Micah

#4: Everything Changes When the King Takes His Rightful Place

Micah 4:1-5

Keaton Koch ---- October 25, 2026

Hey, Grace, I am so excited to be able to preach on Micah chapter 4 with you today, to bring this sermon to you. Or as my daughter Eden would say, a "salmon." She's so excited to hear Daddy's "salmon" today. So am I, Eden. I'm so excited to preach on Micah chapter 4 with you.

And if you're able to, we're going to stand and read Micah 4. So, if you would, turn to Micah 4 and please stand for the reading of God's Word. And just listen to this vision that Micah unfolds.

"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, 2 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. 3 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; 4 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 For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever."

This is God's Word. Thanks be to God.

You may be seated.

What Micah's just given us is a prophecy. It's this vision of the future. And it is a beautiful, extravagant vision. The mountain of the Lord is established as the highest place. It's supreme and unrivalled. And God is at the center of His people again. The nations, the

foreigners, are streaming in to learn from God's ways—not with malice in their hearts, but to marvel and Israel's God.

And then Micah describes something that's almost unimaginable to this audience: world peace, where weapons of warfare are repurposed into these tools of cultivation; where swords become plowshares and spears are turned into pruning hooks. It says that they're not even training for war anymore. In modern-day times you could say that they're melting down the guns and they're repurposing them into garden tools.

And everyone is sitting in comfort and safety in the shade of their own backyard, and no one is afraid. And it's this vision of this sweeping peace under the righteous rule of the King.

Now, wouldn't you like to live in a world like that? But wait a minute. To understand how this would have sounded to Micah's original audience, all you've got to do is go back one verse prior. Micah 3:12—this is where Micah left us in chapter 3. Listen to the final words: **"Therefore because of you, [people of Israel], Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height."**

Rubble. Desolation. A smoldering heap. This is the picture that Micah gives us. He's just declared a death sentence on Judah. For three chapters he's been telling them what's wrong—that their leaders are corrupt, that their priests will teach for a price. Justice is for sale, and the prophets will tell you anything you want for the right price. And perhaps the deadliest of all is this false sense of security that Judah had—that because the temple was in their midst, God must be on their side.

Look at what they say in chapter 3. They lean on the Lord and say, **"Is not the Lord in the midst of us? No disaster shall come upon us."** Do you hear it? They're not atheists. They're not saying, "We don't believe in God anymore." They have all the presence of religion. They don't have the rule of the King. God is in their theology. God is in their vocabulary. God is in the temple. But God is not ruling their lives.

And Micah says that judgment is coming. Desolation is the sentence. You can hear the Assyrians coming, and they're breathing down their neck. You can hear the hoofbeats coming in. Jerusalem will become rubble, like a ghost town. The mountain of the temple of God will become overgrown and forgotten. The curtain closes. End of the show. That's where Micah leaves us at the end of chapter 3.

And then chapter 4: **"It shall come to pass in the latter days …"** Wait. There are latter days after that? There's a tomorrow, after what we just heard? Apparently, Jerusalem's rubble isn't the final chapter. God's judgment isn't the end of the story. And that's what makes the grace of Micah 4 so stunning. Because they don't deserve Micah 4. And that's the point.

1. The King Takes His Rightful Place

The first thing that Micah wants us to see that's going to set off this whole chain reaction, this domino effect of this vision, is this: the King takes His rightful place.

Beginning in verse 1 … look at Micah 4:1 with me: **"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 …"**

It's the same mountain. The mountain in chapter 3 that was just described as overgrown is in chapter 4 exalted. In chapter 3 it's a desolate ghost town; in chapter 4 the nations are streaming toward it. It's the same mountain, but a radically different future.

Think about who Micah is preaching to when he gives this vision. Judah is this small kingdom living in the shadow of Assyria. And Assyria has the armies, the wealth, the prestige and influence. From every human perspective Assyria seems to be driving the course of history.

But Micah leans in and gathers the people together and says, *Do you want to know where history is actually going? The mountain of the house of the Lord will be exalted above them all.*

And what Micah is declaring here is not that the mountain of the Lord is going to literally and geographically be taller than Mount Everest. In ancient times the high places were associated with worship and with divine authority. So, the vision that he sees is YHWH's supremacy above them all. Every rival power, every rival god, every rival allegiance will be beneath Him, the Lord God.

The King is in His rightful place. The nations are coming to Him. He's teaching them His ways. He's settling disputes for foreigners and nations that are far off. He judges between peoples.

Everything changes when the King takes His rightful place.

Now I want to give you a picture of what it looks like when the King doesn't occupy the highest place. During Micah's ministry he ministered under three kings. The second one was

King Ahaz. And in 2 Kings 16 Ahaz goes to Damascus to meet with the king of Assyria. And while he's there, he sees an altar that he likes. And he wants to copy it. So, he sends word back to his architects to get to work on building another altar. And he brings that altar into the temple of God.

But he doesn't remove the bronze altar. Do you know what he does? He moves it over. He rearranges, reorients, the worship of God's people. It's almost as if he's saying, *God, you can stay. We just need you to scoot over just a little bit.*

That's what Micah sees. He sees a day when the mountain of the Lord will be established as the highest of them all, where there's no rival idols or high places. It towers above them all—supremacy.

And Grace, I wonder if Ahaz's problem isn't a little bit closer to home than we'd like to admit. Because for most of us, not all of us, the temptation isn't that we would outright reject Jesus. It's that we would give Jesus a place, but just not the highest place. Jesus on Sunday, but career at the center. Jesus is in the room, but it's our comfort that's on the throne. Jesus is in this space, but it's really money that's driving the decisions. Or maybe it's success or approval or our children or the good life. Whatever that is, it's something that's good that becomes the highest thing in our life.

And here's the question: Is Jesus merely occupying a place in our life—or does He have the highest place? Because we don't take Jesus and place Him on the throne and make Him king. Jesus is King. The question is, are our lives ordered like that's true? That's the question for us. Everything changes when the King takes His rightful place.

And if the King has the highest place in our lives, then there's an obvious next question. And that is: Who gets to tell us how to live? Well, that's the second thing that Micah shows us.

2. The King's Word Reshapes His People

The King's Word reshapes His people. Micah answers this in verse 2. Look at it with me:

"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."

Notice what these people are coming for. It's not Judah's military power or their culture or their wealth. They want Israel's God. They want Israel's God's Word.

And don't miss who these people are. They're the nations. They're the Gentiles! It's the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Philistines, the Moabites, the Ammonites--all these nations and people groups that Judah has learned to fear and whom they have imitated. And they're thinking, *Wait … them? They're coming to the mountain of the Lord? And it's not to conquer?* They're coming to be taught by Judah's God's Word.

And notice the action in this verse. It says, **"Teach us His ways so that we may walk in His paths."** Teach … walk. They don't merely want God's Word to inform them for knowledge's sake. They want to know the Lord so that they can be informed and walk in His ways.

And isn't that what God's Word is supposed to do in us? Because God's Word isn't merely intended to inform us; God's Word forms us.

And there's another contrast here that I don't want us to miss, because Micah is contrasting it back to chapter 3. Remember in chapter 3 when Micah says the priests **"teach for a price"**? But in Micah 4 it says, **"He will teach us His ways"**—He, the Lord Himself.

So, the solution to all this corrupt human leadership that they're dealing with in Micah 3 isn't better human leadership. It's God Himself. And that's what Micah sees. God, YWHW, comes and takes the central position as the authoritative voice for the people of God. They're following His ways.

And here's the irony: that Judah had God's Word, and they were choosing to walk in the ways of the nations, being catechized and discipled by the nations. But here in Micah 4 the nations are streaming in to hear God's Word and to walk at His feet. Do you see the reversal? Do you see the New Testament here?

And I don't want you to miss this. There's an amazing movement that's happening through this vision in Micah 4. What direction are the nations moving in? It says that they're streaming into Zion to hear the Word of the Lord. But then look at the end of verse 2. What direction is the Word moving? It's moving out. I want you to see this. Here's Mount Zion. *[Draws a mountain.]* It's reestablished, and God is at the center of His people. And here are the nations who are far off *[draws arrows pointing toward the mountain]*—the Gentiles. And it says that they are streaming in towards Zion. They want God's presence and they want God's Word to fulfill them and to activate them, to conform and change them.

But it doesn't stay with this inward motion. Look what it says at the end of this verse. It says the Word is going out from them. From Jerusalem it's being proclaimed. As they are receiving God's presence and being changed by His Word, the Word is driving outward to change the world and seek transformation. *[Draws arrows pointing away from the mountain.]*

This is the movement of the Book of Micah, chapter 4. And it's the movement of missions. It's particularly meaningful for us on Mobilization Sunday. Because during this More Than initiative when we've been giving sacrificially, one of the objectives of that is that we would give the Word out to Bible-less peoples who don't have access to the Word of God. Specifically, there are three unreached language groups in Nepal. We want the Word to get out. But Grace, we would be remiss if we were getting the Word out to other peoples, carrying it out, but we weren't feasting and treasuring the Word of God ourselves.

We want to go out. We want to be the type of people who carry the Word to the nations, carrying it out. But we also have to be equally committed to getting the Word in.

Because the goal isn't just for us study more Scripture and hear more Scripture. It's to become people who walk in the King's ways. God's Word isn't merely intended to <u>inform</u> us; it's meant to <u>form</u> His people.

I remember a season when bedtime was a battleground—every single night. Anyone else? We're still a little bit in that stage right now. But this one particular night, I was getting my kids to bed and I lost my temper. I just lost control, and I yelled at them, and I could see tears in their faces. My children, in the hallway, were afraid of their dad's anger. And I stormed out of the room, and I went to my room, and two things occurred. First was a godly grief that came from the Spirit. But soon after from an external voice was, *Why don't they ever listen to you? You deserve fifteen minutes of peace and quiet.* And I was rationalizing the anger in my mind.

And by God's grace, I went to my bed and I turned over to my Bible on the bedside table, and I opened to where God says His name to Moses in Exodus 34. And this is what he says to God Himself about His name: **"The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."**

And I realized how far short I'd fallen as a father. Because here was my heavenly Father abounding in steadfast love and mercy and grace. And here I am, a father whose children are afraid of His anger.

So, that night I was confronted by God's Word. And the first thing I did was to seek God's mercy, because He is a merciful God and loving. And then I resolved that I was never going to raise my voice at my children again.

And if I'm honest with you, I haven't held to that commitment perfectly. Too many times that I can count I've had to go back to my kids, and I have to confess my sin and ask for forgiveness. I'm still learning. I'm still walking, letting the Word of God determine how I walk according to His ways.

And Grace, that's what I want for us—not just to hear the Word, but to walk it.

So, here's the challenge. I'm doing this, and I want to invite you into it. For thirty days I'm going to listen to Scripture every day. That's it. I'll tell you what I'm listening to. There's an app called "Hosanna" that is developed by Faith Comes by Hearing. They've done some incredible work in the Bible translation space. And they actually do awesome voice narration of the characters of the Bible.

So, for thirty days I'm going to be listening to the Book of Acts. If you want to join me, I'd love you to. Scan this QR code, or I'll have some cards available at the welcome desk. I'd love for you to join me.

On your commute, or while you're making breakfast or walking the dog, let's turn off the podcast. Let's put down the news. Let's feast on the Word of God together. The psalmist says it is sweeter than honey to his lips. Moses said that we don't live by bread alone, but by the very words of the mouth of the Lord.

Scripture isn't something that we're supposed to just study; it's something that we're supposed to be feasting on. And I'm concerned that for most of us, we might be snacking on the Word of God rather than feasting on it. So, for thirty days join me, and let's feast together. Let the Word of God dwell in us richly. And as you listen, don't just ask, *What did I hear?* But ask, *King Jesus, what do you want me to change about my life so that I can walk according to Your ways?* Hear it, learn it, walk it—not just so you can check off a box, but so that we can be conformed to the King's Word and we can walk in His paths.

3. The King's Righteous Rule Changes Everything

And that raises the next question. What happens when God's people begin walking according to God's Word? Well, that's the third thing that Micah shows us. The King's righteous

rule changes everything. Verse 3 and 4: **"He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide disputes for strong nations far away …"**

So, remember now who's hearing this. Judah is living in the shadow of Assyria, one of the biggest, baddest superpowers of the day. Assyria has the army, they have the influence. They seem to be calling all the shots. But what Micah sees is that these strong foreign nations are coming into little Judah so that God can settle the disputes of the nations. And don't miss who's doing the judgment. It's God. It's God Himself.

And what happens when the King starts judging rightly? Look at verse 3: **"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 …"**

Now why don't they need swords anymore? Is it because they've suddenly become more enlightened and have figured out this whole world peace thing? No. It's because the King is judging rightly. And righteous rule produces peace like you've never seen before.

And look at the transformation. A sword, which is designed to take life, is turned into a plowshare designed to cultivate life. A spear destroys. A pruning hook? It works to bear much fruit.

Do you see what's happening? Those instruments that were once producing death are now producing life. These instruments that caused destruction now lead to cultivation.

And Micah doesn't just say that the war stops. He says they stop training for the war. They don't even have to prepare for it anymore. Can you imagine a time, what transformation would have to take place, for nations to deactivate their nukes?

Then Micah does something so beautiful. He takes this enormous picture of international world peace, of armies and weapons and nations, and he brings it right down to our very own backyard.

Look at verse 4: **"But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid …"**

Now this might not sound like much to us—a vine, a fig tree. I don't even like figs, so what does that matter to me? But for somebody who is under the threat of invasion, when the Assyrian army is about to come in and take everything that you have, this is a picture of extraordinary blessing. It's a picture of enough. Your land, your family, your shade. Nobody is coming to take it from you.

Here's something I don't want us to miss. Because Micah is contrasting this again back to a previous chapter, chapter 2, when Micah condemns the powerful for coveting the fields of their brothers and trying to seize them. They take people's houses. And therefore, they were taking their inheritance as the people of Israel. But now under the righteous rule of the King everybody sits under their own vine and under their own tree.

See what God is doing? In chapter 2 the powerful take your field. But in chapter 4 you sit safely beneath your own vine. Because the King's good and righteous judgment doesn't just remain in this far-off courtroom. It comes to our very own backyards.

And sometimes, by God's grace, we get to see little glimpses of God's kingdom breaking in from heaven onto earth, and our good and gracious King putting those pieces that are broken back together.

I run a little appliance rental business on the side. And a while back I was installing a washer and dryer for a woman named Sarah. And I asked Sarah, as I was installing her machines, a question that I like to ask, which is, "If God could do a miracle in your life, what would it be?" I love when He actually answers this.

And she said, "I would ask God to bring the father of my children back into the picture."

I said, "Okay. Let's pray for that." And that night we prayed for David, that he would come back into the picture.

A couple of months later I was going back to Sarah's apartment to put in a new hose, and I walked in the front door, and guess who was there? It was David! David was sitting on the couch there. "David, I'm so happy to see you!"

He was thinking, *Who are you?*

The guy who was praying for you.

And there he was. So, I shared the three circles with David that night, and over a washing machine David prayed to receive Christ. Praise God, right? Amen.

But then, even a cooler thing continued to happen, because the gospel is powerful. I kept up with Sarah, checking on her washing machine, but also checking on this relationship. And she messaged me and said, "Hey, we want to get married, and we hear that you're a pastor. Maybe you can do the wedding!"

I said, "Awesome, yes!" So, we're planning a wedding for Sarah and David. Isn't this awesome? This is a glimpse of heaven, the kingdom of God, breaking through into our world.

Now it's not Micah 4 in its fullness. Only Jesus can bring that. But it's a little preview of what happens when the King starts putting broken things back together.

And I think one of the most beautiful phrases in this whole chapter is right here at the end of verse 4. It says, "No one shall make them afraid." Because in this vision the sword is gone. But so is the fear of the sword. And those are not the same thing. If you've ever been in a war-torn country, you can know that the war and the fighting can stop, but the people can still be living in fear. You can put down your weapons, but you don't trust that guy across the street.

But the peace that Micah is describing goes much, much deeper than the absence of conflict. There's security. There's trust. There's room for the ordinary--like children and marriage-- to flourish, for families to grow, for neighbors to walk across and say hello to their neighbors, for people to cultivate rather than to destroy. That's what life looks like under the rule of a righteous King.

How can Micah be so certain of this? Let's look at the end of verse 4: **"For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken."** That's his confidence. It's not Judah's strength. It's not a chink in Assyria's armor that he sees. The Lord has spoken. And what He's promised He will accomplish. It is written.

So, do you see the movement? The King takes His rightful place. The Word reshapes His people. And His righteous rule changes everything.

The Turn—Walk in the Name of the Lord

But there's a problem. Because Micah's audience is looking around, and nothing has changed. Assyria is still there. Those corrupt leaders are still there. The people are still afraid. Swords are still swords. And the people are still walking in the names of their little-g gods.

So, here's the question: What do you do when you believe in a kingdom that's coming, but you're still living in a world that doesn't look anything like it? Look at verse 5: **"For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever."**

There it is. Micah has just given this magnificent vision of the future. But he doesn't give it to us so that we sit around twiddling our thumbs, waiting for this future day to come. He gives this future so that we'll live faithfully in the present.

That's why Micah gives this vision. One day, the nations will come. And they will learn the ways of the Lord. But not today. No, today they're still walking in the ways of their own gods.

So, what will the people of God do? **"But we will walk in the name of the Lord our God."** Notice that word again. In verse 2 the nations say, **"Teach us your ways so that we may walk in your paths."** In verse 5, the peoples walk in the names of their gods.

But we will walk in the name of the Lord. Walk…walk…walk.

You see, Micah's vision isn't to give them something just to look forward to in the future; it's to give them a way to live. Because future certainty produces present faithfulness.

And Grace, knowing that this is where history is going, whose name are you going to walk in today? Micah knew where history was going. But Grace, we know the name of the King. His name is Jesus. And we all, like those in Judah, have gone astray. We have walked in the paths of other gods. We have pushed the King to the margins. We have failed to walk in His paths. But there is good news—that the King has come for rebels. Amen?

Jesus—The King Who Came for Rebels

Jesus lived the perfect life that we couldn't live. He died the death that we deserve, taking on judgment that was upon us, that we through His death and resurrection, as enemies of God, would be made God's people. Jesus took the judgment that we deserved so that we could inherit the kingdom that we never earned. And that's grace. We don't deserve it. If you go back to Micah 4, they didn't deserve it. We don't deserve it.

And not only does He give us His grace, He invites us into His mission. Look what He does in Matthew 28: **"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."** Do you hear Micah? Do you hear Micah in this? The King is in His rightful place. And what does the King do? He says, **"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."**

Micah saw the nations streaming in to learn the ways of God. Jesus sends out His disciples to teach them the ways of the King. Micah saw the vision. Jesus launched the mission.

And we don't go to earn the King's favor. We go because we've already received it. That's why we share the gospel. That's why we take the good news to our coworkers and to our

colleagues, our neighbors, and down at UT campus. That's why we carry the Word of God to Bible-less people groups--because of the grace that we have received.

What if your salvation wasn't about where you go when you die—but about where God wants to send you while you're alive? And if this hasn't convinced you and you want to know where all of this is headed, look at Revelation 7:9-10: **"After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"**

A multitude that no one can number, from every language, from every people, from every tribe. And where are they? They are before the throne, before the Lamb, worshiping the King. Micah saw the nations stream to the mountain of the Lord. And John sees the nations gathered before the throne of the land. Micah saw the vision. Jesus launched the mission. And John sees the fulfillment.

This is where all of history is going. The King is at the center. The nations are worshiping. The promises of God are fulfilled. And so, knowing that, what do we do? We put the King first—not because we put Him on the throne, but because He's already on the throne. We put Him on the throne of our lives. We walk according to His words. We join Him in mission, wherever, however, whenever He wants to send us. Our lives are a blank contract, and we sign it, and we say, *Yes, we will follow You*. Let His Word shape the way you walk. Let His kingdom reshape the way that you relate and live with people. And let His mission determine every breath that you breathe. Because future certainty produces present faithfulness. So, live today like the King is king. Amen?

Will you pray with me?

Lord Jesus, our King, You are high and exalted and lifted up. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come. And because of Your grace we call upon You. And we say that our lives are Yours, belonging to You. So, Lord, may You reshape us by Your Word. May it change everything in our lives and in our relationships so that we can see glimpses of Your kingdom, Lord, for Your glory and for our great joy. Thank You, Lord, for Your grace. We

pray that we would live today, joining You on mission to make Your name high and lifted up, exalted among our neighbors and among the nations. We pray this in Jesus' holy name. Amen.