

## Structure of Law and Gospel in the book of Micah

Law: 1:2-2:11

Accusation: idolatry, portrayed as adultery; social injustice

Consequence: destruction of the capital cities, exile (1:16)

**Gospel: 2:12-13**

Gathering the people (return from exile) – God as shepherd – the good shepherd (see Ezekiel 34)

Presence of a king and God leading them

Law: 3:1-12 judgment against rulers, prophets, and all officials of Jerusalem, culminating in 3:12 prediction of Jerusalem's destruction

**Gospel: 4:1-5**

Temple established as drawing point to God (even though destruction predicted in 3:12) – place to meet with God, where God meets with humanity – the incarnation John 1:14; 2:21; the church, where Christ dwells with his people.

Many nations come to know the God of Israel – the Gospel is for all people, not just those who are Israel according to the flesh

Peace among peoples

**Gospel: 4:6-8**

God will gather the remnant of those he dispersed and rule over them in Jerusalem

The original rule (aka Davidic rule and kingdom will come to Jerusalem – more about this in chapter 5).

Law: 4:9-10c people will go into exile

**Gospel: 4:10c-13**

Israel rescued from her enemies (the exile threatened above)

Israel has power over her enemies

Law: 5:1 Assyria strikes the judge of Israel on the cheek – reference to 701 B.C. siege of Jerusalem

**Gospel: 5:2 – the Messiah in David’s line**

Ruler for Israel whose origins are ancient (concern with king –see above)

Law: 5:3a abandonment of Israel (to foreign dominion)

**Gospel: 5:3b-4 Rule of Messiah after return from exile**

Return of the brothers

Promise of security

Greatness of king to the ends of the earth (connect to chapter 4 themes)

**Gospel: 5:5-9 Yahweh will fight against Assyria, protect remnant of his people**

Law: 5:10-15 destruction of idols – goal is the unadulterated worship of God (5:13)

Law: 6:1-3 Yahweh has a dispute with his people (for they have brought a dispute against him)

**Gospel: 6:4-5 Reminder of Yahweh’s past acts of faithfulness and redemption from the Exodus and conquest of the land**

Law: 6:6-8 musing on what would atone for sins and instruction on what Yahweh desires in the context of the people not recalling this)

Law: 6:9-16 Israel indicted for corrupt business practices; destruction and ruin of people predicted

Law: 7:1-7 description of individual corruption and the distress of siege of Jerusalem

**Gospel: 7:8, 10-13 Yahweh will vindicate Jerusalem by judging and overcoming Assyria**

Law: 7:9 bear punishment of Yahweh

**Gospel: 7:14-20**

Call to God to shepherd his people

God's wonders, as in ancient days, will be renewed

Nations will no longer afflict, but many will reverence the God of Israel

God pardons sin; he delights to show mercy

God will show mercy according the promises that he has made

Expressions of God's grace in the book of Micah

**Christus victor model – God overcomes enemies, vindicates his people**

4:10c-13

There you shall be rescued; there the LORD will redeem you **from the hand of your enemies.**

<sup>11</sup> Now many nations are assembled against you, saying, "Let her be defiled, and let our eyes gaze upon Zion."

<sup>12</sup> But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD; they do not understand his plan, that **he has gathered them as sheaves to the threshing floor.**

<sup>13</sup> Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs bronze; **you shall beat in pieces many peoples;** and shall devote their gain to the LORD, their wealth to the Lord of the whole earth.

5:5-9

<sup>5</sup> And he [this – that which is to follow] shall be their peace. When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces, then **we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men;**

<sup>6</sup> **they shall shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword,** and the land of Nimrod at its entrances; and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian when he comes into our land and treads within our border.

<sup>7</sup> Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, **which delay not for a man nor wait for the children of man.**

<sup>8</sup> And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, **like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, which, when it goes through, treads down and tears in pieces, and there is none to deliver.**

<sup>9</sup> **Your hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off.**

7:9-10

<sup>9</sup> I will bear the indignation of the LORD because I have sinned against him, until **he pleads my cause and executes judgment for me. He will bring me out to the light; I shall look upon his vindication.**

<sup>10</sup> Then my enemy will see, and **shame will cover her who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?"** My eyes will look upon her; now she will be trampled down like the mire of the streets.

7:16-17

<sup>16</sup> The **nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might**; they shall lay their hands on their mouths; their ears shall be deaf;

<sup>17</sup> they shall lick the dust like a serpent, like the crawling things of the earth; **they shall come trembling out of their strongholds**; they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God, and they shall be in fear of you.

### **Good Shepherd seeks the scattered, provides for his sheep**

2:12-13

<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, the LORD at their head.

5:4

<sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and **shepherd his flock** in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

7:14

<sup>14</sup> **Shepherd your people with your staff**, the **flock** of your inheritance, who dwell alone in a forest in the midst of a garden land; **let them graze** in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old.

### **The Messiah as Ruler in David's line**

4:8

<sup>8</sup> And you, O **tower of the flock**, hill of the daughter of Zion, to you shall it come, **the former dominion** shall come, **kingship** for the daughter of Jerusalem.

5:2

<sup>2</sup> But you, O **Bethlehem** Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be **ruler** in Israel, **whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days**.

## God dwells with his people – incarnation

2:13

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, **the LORD at their head.**

4:2-3

<sup>2</sup> and many nations shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to **the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways** and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> **He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide disputes for strong nations far away;** and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

5:2-4

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, **from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel**, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> **And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.**

## Peace of the new creation

4:3-4

<sup>3</sup> He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide disputes for strong nations far away; **and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore;**

<sup>4</sup> but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

5:4

<sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. **And they shall dwell secure**, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

Note: see the connection of sitting in peace in 4:4

### **Gospel is for all people (universal grace)**

4:1-3

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and **peoples** shall flow to it,

<sup>2</sup> and **many nations** shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." **For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.**

<sup>3</sup> He shall judge between **many peoples**, and shall decide disputes **for strong nations far away**; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

5:7

<sup>7</sup> Then the remnant of Jacob shall be **in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD**, like showers on the grass, which delay not for a man nor wait for the children of man.

7:17

<sup>17</sup> they shall lick the dust like a serpent, like the crawling things of the earth; they shall come trembling out of their strongholds; **they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God**, and they shall be in fear of you.

7:19 (their iniquities)

<sup>19</sup> He will again have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; **and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.** (Mic. 7:19 JPS) [Note the different translation here. The NIV and ESV have emended the Hebrew text based on several ancient witnesses.]

## Gospel is the forgiveness of sin

7:18-20

<sup>18</sup> Who is a God like you, **pardoning iniquity** and **passing over transgression** for the remnant of his inheritance? He **does not retain his anger forever**, because he delights in steadfast love.

<sup>19</sup> He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our **iniquities** underfoot. You will cast all **our sins** into the depths of the sea.

<sup>20</sup> You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.

## Hint of *Christus victima* (Christ the victim) model – speaker muses of the sacrifice to atone for sin

6:6-8

<sup>6</sup> "With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

<sup>7</sup> Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

<sup>8</sup> He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?