

A Study of the Minor Prophets
The Book Micah – Lesson 4 – Chapters 5-6

- I. Chapter 5: The opening of this oracle reverts back to the theme of judgment, as Daughter Zion is once again under siege by her enemies. The timing of the oracle again blends near and far as the siege of Jerusalem leads into the coming of the promised Messiah. Even after the return from exile, Israel would remain under foreign oppression and an even greater bondage to sin and to Satan—Jesus announced that he came to bring the release for prisoners that Isaiah and the prophets had promised (see Isa 61:1–3; Luke 4:18–19). The siege of Jerusalem presents a threat to the promises of the Davidic covenant. The enemy here strikes Israel’s ruler (shophet—“judge”) with a “rod” (shevet). Ironically, the word for “rod” here also has the meaning of “scepter,” and this symbol of rule is promised to the tribe of Judah and Israel’s future king (Gen 49:10; Num 24:17). The Lord promises the Davidic king that he would defeat his enemies with a “rod of iron” in Psalm 2:9, but here it is Zion’s enemies that have the upper hand.
- II. After the present humiliation, the Lord would fulfill his covenant promises by restoring dominion to the house of David. A new ruler would once again come from the obscure village of Bethlehem, just as in the days of David. In contrast to the failed.
- III. Chapter 5:7-15: The restored remnant of Israel would become not only like the refreshing dew and rain, but also like a young lion tearing prey in its military domination over the nations. The purpose of the Lord’s judgments on Israel in history and in the last days would be to purge his people of their idolatrous trust in military strength and false gods.
- IV. Chapter 6: The third major section of the book opens with the Lord bringing a formal “lawsuit” against his people with Micah serving as his prosecuting attorney. The proceedings begin with the calling of witnesses. Moses had called on the heavens and earth to serve as witnesses when the Lord entered into covenant with Israel (Deut 32:1), and they had stood as silent observers of Israel’s conduct ever since. The Lord begins his case by recalling the good things he did for Israel in making them a people—rescuing them from bondage in Egypt, giving them leaders like Moses, and protecting them in their wilderness. The Lord’s faithfulness to the people of Israel stands in contrast to their unfaithfulness toward him. The Lord charges that the people have misunderstood what he expected from them as his covenant partner.
- V. Chapter 6:9-16: If the lawsuit speech in 6:1–8 lays out the Lord demands from his people, what follows reflects how far Judah had fallen short of these covenant expectations. The Lord would not forget the economic exploitation of the poor through theft, dishonest measures, and deceit. He would strike his people with a heavy blow and bring the covenant curses upon them so that the rich and powerful would never enjoy the agricultural produce of the lands they had stolen from others.