

# Micah for the Contemporary Church



McMaster Divinity College  
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## Course Designation

OT 2X13 Micah for the Contemporary Church, Second Year Hebrew Specialization

## Course Schedule

Classes begin on Monday September 14<sup>th</sup>  
Class meets each Monday 10:30 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.\*  
No Class Monday October 12<sup>th</sup> (Thanksgiving Holiday)  
Classes end on Monday December 7<sup>th</sup>

\*Students wishing to read Hebrew and review translation work in class will meet at 9:30 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.

## Course Description

This course is an exegetical and expositional study of the book of Micah. The composition will be contextualized within the book of the twelve. The course will include a review of eighth century Israel as given in the biblical narrative within the context of ancient near eastern history.

Literary analysis of Micah will include its composition history, form critical and structural analysis, exegesis and exposition. Attention will be given to themes of the prophecy and their theological import, with particular attention given to the concepts of *justice and hope*.

## Course Objectives

### *Knowing*

- History of the first temple period of Israel and Judah
- Prophetic distinction of Micah within the book of the twelve
- Message of Micah among the eighth century prophets
- Importance of Micah to contemporary theologies of justice and hope in the church

### *Being*

- Being aware of justice within society as a critical aspect of living a spiritual life
- Learning how to represent God as his image in a violent world
- Learning to live courageously in a world of conflict
- Being sensitive to justice issues according to the priorities of Christian ethics
- Living with hope especially when temporal situations create despair

### *Doing*

- Teach the message of Micah to those that take this book seriously as a prophetic word
- Determine and address issues of justice within individual life circumstances
- Find ways to address issues of injustice at various levels of society engagement
- Inspire hope to those who feel that human life has become meaningless and desperate

## Course Texts

Philip J. King, *Amos, Hosea, Micah: An Archaeological Commentary*, Westminster Press, 1988.

Bruce K. Waltke, *A Commentary on Micah*, Eerdmans, 2007.

## Optional Text

Victor H. Matthews, *Studying the Ancient Israelites: A Guide to Sources and Methods*, Baker, 2007.

## Reference Texts

Anthony Gelston, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*. Biblia Hebraica Quinta 13. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011. The relevant portions of the text and apparatus of Micah should be available. These can be scanned for reference.

Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Conner, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, Eisenbrauns, 1990. This grammar or one comparable should be available for reference.

**Textbook Purchase**

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

**Course Lectures\***

\*The schedule below will be complemented by guest lectures on particular topics to be determined during the semester.

1. Israel and Judah in the Eighth Century
2. The text, compositional history, and canonical setting of the Book of Micah
3. Oracles of Doom: Judgment on Samaria and Judah (Micah 1:1-16; Isaiah 2:6-22)
4. Oracles of Doom: Judgment on Greedy Land Barons and False Prophets (Micah 2:1-13; Isaiah 5:8-30)
5. Future of Jerusalem: Zion Ploughed like a Field (Micah 3:1-12; Isaiah 3:1 – 4:1)
6. Future of Jerusalem: Mountain of Zion (Micah 4:1-5; Isaiah 2:2-5; 65:17-25)
7. Future of Jerusalem: City of the Great King (Micah 4:6-13; Isaiah 54-55)
8. Future of Jerusalem: Rule of the Faithful Remnant (Micah 5:1-15; Isaiah 8:16-9:7)
9. Restoration of Zion: Guilty in the Divine Court (Micah 6:1-8; Isa 1:1-20)
10. Restoration of Zion: Curses on Jerusalem (Micah 6:9-7:7; Amos 4:1-13)
11. Restoration of Zion: Who is like our God? (Micah 7:8-20; Amos 9:11-15)
12. New Testament Fulfilment of the Prophecy of Micah

**Course Assignments and Grading****1. Reading Requirements (15%)**

Biblical text of 1 Kings 16:1 – 2 Kings 20:21 by September 21

Biblical text of Isaiah 1:1 – 12:6; 40:1 – 55:13 by October 26

Text by Philip King must be read by September 21 – **5%**

Text by Waltke must be read in preparation for the biblical material covered in each lecture – **10%**

Reading report will be **due December 7**. The report must indicate the date when readings were done and the number of hours for each time. There will be a 5% deduction if the biblical texts are not read.

**2. History of the Eighth Century (20%)**

A paper of about 2000 words will review the historical circumstances of Israel and Judah during the eighth century. The paper will provide background to explain the rise of Omride – Jehu and Judean dynasties during the eighth century. It must explain the events that transpired, including an account of the exile of Israel by Shalmaneser V and the attack against Jerusalem by Sennacherib. Information on life in Israel and Judah as illustrated in the text by King is a part of this review.

This is not a research paper. The student must consult at least two histories of Israel for this period and the text by King. Students are free to incorporate material from any source useful to their goals for the paper. This paper is **due on October 5<sup>th</sup>**.

### 3. Exegesis of Assigned Passages (40%)

Passages for exegesis from the Hebrew MT will be assigned for 10 weeks as listed below. Exegesis must account for all the variables involved in creating a translation. This will include textual issues, lexical questions, and syntactical explanations as necessary to explain MT. Research must be documented from extant textual evidence, lexical evidence, and grammatical references.

- i. Sept. 14: class review of Isaiah 1:10-20 *BHS* (no preparation required)
- ii. Sept. 21: Micah 1:1-16
- iii. Sept. 28: Micah 2:1-13
- iv. Oct. 5: Micah 3:1-12
- v. Oct. 19: Micah 4:1-5 // Isaiah 2:2-5 discussed in class, no preparation required
- vi. Oct. 26: Micah 4:6-13; Isaiah 55:1-9
- vii. Nov. 2: Micah 5:1-15
- viii. Nov. 9: Micah 6:1-8; Isaiah 1:1-9
- ix. Nov. 16: Micah 6:9-7:7
- x. Nov. 23: Micah 7:8-20
- xi. Nov. 30: Amos 4:9-13
- xii. Dec. 7: Isaiah 8:16-9:7

### 4. Translation of Assigned Passages (30%)

A dynamic equivalent translation that includes Hebrew parallelism will be provided along with each of the exegetical exercises. Some creativity is encouraged in consideration of representing aspects of Hebrew poetry as may be possible in the English language.

Classes will include oral reading of the Hebrew text with correct syllable division. Class discussion will include explanation of the translations rendered.

## Course Policies

### *Academic Honesty*

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

**Gender Inclusive Language**

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

**Style**

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuide.pdf>  
Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

**Late Assignments**

Late assignments are reduced two percentage points for each day late (e.g., if the grade is 90 and it is one day late, the grade will be reduced to 88).

**Bibliography****Text**

Barthélemy, Dominique. *Critique textuelle de l'Ancient Testament*. Vol. 3. Ezéchiél, Daniel, et les 12 Prophètes. OBO 50/3. Univ.-Verlag Göttingen / Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1992.

Gelston, Anthony. *The Twelve Minor Prophets*. Biblia Hebraica Quinta 13. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011.

Tov, Emanuel. *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever*. DJD VIII. Clarendon Press, 1990.

Ziegler, Joseph. *Duodecim prophetae*. Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Gottingensis 13. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 3. ed., 1984.

**Commentaries**

Allen, Leslie C. *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah*. Eerdmans, 1976.

Andersen, Francis I., and David Noel Freedman, eds. *Micah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. AB 24E. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

Ben Zvi, Ehud. *Micah*. FOTL. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Cheyne, T. K. *Micah, with Notes and Introduction*. 1889.

Hillers, Delbert R. *Micah : A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Micah*. Hermeneia. Fortress, 1984.

Limburg, James. *Hosea--Micah*. Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox, 1988.

Margolis, Max Leopold. *Micah*, 1908.

Mays, James Luther. *Micah : A Commentary*. OTL. Westminster, 1976.

McKane, William. *The Book of Micah : Introduction and Commentary*. T & T Clark, 1998.

McKeating, Henry, ed. *The Books of Amos, Hosea and Micah*. The Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge: University Press, 1971.

Nogalski, James. *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*. Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011.

Smith, Ralph L. *Micah-Malachi*. Word Biblical Commentary. Word Books, 1984.

Waltke, Bruce K. *A Commentary on Micah*. William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2007.

Wolff, Hans Walter. *Micah : A Commentary*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1990.

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### **Canon of the Twelve**

Biddle, Mark E. "'Israel' and 'Jacob' in the Book of Micah: Micah in the Context of the Twelve." In *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, 146–65. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000.

Cuffey, Kenneth H. "Remnant, Redactor, and Biblical Theologian: A Comparative Study of Coherence in Micah and the Twelve." In *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, 185–208. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000.

### **Hebrew Prophetic Composition**

Clements, Ronald E. "Prophecy Interpreted: Intertextuality and Theodicy: A Case Study of Jeremiah 26:16-24." In *Uprooting and Planting*, 32–44. New York: T & T Clark, 2007.

Jacobs, Mignon R. *The Conceptual Coherence of the Book of Micah*. JSOTSup. Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

Stansell, Gary. *Micah and Isaiah : A Form and Tradition Historical Comparison*. SBL Dissertation Series. Scholars, 1988.

Sweeney, Marvin A. "Micah's Debate with Isaiah." In *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature*, 210–21. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.

Wagenaar, Jan A. *Judgement and Salvation: The Composition and Redaction of Micah 2-5*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum. Leiden; New York; Cologne: E J Brill, 2001.

### **Theological Studies**

Jenson, Philip Peter. *Obadiah, Jonah, Micah: A Theological Commentary*. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies. London: T & T Clark, 2008.

Mason, Rex. *Micah, Nahum, Obadiah*. Old Testament Guides. Sheffield: JSOT, 1991.

### **Homiletical Studies**

Aaron, Charles L. *Preaching Hosea, Amos, and Micah*. Preaching Classic Texts. Chalice, 2005.

Snaith, Norman Henry. *Amos, Hosea and Micah*. Epworth Preacher's Commentaries. Epworth, 1956.

***Disclaimer: This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes up to and including the first day of class.***