

Dr. Gary Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 20, Message of Micah 1-3 Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 20, Message of Micah 1-3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Gary Yates' lecture on Micah 1-3 explores the prophet's message of impending judgment and eventual salvation for Judah during the Assyrian crisis. The lecture highlights how Micah uses rhetorical skill, including wordplay and historical allusions, to emphasize the seriousness of God's message, focusing on the sins of both leaders and false prophets. **Yates explains that Micah's message warns of military invasion and exile, but also promises restoration if Judah repents.** This message, Yates argues, influenced Hezekiah to turn to God, sparing Judah from immediate judgment, demonstrating the importance of responding to God's word. **The lecture emphasizes that true covenant relationship requires both blessing and responsibility, a balance the people had forgotten.** Ultimately, Yates positions Micah as a reminder of the proper understanding of a relationship with God.

2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 20 – 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 → Major Prophets → Book of the Twelve [Minor Prophets]).



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on20.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 20, Message of Micah 1-3

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from Dr. Gary Yates's lecture on Micah 1-3:

Briefing Document: Micah 1-3 - The Message of Micah

Main Themes:

- **Judgment and Salvation:** The book of Micah presents a powerful message that interweaves warnings of impending judgment with promises of ultimate restoration. "So, as we look at this, we see a powerful message of judgment and salvation." The book is structured around these alternating themes.
- **Covenant Responsibility:** A central argument is that Israel and Judah have failed to uphold their covenant responsibilities to God, leading to the coming judgment. True prophets emphasize that the covenant includes both blessing and responsibility. "If we have not kept the commandments, then we have no right to expect the blessings."
- **Social Injustice:** Micah condemns the social injustice prevalent in Judah, particularly the oppression of the poor by the wealthy and powerful leaders. "Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil on their beds...They covet fields and seize them and houses and take them away. They oppress a man in his house and a man in his inheritance."
- **False Prophets:** Micah contends with false prophets who preach a message of peace and prosperity without acknowledging the people's sin and the need for repentance. These prophets offer what the people *want* to hear, not what they *need* to hear. "These other prophets are preaching God's blessing, and they are preaching what the people want to hear."
- **Rhetorical Skill and Communication:** Yates highlights Micah's effective use of rhetorical devices, including wordplay, puns, historical allusions, and vivid imagery, to communicate his message and impress its urgency upon his audience. "Micah is going to do something that is rhetorically brilliant." "What it does is that it makes the message more impressionable."

- **God's Relenting (or not):** Yates discusses how God can change his mind. "God bases the final decisions and whether he will bring judgment or salvation on the responses that people have to him." But, he does not always relent, as in cases where covenants have been made, or a line has been crossed.

Key Ideas and Facts:

- **Historical Context:** Micah prophesied in Judah during the 8th century BC, a time of Assyrian crisis. His message influenced King Hezekiah to repent, averting immediate judgment. "Remember that we learn from Jeremiah chapters 26, verses 17 to 19, that Micah's message played a significant role in helping Hezekiah to turn to God and in bringing about the sparing of Judah from the judgment that fell on the northern kingdom."
- **Structure of Micah:** The book is divided into three major sections, each introduced by the call "to hear."
- **Micah 1: Judgment on Samaria and Judah:** Micah uses a rhetorical strategy similar to Amos, initially focusing on judgment against other nations and Samaria before delivering the core message of judgment against Judah and Jerusalem. God is depicted as a warrior whose presence causes the earth to tremble.
- **Micah 1: Wordplay and Imagery:** Micah uses wordplay involving the names of Judean cities to vividly illustrate the Assyrian invasion and impending judgment. For example, "Tell it not in Gath" alludes to the mourning after Saul's death. Moresheth (Micah's hometown) sounds like "betrothed" but will become a dowry for the Assyrian army.
- **Micah 2: Sins of the Leaders and False Prophets:** This chapter explains *why* judgment is coming, focusing on the social injustices perpetrated by Judah's leaders and the deceptive messages of the false prophets.
- **Micah 2: The "Nataph" Controversy:** Micah's opponents tell him "do not preach" using the Hebrew word *nataph* which can mean drip or foam. Micah sarcastically adopts this term for their worthless messages.
- **Micah 3: Cannibalistic Metaphor:** Micah uses the shocking metaphor of leaders as cannibals who "tear the skin off from my people and their flesh from off of their bones" to emphasize the horrific nature of their injustice.
- **Micah 3: Judgment Inevitable (But Contingent):** Micah proclaims the destruction of Jerusalem, but this is conditional. Repentance can avert the disaster.

- **God's Response to Repentance:** Yates emphasizes the importance of human response to God's word. God is willing to relent from judgment if people repent, as seen in the examples of Nineveh and Hezekiah. However, God's character is not capricious, and he will uphold his covenant promises.

Quotes:

- "So, as we look at this, we see a powerful message of judgment and salvation."
- "If we have not kept the commandments, then we have no right to expect the blessings."
- "These other prophets are preaching God's blessing, and they are preaching what the people want to hear."
- "Micah is going to do something that is rhetorically brilliant."
- "What it does is that it makes the message more impressionable."
- "Remember that we learn from Jeremiah chapters 26, verses 17 to 19, that Micah's message played a significant role in helping Hezekiah to turn to God and in bringing about the sparing of Judah from the judgment that fell on the northern kingdom."
- "You tear the skin off from my people and their flesh from off of their bones. You eat the flesh of my people. You flay their skin from off of them, and you break their bones into pieces. You chop them up like meat in a pot and like flesh in a cauldron."
- "God bases the final decisions and whether he will bring judgment or salvation on the responses that people have to him."

Significance:

This lecture provides valuable insights into the book of Micah, highlighting its key themes, rhetorical strategies, and theological significance. It underscores the importance of covenant faithfulness, social justice, and discerning true prophecy. It also provides understanding of how and why God may or may not "change his mind."

4. Study Guide: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 20, Message of Micah 1-3

Micah 1-3: A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What was the primary message that Micah preached to the people of Judah?
2. What are the three major sections of the book of Micah introduced by?
3. How does Micah use rhetorical skill in chapter 1 to deliver his message?
4. What is the significance of Micah's wordplays on the names of Judean cities?
5. What is the primary sin that Micah identifies as the reason for Judah's coming judgment?
6. What is the meaning of "nataph" in the context of the false prophets?
7. Describe the conflicting messages of the true and false prophets in Micah's time.
8. How does Micah portray the wickedness of the leaders of Israel and Judah in chapter 3?
9. How did King Hezekiah's response to Micah's prophecy affect the fate of Judah?
10. What does Micah reveal about the conditional nature of God's judgment and salvation?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Micah preached a message of judgment and salvation, warning that Jerusalem would be destroyed but also promising ultimate restoration. He emphasized that Judah faced imminent invasion and exile due to their sins, but repentance could lead to God's mercy.
2. The three major sections of the book of Micah are introduced by the phrase "to hear." These sections highlight different aspects of the judgment and salvation messages, as well as the people's failure to uphold their covenant responsibilities.
3. Micah begins by talking about God's judgment falling on the nations and Samaria before turning to Judah and Jerusalem. This allows him to ease into the

unpopular message, grabbing their attention by initially focusing on others before addressing their own sins.

4. Micah's wordplays on the names of Judean cities were designed to impress the seriousness of the coming judgment on the people. By associating each city's name with a related concept or historical allusion, he created a vivid and unforgettable message.
5. Micah identifies social injustice and the failure of civil leaders to uphold justice as the primary sin leading to Judah's judgment. This includes oppressing the poor, seizing property, and generally failing to adhere to the principles of the Mosaic Law.
6. In the context of the false prophets, "nataph" refers to a "dripping" or "foaming at the mouth" type of preaching. It suggests a dismissive view of their message as something worthless or even deceptive, indicating a rejection of Micah's warnings.
7. True prophets like Micah warned of impending judgment and called for repentance, while false prophets preached peace and prosperity regardless of the people's behavior. The false prophets offered a message that was more appealing to the people but not necessarily the message they needed to hear.
8. Micah portrays the wickedness of the leaders through a powerful metaphor, comparing them to cannibals who tear the skin and flesh from their people. This imagery highlights the horrific nature of their crimes and injustices.
9. King Hezekiah's repentance in response to Micah's prophecy led God to delay the judgment on Judah. This demonstrates the conditional nature of God's judgment, as repentance can lead to divine mercy.
10. Micah's message reveals that God's judgment and salvation are conditional and based on the people's response to Him. When they repent and turn from their sins, God is willing to relent from judgment and offer salvation.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of Micah's ministry in relation to the Assyrian crisis and its impact on Judah. How did his message differ from the messages of other prophets at the time, and what made it particularly challenging for the people to accept?
2. Analyze the rhetorical strategies employed by Micah in chapter 1. How does he use wordplay, historical allusions, and vivid imagery to convey the message of impending judgment, and what is the overall effect on his audience?
3. Explore the theme of social justice in Micah 2-3. What specific injustices does Micah condemn, and how does he connect these injustices to the coming judgment on Judah?
4. Compare and contrast the messages of the true and false prophets in Micah's time. What were the key differences in their approaches, and why was it difficult for the people to discern which message to believe?
5. Evaluate the concept of God changing His mind in the Old Testament, as illustrated in the book of Micah. How does this concept relate to God's sovereignty and human responsibility, and what implications does it have for understanding the nature of divine judgment and salvation?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Assyrian Crisis:** The period in the 8th century BCE when the Assyrian Empire posed a significant threat to the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
- **Theophany:** An appearance or manifestation of God to humans, often accompanied by dramatic natural phenomena like earthquakes and melting mountains.
- **Rhetorical Skill:** The art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, used by prophets to communicate their messages powerfully and memorably.
- **Wordplay (Pun):** The humorous or clever use of words to suggest different meanings or applications of a word, used to add emphasis and memorability.
- **Historical Allusion:** A reference to a well-known historical event or figure, used to draw parallels or comparisons and enrich the meaning of a message.
- **Social Justice:** The concept of fairness and equality in society, particularly concerning the distribution of resources and opportunities, and the treatment of marginalized groups.
- **False Prophets:** Individuals who claimed to speak for God but delivered messages that were not in accordance with God's true will, often preaching peace and prosperity without calling for repentance.
- **Nataph:** A Hebrew word meaning "to drip" or "to foam at the mouth," used to describe the style of preaching employed by false prophets.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement or promise between God and His people, outlining the terms of their relationship and the blessings and responsibilities associated with it.
- **Zion Tradition:** The theological tradition surrounding Jerusalem (Zion) as God's chosen city and dwelling place, emphasizing God's protection and deliverance of the city.

5. FAQs on Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 20, Message of Micah 1-3, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Micah FAQ

1. What is the primary message of the Book of Micah, and what historical context shaped it?

Micah's message is a powerful combination of judgment and salvation, delivered in Judah during the 8th century Assyrian crisis. He warns of severe judgment, including military invasion and exile, but also promises eventual restoration and the coming of a Davidic Messiah. This message was delivered against the backdrop of the looming threat of Assyria and the social injustices within Judah.

2. How does Micah structure his book, and what are the key themes in each section?

Micah's book is structured into three main sections, each introduced by the call "to hear." The first section (chapters 1-2) focuses on military invasion and exile, but with a hint of future restoration. The middle section emphasizes the promise of salvation and the restoration of Israel, with Zion becoming the center of God's kingdom, ruled by a Davidic Messiah. The final section (chapters 6-7) reiterates Judah's failure to uphold the covenant and expresses personal grief and a hope that mourning will turn into joy and restoration.

3. How does Micah use rhetorical skill in chapter 1 to communicate his message of judgment?

Micah employs a similar rhetorical strategy to Amos, beginning with judgments against the nations and Samaria before focusing on Judah and Jerusalem. He describes God coming as a warrior, causing the earth to tremble, to emphasize the power and awesomeness of God's judgment. He utilizes word plays and puns on the names of Judean cities to vividly illustrate the Assyrian army's impending invasion and its impact on specific communities, making the message more impactful.

4. What are some examples of the wordplay that Micah uses, and what is their purpose?

Micah uses wordplay with place names to heighten the impact of his message. For example, he references Beth-le-aphrah ("house of dust") and calls for people to roll in the dust as a sign of mourning. He contrasts Shaphir ("pleasant") with the ugliness of naked exile. Zaanan is unable to "go out" (yatsah) because of the siege. Maroth ("bitterness") will not experience anything good. These puns serve to shock the audience, highlighting the contrast between what the cities represent and the disaster that awaits them. The modern examples given include "Washington being washed away," or "Watertown having its Waterloo."

5. According to Micah, what are the sins of the leaders and false prophets in Judah that lead to God's judgment?

Micah condemns the social injustices perpetrated by Judah's leaders, who exploit and oppress the people for their own gain. He also denounces the false prophets who preach messages of blessing and peace that the people want to hear, rather than the message of repentance that they need to hear. These false prophets oppose Micah and undermine his warnings, hindering the people from turning to God. They preach "nataph," which can be translated as a worthless, dripping message.

6. How did the people react to Micah's message compared to the messages of the false prophets, and why?

The people were more inclined to listen to the false prophets, who preached a comforting message of God's love and protection, divorced from His justice and holiness. This message was more appealing than Micah's warnings of judgment, which required acknowledging their sins and repenting. The people wanted to believe they were secure in God's favor, regardless of their actions.

7. What is the "covenant responsibility" that Micah emphasizes, and how does it relate to God's blessings?

Micah emphasizes that the covenant between God and Israel includes both blessings and responsibilities. The people cannot expect God's blessings if they fail to uphold their covenant obligations, which include justice, righteousness, and obedience to God's law. Ignoring their responsibilities and presuming upon God's grace is a false and dangerous understanding of their relationship with God.

8. How does Micah's message connect to the idea of God changing his mind, and what are the limits to this concept?

Micah's message illustrates that God is willing to relent from judgment if the people repent and turn from their sins. This demonstrates that human responses matter and can influence God's actions. However, there are limits to this concept. God will not change his mind on covenant promises he has made and that he has sworn to carry out. There are also circumstances when God has said, "I am going to do this, I will not alter my course of action, I am not going to change," even when someone prays all night. But there is always the possibility that if there is a right response to God's message, that God will relent and not send the judgment that he has threatened.