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MICAH

A 6–Week Group Bible Study

By Greg and Kayla Gibson

WEEK 1 OF 6 • GENERAL / MIXED GROUP EDITION

The LORD Comes Down — Micah 1:1–16

Scripture Scope: Micah 1:1–16 (ESV) • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

LEADER GUIDE EDITION

Complete Participant Text + Interleaved Pacing, Hebrew Word Studies, Facilitation Probes & Pitfalls

Micah — 6-Week Group Bible Study (Leader Guide Edition)

Week 1: The LORD Comes Down (Micah 1:1–16)

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- **The title:** "The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth" (1:1), a country town southwest of Jerusalem, in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah (about 740–690 BC). Micah's name means Who is like the LORD?, a question the book ends on (7:18).
- **The voices:** The LORD speaks through Micah to Samaria and Jerusalem, to rulers, priests, and prophets, and to the nations. False prophets push back (2:6), and the prophet himself laments, waits, and confesses.
- **Its form:** Prophetic poetry in three cycles, each opening with "Hear" (1:2; 3:1; 6:1) and each moving from judgment to hope.
- **The structure:**
  - The LORD comes down in judgment; injustice and false prophets; a Breaker who leads the flock out (chapters 1–2).
  - Corrupt leaders and a plowed Zion; the mountain of the LORD raised up; a ruler from Bethlehem (chapters 3–5).
  - The LORD's lawsuit and what he requires; a waiting prophet; the God who pardons and casts sins into the sea (chapters 6–7).
- **Why it matters:** Micah confronts the powerful who use their position to take from the weak, and religious leaders who preach for pay. He announces that Zion will be plowed like a field, yet promises a ruler born in Bethlehem who will shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD. Micah 6:8 sums up what the LORD requires, and 7:18–19 celebrates a God who delights in steadfast love.

How This 6-Week Study Works

You may notice this study is shorter than our usual eight weeks. Even though we are 8weekbiblestudy.com, stretching Micah to eight weeks would have left it thin on content, and we never want to trade quality for quantity.

Designed for weekly small groups, mini-churches, and community gatherings (75–90 minutes per session) rather than daily homework checklists, this study is six weeks rather than the series' usual eight. Micah has 105 verses in seven chapters. Six weeks follow the book's own rhythm of judgment and hope, giving each great hope passage (4:1–5; 5:2–5; 6:8; 7:18–20) room to breathe. Chapters 3 and 4 share a week because Micah deliberately sets Zion's ruin (3:12) directly against Zion's exaltation (4:1–2). Each week invites you to justice, kindness, humility, and hope in the God who pardons together through six repeatable sections:

- **Section X.1 — Opening:** Sets the scene, the Week at a Glance, Head, Heart, and Hands objectives, the Opening Frame, and the Opening Entry Question.
- **Section X.2 — Historical & Literary Context:** Places the week's passage inside the structure of Micah and the ancient Near Eastern world.
- **Section X.3 — Movement 1:** The week's first guided passage: Guided Scripture Reading, Anchor Verses, Teaching Narrative, and Group Discussion Questions.
- **Section X.4 — Movement 2:** The week's second guided passage, following the same flow.
- **Section X.5 — Canonical Horizon:** Traces how the passage echoes across Scripture and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

- **Section X.6 — Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer:** Moves the week's study into everyday life, previews next week, and closes in prayer.

Key anchor verses are printed in each section for quick reference. Longer focal passages are read aloud together from the ESV.

Choosing a Bible Translation: Top 5 Translations Compared

Every English Bible translation falls along a spectrum between two primary approaches: word-for-word translation (formal equivalence, which prioritizes literal accuracy to the original phrasing and sentence structure) and thought-for-thought translation (dynamic equivalence, which prioritizes immediate modern readability by translating idioms and ideas into natural contemporary expressions). Here is how five widely used English translations compare:

- **ESV (English Standard Version) — Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Follows the wording and sentence structure of the original Hebrew and Greek closely while using modern English; well suited to close study.
  - Cons: Because it tracks the original sentence structure, some phrasing can feel more formal than everyday speech.
- **NIV (New International Version) — Balanced (Between Word-for-Word and Thought-for-Thought)**
  - Pros: Widely read; balances accuracy to the original languages with natural, everyday readability.
  - Cons: Because some idioms are rendered as modern expressions, a few literal wordplays or technical terms can be less visible.
- **NLT (New Living Translation) — Thought-for-Thought**
  - Pros: Warm and conversational; reads smoothly aloud and helps readers follow the big picture of long passages.
  - Cons: Because it prioritizes meaning over literal phrasing, it can be harder to use for close word study.
- **CSB (Christian Standard Bible) — Optimal Equivalence (Balanced)**
  - Pros: Stays close to the original words where possible while smoothing awkward phrasing into natural modern English.
  - Cons: Because it is a newer translation, some well-known verses may sound different from the wording many readers remember.
- **KJV / NKJV (King James Version & New King James Version) — Traditional Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Historic cadence that shaped English literature and church history; the NKJV updates archaic pronouns ("thee/thou") while keeping the classic rhythm.
  - Cons: Often reads like older English poetry, with complex sentences and archaic or formal vocabulary that can be harder for modern readers to follow.

This study quotes the ESV.

Greg & Kayla's Recommended Study Bibles

Having a trusted study Bible on hand is one of the best ways to go deeper as you read through Micah:

- **Greg's Favorite Study Bible:** The MacArthur Study Bible (ESV), which contains extensive explanatory notes beneath almost every verse, ideal for detailed study.
- **Kayla's Favorite Study Bible:** The ESV Study Bible, containing over 20,000 study notes, articles, and explanations.

The 6-Week Micah Study at a Glance

Week	Title & Passage	Movement 1 / Movement 2	Canonical Horizon
1	**The LORD Comes Down** (1:1–16)	The LORD Comes Out of His Place (1:1–7) / Micah's Lament as Judgment Spreads (1:8–16)	The God who comes down; the Savior who weeps over his city
2	**Woe to Those Who Plan Iniquity** (2:1–13)	Fields Coveted, Homes Seized (2:1–5) / False Prophets and the Breaker Who Goes Before (2:6–13)	The Shepherd-King who goes before his flock
3	**Corrupt Leaders and a Coming Ruler** (3:1–4:13)	Leaders, Prophets, and a Plowed Zion (3:1–12) / The Mountain of the LORD Raised Up (4:1–13)	The true Shepherd; the word going out to the nations
4	**From Bethlehem Will Come a Ruler** (5:1–15)	The Ruler Who Shepherds in the LORD's Strength (5:1–6) / The Remnant and the End of False Security (5:7–15)	Jesus born in Bethlehem, the Good Shepherd who is our peace
5	**What Does the LORD Require?** (6:1–16)	The LORD's Lawsuit and His Requirement (6:1–8) / Dishonest Scales and Empty Harvests (6:9–16)	Christ who fulfills what the LORD requires
6	**Who Is a God Like You?** (7:1–20)	Waiting for the God of My Salvation (7:1–10) / Pardon, Compassion, and Sins Cast into the Sea (7:11–20)	The God who pardons in Christ and keeps his oath to Abraham

How to Use This Leader Guide Edition

This **Leader Guide Edition** is built on a synchronized two-edition architecture so you never have to juggle two separate books during your small group or mini-church gathering:

1. 100% Word-for-Word Participant Text Included: Every section, Scripture reading prompt, verbatim ESV anchor verse callout, teaching narrative, table, and discussion or reflection prompt appears here **word-for-word identical** to what your group members see in their Participant Study Edition. Section numbers and question labels match exactly, so leaders and participants can stay on the same page.

2. Interleaved `[LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY]` Blocks: Immediately following each section, you will find a dedicated leader block containing:

- **Pacing & Time Targets** calibrated for a 75–90 minute session. Pacing targets appear in every Leader section header. If time runs short, shorten the Teaching Narratives rather than the discussion.
- **Hebrew Word Study & Ancient Near Eastern Research Quick-References** so you can explain terms naturally without lecturing, when they add something useful.
- **Question-by-Question Facilitation Probes** listed in question order, designed to move conversation past polite answers into honest reflection.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around** so you can gently redirect common rabbit trails back to the biblical text.
- **Additional Research Notes** appear when they add something useful.

3. Leader Flags: Numbered in reading order, they mark passages that need pastoral care or tend to raise hard questions. Micah speaks of idolatry, families driven from their homes, leaders who devour the people, children taken into exile, and households turned against themselves. Some members will have lost homes, been harmed by church or civic leaders, or be estranged from family. Tell the hardest images in brief, never turn the book into a political program, and keep its hope in view. If someone discloses abuse, exploitation, trafficking,

coercion, or immediate danger, listen without interrogation, take the disclosure seriously, help the person reach safety, and follow applicable law and your organization's safeguarding and reporting procedures. If someone expresses current thoughts of suicide or self-harm, ask directly whether there is immediate danger, intent, a plan, or access to means. Do not leave the person alone when imminent risk is present. In the United States, call or text 988 (the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), and call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department for immediate danger. Outside the United States, use the appropriate local crisis or emergency service. Inform the appropriate pastor or safeguarding leader while prioritizing immediate safety.

4. Reading aloud: Assign readers ahead of time for the Guided Scripture Reading. Printed anchor verses are for quick reference; read the longer focal passages from an open ESV. Passages marked "in brief" are summarized or retold by the leader rather than read.

5. Facilitating well: Ask the printed question, wait, and let silence work. Use the probes to deepen, not to lecture. Aim for every voice to be heard at least once each session.

Week 1 Session Pacing at a Glance (75–90 Minutes)

Section	Focus	Time Target
Section 1.1	Opening: The LORD Comes Down (Micah 1:1–16) (1.1 Q1)	**10 mins**
Section 1.2	Historical & Literary Context: A Country Prophet and Two Capitals (1.2 Q1–Q3)	**12 mins**
Section 1.3	Movement 1: The LORD Comes Out of His Place (Micah 1:1–7) (1.3 Q1–Q5)	**22 mins**
Section 1.4	Movement 2: Micah's Lament as Judgment Spreads (Micah 1:8–16) (1.4 Q1–Q5)	**20 mins**
Section 1.5	Canonical Horizon: The God Who Comes Down; the Savior Who Weeps over His City (1.5 Q1–Q3)	**12 mins**
Section 1.6	Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer (1.6 Q1–Q3)	**9 mins**
Total	**Full Week 1 Group Session**	**75–90 mins**

WEEK 1 OF 6

WEEK 1 SESSION GUIDE · MICAH 1:1–16

Week 1: The LORD Comes Down

Scripture Scope: Micah 1:1–16 (ESV) • Focal Passages: Micah 1:2–5; 1:8–9 • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

Section 1.1

Opening: The LORD Comes Down (Micah 1:1–16)

Passage **Micah 1:1–16**

Opening

Micah, a prophet from the small town of Moresheth, opens with a courtroom summons to the whole world: "Hear, you peoples, all of you." The Lord GOD himself will testify from his holy temple. Then the scene erupts: "the LORD is coming out of his place," and the mountains melt beneath him like wax before the fire. Why? Not first because of the pagan nations, but because of God's own people: "What is the transgression of Jacob?

Is it not Samaria?" Even Jerusalem, the holy city, has become a high place of false worship. Samaria will become a heap of rubble, its idols smashed. And the prophet does not gloat. "For this I will lament and wail," Micah says, going barefoot in mourning, because the wound is incurable and has reached the gate of Jerusalem. Town by town, the lament moves toward the capital.

Week 1 At a Glance

Scripture Scope	Micah 1:1–16 (a courtroom summons to all peoples, the Lord GOD as witness from his holy temple, the LORD coming down and the mountains melting, the transgression of Samaria and the high place of Jerusalem, Samaria's idols smashed, the prophet's lament and mourning, an incurable wound reaching Jerusalem's gate, and a lament that moves town by town toward the capital)
Focal Passages	Micah 1:2–5; 1:8–9
Literary & Structural Anchor	The book opens with a legal summons (1:2) and a storm-like appearing of God (1:3–4). The capitals, Samaria and Jerusalem, are named as the source of sin (1:5). Judgment spreads from Samaria through Judah's lowland towns to Jerusalem's gate (1:9, 12). Nearly every town in 1:10–15 is a pun on its name.
Big Idea	The holy LORD comes down to judge the sin at the heart of his own people, and his faithful servant grieves as judgment draws near.

Week 1 Learning Objectives (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD	**Know the God Who Comes Down:** Learn how Micah pictures the LORD coming down as witness and judge against the sin at the center of his people's life.
HEART	**See the Savior Who Weeps:** See that God came down in Jesus, who wept over Jerusalem and by whose wounds the incurable is healed.
HANDS	**Grieve and Turn:** Take one step to let God's word search your own heart and to grieve, rather than gloat, over sin and its cost.

Opening Frame: The LORD Comes Down

Jonah ended with the LORD's question about his pity for Nineveh. Within a generation or two, Nineveh's empire, Assyria, had become the rod hanging over Samaria and Jerusalem. Micah, a country prophet from the small town of Moresheth and a contemporary of Isaiah, spoke into that world. His book moves in three cycles, each one beginning with judgment and ending with hope, and it gives us two of the Old Testament's best-known verses: the ruler from Bethlehem (5:2) and what the LORD requires (6:8). This is a 6–Week study that follows those cycles. This week the LORD comes out of his place to judge the sin at the heart of his own people, and Micah weeps as judgment spreads toward Jerusalem. The question for this week: what does it mean that God's judgment begins with his own people, and how should we respond? Before we read together, take a moment to share with the group:

Opening Entry Question (Icebreaker)

1.1 Q1 (Opening Entry Question): Who is someone whose warning or correction you took seriously because you knew they cared about you?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.1 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 10 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 10 minutes. Opening and At a Glance, 3 minutes; Head, Heart, Hands, 2 minutes; Opening Frame, 2 minutes; Opening Entry Question, 3 minutes.
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Briefly walk through the front matter before 1.1, especially the book's three cycles, the six-week table, and the note about verse numbering. Keep the icebreaker warm; it prepares for Micah, who warned with tears.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.1 Q1**: Who? What did they say? Why did you listen?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not open with a geography tour of Micah's towns; name them as the text does and move on.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah; Micah 4:1–3 and Isaiah 2:2–4 share the vision of the mountain of the LORD. A century later, elders saved Jeremiah's life by quoting Micah 3:12 (Jeremiah 26:17–19). Micah stands sixth in the Book of the Twelve, after Jonah.

Section 1.2

Historical & Literary Context: A Country Prophet and Two Capitals (Micah 1:1–16)

Passage **Micah 1:1–16**

Entering the World of Micah and His World

1. Historical Background

Assyria's armies advanced through Micah's lifetime. Samaria fell in 722 BC (2 Kings 17:5–6), and in 701 BC the Assyrian king Sennacherib took many fortified cities of Judah, including Lachish (2 Kings 18:13–14).

2. Cultural Setting

High places were raised worship sites, often tied to idolatry. Going barefoot, stripping off outer garments, rolling in dust, and shaving the head were public signs of grief.

3. Literary Structure of Micah 1:1–16

- **Heading** (1:1)
- **The world summoned** (1:2)
- **The LORD comes down** (1:3–4)
- **The cause named in the capitals** (1:5)
- **Samaria's ruin** (1:6–7)
- **The prophet mourns** (1:8–9)
- **The towns of the lowlands** (1:10–15)
- **Shave for your children** (1:16)

4. Key Themes

God as witness and judge; God coming down; sin at the center of God's people; idolatry; grief; an incurable wound.

5. Theological Considerations

Micah's judgment begins with God's own people and their places of worship, not with outsiders. The prophet grieves; judgment is never something to celebrate.

6. Relevant Scholarly Insights

The puns on town names in 1:10–15 (Beth-le-aphrah, "House of Dust"; Shaphir, "Beautiful"; Achzib, "Deception") are explained in study Bibles, though some sites and meanings are debated. Gath and Adullam recall David's lament and his flight.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.2)

1.2 Q1: Micah names Samaria and Jerusalem, the places of kings and worship, as the source of sin. Why is it significant that judgment begins at the center rather than the edges?

1.2 Q2: How do you think people in Jerusalem reacted to being compared to pagan high places?

1.2 Q3: Why do you think Micah grieves rather than celebrates the coming judgment?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.2 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 12 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 12 minutes. Context summary, 5 minutes; discussion, 7 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Keep the context brief. Name Assyria's advance and the shock of the capitals being named as the sin.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q1**: Where did sin start? Why there? How does it apply to the church?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q2**: What would they feel? Why would it sting? Where might we need the same correction?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q3**: What does his grief show? How should we speak about judgment? When have you grieved over sin?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not turn 1:5 into a criticism of another church or denomination; ask how it searches us.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Deuteronomy 32:1 and Isaiah 1:2 also call heaven and earth as witnesses. 2 Samuel 1:20 ("Tell it not in Gath") is David's lament, echoed in Micah 1:10.
- **Ancient Near Eastern Research Notes:** Treaties of the ancient Near Eastern world called gods, heaven, and earth as witnesses; Scripture uses the form with the LORD as both witness and judge. Sennacherib's capture of Lachish was carved in reliefs on his palace walls at Nineveh.

Section 1.3

Movement 1: The LORD Comes Out of His Place (Micah 1:1–7)

Passage **Micah 1:1–7**

Guided Scripture Reading

Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Leader summary of Micah 1:1** — The word of the LORD came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, a vision about Samaria and Jerusalem.
- **Reader 1: Micah 1:2–5** (focal passage) — Hear, all peoples, and let the Lord GOD testify against you from his holy temple; the LORD is coming out of his place to tread the high places of the earth; mountains melt like wax and valleys split; all this is for the transgression of Jacob and the sins of Israel; Samaria is Jacob's transgression, and Jerusalem is Judah's high place.
- **Leader summary of Micah 1:6–7** — The LORD will make Samaria a heap of rubble in the open country; its stones will be poured into the valley, its carved idols smashed, and the wealth gathered through idolatry will be carried off to serve other idols.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **Micah 1:2:**
>
> Hear, you peoples, all of you;
> pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it,
>
> and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you,
>
> the Lord from his holy temple.
>
> **Micah 1:3:**
>
> For behold, the LORD is coming out of his place,
> and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.
>
> **Micah 1:4:**
>
> 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.
>
> **Micah 1:5:**
>
> 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?

Teaching Narrative: The LORD Comes Out of His Place

1. The Word to Micah (Micah 1:1)

Retold briefly. A vision about two capitals.

2. Hear, You Peoples (Micah 1:2)

The LORD as witness.

3. The LORD Comes Down (Micah 1:3–4)

Mountains melt.

4. The Cause Named (Micah 1:5)

Samaria and Jerusalem.

5. Samaria's Ruin (Micah 1:6–7)

Retold briefly. Idols smashed.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.3)

1.3 Q1: "Hear, you peoples, all of you" and "let the Lord GOD be a witness against you" (1:2). What does it mean that God is a witness to everything that happens, even in private?

1.3 Q2: "For behold, the LORD is coming out of his place, and will come down" (1:3). What does it reveal about God that he does not stay distant from what his people do?

1.3 Q3: "And the mountains will melt under him" "like wax before the fire" (1:4). Why do you think Scripture uses such dramatic pictures of God's presence?

1.3 Q4: "What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?" (1:5). How can the very places meant for worship become centers of sin?

1.3 Q5: Samaria's idols would be smashed and the wealth gathered through idolatry carried away (1:7). What "wealth" or security do people gain through compromise, and why can't it last?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.3 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 22 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 22 minutes. Guided Scripture Reading with brief retellings, 6 minutes; Anchor Verses and Teaching Narrative, 5 minutes; discussion, 11 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).

- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Summarize 1:1 and 1:6–7 yourself. Read 1:2–5 aloud. Let the surprise of 1:5 land.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q1**: What does God see? How does that feel? How should it shape our lives?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q2**: Why come down? What does it show? Where do you need God to come near?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q3**: What do the images teach? How should we approach God? What happens to what seems solid?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q4**: What went wrong? How does it happen? How do we guard our worship?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q5**: What did Samaria gain? Why did it fail? Where are we tempted to compromise?
- **LEADER FLAG 1: Judgment on God's own people (1:5)**
  - Members may assume prophets mainly condemned pagans. Micah's target is the worship centers of God's people. Avoid making this about another church or denomination; ask how it searches us.
- **LEADER FLAG 2: Idols and a prostitute's wages (1:7)**
  - Explain the image briefly as wealth gained through idolatry, without dwelling on sexual detail.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not get lost in the imagery of melting mountains; keep the focus on why the LORD comes down.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Psalm 97:5 says the mountains melt like wax before the LORD. 2 Kings 17:7–18 explains Samaria's fall as the result of idolatry. 1 Peter 4:17 says judgment begins at the household of God.
- **Hebrew Word Study:**
  - 'Ed (עֵד), "witness," in 1:2. In this movement the Lord GOD testifies from his holy temple; God is not a distant observer but knows the facts and speaks in his own court.
  - Yotse' mimmeqomo (יֹצֵא מִמְּקוֹמוֹ), "coming out of his place," in 1:3. In this movement the LORD leaves his dwelling to act in history; Micah's God is the God who comes down, here in judgment and later in salvation.
  - Bamot (בָּמוֹת), "high places," in 1:3 and 1:5. In this movement the LORD treads the high places of the earth, then Micah calls Jerusalem the high place of Judah: the holy city has become what it was meant to oppose.
  - Pesha' (פֶּשַׁע), "transgression," in 1:5. In this movement it means rebellion, a breach of relationship, concentrated at the center of the people's life.

Section 1.4

Movement 2: Micah's Lament as Judgment Spreads (Micah 1:8–16)

Passage **Micah 1:8–16**

Guided Scripture Reading

Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Reader 1: Micah 1:8–9** (focal passage) — For this Micah will lament and wail, going stripped and barefoot, howling like jackals and mourning like ostriches, because the wound is incurable and has reached Judah, to the gate of Jerusalem.
- **Leader summary of Micah 1:10–15** — Do not tell it in Gath; roll in the dust in the House of Dust; the towns of the lowlands, each named with a pun, pass into shame and bitterness as disaster comes from the LORD to Jerusalem's gate; Lachish must harness its horses, a conqueror comes, and Israel's glory will flee to Adullam.
- **Leader summary of Micah 1:16** — Shave your heads in mourning for the children you delight in, for they will go into exile.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **Micah 1:8:**
>
> 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.
>
> **Micah 1:9:**
>
> For her wound is incurable,
> and it has come to Judah;
>
> it has reached to the gate of my people,
>
> to Jerusalem.

Teaching Narrative: Micah's Lament as Judgment Spreads

1. The Prophet Mourns (Micah 1:8)

Stripped and barefoot in grief.

2. An Incurable Wound (Micah 1:9)

It has reached Jerusalem's gate.

3. Towns of the Lowlands (Micah 1:10–15)

Retold briefly. A lament of puns.

4. Mourn for Your Children (Micah 1:16)

Retold briefly and gently.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.4)

> **1.4 Q1:** "For this I will lament and wail; I will go stripped and naked" (1:8). What does Micah's grief teach us about how God's people should respond to coming judgment?

> **1.4 Q2:** "For her wound is incurable, and it has come to Judah" (1:9). Why is it important to recognize that some wounds are beyond human healing?

1.4 Q3: The wound "has reached to the gate of my people, to Jerusalem" (1:9). How can sin spread from one place or person to another?

1.4 Q4: Micah's lament uses wordplay on town names, like the House of Dust and Beautiful passing on in shame (1:10–11). Why might memorable language help people take a warning seriously?

1.4 Q5: Micah tells parents to mourn because their children will go into exile (1:16). How does this verse help us see the cost of sin for the next generation?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.4 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 20 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 20 minutes. Guided Scripture Reading with brief retellings, 6 minutes; Anchor Verses and Teaching Narrative, 4 minutes; discussion, 10 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Read 1:8–9 aloud. Summarize 1:10–16 yourself, naming a few of the town puns and handling 1:16 gently.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q1**: Why grieve? What does it show? How should we speak of judgment?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q2**: What wound? Why incurable? Who alone can heal it?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q3**: How did it spread? How does sin spread today? How can it be stopped?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q4**: What does wordplay do? Why remember? How do we make God's word memorable?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q5**: Who suffers? Why children? How can we protect the next generation?
- **LEADER FLAG 3: The prophet stripped and barefoot (1:8)**
  - Explain that going stripped and barefoot was a public mourning sign, not indecency. It shows that God's spokesman grieves rather than gloats.
- **LEADER FLAG 4: Children going into exile (1:16)**
  - Parents, adoptive and foster families, and those who have lost children may feel this keenly. Handle gently and do not read it as God's indifference to children. Follow up privately with anyone affected.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not try to locate each town or settle every pun; present them as wordplay and move on.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Isaiah 20:2–4 describes Isaiah going barefoot and stripped as a sign. Jeremiah 30:12–17 also speaks of an incurable wound that only the LORD can heal.

- **Hebrew Word Study:**
  - Mispad (מִסְפֵּד), "lamentation," in 1:8, echoed in 1:11. In this movement it is the formal mourning wail; the prophet's heart is broken over the judgment he announces.
  - Makkah 'anushah (מַכָּה אֲנוּשָׁה), "incurable wound," in 1:9. In this movement 'anushah (אֲנוּשָׁה) describes a sickness beyond human healing; only God can heal what is incurable, preparing for the book's later hope.

Section 1.5

Canonical Horizon: The God Who Comes Down; the Savior Who Weeps over His City

Passage **Micah 1:3**

Tracing the Thread Across Scripture

The God who came out of his place in judgment finds a deeper canonical echo in the incarnation, when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). As Micah lamented over Jerusalem, Jesus wept over the city (Luke 19:41–44), and the incurable wound of Micah 1:9 meets the one by whose wounds we are healed (1 Peter 2:24). Turn to each passage as the connections are traced.

1. The God Who Comes Down (John 1:14; Philippians 2:6–8)

The God who came out of his place in judgment finds a deeper canonical echo in the incarnation: the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, humbling himself to death on a cross.

2. The Savior Who Weeps (Luke 19:41–44)

As Micah lamented over Jerusalem, Jesus wept over the city as judgment approached it.

3. Healed by His Wounds (1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5)

The incurable wound of Micah 1:9 meets the one by whose wounds we are healed.

4. The Coming Judge (Acts 17:31; Revelation 20:11)

God has fixed a day to judge the world by the man he has appointed. Earth and sky flee from the presence of the one on the great white throne.

Anchor Verse (ESV)

> **Micah 1:3:**
>
> For behold, the LORD is coming out of his place,
>
> and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.5)

> **1.5 Q1:** John writes, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). How does God coming down in Jesus echo and transform Micah's picture of the LORD coming out of his place?

1.5 Q2: "And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it" (Luke 19:41). How does Jesus' grief over Jerusalem echo Micah's lament?

1.5 Q3: Peter writes, "By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24). How does Christ answer the "incurable wound" of Micah 1:9?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.5 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 12 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 12 minutes. Canonical Horizon teaching, 5 minutes; discussion, 7 minutes.
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Assign participants to look up John 1:14; Philippians 2:5–8; Luke 19:41–44; and 1 Peter 2:24 ahead of time.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q1**: How did God come in Micah? In Jesus? What does it mean for us?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q2**: What did Micah grieve? What did Jesus grieve? What should we grieve?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q3**: What was incurable? How does Christ heal? What wound do you bring to him?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not move so quickly to comfort that the seriousness of judgment is lost; Jesus himself wept.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Philippians 2:7 says Christ "emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant." Isaiah 53:5 says, "with his wounds we are healed."

Personal & Group Application (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD	Micah shows the holy LORD coming down to judge the sin at the center of his people's life, and a prophet who grieves as judgment spreads.
HEART	God came down in Jesus, who wept over Jerusalem and whose wounds heal what is incurable.
HANDS	Faith lets God's word search our own hearts first and grieves, rather than gloats, over sin.

Section 1.6

Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer

Application

Take a few minutes to move this week's study into everyday life. Discuss these three questions together and write down what you want to remember:

1.6 Q1: What can become a modern "high place" competing with God in a believer's heart, and what might turning away from it look like in daily life? (Personal reflection may remain private.)

1.6 Q2: When sin or failure comes to light in the church or among leaders, how can believers respond with grief rather than gloating—while still taking harm seriously and protecting the vulnerable? (Feel free to pass.)

1.6 Q3: Micah calls Judah's wound "incurable" (1:9), yet the gospel speaks of Christ's healing mercy. How can believers bring deep grief or weariness to Christ in prayer without feeling pressured to disclose personal wounds aloud? (Feel free to reflect silently or pass.)

Looking Ahead to Next Week

Recap: In Week 1, we heard the LORD summon the world to court, watched him come down as mountains melted, heard Samaria and Jerusalem named as the source of sin, and joined Micah's lament as the incurable wound reached Jerusalem's gate.

Transition: Next week Micah names the sins behind the judgment: powerful people who plan evil and seize fields and homes, and prophets who preach what people want to hear. Then he promises a Breaker who leads the flock out.

Week 2 Overview — Woe to Those Who Plan Iniquity (Micah 2:1–13): Movement 1, Fields Coveted, Homes Seized (2:1–5), covers the powerful who lie awake planning to take what belongs to others. Movement 2, False Prophets and the Breaker Who Goes Before (2:6–13), covers prophets who say "Do not preach" and the promise of a Shepherd-King who gathers and leads his flock. The Canonical Horizon traces the Shepherd-King who goes before his flock.

Focal Readings to Preview

- Micah 2:1–2
- Micah 2:6
- Micah 2:11–13

My One Concrete Step for the Week Ahead

Write down or name aloud the specific rhythm, boundary, or conversation you want to practice before next week's gathering:

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by inviting each person to share a one-sentence takeaway or prayer request, then pray together along these lines:

Closing Group Prayer

Holy LORD, you see everything, and you come down. We confess the sin that sits at the center of our own lives, and any gladness we have felt at the failures of others. We pray for those carrying wounds that feel incurable, and for parents and children separated by hardship. Thank you for Jesus, who came down, wept over the city, and heals us by his wounds. Teach us to grieve over sin and to turn to you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.6 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 9 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 9 minutes. Application and questions, 5 minutes; Looking Ahead and Focal Readings, 2 minutes; Concrete Step and Closing Prayer, 2 minutes.
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Close gently. Some members may have been stirred by the picture of children taken away. Make yourself available afterward.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.6 Q1**: How do modern "high places" form? Keep personal application private.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.6 Q2**: Why is gloating tempting? How do grief, truth, and protection go together?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.6 Q3**: How does Micah 1:9 meet us in deep sorrow? Do not press anyone to disclose personal wounds.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not close with judgment alone; close with the God who came down to heal.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Next week's woe on those who "covet fields and seize them" (2:2) shows the injustice that made the capitals the center of sin.