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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

PARTICIPANT STUDY EDITION

Synchronized Section-by-Section with the Leader Guide Edition · Includes Group Reflection Workspace

Micah — 6-Week Group Bible Study (Participant Study 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

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?

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?

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:

- **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.
- **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?

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.
- **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.
- **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?

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?

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.