

# Micah 6:1-16

Outline of chapter 6:

1. 6:1-2 – Mountains and the earth's foundations are called as witnesses in a legal court to hear the Lord's indictment of his people Israel
2. 6:3-5 – The Lord's testimony concerns what he has done for Israel in fulfilling his faithfulness to the legal covenant he made with them
3. 6:6-8 – Israel's attempt to appease the Lord with Pagan religious rituals is rejected. Instead, justice, kindness and humility are demanded
4. 6:9 – Judgment from the Lord and the coming punishment is announced.
5. 6:10-16 – Israel's sins are identified and the sentence for punishment is identified.

**6:1-2 – Mountains and the earth's foundations are called as witnesses in a legal court to hear the Lord's indictment of his people Israel**

Micah 6:1 – **"Hear what the Lord says:**

**Arise, plead your case before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.**

**6:2 Hear, you mountains, the indictment of the Lord,  
and you enduring foundations of the earth,  
for the Lord has an indictment against his people,  
and he will contend with Israel.**

**6:3-5 – The Lord's testimony concerns what he has done for Israel in fulfilling his faithfulness to the legal covenant he made with them**

**6:3 "O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I wearied you? Answer me!**

**6:4 For I brought you up from the land of Egypt  
and redeemed you from the house of slavery,  
and I sent before you Moses,  
Aaron, and Miriam.**

**6:5 O my people, remember what Balak king of Moab devised,  
and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him,  
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,  
that you may know the righteous acts of the Lord."**

1. The opening is a pleading defense. It is as if the Lord has put himself in a position to defend himself against an accusing Judah who has rejected him.
2. Shittim and Gilgal are reference to the early events of the Conquest where the Lord had proven himself faithful and Joshua and the people recognized the Lord's faithfulness:
  - a. Joshua 2:1 – "Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim. "Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there.
  - b. Joshua 4:19-24 – "On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan. He said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their parents, 'What do these stones mean?' tell

them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' For the Lord your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The Lord your God did to the Jordan what he had done to the Red Sea[b] when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over. He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God." "

**6:6-8 – Israel’s attempt to appease the Lord with Pagan religious rituals is rejected. Instead, justice, kindness and humility are demanded**

**6:6 “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?**

**6:7 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?”**

**6:8 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?**

1. It is not cultic ritual the Lord desires.
2. The people had a duty to each other and to the Lord.
  - a. Matthew 7:12 – “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”
  - b. From Deut. 6:4-5 and Lev. 19:18 comes → Mark 12:29-31 – “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”
3. “Justice” – a key word used by the prophets addressing the social sins and social violence. Justice is NOT oppression, lying, bribery, but is instead responsibility, supporting the rights of others and social preservation.
4. “love kindness” is Hebrew *hesed* meaning loyalty or covenant love.
5. “Humbly with your God” would mean NOT treating the Lord like a typical pagan god, but knowing the Lord’s nature and letting his nature penetrate your soul.

**6:9 - Judgment from the Lord and the coming  
punishment is announced.**

1. Micah calls for Israel to be attentive to Yahweh’s message.
2. Micah is the messenger to announce the legal charges and the court’s verdict.
3. Micah identifies the “city” as to who the Lord is addressing. Most likely the city is Jerusalem.
4. If this were an actual event where Micah cried out to the people or spoke to a delegation of representatives in Jerusalem we could assume he is speaking to the general population of Judah that had traveled to Jerusalem on a busy market day or Micah could be addressing

governmental and social leaders who have assembled for some administrative meeting in Jerusalem.

5. Micah interrupts the people's business or assembly by saying:
  - a. "Hear of the rod" which is the instrument by which the sinful people will be struck
  - b. "...of him who appointed it" which is Yahweh, the one who will be striking the wicked society with the rod.
6. The sins and their punishments are identified in 6:10-16.

**6:9 The voice of the Lord cries to the city—  
and it is sound wisdom to fear your name:  
"Hear of the rod and of him who appointed it!"**

**6:10-16 – Israel's sins are identified and the sentence  
for punishment is identified.**

1. Three lines of commercial and social sins (6:10-12)
2. Seven lines of the penalties God is going to follow through with (6:13-15)
3. Two lines summarizing the sins and their matching penalties. (6:16)

**6:10 Can I forget any longer the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked,  
and the scant measure that is accursed?**

**6:11 Shall I acquit the man with wicked scales  
and with a bag of deceitful weights?**

1. The Lord states he cannot forget and will not acquit the crimes of the market place.
2. The market place crimes where the wicked gain treasures through wicked practices:
  - a. The accursed scant measure
  - b. Wicked scales
  - c. Bag of deceitful weights
3. This was similar to what had been happening in Northern Israel according to Amos:  
"that we may make the ephah small and the shekel large and cheat with false scales." (Amos 8:5)
4. This practice is strongly forbidden in Lev. 19:35-36 and Deut 25:13-16

**6:12 Your rich men are full of violence;  
your inhabitants speak lies,  
and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.**

1. Here is the "violence" of the fourth generation.
2. "violence" refers to lawlessness and the upheaval of law and order in society. It is the Hebrew word "hamas"
3. The "violence" is covered up with "lies" and "deceitful" tongue
4. The wealthy are protected through corruption and the middle class is oppressed into poverty.

**6:13 Therefore I strike you with a grievous blow,  
making you desolate because of your sins.**

**6:14 You shall eat, but not be satisfied,  
and there shall be hunger within you;  
you shall put away, but not preserve,  
and what you preserve I will give to the sword.**

**6:15 You shall sow, but not reap;**

**you shall tread olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil;  
you shall tread grapes, but not drink wine.**

1. This is the promised curses from Leviticus 26 that occur during the five cycles of discipline to a nation:
  - a. Lev. 26:16, 26
  - b. Deut. 28:33, 38, 39, 40
2. Their booming, corrupt economy was going to collapse.

**6:16 For you have kept the statutes of Omri,  
and all the works of the house of Ahab;  
and you have walked in their counsels,  
that I may make you a desolation, and your inhabitants a hissing;  
so you shall bear the scorn of my people.”**

1. Micah opened his book condemning Northern Israel, the land of Omri and Ahab. Northern Israel had fallen to Assyria by this time.
2. But, now it was Judah who had learned from Northern Israel and were practicing the same.
3. Jerusalem's punishment would equal Northern Israel's for their sin was the same.