

**“Wind vs Word”**  
**Micah 1-2 Pt 1**  
**April 25, 2021**  
**Faith Presbyterian Church – Evening Service**  
*Pastor Nicoletti*

We are starting a new evening series tonight in the Book of Micah.

We are at something of a breaking point in Second Samuel, after the initial resolution of the sin of David, and before the introduction of Absalom and the role that he will play, and so this seemed like a good time to pause.

When I began to consider what book to turn to during that pause, a few ideas came to mind, but I soon found myself looking to preach from one of the prophets. This seemed like a good idea as out of the two-hundred or so sermons I have preached here so far, I’ve only preached six sermons from the prophets – who make up somewhere around a quarter of the pages in our English Bibles.

After some consideration, I settled on Micah. And I was excited as I gathered my resources. “Why haven’t I preached more from the prophets before now?” I found myself asking. “Why don’t pastors preach from the prophets more often?” I caught myself wondering.

Well ... the past week I started to get an idea of an answer to that question. It turns out that preaching from the prophets is hard! (At least for me.)

There are a few reasons for this, though I particularly enjoy how Martin Luther summed up one of them. Complaining about the prophets, Luther wrote: “They have a queer way of talking, like people who, instead of proceeding in an orderly manner, ramble off from one thing to the next, so that you cannot make head or tail of them or see what they are getting at.” [Quoted in Waltke 1988, 156]

I may not put it exactly how Luther did, but I was certainly more sympathetic to him by the end of this week.

Micah does have structure, but it may not meet most of our desires for orderliness.

Micah’s ministry took place in the second half of the eighth century BC, during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, as he says in verse one. He was a contemporary of the prophets Isaiah and Hosea.

Micah directs his prophecy to both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel, as he mentions in verse one and does throughout the book. And so, at this point Israel is politically divided between the Northern Kingdom with its capital in Samaria, and the Southern Kingdom with its capital in Jerusalem, but Micah speaks to both of them, and sometimes speaks to them as one spiritual unit, simply with the term “Israel”. [Waltke 1988, 154]

Micah does not tell us much of anything about himself. He identifies his hometown as Moresheth, and we know that he was a prophet who had a significant impact at least in Judah. But, as Bruce Waltke points out, the fact that he was not from Jerusalem would have made him something of an

outsider. And yet we know that he gained a hearing from those in power, as we read in Jeremiah 16 how King Hezekiah heeded his word. [Waltke 1988, 150]

The name “Micah” means “Who is like Yahweh?” [Waltke 1988, 149]

But beyond his name, his time period, his hometown, and the fact that the word of the Lord – the word of Yahweh – came to him, we are not told much about Micah’s personal background.

From the list of kings he gives, whose reigns he ministered during, we know his prophetic ministry lasted for at least over twenty years during a difficult time in the life of God’s people. Moral corruption was growing, and outside threats were becoming more apparent. [Waltke 1988, 151]

In the first half of the eighth century BC God’s people were relatively free from interference from the Assyrians. The result was the emergence of a wealthy upper class. But then corruption followed success. And now, in Micah’s day, in the second half of the eighth century BC, the Neo-Assyrian Empire looms as a threat in the background. These are the realities behind Micah’s ministry. [Aucker]

The Book of Micah is a compression of his preaching from over the span of his ministry. One commentator puts it like this – he writes: “Micah’s prophecy contains once-independent announcements of judgment, oracles of salvation, controversy sayings, lawsuit speeches, instructions, laments, prayer, hymn, and a proclamation of the Lord’s epiphany. One could think of it almost as a preacher’s file of sermons delivered on different occasions in the life of the capital. But unlike a drawer of sermon-files, the careful student will discern that the messages have been skillfully fitted together like pieces of a mosaic.” [Waltke 1988, 156]

And what is the larger pattern of that mosaic? Well, Micah is different from most other prophetic books because it deviates from their typical pattern. Many of the prophets begin with oracles of judgment against Israel, then they give oracles of judgment against the other nations – the enemies of God’s people – and then after that they give oracles of hope for Israel. But Micah instead cycles through two movements: he gives oracles threatening Israel, then oracles giving Israel hope. Then he does it again. And then a third time, giving us three cycles of threat followed by hope. [Waltke 1988, 157]

And so, we will begin this evening with the first full cycle of the Book of Micah, which spans chapters one and two. We will not address every aspect of this text, and we may come back to look at other aspects of it next week. But it seemed best, as we begin, to include the first cycle as a whole this evening, even though we’ll just be focusing on one theme.

And as we turn to it now, it’s helpful to remember again what the role of a prophet really is – what Micah is seeking to do. We spoke about this back in January, though it’s worth reviewing.

While we may tend to think of the main role of a prophet as making predictions about the future, and giving God’s people new revelation from the Lord, though such things were certainly part of their ministry, such predictions were not actually at the heart of the prophetic ministry. It was more a tool of the prophet’s ministry, rather than the goal.

The goal, the purpose, the heart of the ministry of a prophet, is that they are God’s covenant enforcers. They are God’s covenant enforcers. [Williams, 191]

Which means that their purpose is to go to God's people and to call them to be faithful to their covenant with God.

God's relationship to his people takes the form of a covenant: a formal relationship of love, with obligations for both parties. God binds himself to his people, and makes promises about how he will care for them. God also issues obligations to his people, which they agree to follow in faithfulness to him.

God sends prophets to his people when they are failing to keep his law – the obligations he has given them – and through the ministry of prophets, God calls his people back to faithfulness.

God sends his prophets to his people *before* he comes to them himself in judgment. The initial sending of the prophet is a mercy, that the people might turn and recommit themselves to the covenant: trusting God's promises and obeying his commands. That call to covenant faithfulness is what is at the heart of the prophetic ministry.

And it is what we see here. The book begins with what appears to be a covenant lawsuit, as God bears witness against his people, and urges them to repent before judgment comes. And the book goes on from there.

With all of that in mind, we turn now to Micah chapters one and two.

Please do listen carefully, for this is God's word for us this evening.

<sup>1:1</sup> The word of Yahweh that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> Hear, you peoples, all of you;  
pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it,  
and let the Lord YAHWEH be a witness against you,  
the Lord from his holy temple.

<sup>3</sup> For behold, Yahweh is coming out of his place,  
and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.

<sup>4</sup> And the mountains will melt under him,  
and the valleys will split open,  
like wax before the fire,  
like waters poured down a steep place.

<sup>5</sup> All this is for the transgression of Jacob  
and for the sins of the house of Israel.

What is the transgression of Jacob?

Is it not Samaria?

And what is the high place of Judah?

Is it not Jerusalem?

<sup>6</sup> Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country,  
a place for planting vineyards,  
and I will pour down her stones into the valley  
and uncover her foundations.

<sup>7</sup> All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces,

all her wages shall be burned with fire,  
and all her idols I will lay waste,  
for from the fee of a prostitute she gathered them,  
and to the fee of a prostitute they shall return.

<sup>8</sup> For this I will lament and wail;  
I will go stripped and naked;  
I will make lamentation like the jackals,  
and mourning like the ostriches.

<sup>9</sup> For her wound is incurable,  
and it has come to Judah;  
it has reached to the gate of my people,  
to Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> Tell it not in Gath;  
weep not at all;  
in Beth-le-aphrah  
roll yourselves in the dust.

<sup>11</sup> Pass on your way,  
inhabitants of Shaphir,  
in nakedness and shame;  
the inhabitants of Zaanan  
do not come out;  
the lamentation of Beth-ezel  
shall take away from you its standing place.

<sup>12</sup> For the inhabitants of Maroth  
wait anxiously for good,  
because disaster has come down from Yahweh  
to the gate of Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup> Harness the steeds to the chariots,  
inhabitants of Lachish;  
it was the beginning of sin  
to the daughter of Zion,  
for in you were found  
the transgressions of Israel.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore you shall give parting gifts  
to Moresheth-gath;  
the houses of Achzib shall be a deceitful thing  
to the kings of Israel.

<sup>15</sup> I will again bring a conqueror to you,  
inhabitants of Mareshah;  
the glory of Israel  
shall come to Adullam.

<sup>16</sup> Make yourselves bald and cut off your hair,  
for the children of your delight;  
make yourselves as bald as the eagle,  
for they shall go from you into exile.

<sup>2:1</sup> Woe to those who devise wickedness  
 and work evil on their beds!  
 When the morning dawns, they perform it,  
 because it is in the power of their hand.

<sup>2</sup> They covet fields and seize them,  
 and houses, and take them away;  
 they oppress a man and his house,  
 a man and his inheritance.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore thus says Yahweh:  
 behold, against this family I am devising disaster,  
 from which you cannot remove your necks,  
 and you shall not walk haughtily,  
 for it will be a time of disaster.

<sup>4</sup> In that day they shall take up a taunt song against you  
 and moan bitterly,  
 and say, “We are utterly ruined;  
 he changes the portion of my people;  
 how he removes it from me!  
 To an apostate he allots our fields.”

<sup>5</sup> Therefore you will have none to cast the line by lot  
 in the assembly of Yahweh.

<sup>6</sup> “Do not preach”—thus they preach—  
 “one should not preach of such things;  
 disgrace will not overtake us.”

<sup>7</sup> Should this be said, O house of Jacob?  
 Has Yahweh grown impatient?  
 Are these his deeds?  
 Do not my words do good  
 to him who walks uprightly?

<sup>8</sup> But lately my people have risen up as an enemy;  
 you strip the rich robe from those who pass by trustingly  
 with no thought of war.

<sup>9</sup> The women of my people you drive out  
 from their delightful houses;  
 from their young children you take away  
 my splendor forever.

<sup>10</sup> Arise and go,  
 for this is no place to rest,  
 because of uncleanness that destroys  
 with a grievous destruction.

<sup>11</sup> If a man should go about and utter wind and lies,  
 saying, “I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,”  
 he would be the preacher for this people!

<sup>12</sup> I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob;  
 I will gather the remnant of Israel;  
 I will set them together  
 like sheep in a fold,  
 like a flock in its pasture,

a noisy multitude of men.

<sup>13</sup> He who opens the breach goes up before them;  
they break through and pass the gate,  
going out by it.

Their king passes on before them,  
Yahweh at their head.

This is the word of the Lord. (Thanks be to God.)

## **WORD VS WIND**

There are a several themes we could focus on this evening as we begin the book of Micah, but it seemed appropriate to me that the best theme to begin with may be the question of whether we will really *hear* from Micah ... or from others like him.

A question that comes up a few times in this passage is whether the people of God will hear the word that God is sending them through Micah.

Because one of the first things we see here in the Book of Micah is that God warns his people by his word, but we often prefer wind instead.

God warns his people by his word, but we often prefer wind instead.

Let's take a look at that in our text.

First, take a look at verse one. Maybe this is so obvious that it does not need to be said, but we should make sure that it is clear. The word that is coming, the word that we are concerned about, the word that Micah is speaking, is the word of Yahweh – the word of the God of Israel ... the God of the Bible. Yahweh is speaking through Micah. And the word he is speaking is concerned with God's people – with Samaria and Jerusalem.

And it is a word of witness. In verse two we read:

<sup>2</sup> Hear, you peoples, all of you;  
pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it,  
and let the Lord YAHWEH be a witness against you,  
the Lord from his holy temple.

God's word goes out before him, to bear witness against his people. And it proceeds the coming of God himself.

For the very next verse – verse three – says:

<sup>3</sup> For behold, Yahweh is coming out of his place,  
and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.  
<sup>4</sup> And the mountains will melt under him,  
and the valleys will split open,  
like wax before the fire,  
like waters poured down a steep place.

God is coming in power and in judgment. But before he does, he sends his word, through Micah, to urge the people to repent of the ways that they have not been faithful to the covenant. This is the word of God that comes by Micah.

But, as we read on, we soon learn that the people don't really want to hear it.

We see this first in verses six and seven of chapter two. There we hear from the false prophets among the people of God. And we read:

<sup>6</sup>“Do not preach”—thus they preach—  
“one should not preach of such things;  
disgrace will not overtake us.”

<sup>7</sup>Should this be said, O house of Jacob?  
Has Yahweh grown impatient?  
Are these his deeds?

Do not my words do good  
to him who walks uprightly?

Now, commentators debate about who is saying what in that series of questions, but they seem to agree that the theme is that the false prophets only want to preach that everything is going to be fine for God's people, while Micah seeks to confront God's people regarding their sin. The false prophets tell Micah to be quiet. The false prophets want to assure everyone that there is no problem – there is no threat, and there is no covenant lawsuit. God will just be nice to his people, and that is that. And so they urge Micah to quiet down.

And Micah learns that on the whole, it is the false prophets that the people prefer. He describes the people, with a tone of frustration and mockery, in verse eleven. There he says:

<sup>11</sup> If a man should go about and utter wind and lies,  
saying, “I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,”  
he would be the preacher for this people!

Micah says that these preachers do not preach the real Word of God, but mere wind. They “utter wind and lies” he says ... their talk is empty and meaningless. But *that* is what the people want. That is the kind of preacher they desire.

Micah mockingly summarizes their preaching as them saying: “I will preach to you of wine and strong drink.” Now, while Micah may be complaining about the moral license that the false prophets are preaching, he probably means more than that. Because it's noteworthy that while Micah lists a number of sins in his accusations against God's people, he does not repeat those same offences here, but instead speaks of wine and strong drink. It's likely that he chose that image for a reason. For wine and strong drink dull our senses and our awareness ... and at the heart of things, what the people want, is preaching that will dull their senses and their self-awareness ... preaching that acts on them like too much wine and too much strong drink. [Gignilliat, 120-121]

That, however, is in contrast to the effect that the word of God, through Micah, would have. For the words and the imagery we read here from God do not lull or numb us, but rather, if truly heard, they jolt us from complacency and they alarm us. The word through the true prophet leads to a response ... but the wind of the false prophets soothes one to sleep. And the people prefer the sleep-inducing wind.

Which should lead us to ask: What about us? How does the word come to us? And what are the ways that we tend to prefer the wind instead?

The most obvious form of wind is one which tells us that God doesn't care what we do. It is that wind of hedonism – of antinomianism – that more quickly comes to mind when we hear Micah's mocking description of false prophets' preaching using the picture of wine and strong drink. Lawless hedonism and pleasure-seeking tend to dull our senses both literally and spiritually, and we can be prone to welcome any who will encourage us in it.

And it's not hard to see the influence of that kind of wind – that kind of false preaching – in our culture. There are many preachers – and by that, I mean not necessarily people in literal pulpits, but people who, from a secular or religious standpoint exhort us to a certain way of living – there are many such preachers all around us, and they are welcomed and heralded, and praised by our culture.

That is one form of wind: a wind that does not call us to account because it tells us that all things are lawful and any choice in just about any area of life should be celebrated.

In some way, as Christians, that form of wind is easier to spot.

But we have a history of missing another form of wind. Because another form of wind refrains from calling us to repentance not because it rejects high moral standards, but because it assures us that we have already met them.

We get a good picture of this kind of wind if we considered a parable that Jesus told. In Luke 18 we read:

<sup>9</sup> [Jesus] told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: <sup>10</sup> “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ <sup>13</sup> But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ <sup>14</sup> I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Now, take a moment and think about the Pharisee in that parable ... and tell me, did that man truly receive the word of God? Did he truly see it and receive it for what it was and for what it really said about him? Or did he somehow transform it into wind instead?

James says:

Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup> For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup> But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

That Pharisee in Jesus's parable had studied the Scriptures. On one level he really knew what they said ... and yet, did he? Did he really receive the Word ... or had he somehow managed, in his mind, to transform it into wind? To transform it into something that told him there was nothing for

him to do – all was well, God had nothing for him to repent of? That’s what he had done, isn’t it? With the help of others, he had turned the Word which would confront him and call him to repentance (after all, what could be more essential to being a doer of the Word than repentance) – but he took that Word which confronted him and called him to repentance, and he turned it into empty wind that dulled his senses ... that told him all was well ... that he was just as he needed to be ... that the real problem with the world was other people – people like that tax collector – not people like him ... he could relax about where he was ... and he could indulge in the conscience dulling intoxication of self-righteousness and self-satisfaction and contempt for others.

The wind of false preaching can take very different forms ... we see it in the hedonist, and we see it in the Pharisee. But the Word of God would confront both of them.

And so, what about us? Do we really hear the word? Do we come to it to find out what we are really like? Or do we prefer soothing wind instead?

Do we prefer to change the Bible into a series of assurances that promise everything to us but expect nothing from us? Do we prefer a message that we can do as we please and God will be there as our cosmic personal assistant to help us out, and our cosmic emotional support dog to assure us we are perfect the way we are? Is that what we prefer to the actual message of the Bible, which presents God as our cosmic Lord and King who rightfully demands our allegiance and our obedience? Do you tend to prefer that kind of hedonistic wind?

And if so, what does that preference look like for you? How do you gather those kinds of false prophets? Are there certain books or movies or music that you gravitate towards because it will preach that gospel to you? Are there certain friends you prefer to others because you know they will speak that kind of soothing message to you? Are there certain teachers, or cultural icons, or preachers you prefer because they give you that kind of pleasantly intoxicating message ... that kind of soothing wind?

In what ways are you drawn to such false preaching?

Or maybe you tend more on the other end. Maybe you prefer not the hedonistic wind, but the pharisaical wind. Maybe you prefer to read the Bible not as a book that shows you what you are really like and calls you to repentance, but you’d rather transform the Bible into a book that tells you why you are right and other people are wrong ... why you are smart and other people are idiots ... why you are good and other people are bad ... why you are courageous and competent and other people are feckless and foolish. That is how the Pharisee read the Scriptures. That is how he transformed it from a convicting mirror into an intoxicating soothing wind.

And if that’s you, then you prefer a God who comes to you more as a flattering champion, who will assure you that the problems in your life are mainly caused by other people, but don’t you worry, we’ll take care of those trouble makers soon enough, and then you can just go on being your awesome self, once all those outside interferences that are holding you back are out of the way.

If that’s the kind of wind you like, how do you tend to reinforce it for yourself? What kind of teachers, or leaders, or groups do you listen to to reinforce it? What kind of friends do you prefer who will affirm your status and repeat the wind of your greatness? What kind of resources do you seek out that will help you cultivate contempt for others – contempt that reinforces your assurance

that you are so much better, and have nothing to change about yourself (nothing serious at least)? How do you get drunk on the intoxicating message of your righteousness and the evil or foolishness of others? How do you seek out the soothing wind of self-satisfaction?

God warns his people by his word ... he gives it to us like a mirror, to see ourselves as we are and then to call us to repentance. But we, in a wide variety of ways – in ways that can look like polar opposites from each other – we often prefer the wind.

That is what Micah tells the People of God. That is what Micah tells us.

So what are we to do when we see that? What are we to do when we recognize the soothing wind we have chosen for ourselves instead of the confronting word?

Well, it's actually quite simple: We need to turn away from the wind and turn towards the word. We all – each of us – probably have certain voices, input, or media that we seek out in our lives that fill, for us, the role of those false prophets. They will speak to us the wind, the intoxicating message of our preference. And since this isn't 8<sup>th</sup> century BC Judah, but 21<sup>st</sup> century America, you're not stuck with whatever false prophet you can find in Jerusalem, but you have the whole internet full of options.

But if we want to take the word seriously, we need to intentionally avoid those false preachers – particularly the ones we know we are prone to be intoxicated by.

Now, to be clear, this is not a call for Christians to separate from all non-Christian teachers or leaders. As we've said before, we can learn from all kinds of people – we can plunder the Egyptians.

That's not what I'm talking about. What I'm talking about is avoiding those voices – whether from Christian or non-Christian sources – who you know stoke in you a tendency to embrace the wind and resist the word ... those who really encourage you, in your heart and mind, to put your desires before the Lord's commands ... or those who really do nurture your self-righteousness and contempt for others, rather than point you to humility and love. Those voices, those preachers – the ones that really affect you personally – those are the ones you need to avoid.

And then, you need to replace those voices with the Word of God. You need to replace them with the Scriptures. And you need to really listen to the Scriptures. And you might need to retrain yourself to read them and to ask as you do: What would this text – what would this word of God – have me do? Where do I need to repent?

You may also need to replace those other false soothing voices with voices that will challenge you. Perhaps it is with additional sermons online from preachers who will confront you and call you to humility, love, and faithful obedience. Perhaps it is from other Christians who see things differently from you, who may help you see something of God's revelation that you have missed, in a way that will challenge you or humble you or help you better hear God's word as a whole.

Our calling, from Micah, is to resist the intoxicating wind of our preferred false preachers, and to pursue instead the Word of God, which confronts us, and warns us, and calls us to faithfulness.

## THE SHEPHERD WHO PURSUES

We see in our text that God sends his word out to us. But that is not all he does. He also comes himself. And he comes not only to cleanse us, but also to gather us.

We see this especially in chapter two, verses twelve and thirteen – in Micah’s words of hope at the end of this first cycle of prophecy. There, in verse twelve, God is speaking – and he says:

<sup>12</sup> I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob;

I will gather the remnant of Israel;

I will set them together

like sheep in a fold,

like a flock in its pasture,

a noisy multitude of men.

Then, in the next verse, the speaker shifts from God to Micah, and Micah, speaking of God says:

<sup>13</sup> He who opens the breach goes up before them;

they break through and pass the gate,

going out by it.

Their king passes on before them,

Yahweh at their head.

Micah here reminds us that God not only sends his word out to us, but he himself comes to us.

God will continue to pursue us, and will relent only when we repent – only when he has brought his people back to himself.

These verses present God to us as our Shepherd-King. And he is the kind of Shepherd who will not abandon his sheep, but he will pursue them. He will pursue them relentlessly. He will pursue them with his great power. And he will do it for their good. Because that’s the kind of Shepherd-King he is.

Hear again of his power and strength, from chapter one verses three through seven. There, we read:

<sup>3</sup> For behold, Yahweh is coming out of his place,  
and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.

<sup>4</sup> And the mountains will melt under him,  
and the valleys will split open,  
like wax before the fire,  
like waters poured down a steep place.

<sup>5</sup> All this is for the transgression of Jacob  
and for the sins of the house of Israel.

What is the transgression of Jacob?

Is it not Samaria?

And what is the high place of Judah?

Is it not Jerusalem?

<sup>6</sup> Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country,  
a place for planting vineyards,  
and I will pour down her stones into the valley  
and uncover her foundations.

<sup>7</sup> All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces,

all her wages shall be burned with fire,  
and all her idols I will lay waste,

Yahweh – the Lord – will come. And he comes to destroy those things that are keeping you from him. He comes to destroy the sinful pleasures you refuse to give up. He comes to smash the self-righteousness you so prize. He comes to destroy your idols – the things that threaten your soul – in order to get you to follow him with all your heart, for he is the true Shepherd and King of your soul.

The coming of such a king is a scary thing. As one commentator puts it: “Men feel secure so long as God remains in heaven, but when he comes to earth in judgment they are gripped by the terrifying realization that they must meet the holy God in person.” [Waltke 1998, 167]

If God comes in that way, you should tremble. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” If we trust in him, but still hold to idols, his judgment will be painful but for our good. But if we have truly turned from him, rejecting him from the heart in favor of our idols, then we may suffer the same fate that our idols will.

But Micah’s words are a call to repent before God’s judgment arrives. His call is to abandon our idols now, and turn instead to the Lord, so that he might meet us not as a judge but as our loving Shepherd-King.

But it begins by hearing – by hearing the word, and by turning from the wind.

Which is why Micah begins this book with these words:

<sup>2</sup>Hear, you peoples, all of you;  
pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it,

Because here, in the Book of Micah, and here in the canon of Scripture, God himself is speaking to us. May we have ears to hear it.

Amen.

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**This sermon draws on material from:**

- Aucker, W. Brian and Dennis R. Magary. Introduction and notes to Micah in *The ESV Study Bible*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008.
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