpretation
- Inductive Bible Study Interpretation of Prophetic Scripture
- Interpretative Views of the Revelation of Jesus Christ
- [Allegorical Interpretation - Tony Garland](#)
- [Interpreting Symbols - Tony Garland](#)
- [Basic Considerations in Interpreting Prophecy - John Walvoord](#)
- Millennium - Biblical descriptions of this time on earth, primarily from the OT prophets

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