1:8 Micah didn’t just mindlessly transmit God’s word to God’s people. He perceived the truth of the words he was repeating, and believed absolutely that they would come true; and so he wept and rolled himself in the dust (:10). This may have been from grief, but it may also be that he thought that *his* repentance and prayer could avert the judgment upon God’s people which he was prophesying.

1:10 Rolling naked in the dust… this was the extent of Micah's passion for the repentance of his audience. Our preaching isn’t to be an emotionless publicity campaign for our denomination or local church, but a passionate appeal for real response. Indifference, lack of passion, is the besetting tragedy of our age. When did you last really shed tears? When were you moved, really wrenched in your gut, by the suffering of others, by the sin of this world, your own sin, your part in humanity’s tragic rejection of God… when did you last *feel* for God in His pain, as He sees His beloved children and creation walk away from Him day after day, second after second? When did you last feel ecstatic joy, deep sadness… in this post-modern world of surface level emotion? It’s in all this that the words of the prophets and their personal nature as people challenge us- and their spirit is to be the spirit of our testimony to Jesus in this world (Rev. 19:10.

1:12 *Evil has come down*- Evil in the sense of calamity and disaster comes from God (Is. 45:5-7); it’s not true that there is a personal Satan figure who brings evil, and God brings only good. Both good and evil ultimately come from God; He is in control of our lives, and has total power in the cosmos.

2:1 What people think about as they lay on their beds is known by God and is the basis of His judgment of them.

2:6 The apostles were likewise ordered not to preach, but their response was that it was impossible for them to keep quiet about God’s word as it was in Christ (Acts 5:28). We cannot but share God’s word with others if it really has a place in our hearts (Am. 3:8).

2:7 *Spirit… restrained?*- The prophets didn’t speak their own words but God’s words, because they spoke as they were moved by God’s Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:21). For a prophet not to speak or preach would therefore be as good as trying to restrain the Spirit of God; and this cannot be done.

*My words do good*- The early chapters of Proverbs emphasize how God’s words give strength to those who already obey them. There is an upward spiral in spiritual life, in which the Spirit and word of God is the dynamic. Exposure to God’s word confirms us in living a spiritual life. Hence the importance of daily Bible reading.

3:12 *For your sake*- Other people suffer because of the sins of others. However, when Hezekiah studied the words of Micah, he repented and begged God to change His mind about this very verse- and God changed His mind and didn’t bring this evil (Jer. 26:19). So God’s words of prophecy are open to renegotiation, according to prayer and repentance. This adds intensity and significance to our entreaties of God, knowing that others (e.g. Moses) have successfully reasoned with God and He has changed His stated intentions.

4:1-4 A clear prophecy of the literal establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, based around Jerusalem. ‘Mountains’ are symbolic of kingdoms.

4:4 *Vine… fig tree*- These words were quoted by Rabshakeh, in offering the Jews this very situation in pagan Assyria (2 Kings 18:31,32). The world around us in its advertisements and glossy images is in fact a fake Kingdom of God, imitating the true Kingdom of God. And so the choice is highlighted for us- between the kingdoms of this world for today, and the eternal Kingdom of God tomorrow.

*For the mouth*- The wonder of the process of inspiration is that the black print we read on white paper in the Bible is the very mouth of God speaking to us.

4:8 The Kingdom of God which Jesus will establish at His return will in fact be a re-establishment of the Kingdom which was earlier, when Yahweh was Israel’s Kingdom on earth (Ez. 21:25-27; 1 Chron. 29:23). This “former Kingdom” will be restored, again on earth, but to a far more glorious extent.

4:10 How was the travailing daughter of Zion to be delivered / rescued in Babylon after having been taken captive there from Jerusalem by the Babylonians? Surely in that there, God intended a spiritual revival of the people, there they would hear Ezekiel’s appeal to repent, which if responded  to would enable them to build the temple which he had described (Ez. 43:10,11) and thus usher in a Messianic Kingdom.  God had so many wonderful plans for His people which they didn’t allow to come true for them.

4:12 God assembles the nations to judge / thresh them, but they assemble themselves (:11).This is part of a large Biblical theme- that those who are judged in fact judge themselves. The only ones who will be rejected by God are those who themselves don’t wish to be in His Kingdom.

5:1 Mk. 14:65 (Gk.) says that the Lord was hit with “strokes of rods". Perhaps it was in this sense that the rod comforted Messiah (Ps. 23:4) in that He saw immediately that prophecy was being fulfilled in Him. Our darkest moments likewise can be our greatest encouragement if only we perceive them as we should. As men mocked Him and smote Him, thus they were treating their judge at the time of judgment. In His time of dying, the Lord Jesus was the judge of Israel. This explains why when we come before the cross, not only at the breaking of bread but whenever we reflect upon Him and His death, we are in some sense coming before Him in judgment.

5:2 A prophecy of Christ’s birth in Bethlehem (Mt. 2:6). This prophecy of His birth is prefaced by a statement that Messiah would be smitten upon the cheek with a rod (:1)- which happened at the end of His life. In our linear way of thinking, we’d expect this to be the other way around- Messiah is born, grows up, suffers, dies… but God doesn’t think and write like that; the prophecies often appear to ‘jump around’ in their chronological fulfilment.

6:7 Micah comes to the point where he would fain make sacrifice for Israel, even to the point of offering his firstborn son, so strongly did he take upon himself the sins of his people. But he tells Israel that even this will be no good; they must repent themselves, for God doesn’t work on the basis of substitution but representation. In all this, Micah came close to the spirit of the Father and Son. For the Father would give His firstborn for their sin.

7:16 *Ashamed of all their might*- In the day of judgment, people will be ashamed of the size of their bank accounts, the trust they put in investments, influential people, wealth, bodily strength. All human advantage will be despised- and we must live in that spirit today.