

# **Dr. Elaine Phillips, Micah, Prophet Outside the Beltway**

## **Session 3, Micah 2**

### **Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

#### **1. Abstract of Phillips, Micah, Session 3, Micah 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

This transcription details a Bible study session led by Dr. Elaine Phillips and Perry Phillips on Micah chapter two. The session reviews the historical, geographical, and literary context of Micah's prophecy, focusing on the socio-political climate of Judah during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The main discussion centers on interpreting Micah's condemnation of the societal injustices—land grabbing, oppression of the poor, and the rise of false prophets—and God's promised restoration of His people. The instructors employ close textual analysis, exploring linguistic nuances and multiple layers of dialogue within the text, before concluding with the promise of God's future intervention and gathering of a remnant of Israel.

**2. 19 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Phillips, Micah, Session 3 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Minor Prophets → Micah).**



**Phillips\_Micah\_Sess  
ion03.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. Elaine Phillips' lecture on Micah chapter 2:

#### Briefing Document: Dr. Elaine Phillips on Micah 2

**Overall Theme:** This session focuses on Micah chapter 2, exploring themes of **judgment, covenantal disobedience, social injustice, and God's response**, which includes both judgment and promise of restoration. Dr. Phillips emphasizes the "woe" oracles, covenantal violations, and the complex layers of voices within the chapter. She also provides historical context and draws parallels to other biblical texts.

#### Key Ideas and Facts:

##### 1. Historical and Geographical Context:

- **Southern Kingdom Focus:** While acknowledging the presence of the Northern Kingdom, the primary focus is on the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
- **Prosperity & Abuse:** Uzziah's reign brought prosperity but also systemic abuses, including land grabbing. "The good economic advancement and prosperity that were part of Uzziah's reign may have had some other things going on."
- **Ahaz's Apostasy:** Ahaz's apostasy led to God's judgment, involving aggression from the Northern Kingdom, Syria, Edom, and the Philistines.
- **Shephelah Importance:** The Shephelah, the buffer zone between the coastal plain and the Judean hills, was a critical area of conflict with invasion routes through its east-west valleys. Micah's hometown, Maresha, is located in this buffer zone.
- **Assyrian Threat:** The Assyrian empire posed a major threat, conquering Samaria in 722 BC and impacting cities in the Shephelah.

##### 1. Literary & Stylistic Features of Micah:

- **Trauma & Triumph:** Each section of Micah includes elements of trauma (judgment) and triumph (restoration).
- **Broken Language:** The language is often broken, turbulent, and syntactically fragmented, reflecting the chaos and emotional intensity of the time. Translators often "smooth over" this brokenness, but it's important to recognize the raw and visceral nature of the text.

- **Lament:** Lament is expressed through both words and actions (weeping, wailing, rolling in dust).
- **Dialogue & Multiple Voices:** Micah's words intertwine with the Lord's, and other voices are quoted within the text, requiring careful parsing to understand the different perspectives.
- **Figures of Speech:** Micah utilizes a variety of figures of speech to make his points.

## 1. Covenantal Relationship & Violations

- **God's Blessings:** God's covenant with Israel included blessings such as the Torah, the land, and God's presence. "Israel has been chosen by the Lord to be a blessing...They're blessed with the Torah, God's instructions on how to live best to be fruitful. They're blessed with the land. It's part of the covenant promises. They're blessed with God's presence with them."
- **Disobedience & Consequences:** The covenant required obedience, but the people were repeatedly disobedient, especially through idolatry, which would lead to exile.
- **Ten Commandments:** Focus on commandments against idolatry, false witness, and covetousness. "The Ten Commandments...special focus on not having other gods, on no idols or idolatry, no false witness, don't bear false witness...the Tenth Commandment, do not covet."
- **Care for the Poor:** The covenant also required concern for and provision for the poor and marginalized.
- **Warnings Against False Prophets:** The people are warned against false prophets, who appear within Micah's text. "Obviously, warnings against false prophets. They were given instructions on how to tell a false prophet from a true one...But the warnings against the false prophets are tremendously important."
- **Justice as Measure for Measure:** God's justice is based on a principle of "measure for measure," where the punishment reflects the severity of the offense, a theme also found in the way Micah uses words. "The measure of their infraction measured by God's response to it... The way Micah uses words to depict their sins, those words are echoed in how God responds to them."
- **Loss of Torah Anchor:** The failure of the king and people to teach and adhere to the Torah was a key factor in their downfall.

### 1. **Micah 2:1-5 - The Initial Indictment:**

- **"Woe" to the Oppressors:** Micah begins with "woe" oracles against those who devise evil, work it out at night, and then carry it out in the morning using their power. "Woe to those who devise trouble and those who work evil on their beds. In light of the morning, they perform it because it is in the strength of their hand."
- **Covetousness and Extortion:** They are accused of coveting and seizing fields and houses, practicing extortion, and taking inheritances.
- **God's Response: "Devising Evil":** God responds to their scheming by stating, "Therefore, thus says the Lord, behold, I am devising evil against this family, from which you will not be able to remove your necks." This is a "measure for measure" response from God.
- **Loss of Pride & Taunting:** They will not walk proudly, and they will be mocked by a taunting proverb or lament. "You will not walk proudly, for it will be an evil time. In that day, one will take up a proverb...a lament... Destroyed, we are destroyed."
- **Reapportionment of Land:** God will reapportion the land, taking it away from the oppressors, echoing the violation of inheritance principles that was part of their sin. "He has altered the portion of my people...He has divided our fields to an apostate."

### 1. **Micah 2:6-7 - False Prophets and the Rejection of Judgment:**

- **False Prophets Drip:** Micah quotes the false prophets who tell him not to "drip" (prophecy) concerning judgment and that reproach won't come upon them. "Do not drip. Presumably, words, they drip. They ought not drip concerning these things. Reproach will not overtake, or could be translated leave, and then possibly us."
- **Rejection of God's Justice:** The false prophets question if the Spirit of the Lord is short and if these judgments are truly from God. "Is it said, O house of Judah, and then now presumably the house of Judah, has been saying, this next quote, is the spirit of the Lord short if these are his works?"
- **Integrity is Key:** Micah and the Lord's response is "Do not my words do good with the one walking in integrity." This statement underscores that God's word is good for those who live righteously, implicitly condemning those who do not.

### 1. **Micah 2:8-11 - Social Fabric Torn Apart**

- **People as Enemies:** God says "Lately, my people, they've been rising up to become an enemy." indicating the severity of their societal breakdown, that they have become their own enemy.
- **Abuse of Returning Warriors:** The people are accused of abusing those returning from battle, stripping them of their honor. "From the front of a garment, you strip off the mantle...From those passing by, secure, presumably, those returning from battle."
- **Abuse of Women and Children:** The women are driven from their homes, and the children are robbed of their future inheritance. "The women of my people, you drive away from her luxurious house. From her young children, you take away my glory forever."
- **Exile:** The people are told to get up and leave, as their place is defiled, and will be ruined. "Get up and go, because this is not the resting place. Because it's defiled, it will be ruined, and the sickened, destruction."
- **False Prophecy for Profit:** Micah reiterates the false prophets who speak falsehood, willing to drip prophecy for wine and beer. "If a person comes and lies with a spirit of falsehood, quote, I will drip for you about wine and beer. Or maybe that preposition could mean, I will drip for you for wine and beer."

#### 1. **Micah 2:12-13 - Promise of Restoration and a King**

- **Gathering:** God will gather and bring together the remnant of Israel, like a flock in a secure enclosure. "I will certainly gather, O Jacob, all of you. I will certainly bring together the remnant of Israel."
- **Shepherding Image:** The image shifts to that of a shepherd protecting his flock.
- **Breaking Through:** One who breaks through has gone up before them, they pass the gate, and they go out. "one who breaks through has gone up before them. They've broken through and passed the gate. They've gone out through it."
- **King and Lord:** God will lead them and be their head. "Their king has passed before them and the Lord will be their head."

### Key Quotes:

- "The good economic advancement and prosperity that were part of Uzziah's reign may have had some other things going on."
- "Israel has been chosen by the Lord to be a blessing...They're blessed with the Torah, God's instructions on how to live best to be fruitful. They're blessed with the land. It's part of the covenant promises. They're blessed with God's presence with them."
- "Woe to those who devise trouble and those who work evil on their beds. In light of the morning, they perform it because it is in the strength of their hand."
- "Therefore, thus says the Lord, behold, I am devising evil against this family, from which you will not be able to remove your necks."
- "You will not walk proudly, for it will be an evil time. In that day, one will take up a proverb...a lament... Destroyed, we are destroyed."
- "Do not drip. Presumably, words, they drip. They ought not drip concerning these things. Reproach will not overtake, or could be translated leave, and then possibly us."
- "Is it said, O house of Judah, and then now presumably the house of Judah, has been saying, this next quote, is the spirit of the Lord short if these are his works?"
- "Do not my words do good with the one walking in integrity."
- "Lately, my people, they've been rising up to become an enemy."
- "Get up and go, because this is not the resting place. Because it's defiled, it will be ruined, and the sickened, destruction."
- "I will certainly gather, O Jacob, all of you. I will certainly bring together the remnant of Israel."
- "one who breaks through has gone up before them. They've broken through and passed the gate. They've gone out through it. Their king has passed before them and the Lord will be their head."

**Significance:**

- **Covenantal Disobedience:** The lecture highlights the importance of the covenantal relationship between God and Israel and the dire consequences of breaking that covenant.
- **Social Justice:** The text exposes the pervasive social injustices of the time, including the abuse of power, economic oppression, and the mistreatment of vulnerable groups.
- **God's Response:** The lecture emphasizes that God's response is not only one of judgment but also of eventual restoration and protection.
- **Complexity of Voices:** Dr. Phillips underscores the complex literary nature of the text, noting the shifting voices and rhetorical strategies Micah uses, making careful interpretation essential.
- **Application:** The themes resonate for modern readers, prompting reflection on issues of power, social justice, and the importance of faithfulness.

This detailed briefing document captures the main points of Dr. Phillips' lecture, providing a solid foundation for understanding the key issues in Micah 2.

## 4. Phillips, Micah, Session 3, Micah 2

### Micah Chapter 2: A Study Guide

#### Short Answer Quiz

1. **What is the primary focus of Micah chapter 2 in terms of structural issues?**  
Micah chapter 2 primarily focuses on the judgment against woe, crimes, and their consequences, exploring the societal and spiritual breakdown of the time. It delves into specific injustices and their repercussions, highlighting the gravity of the covenantal violations.
2. **Describe the historical context of Micah's prophecies, particularly concerning the Southern Kingdom.** The Southern Kingdom initially experienced prosperity under Uzziah, but this period was marked by systemic abuses. Ahaz's apostasy led to significant aggression from neighboring kingdoms and pressure from Assyria, setting the stage for God's judgment.
3. **How did the geographical landscape of the Shephelah influence the events of Micah's time?** The Shephelah's east-west valleys served as invasion routes, with threats coming primarily from the coastal plain where the Philistines were located. This strategic location made cities in the Shephelah particularly vulnerable and the buffer zone.
4. **What are some of the literary styles employed by Micah in the book, and why might they be significant?** Micah's language is often broken and turbulent, mirroring the chaos and trauma of the times. He employs lamenting words and actions, dialogues, and figures of speech, these stylistic choices emphasize the emotional and spiritual impact of his prophecies.
5. **Summarize the covenant relationship between God and Israel, as discussed in the lecture.** Israel was chosen by God to be a blessing, receiving the Torah, the land, and God's presence as blessings. However, their disobedience, particularly through idolatry, led to warnings of exile and a call to return to the covenant.
6. **According to the lecture, what are some of the specific covenant violations highlighted in Micah 2?** Micah 2 highlights violations of the Ten Commandments, particularly coveting, the failure to care for the poor and marginalized, and the acceptance of false prophets. These actions demonstrated a fundamental break with their covenant obligations.



7. **What is the significance of the phrase "working evil on their beds" in Micah 2?**  
This phrase suggests that the people were so engrossed in their evil that they planned and initiated their actions from their beds, immediately putting their malicious plans into action, demonstrating that they were wholly consumed by their evil intents.
8. **Explain the "measure for measure" concept that is applied in Micah 2.** "Measure for measure" refers to God's response to their sins, often echoing their actions in the consequences they face. For example, their devising of trouble leads to God devising evil, illustrating a direct correlation between their behavior and divine justice.
9. **How does the use of the word "drip" function in Micah 2?** The word "drip" is used by the false prophets to mock Micah's prophetic pronouncements, suggesting they were trivial and negative. Micah uses the word back to show their rhetoric is not coherent and they are not to be trusted.
10. **Summarize the shift in tone at the end of Micah 2, and what it implies for the people.** At the end of Micah 2, there is a shift from judgment to hope with images of shepherding and a king, with a reminder of God's power to break through obstacles and lead his people to safety. These images offer a sense of security despite the tumult and suggest a future restoration.

### **Answer Key**

1. Micah chapter 2 primarily focuses on the judgment against woe, crimes, and their consequences, exploring the societal and spiritual breakdown of the time. It delves into specific injustices and their repercussions, highlighting the gravity of the covenantal violations.
2. The Southern Kingdom initially experienced prosperity under Uzziah, but this period was marked by systemic abuses. Ahaz's apostasy led to significant aggression from neighboring kingdoms and pressure from Assyria, setting the stage for God's judgment.
3. The Shephelah's east-west valleys served as invasion routes, with threats coming primarily from the coastal plain where the Philistines were located. This strategic location made cities in the Shephelah particularly vulnerable and the buffer zone.
4. Micah's language is often broken and turbulent, mirroring the chaos and trauma of the times. He employs lamenting words and actions, dialogues, and figures of

speech, these stylistic choices emphasize the emotional and spiritual impact of his prophecies.

5. Israel was chosen by God to be a blessing, receiving the Torah, the land, and God's presence as blessings. However, their disobedience, particularly through idolatry, led to warnings of exile and a call to return to the covenant.
6. Micah 2 highlights violations of the Ten Commandments, particularly coveting, the failure to care for the poor and marginalized, and the acceptance of false prophets. These actions demonstrated a fundamental break with their covenant obligations.
7. This phrase suggests that the people were so engrossed in their evil that they planned and initiated their actions from their beds, immediately putting their malicious plans into action, demonstrating that they were wholly consumed by their evil intents.
8. "Measure for measure" refers to God's response to their sins, often echoing their actions in the consequences they face. For example, their devising of trouble leads to God devising evil, illustrating a direct correlation between their behavior and divine justice.
9. The word "drip" is used by the false prophets to mock Micah's prophetic pronouncements, suggesting they were trivial and negative. Micah uses the word back to show their rhetoric is not coherent and they are not to be trusted.
10. At the end of Micah 2, there is a shift from judgment to hope with images of shepherding and a king, with a reminder of God's power to break through obstacles and lead his people to safety. These images offer a sense of security despite the tumult and suggest a future restoration.

## Essay Questions

1. Analyze the social and economic injustices described in Micah 2, and discuss how they relate to the covenant violations of the time.
2. Examine the role and rhetoric of the false prophets in Micah 2, and explain why their message is ultimately rejected by God.
3. Compare and contrast the various literary styles and devices used in Micah 2, and discuss how they contribute to the overall message of the chapter.
4. Explore the significance of the covenant relationship between God and Israel, as presented in Micah 2, and how it informs both the judgments and promises within the chapter.
5. Discuss the transition from judgment to hope at the end of Micah 2 and how the imagery of shepherding and a king provides a sense of security to a people facing tremendous challenges.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Shephelah:** The geographical region of foothills between the coastal plain and the central mountains of Israel, acting as a buffer zone that was vulnerable to invasion.
- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of religious or political beliefs, which was specifically seen in Ahaz, a leader of the Southern Kingdom.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement or contract, especially between God and his people, that outlined their obligations and promises.
- **Lament:** A passionate expression of grief or sorrow, often used in the context of mourning or judgment.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or false gods, seen as a major sin against the covenant with God.
- **Torah:** The first five books of the Hebrew Bible, containing God's laws and instructions for living, also generally referring to the entire body of Jewish teachings and law.
- **False Prophets:** Individuals who claimed to speak on behalf of God but were actually conveying their own opinions or deceptive messages, often in direct opposition to true prophets.
- **Measure for Measure:** A principle of divine justice in which the consequences of actions directly reflect the nature of those actions; a form of retributive justice.
- **Remnant:** A small group of people that survives a catastrophe or remains after a larger group is destroyed, often carrying a promise of hope and future restoration.
- **Inclusio:** A literary device in which a passage or section begins and ends with similar words or phrases, creating a sense of completeness or framing.

## 5. FAQs on Phillips, Micah, Session 3, Micah 2, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ on Micah Chapter 2:

**1. What are the primary social and economic injustices condemned in Micah 2?**

Micah 2 primarily condemns the powerful in society who exploit the vulnerable through greed and the abuse of power. Specifically, it highlights how these individuals devise and carry out evil plans, often coveting and seizing fields, houses, and inherited lands. They are accused of practicing extortion against their neighbors, essentially stealing their property and livelihoods, violating inheritance laws and demonstrating a lack of concern for the poor.

**2. How does Micah describe the actions of those committing these injustices?**

Micah portrays these individuals as deeply engrossed in their evil deeds, planning them at night and executing them with the full strength of their hand and power in the morning. He uses vivid language, emphasizing that their actions are not merely thoughts but actively pursued with a calculated cruelty, revealing the deep corruption of their intentions and actions. Micah also suggests they are so intent on their plans that their evil plans are put into practice almost as soon as they wake up.

**3. How does God respond to these injustices, and what does "measure for measure" mean in this context?**

God responds to these injustices with a "measure for measure" principle, reflecting the nature of the sins back onto the perpetrators. Because they devised evil, God declares that He is devising evil against them. They seized properties; therefore, God will overrule and seize back what was taken illegitimately. The principle means that God's judgment will be proportional to the wickedness they have committed, directly related to their specific actions and behaviors.

**4. Who are the false prophets mentioned in Micah 2, and what is their role?**

The false prophets in Micah 2 are those who contradict Micah's message of judgment. They tell people what they want to hear, not what they need to hear. They are accused of 'dripping' or spouting out messages that are not true but rather based on their own self-interest, specifically regarding financial gain. They are characterized as those who can't believe God could be angry with them and their people. Their messages are often incoherent and do not align with God's will or

actions, leading people astray. Micah seems to be suggesting that they are actively trying to counter his messages.

5. **What is the significance of the “dripping” imagery used in the chapter?** The "dripping" imagery, translated as prophesying, is a key element in understanding the conflict between true and false prophecy. Initially, the false prophets accuse Micah of 'dripping,' indicating that he is just speaking words of judgement and they respond to it. However, Micah appropriates this language to accuse the false prophets of being willing to "drip" messages for financial gain (wine and beer). It is used to illustrate the corrupt and self-serving nature of their messages and to emphasize the contrast between their empty rhetoric and true prophecy.
6. **What is the 'resting place' mentioned in Micah 2, and what does it mean to say it is defiled?** The 'resting place' in Micah 2 could refer to the land of Israel itself, specifically as a place of rest under God's blessing or to the Temple in Jerusalem where God's presence was meant to reside among the people. Both of these places have become defiled by the people's wickedness and social injustices. Defilement implies the moral and spiritual corruption that has rendered the land or the Temple unfit for God's presence and no longer a place of rest, leading to the consequence of exile and destruction.
7. **How does Micah 2 end with a message of hope, and what is the role of the shepherd and king in this context?** Micah 2 ends with a message of hope by shifting from judgment to restoration. The images of the shepherd and the king suggest God's role in gathering, protecting, and leading his people. God promises to bring together the remnant of Israel, providing security and guiding them out of the current oppression by 'breaking through' on their behalf, while also leading the people, which is a new contrast to the idea of them rising up in enmity. The Shepherd's care and the King's leadership offers promise for the future and that their hardship won't last forever.
8. **What literary devices does Micah use to emphasize the seriousness of the message in Micah 2?** Micah employs several literary devices such as the use of the word "woe" at the beginning of the chapter, which is an exclamation of impending judgment. He utilizes the "measure for measure" principle, where their sins are directly related to God's response and incorporates vivid imagery, such as those of “dripping,” to emphasize the corruption of the false prophets. He layers different speakers to highlight the confusion of the false prophets and shows the difference between their rhetoric and the true message, which is that God does have standards and they have violated them