

# Micah 5 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

MICAH - WHO IS LIKE JEHOVAH?  
 Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
 Chart by Charles Swindoll

<b>MICAH: WHO IS LIKE JEHOVAH?</b>					
<b>Micah 7:18</b>					
<b>RETRIBUTION</b> Micah 1:1-2:13		<b>KINGDOM</b> Micah 3:1-5:15		<b>WORSHIP</b> Micah 6:1-7:20	
<b>First Message:</b> Judgment Will Come		<b>Second Message:</b> Blessing will follow Judgment		<b>Third Message:</b> An Indictment of Sin & A Promise of Blessing	
Judgment Micah 1:1-2:11	Promise Micah 2:12-13	Judgment Micah 3:1-12	Promise Micah 4:1-5:15	Judgment Micah 6:1-7:10	Promise Micah 7:11-20
Sin and Judgment		Hope and Comfort		Controversy and Pardon	
Sin & It's Outcome Incurable		The King & His Kingdom Inevitable First Coming - Mic 5:2-3 Second Coming - Mic 5:4-15		The Lord & His Justice Inescapable	
Message of Destruction for Samaria & Judah		Message of Doom & Deliverance		Message of Denunciation	
God Gathers to Judge and Deliver		God Judges Rulers and Comes to Deliver		God Brings Indictments and Ultimate Deliverance	
<b>Question 1:</b> Is God Responsible for the Destruction we face?		<b>Question 2:</b> How Do We Know God is with Us?		<b>Question 3:</b> What Does God Want from Us?	
About 25 Years 735-710 BC Approximated					

## MICAH 5 COMMENTARY

**Micah 5:1 Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; They have laid siege against us; With a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek.**

- **Gather** Deuteronomy 28:49; 2Kings 24:2; Isaiah 8:9; 10:6; Jeremiah 4:7; 25:9; Joel 3:9; Habakkuk 1:6; Habakkuk 3:16
- **They have** Deuteronomy 28:51-57; 2Kings 25:1-3; Ezekiel 21:21,22; 24:2; Luke 19:43,44
- **With a rod** Job 16:10; Lamentations 3:30; Matthew 5:39; 26:67; 27:30; John 18:22; 19:3; Acts 23:2; 2Corinthians 11:20
- **judge** 1Samuel 8:5,6; Isaiah 33:22; Amos 2:3
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

This verse occurs at the end of chapter 4 in the Massoretic Text and is thus understood to be a continuation of the preceding discussion. The **NET Note says** Beginning with Mic 5:1, the verse numbers through 5:15 in the English Bible (ET) differ by one from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (HT) (BHS), with Mic 5:1 ET = 4:14 HT, Mic 5:2 ET = 5:1 HT, Mic 5:3 ET = 5:2 HT, etc., through Mic 5:15 ET = 5:14 HT. From Mic 6:1 the verse numbers in the English Bible and the Hebrew Bible are again the same. **Allan** comments that Micah 5:1 "is composed of a short sinister section and a long happy one." (Micah 5:2-15)

**Note:** While Micah 5 clearly has Messianic implications, the interpretation of many of the specific details is not straight forward which has led to a variety of interpretations, even by conservative commentators.

**TABLE 1**  
**DIVINE MERCY**  
**TRUMPS**  
**DIVINE WRATH**

JUDGMENT	PROMISE/HOPE
Micah 1:1-2:11	Micah 2:12-13
Micah 3:1-12	Micah 4:1-14
Micah 5:1	Micah 5:2-15
Micah 6:1-7:10	Micah 7:11-20

**NLT** Micah 5:1 Mobilize! Marshal your troops! The enemy is laying siege to Jerusalem. They will strike Israel's leader in the face with a rod.

**NET** Micah 5:1 But now **slash** yourself, daughter surrounded by soldiers! We are besieged! With a scepter they strike Israel's ruler on the side of his face.

**HCSB** Micah 5:1 Now daughter who is under attack, you **slash** yourself in grief; a siege is set against us! They are striking the judge of Israel on the cheek with a rod.

**NICOT** (Allen) Micah 5:1 Now you are **gashing** yourself, Lady under attack. Siege is laid against us; with their stick they are striking on the cheek Israel's judge.

**Context** - As you will note in the preceding above, Micah now reverts back to judgment and then follows immediately by one of the more famous Promises of Hope in all the OT.

**Wiseman** notes that "Like the preceding oracle it moves from the present distress to future salvation, more particularly from the humiliation of Jerusalem's king (Micah 5:1) to the Messiah's victory (Micah 5:2-5)."

**Now** - Here we meet the third **'now'**. Three times (Micah 4:9-10; 4:11-13; 5:1-5a) Micah introduces a period of distress with his **'now'** and then follows it with a proclamation of hope. (Dale Ralph Davis)

**Now muster** (summon) **yourself in troops, daughter of troops** - Note that the **NET**, **HCSB** and **NICOT** translations (above) interpret the Hebrew differently because they take the Hebrew verb **gadam** to mean "slash (gash) yourself.". The **NAS** and **ESV** favor the meaning of **gadam** as to "to muster." As discussed below, the most common meaning of **gadam** in the OT is to cut or slash one's self as either a sign of grief (Dt 14:1) or as a maneuver calculated to appeal to the deities (as was done with the pagan false religions). The verb **gadam** is in the Hithpoel, which is an intensive reflexive stem ("Muster yourselves" or "Cut yourselves")

**McComiskey** - According to the former meaning (of **gadam** meaning slashing), Micah sarcastically calls upon Zion to engage in heathen mourning rites that involved cutting oneself (1Ki 18:28; Jer 16:6; 41:5), which the law forbade (Lev 19:28; Dt. 14:1)... Micah is ordering Zion to form itself into a troop. (This) interpretation is preferable because, as in Micah 4:9 where the figure of sarcasm was also disallowed, it better fits an oracle of salvation.

**Davis** - We can't be sure exactly what it is that Micah calls Jerusalem to do in face of the siege. His command uses a word- or sound-play; he wants the 'daughter of **gadam**' to **gadam** in some way! There may be two distinct verbs that 'use' that **gadam** root. One means to 'gash'; hence NJPS, 'Now you gash yourself in grief' (cf. 1Ki 18:28). The other means 'to throng' or 'band together'. This latter fits nicely with **gadam**, a band of raiders.

**Daughter of troops** - "daughter of attack (Lit = daughter of a raid)" (Allen). "daughter surrounded by soldiers." (NET) The **New American Bible** has an interesting translation "Bat-gader!" regarding which the marginal note says "Bat-gader: "fenced-in maiden," another symbolic name for Jerusalem, then under siege from the Assyrians (**Ed**: Clearly their interpretation. Others think that Micah is referring to the siege by Babylon.)" Compare "daughter of Zion (Jerusalem)" - Mic 4:8.

**Wiersbe** - So many soldiers are encamped around Jerusalem that Micah calls her "**the city [daughter] of troops.**" (Be Concerned)

**Muster** (01413)(**gadam**) means primarily to penetrate, to cut, to cut off, to make an incision upon oneself an in a pagan act of self-laceration which is strictly forbidden in the Torah (Dt 14:1, 1Ki 18:28, Jer 16:6, 41:5, 47:5) The purpose of the self-laceration is to "coerce" the deity to perform a desired action. Jer 16:6 prophesied of a day when God's people would not gash themselves. The best known use is in First Kings "So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them." (1Kgs 18:28)

**Swanson** says here in Micah 5:1 the idea of gadad is "to marshal, band together against by calling together persons for a task or event."

**TWOT** - This verb is used eleven times in the OT. Seven of these are in the Hithpoel stem, and with two exceptions, they all refer to an act of self-laceration in an act of worship or to a custom of mourning.

**Gadad** is also used in the sense of band together, as gathering to plot and plan in conspiracy (Ps 94:21)

**NAS Usage:** cut(2), gash(2), gashed(1), muster yourselves in troops(1), together(1), trooped(1).

**Gadah** - 8v - Deut 14:1; 1Kgs 18:28; Ps 94:21; Jer 5:7; 16:6; 41:5; 47:5; Mic 5:1

**They have laid siege against us** - Who is **they**? In other words who lays siege against Jerusalem? Two possibilities have been mentioned - [Sennacherib](#) (Assyria) in 701BC and [Nebuchadnezzar](#) (Babylon) in 597 or 586BC. With the pronoun "**us**" Micah identifies himself with the besieged readers, but this does not necessarily mean that Micah was present when the siege took place. He simply is representing his people, empathizing with their fate.

[Sennacherib](#) described his **siege** - "Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria, 'On what are you trusting that you are remaining in Jerusalem under **siege (matsor)**?' (2Chr 32:10) Those who favor this siege include - Allen (NICOT), ESV Study Bible, A C Gaebelain, James M Boice

Some like Gaebelain see this **siege** as by the Assyrian (cf Micah 5:5), who Gaebelain sees as ultimately fulfilled in the future Antichrist, but this seems to be forcing more than is stated in the literal text.

[Nebuchadnezzar](#) began his final siege against Jerusalem beginning in 588BC and ending 18 months later with the invasion and defeat of the Holy city of Jerusalem and burning of the House of the Lord (2Ki 25:1-4, 8-11). The Hebrew word for **siege (matsor)** is used twice related to Nebuchadnezzar, first in 2Kgs 24:10 (597) and then in 2Ki 25:2 (Referring to the siege that culminated in the razing of the Temple and Jerusalem in 586BC). Those who favor this as the siege to which Micah refers include - Walter Kaiser (This prophecy of the Babylonian siege "returns to the thought of Mic 4:9,10"), Kenneth Barker (New American Commentary), J A Martin (Bible Knowledge Commentary), Warren Wiersbe (Be Series).

**John Gill** seems to take this passage a bit too far writing this is "either Nebuchadnezzar, and the Chaldean army or Vespasian with the Romans."

I like **Davis'** comment - I don't think this was fulfilled in the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem in 701 BC. Sennacherib didn't have Hezekiah in his power like this; the fulfillment in view may well be Jehoiachin's capitulation to Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon in 597 BC (2Kings 24:10-12) or Zedekiah's downfall in the siege of 587 BC (2Kings 25:1-7). Verse 1 tells us the setting for God's work—complete humiliation. Here is what looks like the total demise of the Davidic dynasty. This is so often where God begins—in our abysmal helplessness.

**Siege** ([04692](#)) (**matsor** from **tsur** to confine, bind, besiege) means a siege enclosure, entrenchment, a besieged, fortified area. A siege is a process of shutting up and confining a city, and methodically attacking the walls (Dt 20:19). It can also refer to the siege works or ramparts which were "earthen mounds and ramps built as offensive weapons to attack city walls (Dt 20:20)" (Swanson)

**See Dictionary Articles on Siege:** [Siege](#)

**NAS Usage:** besieged(3), defense(1), fortified(1), fortress(1), rampart(1), siege(17), siegeworks(1).

**Matsor** - 25v - Deut 20:19f; 28:53, 55, 57; 2Kgs 24:10; 25:2; 2Chr 8:5; 11:5; 32:10; Ps 31:21; 60:9; Jer 10:17; 19:9; 52:5; Ezek 4:2f, 7f; 5:2; Mic 5:1; Nah 3:14; Hab 2:1; Zech 9:3; 12:2

**With a rod they will smite the judge** (reference to the king) **of Israel on the cheek** - A slap on the cheek is one of the most humiliating insults. Who is the judge? **Judge** is the Hebrew verb **shaphat** which means to judge (to decide between, settle a dispute) or to govern. The clearest example of **shaphat** in the sense of ruler is in Da 9:12. Here I favor this as a reference to the Hebrew king as the supreme judge of the land.

Smiting someone on the cheek was considered a bitter insult, the ultimate insult, a sign of humiliation (1Ki 22:24; Job 16:10; Lam 3:30; Ps 3:7). "Striking a king with a scepter, a symbol of rulership, would be especially ironic and humiliating." (NET Note)

It is interesting to note that Micah's contemporary, Isaiah, likened the Assyrian army to **arod** (Isa 10:5, 15).

While some generally conservative commentators ([A C Gaebelain](#), [Henry Morris - Defender's Study Bible](#)) interpret the stricken **judge** as Jesus (cf Mt 26:67-68, 27:30, Mk 15:19, Jn 19:3, cf Isa 50:6), the context does not support that interpretation, for the first

part of the verse seems to refer to the Babylonian **siege**. Certainly, Jerusalem was not under **siege** when Christ was smitten, nor was He actually smitten with a **rod**. Most writers interpret the smitten **judge** as [King Zedekiah](#) who received humiliating treatment from Nebuchadnezzar when Judah fell in 586 BC (2 Ki 25:4-5, 6, 7, context = 2Ki 24:17-25:7) Of course it is still reasonable to consider that this OT picture was a foreshadowing of what happened to Jesus.

**Morris** - Smiting an official on the cheek was considered a bitter insult, and the ultimate insult was for the representatives of a godless pagan government to strike the true Judge of Israel and of all the earth (2 Ti 4:1+) on the cheek--as they did repeatedly during the mock trial of Christ (Matthew 26:67; 27:30). The entire context here is Messianic, involving aspects of both comings of Messiah (Micah 5:2b, 4 = Second Coming). It goes well beyond any public humiliation of King Zedekiah by the Babylonians, as many have interpreted it.

**IVP Background Commentary** - To be struck on the cheek is generally considered a gesture of contempt (see 1 Kings 22:24; Job 16:10). Hammurabi's Code provides for a variety of punishments for the person who strike others on the cheek—from flogging and mutilation to stiff fines. Striking Judah's "judge" implies both the contempt of the nations as well as the impotence of Judah's ruler to respond. In the New Year festival (akitu) that was practiced in both Assyria and Babylon, the priest slapped the king on the cheek in a ritual that led to the king claiming he was innocent of injustice.

**Micah 5:2 But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be Ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.**

- **But as for you** Matthew 2:6; John 7:42
- **Ephrathah** Genesis 35:19; 48:7 Ruth 4:11; 1Samuel 17:12; 1Chronicles 2:50,51,54; 4:4; Ps 132:6
- **among** 1Samuel 10:19; 23:23
- **Clans** Exodus 18:21,25; Deuteronomy 1:15; 1Samuel 8:12; 17:18
- **From you** Isaiah 11:1; 53:2; Ezekiel 17:22-24; Amos 9:11; Luke 2:4-7; 1Corinthians 1:27,28
- **To be ruler** Genesis 49:10; 1Chronicles 5:2; Isaiah 9:6,7; Jeremiah 13:5,6; Ezekiel 34:23,24; 37:22-25; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 28:18; Luke 1:31-33; 23:2,38; John 19:14-22; Revelation 19:16
- **His goings** Psalms 90:2; 102:25-27; Proverbs 8:22; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 13:8; 1John 1:1; Revelation 1:11-18; 2:8; 21:6
- **Spurgeon's Sermon on this passage** [The Incarnation and Birth of Christ \(57\) - Micah 5:2](#)
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Notice that Micah 5:2 is God the Father Himself issuing this great prophecy, whereas the remainder of the verses in Micah 5:1-15 appear to be the voice of Micah.

**Matthew Henry** - a prediction of the Messiah and his kingdom is added to encourage the faith of God's people. Having shown how low the house of David should be brought, and how vilely the shield of that mighty family should be cast away, as though it had not been anointed with oil, to encourage the faith of God's people, who might be tempted now to think that his covenant with David and his house was abrogated (according to the psalmist's complaint, Psalm 89:38,39), he adds an illustrious prediction of the Messiah and his kingdom, in whom that covenant should be established, and the honours of that house should be revived, advanced, and perpetuated. ([Micah 5 - Matthew Henry](#))

**But (term of contrast)** - Remember that "**but**" almost always marks a "change of direction" in the writer's flow of thought. In this case, the **but** introduces several contrasts - "Great" Jerusalem (daughter of troops) with "little" Bethlehem, house of bread. Judah's last king Zedekiah with Judah's greatest King, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. And finally the humiliation suffered by Judah's last Davidic king (Zedekiah from line of David) is contrasted with the prophecy of the humble beginnings of the greatest Davidic King (Mt 1:1-2ff). The last king brought bitter humiliation (defeat), while the King of kings brings a blessed hope (victory). Royal misfortune contrasts with Royal majesty. "The kings born in proud Jerusalem failed; the Messiah incarnated in lowly Bethlehem triumphs." (Wiseman)

**McComiskey** on the "**but**" - **Waw** is adversative, contrasting the role of Bethlehem in Israel's future salvation with Jerusalem's present distress.

**As for you, Bethlehem (House of Bread) Ephrathah (fruitful)** (see also [Ephrathah](#)) **too little to be among the clans** of Judah (NET = "seemingly insignificant") - "The primary significance of Bethlehem is its very insignificance." (Davis) Bethlehem was little... both in size and in significance (in the eyes of the non-believing world, but as Matthew says "by no means least." Mt 2:6). "As David had been the **least** notable of his brothers, so Bethlehem was the **least** honorable among the towns in Judah. The most **insignificant** place would bring forth the most **significant** person." (Constable, bolding added) "Out of seeming littleness and

weakness God has perfected strength." (Barker) Recall that even the well known Christmas carol recognizes this fact in the title "[O Little Town of Bethlehem - Vienna Boys Choir](#)."

The greater David Jesus was born in David's birthplace (1Sa 16:1; 16:18-19; 17:12), "**the city of David**" (Lk 2:4, Jn 7:42, Ru 4:11, 17-21,22), a lowly town, a town so small that it was not even mentioned in the list of more than 100 towns in Joshua 15:21-63 (Nor was it mentioned in Neh. 11:1-36).

**Bethlehem** was also the home of Naomi, Boaz and Ruth the Moabitess, the latter being in the Davidic line of the Messiah (see Mt 1:5,6).

**How did the Jewish writers interpret Micah 5:2?** **James Gloag** observes that even "Jewish writers in general... have adopted the Messianic application of this passage. They, however, avoid the reference to Jesus by supposing that Bethlehem is mentioned here as the birth-place of the Messiah only indirectly, denoting merely that he was to be descended from David; and the eternal duration here mentioned alludes not to the person but to the name of the Messiah. According to the rabbinical fancies, there were seven things created before the world existed; and one of these is the name of the Messiah. Other Jewish writers grant that Bethlehem is to be the birth-place of the Messiah, but they regard the prophecy as still unfulfilled, and look forward to its accomplishment in the future." ([The Messianic Prophecies - Paton James Gloag - Google Books](#))

**Wiersbe** - Bethlehem ("house of bread") has an interesting history. Jacob's favorite wife, **Rachel**, died near Bethlehem when she gave birth to Benjamin, and she was buried nearby (Ge 35:16-20). Matthew cites this when he reports the slaying of the innocent children by Herod (Mt 2:16-18; see Jer 31:15). In her pain, Rachel named her son **Ben-Oni**, which means "son of my sorrow"; but Jacob renamed the boy, calling him **Benjamin**, "son of my right hand." These two names remind us of our Lord's suffering and glory, the cross and the throne at the Father's right hand. **Ruth** and **Naomi** came to Bethlehem; there Boaz fell in love with Ruth and married her. Ruth is an ancestor of the Messiah (Mt. 1:5). Of course, David was Bethlehem's greatest son; and it was through David's family that the promised Messiah would be born (2Sa 7; Mt 1:1; Lk 1:26-27; Ro 1:3). The Jews knew that their Messiah would come from Bethlehem (Jn 7:42). (Be Concerned)

The fulfillment of Micah's prophecy (Messiah's birth in Bethlehem) allows fulfillment of the "Davidic Covenant" [See discussion of Davidic Covenant in bottom third of page - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#) in 2Sa 7:12,13 (Notice especially the phrase "I will establish the throne of His kingdom **forever**" - this could not be Solomon because his kingdom was split in 931BC; See explanatory notes on Isa 9:7)

**Jamieson** - Matthew 2:6 seems to contradict Micah, "thou art not the least," But really he, by an independent testimony of the Spirit, confirms the prophet, Little in worldly importance, thou art not least (that is, far from least, yea, the very greatest) among the thousands, of princes of Judah, in the spiritual significance of being the birthplace of Messiah (John 7:42). God chooses the little things of the world to eclipse in glory its greatest things (Judges 6:15; John 1:46; 1 Corinthians 1:27, 1 Corinthians 1:28). The low state of David's line when Messiah was born is also implied here. ([Note](#))

**Davis** has a very practical insight on the insignificance of **Bethlehem** for in it "we see a frequent tendency in God's ways, for God is prone to choose the obscure, the insignificant, the lowly, the common, the unnoticed as the very instrument(s) through which he displays the brightest flashes of his glory."

Remember that there is more than one city named **Bethlehem** for Josh 19:15 refers to Bethlehem in Zebulun, not Bethlehem in Judah which is specifically referred to in Jdg 17:7, 1Sa 17:12, Ru 1:1-note. [Ephrathah \(Ephrath\)](#) was an old name for the district in which Bethlehem of Judah lay, in contrast to other Bethlehem in the Promised Land (**Ed note**: Bethlehem was originally called Ephrath in Ge 35:16-19, Ge 48:7 and Ru 4:11-note).

**McComiskey** - The focal point in redemptive history is none other than the insignificant town of Bethlehem, showing that Israel's future greatness does not depend on a great human king but on divine intervention to bring greatness out of nothing.

**Wiseman** - The clause qualifying Bethlehem Ephrathah reads literally, 'insignificant with regard to its existence among the clans of Judah'; that is, as David was the least of his brothers, so Bethlehem played only a very limited role among Judah's clans. The adjective rendered small describes here not a quantity but a quality. Elsewhere it occurs in connection with 'weak' and 'despised' (Jdg. 6:15; Ps. 119:141) and is rendered by 'least' and 'lowly' in the NIV (cf. 1 Sam. 9:21, where it is contrasted with the normal word for 'small')... the Lord delights to choose the weak and despised things of this world to shame the wise and strong, that man may boast in the Lord alone (1Co 1:18-31).

**Little** ([06810](#))(**tsair** from **tsaar** = to be or grow insignificant) means insignificant, small, little, small in years (young - Ge 19:31, 34).

**Swanson** - 1. younger sibling, i.e., pertaining to a child in a family which has an older sibling, and possibly no siblings younger than himself (Ge 19:31, 34, 35, 38; 25:23; 29:26; 43:33; 48:14; Jos 6:26; 1Ki 16:34+), note: in some contexts these may be nouns as



their part of speech; 2. younger, i.e., pertaining to being relatively young, often the younger of two objects (Job 30:1; 32:6; Jer 48:4; 49:20; 50:45); 3. lowly, small, little, i.e., pertaining to having a low status in a society or family relationship (Jdg 6:15; 1Sa 9:21; Ps 68:27; 119:141; Isa 60:22; Mic 5:2); 4. small, little, i.e., pertaining to having a small physical size (Da 8:9+), note: for another parsing, see 7584; 5. servant, i.e., persons of low status that does tasks for a superior, possibly owned as a slave (Jer 14:3+)

**NASB Usage:** least(1), least one(1), little(1), little ones(3), servants(1), small(2), those younger(1), young(1), younger(7), youngest(4), youngest son(1).

**Tsair** - 23v - Ge 19:31, 34f, 38; 25:23; 29:26; 43:33; 48:14; Josh 6:26; Jdg 6:15; 1 Sam 9:21; 1 Kgs 16:34; Job 30:1; 32:6; Ps 68:27; 119:141; Isa 60:22; Jer 14:3; 48:4; 49:20; 50:45; Dan 8:9; Mic 5:2

**To be among the clans - Barker** "The singular of the Hebrew for "clans" (elep) apparently developed semantically from an original nuance of a numeral ("thousand," Nu 35:4; Josh 7:3) to a "military company of 1,000" men (Ex 18:21, 25; 1Sa 8:12) to the approximate number of a "clan" (Jdg 6:15; 1 Sam 10:19, 21) to the "city" where a clan lived (here; Amos 5:3) to the "ruler" of a clan (cf. Matt 2:6). Here "cities" or "towns" (GNB reads "towns") seems to be the most appropriate sense contextually, though "clans" also is satisfactory. (**Logos Link**)

**From you One** (God the Son) **will go forth for Me** (God the Father) - Remember that God the Father is speaking. **From you** is from Bethlehem. **For Me** identifies the Speaker of this prophecy as God the Father. Note also that "for Me" indicates Messiah came first and foremost to fulfill the perfect will and predetermined plan of His Father (Heb 10:7-note, cf Acts 2:23, Eph 1:9, 10-note, 2Ti 1:9, 10-note), and secondarily (albeit not an "afterthought" but a definite purpose) for Israel (cf Isa 44:21, 49:15, 16, Hos 2:19, 20, Jer 31:36, 37). The promised Messiah is the Father's final Word to mankind (Heb 1:2-note), the "Messenger of the Covenant" (Mal 3:1-note)

**For Me**, for Jehovah, for God the Father as we see in these NT passages spoken by the Son to the Father...

(John 17:4) "I (God the Son) glorified You (God the Father) on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.

(Heb 10:7) "THEN I SAID (God the Son), 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD (God the Father).'"

**Davis** on the phrase "for Me" - We easily forget this—that the coming kingdom is God's show and that what matters is what God wants. Yahweh spoke this way to Samuel when he first sent him to Jesse's farm; he said, 'I have seen among his sons a king for myself' (1Sa 16:1). It's only one Hebrew syllable (lî) but it can knock down mountains of our idolatry, as does Paul's concise confession in 1Co 8:6: 'yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from Whom are all things and we exist **for Him**' (emphasis mine). (**Ed: This begs the question all of us would do well to ask ourselves: For whom am I "existing," for myself [Self/selfish] or for Him [Savior/surrendered]?**)

The words "go forth" parallel the thought of "the Sent One," the **Apostle**, which describes Jesus in Heb 3:1-note.

**To be Ruler in Israel** (cf Mic 4:7) (NET = "A King will emerge Who will rule **over** Israel" - See Davis' note below) - Notice Jesus was sent to be the King of the Jews.

**Kaiser** - The prophets usually avoided the word "king" because of its pagan connotations. Thus the Messiah was called a "Ruler."

**Jamieson** on the **Ruler** - the "[Shiloh \(Spurgeon's sermon\)](#)," "Prince of peace," "on Whose shoulders the government is laid" (Genesis 49:10; Isaiah 9:6-note).

**Davis** - Note, however, that this coming one will be ruler 'over Israel'—not 'in Israel' (as NASB, NRSV, ESV have it), but 'over' (as in NIV). The combination of the verb form and following preposition (participle of māšāl + bē) means to 'rule over'. He will rule not simply over Judah, but over the whole reunited people, north and south. This reunion of the two 'nations' is a recurring theme in the prophets (see Isa. 11:13–14; Hosea 1:11; Jer. 3:18; Ezek. 37:15–22).

Earlier Micah had prophesied of a future day where God declared "I will make the lame a remnant and the outcasts a strong nation, and the LORD will reign **over** them in Mount Zion From now on and forever." (Mic 4:7)

David was born in Bethlehem (1Sa 16:1, 18–19; 17:12) as was the "Greater David" Jesus the Messiah (Mt. 2:1). From Mt 2:3-6 (quoting Mic 5:2), it is clear that the "chief priests and scribes" interpreted Micah 5:2 as a prophecy of the Messiah.

**His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity** (literally "days of antiquity", see word study of **olam**; cf Ps 25:6; 90:2) - **Goings forth** may refer to His origins (cf. NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT) or His activities. Jesus had no beginning but existed eternally with God the Father (cf Jn 1:1, Php 2:6-note, Col 1:17-note, Rev 1:8-note). Indeed, **Jesus** is **El Olam, the Everlasting**

**God**, Who alone could make the claim "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." (John 8:58) As **Spurgeon** says "Before there was any Abraham, there was this glorious Christ of ours existing as the Eternal I AM, in all the infinity of his glory." ([John 8 - Spurgeon Exposition](#))

**Long ago** (06924) ([הַמֶּלֶךְ](#)) ([qedem](#)) is used to describe Elohim in Dt 33:27 ("the **Eternal** God").

**Eternity** ([05969](#)) See "olam"

**Wiseman** - The Hebrew ('ōlām), used in connection with either the created order or God himself, can mean 'from eternity on' (cf. Ps 25:6; 90:2). It can also designate 'ancient times' within history, i.e. the distant past. If the reference to Bethlehem aims to evoke the memory of Jesse and David, then the latter meaning fits this context best.

**Arnold Fruchtenbaum** comments that "The Hebrew words for "from long ago, from the days of eternity" are the strongest Hebrew words ever used for eternity past. They are used of God the Father in Psalm 90:2. What is true of God the Father is also said to be true of this One who is to be born in Bethlehem. These words are also used in Proverbs 8:22–23 (the voice of Wisdom speaking)."

**Kaiser** - When the Hebrew word for "everlasting," **olam**, is used in connection with God, it can only mean "from eternity on" (cf. Ps 25:6; 90:2). That can be its only meaning here if the Ruler is none other than the Son of God, the Messiah. (See also **B B Warfield's The Divine Messiah in the Old Testament**)

**Keil & Delitzsch** - The announcement of the origin of this Ruler as being before all worlds unquestionably presupposes His divine nature; but this thought was not strange to the prophetic mind in Micah's time, but is expressed without ambiguity by Isaiah, when he gives the Messiah the Name of "the Mighty God" (Isaiah 9:6-note) ([Note](#))

**Constable** - This ruler must be divine since He had been conducting activities on Yahweh's behalf from long ago, even eternity past (literally = days of immeasurable time; cf. Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1; Philipians 2:6; Colossians 1:17; Revelation 1:8). ([Note](#))

**The ESV Study Bible** comments on **from long ago, from the days of eternity** - This has been taken to indicate either an **ancient** (Davidic) lineage or **eternal** (and therefore divine) origin of the predicted Messiah. The first time-related expression ("from of old"; Hebrew miqqedem) generally refers to ancient historical times (e.g., Neh. 12:46; Ps. 77:5, 11; 78:2; 143:5; Isa. 45:21; 46:10) but can also refer to eternity past (e.g., Ps. 74:12; Hab. 1:12). The second time-related expression ("from ancient days"; Hebrew mime 'olam), however, refers to ancient historical times both in Micah (Mic 7:14; cf. Mic 7:20) and elsewhere (Dt. 32:7; Isa. 63:9, 11; Amos 9:11; Mal. 3:4); thus this text is referring to the Messiah's ancient Davidic lineage, confirming that the ancient covenantal promises made to David still stand.

**G Campbell Morgan** - And now in the prophet's message the great secret was out. This was the reason of his confidence that the Day of perfect realization would come. Here is the solution of the long problem of authority. **The Kingdom will be realized under the King; the true order of life will result from the exercise of the true authority.** The wonderful thing, that which sets this prophecy of Micah among the noblest of all, is this detailed and explicit prediction of the **birthplace** of God's King; and this description of the **mystery** of His Person. As to human history and human experience, He would come forth from Bethlehem. This was so definite that hundreds of years afterwards, both scholarly opinion (even the view of chief priests and scribes, Mt 2.4-6), and popular belief (see the view of the multitudes, John 7.42), accepted it as true. But this One would not begin to be, in that coming forth from Bethlehem; His "goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." The men of His day knew that Jesus had come forth from Bethlehem. That His goings forth were "from of old from ever-lasting" was that which, men believing, found **life**. That is the key to the Gospel of John (John 20.30-31). Thus God gave the world its King. The world rejected Him. It can find no authority and no peace. But God has not done with the world. That King is reigning now (**Ed**: In the hearts of those who are His loyal subjects, cf Lk 17:21); and will be manifested again to establish the Kingdom (Da 2:34-35, 44-45-note). Until He comes there will be no final peace (Isa 9:6-note), no true prosperity. It is for those who love His appearing (2Ti 4:8-note) to hasten it by loyalty to Him in life and service. (Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

**Matthew Henry** - This (Micah 5:1-6) is perhaps, the most important single prophecy in the Old Testament: it respects the personal character of the Messiah, and the discoveries of himself to the world. It distinguishes his human birth from his existing from eternity; it foretells the rejection of the Israelites and Jews for a season, their final restoration, and the universal peace to prevail through the whole earth in the latter days. ([Micah 5 - Matthew Henry's Complete Commentary](#))

**Constable** - This messianic prophecy not only gives the birthplace of Messiah, and thus assures His humanity, but it also asserts His deity. No mere human could be said to have been carrying out the will of Yahweh eternally. ([Expository Notes](#))

**Related Resource:**

- [Is Micah 5:2 a Messianic prophecy?](#)

- [Who were the Ephrathites?](#)

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## Messianic Prophecy in Poetry

Mary Had The Little Lamb

Mary had the little Lamb, who lived before His birth;  
Self-existent Son of God, from Heaven He came to Earth.  
Micah 5:2

Mary had the little Lamb; see Him in yonder stall --  
Virgin-born Son of God, to save man from the Fall.  
Isaiah 7:14

Mary had the little Lamb, obedient Son of God;  
Everywhere the Father led, His feet were sure to trod.  
John 6:38

Mary had the little Lamb, crucified on the tree  
The rejected Son of God, He died to set men free.  
1 Peter 1:18

Mary had the little Lamb -- men placed Him in the grave,  
Thinking they were done with Him; to death He was no slave!  
Matthew 28:6

Mary had the little Lamb, ascended now is He;  
All work on Earth is ended, our Advocate to be.  
Hebrews 4:14-16

Mary had the little Lamb -- mystery to behold!  
From the Lamb of Calvary, a Lion will unfold.  
Revelation 5: 5,6

When the Day Star comes again, of this be very sure:  
It won't be Lamb-like silence, but with the Lion's roar.  
Psalm 2:12  
Revelation 19:11-16

Marv & Marbeth Rosenthal - Copies of this poem may be used without written permission from the authors.

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## Micah 5:1-5 "What If?"

When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His son, born of a woman, born under the law. - Galatians 4:4

Several years ago a group of historians authored a book called "If - Or History Rewritten." Some of the "ifs" those scholars considered were these: What if Robert E. Lee had not lost the battle of Gettysburg? What if the Moors in Spain had won? What if the Dutch had kept New Amsterdam? What if Booth had missed when he shot at Abraham Lincoln? What if Napoleon had escaped to America?

The attempt to reconstruct the past on the basis of these "ifs" was only a historian's game. But apply it for a moment to the central event in history - the birth of Jesus Christ. It was foretold with pinpoint accuracy hundreds of years before by the prophet Micah. The greatest "if", therefore - the most startling question to the imagination - is, "What if Jesus had not been born as predicted?"

Such an "if" staggers the mind. It is like imagining the earth without a sunrise or the heavens without a sky. Yet this "if" must be taken seriously, especially at Christmas, because our world is oblivious to

the true meaning of Christ's coming.

On the first Sunday of Advent, try to think of the world without Christ.

What would history have been without Him? And at a personal level, what would your life be without Him? Thank God that there are no "ifs" in history. - Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))



If Christ had never left His throne  
To enter time and space,  
We'd have no hope beyond the grave,  
No knowledge of His grace.- Sper

A world without Christ would be a world without hope.

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### **Micah 5:2 Small Things**

It's getting harder to visit Bethlehem because of ongoing political tensions, but visitors to Israel still trek that way; and many are surprised at how close this little town is to Jerusalem—only about five miles away, and so small—"only a small village among all the people of Judah."

Sometimes we think our place is too small, and we're disappointed at our meager lot. Perhaps we're in a small church, a small town, a small ministry, or a small house. Don't underestimate how greatly Jesus uses small things.

Historian David Hackett Fischer points out that, compared to the great battles of history, Washington's crossing of the Delaware was a very small event. But the outcome saved the United States of America.

French Jesuit Father Jean Nicolas Grou once wrote, "Let your aim be to please our dear Lord perfectly in little things."

If your place is a small one, remember Bethlehem. Of all the cities of Judah, God chose this little town as the birthplace of the Messiah and as the junction of time and eternity. - Rob Morgan

Jesus bids us shine  
With a pure, clear light,  
Like a little candle  
Burning in the night.

In this world of darkness  
So let us shine—  
You in your small corner,  
And I in mine.  
—Susan Warner

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### **Micah 5:2 Born In Us**

Bethlehem Ephrathah, . . . out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel. —Micah 5:2

During a visit to England's picturesque Stratford-upon-Avon, I was struck by how a town's identity and future can be affected just because someone was born there. Every year, half a million people come to visit the birthplace of William Shakespeare, whom some consider the most influential playwright in the English language.

And what about Bethlehem? With the birth of Jesus, Micah's prophecy of significance was fulfilled: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). Bethlehem is defined by Jesus' birth.

Isn't the same true for us? When Christ comes to live in us, we are changed. No longer just ordinary human beings, we become the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Our identity and destiny are marked by Him, just as surely as a town becomes known for the significant person who was born there.

Christmas is a wonderful time to celebrate the presence of Christ in us, and the change He brings to all who invite Him in. —David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in-  
Be born in us today. -Brooks

**God came to live with us so we could live with Him**

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### **Micah 5:2 Eat This Bread**

Christmas isn't the time of year when our thoughts naturally turn to the Last Supper—or what the Jews called Passover. But that particular Passover is critical to Christmas. After breaking bread and giving it to His disciples, Jesus said, "Take, eat; this is My body" (Matt. 26:26). Breaking bread was a traditional part of Passover, but adding "this is my body" was a striking departure from the familiar liturgy. The disciples must have been bewildered.

Later the meaning became clear. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, which means "house of Bread." He was laid in a manger—a feeding trough. He once said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh" (John 6:51).

The prophet Micah indicated that One born in Bethlehem would rule over Israel (5:2). But not until Jesus came did anyone realize the uniqueness of this Kingdom. Christ's rule would not be imposed upon anyone; it would be imparted to those who accepted this new citizenship.

As we sing of Bethlehem's manger, let's remember that the heaven-sent infant King came so that we might "eat this bread" and partake of His divine nature.— by Julie Ackerman Link

Thou art the bread of life, O Lord, to me,  
Thy holy Word the truth that saveth me;  
Give me to eat and live with Thee above,  
Teach me to love Thy truth, for Thou art love. —Lathbury

Only Christ the Living Bread can satisfy our spiritual hunger.

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### **Micah 5:2-6**

I have a piece of old plaster on my desk that comes from the ancient site of the Herodium in the land of Israel. It reminds me of the humility of our Lord Jesus.

Herodium was a lavish residence that served as King Herod's summer palace, a sumptuous villa with opulent apartments furnished for the royal family and their guests. It boasted a Roman bath with hot and cold pools, surrounded by colonnaded gardens.

It's said that Herod built his palace to commemorate a victory in battle, but knowing Herod's selfish ambition it's possible he had another purpose in mind. Some have conjectured that Herod, despite inquiring of the scribes (Matt. 2:4-6), knew about Micah's prediction that Israel's Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. He may have wanted Israel's King to be born in his palace.

The Father's plan, however, was for our Lord to be born not in a castle but in a cave. It was in a lowly manger that the little Lord Jesus was born.

This is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). This is the gift of lavish salvation—of all gifts, the greatest gift that you and I will ever receive.— by David H. Roper

He did not use a silvery box  
Or paper green and red;  
God laid His Christmas gift to me  
Within a manger bed. —Prentice

The goodness and love of God became incarnate at Bethlehem.

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### **Micah 5:2 Matthew 16:13-20**

#### **You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. - Matthew 16:16**

#### **TODAY IN THE WORD**

Some things aren't what they appear to be! In 1867 Secretary of State William H. Seward purchased Alaska for \$ 7.2 million--about \$12 per square mile! At the time, the deal was called "Seward's Folly" and Alaska was dubbed "Seward's Icebox." Then, in 1880, gold was discovered. During the 1930s, drought-weary Midwesterners began to farm Alaska's fertile soil. By the 1970s, oil was flowing through the Alaska Pipeline. Some things aren't what they appear to be!

Jews living in Palestine at the time of Jesus' birth certainly weren't expecting their deliverer, or messiah, to be born in a feeding

trough for cattle! Everyone knew that God's messiah would come in power, conquering the Romans, reestablishing the throne of David, and restoring the temple! Yet, contrary to expectations, the promised Messiah was born in the lowliest circumstances.

These mistaken notions made it impossible for Jesus to openly claim this title, even though He alone was the promised Messiah. Jesus didn't want people to settle for a liberator from Rome when He knew that what they really needed was a liberator from their sin.

But Jesus didn't have to call Himself the Messiah--His birth and life revealed both the true nature of the Messiah and that He was the Messiah. When Jesus proclaimed the coming kingdom of God, He associated it with His own coming (Matt. 12:28). As Jesus taught, healed, and performed miracles, people began to recognize that He was the Christ (John 4:29). (Christ is Greek for Messiah; cf. John 4:25.)

Even more significantly, when people identified Jesus as the Messiah, He never corrected them. Indeed, Jesus blessed Peter when he realized that Jesus was the Christ (Matt. 16:17). At Jesus' trial, He never denied that He was the Christ (Mark 14:61-62).

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - Many in Jesus' day were so sure that they knew how the Messiah would come that they overlooked Jesus.

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### **Micah 5:2 The Place Of Going Forth**

Bethlehem . . . , out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel. —Micah 5:2

A lot of attention was suddenly focused on the small town of Bethlehem. Jews from many parts of the world came to be counted in a census. Mary and Joseph traveled there from Nazareth. Shepherds came from the fields to see the Baby lying in a manger (Luke 2:15-16) after a multitude of angels had come to announce, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (vv.13-14).

Every Christmas, in our imagination, we go to Bethlehem to celebrate Jesus' birth. But we cannot stay there; we must leave. The angels returned to heaven. Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem, then sought safety in Egypt.

The shepherds' exit gives a clear message to us. They left the stable and told everyone about the holy Child. "And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds" (v.18).

It's appropriate for us to do the same. Micah prophesied that from Bethlehem would go forth a Ruler of Israel, the eternal Maker of the world, who had come to save mankind from sin (Micah 5:2). This season, let's join those who have gone forth from their visits to Bethlehem to proclaim the good news of Christ, who came to save us.—David C. Egnor ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Go tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills and everywhere—  
Go tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born! —Traditional

The gospel is one gift you can keep and still pass on to others

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### **Micah 5:2-15 TODAY IN THE WORD**

Abraham Lincoln's humble beginnings have become part of American lore. But one historian says that the most difficult part of young Abraham's life came not during his early years in a Kentucky cabin, but after Thomas Lincoln moved the family to Indiana in 1816. The family arrived in Indiana during early winter, needing immediate shelter. Thomas and his son built a three-sided log shelter called a "half-faced camp," the only protection on the fourth side being a fire that burned day and night. The Lincolns began building a log cabin after finishing the shelter, and the family moved in during February, 1817.

Many of the world's great rulers came from humble beginnings, but none more so than earth's rightful Ruler, Jesus Christ the Messiah. Actually, Micah's famous prophecy in verse 2 speaks both of Jesus' earthly beginnings as the Son of Man and of His eternity as the Son of God.

This great verse is like an early touch of Christmas joy, since it is so much a part of the Advent story. But the prophecy is even more glorious in its context of the coming judgment and ultimate blessing. The Ruler from Bethlehem of Judah will one day reign in power and majesty over His millennial kingdom.

Of course, the fifth chapter of Micah does not end with verse 2. That's good news, because the remainder of the chapter outlines a

half dozen items on the Messiah's list to accomplish at His Second Coming and the establishment of His kingdom.

First, He will reunite the nation of Israel (v. 3). Second, He will rule His people as a caring and protecting Shepherd (vv. 4-5a). Their security and peace will never be in doubt.

What about Israel's enemies? That's the third item on Micah's list. They will be routed before the Messiah (vv. 5b-9), never to rise up again. Therefore, fourth, Israel will no longer need to rely on military might, but only on the Lord (vv. 10-11).

#### TODAY ALONG THE WAY

Yesterday we praised God for the peace we can enjoy today as His children.

We urge you to praise God for the coming peace of His kingdom. Remember, we who know Christ will rule with Him in the Millennium! Our strife-filled world makes universal peace seem like a pipe dream. On the contrary, it is a wonderful reality recorded for us in the pages of God's Word . ([Copyright Moody Bible Institute. Used by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Believing Christ died—that's history**

**Believing Christ died for me—that's salvation.**

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#### Micah 5:2

Isaiah, Micah, and many of the other prophets foretold many details of Jesus' birth, life, and death hundreds of years before they were fulfilled. The likelihood of these events occurring exactly as they were prophesied is too remote to explain away the phenomenon by calling it coincidence.

In *Science Speaks*, Peter Stoner applies the modern science of probability to just eight prophecies. He said,

"The chance that any man might have...fulfilled all eight prophecies is one in ten to the seventh degree. That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000."

Stoner said that if we took that many silver dollars and laid them across Texas they would cover the state two feet deep.

Since Christ's first coming was the exact fulfillment of many prophecies, we can expect the same of His second coming. —D. J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

PROPHECY IS HISTORY WRITTEN AHEAD OF TIME.

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#### Micah 5:2 - G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications

And now in the prophet's message the great secret was out. This was the reason of his confidence that the Day of perfect realization would come. Here is the solution of the long problem of authority. The Kingdom will be realized under the King; the true order of life will result from the exercise of the true authority. The wonderful thing, that which sets this prophecy of Micah among the noblest of all, is this detailed and explicit prediction of the birthplace of God's King; and this description of the mystery of His Person. As to human history and human experience, He would come forth from Bethlehem. This was so definite that hundreds of years afterwards, both scholarly opinion (see the view of chief priests and scribes, Matt. 2.6), and popular belief (see the view of the multitudes, John 7.42), accepted it as true. But this One would not begin to be, in that coming forth from Bethlehem; His "goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." The men of His day knew that Jesus had come forth from Bethlehem. That His goings forth were "from of old from ever-lasting" was that which, men believing, found life. That is the key to the Gospel of John (John 20.30-31). Thus God gave the world its King. The world rejected Him. It can find no authority and no peace. But God has not done with the world. That King is reigning now; and will be manifested again to establish the Kingdom. Until He come there will be no final peace, no true prosperity. It is for those who love His appearing to hasten it by loyalty to Him in life and service.

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#### Micah 5:2 Spurgeon - Morning and Evening

The Lord Jesus had goings forth for his people as their representative before the throne, long before they appeared upon the stage of time. It was "from everlasting" that he signed the compact with his Father, that he would pay blood for blood, suffering for suffering, agony for agony, and death for death, in the behalf of his people; it was "from everlasting" that he gave himself up without a murmuring word. That from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot he might sweat great drops of blood, that he might be spit upon, pierced, mocked, rent asunder, and crushed beneath the pains of death. His goings forth as our Surety were from everlasting. Pause, my soul, and wonder! Thou hast goings forth in the person of Jesus "from everlasting." Not only when thou wast born into the world did Christ love thee, but his delights were with the sons of men before there were any sons of men. Often did he think of them;

from everlasting to everlasting he had set his affection upon them. What! my soul, has he been so long about thy salvation, and will not he accomplish it? Has he from everlasting been going forth to save me, and will he lose me now? What! Has he carried me in his hand, as his precious jewel, and will he now let me slip from between his fingers? Did he choose me before the mountains were brought forth, or the channels of the deep were digged, and will he reject me now? Impossible! I am sure he would not have loved me so long if he had not been a changeless Lover. If he could grow weary of me, he would have been tired of me long before now. If he had not loved me with a love as deep as hell, and as strong as death, he would have turned from me long ago. Oh, joy above all joys, to know that I am his everlasting and inalienable inheritance, given to him by his Father or ever the earth was! Everlasting love shall be the pillow for my head this night.

**Micah 5:3 - Therefore He will give them up until the time when she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren will return to the sons of Israel.**

- **Therefore** Mic 7:13; Hosea 2:9,14
- **Give** Mic 6:14; 1Kings 14:16; 2 Chronicles 30:7; Hosea 11:8
- **she** Mic 4:10; Isaiah 66:7,8; Matthew 1:21; Revelation 12:1,2
- **then** Mic 4:7; Isaiah 10:20,21; 11:11; Jeremiah 31:1,7-9; Romans 9:27,28; 11:4-6
- **His brethren** Matthew 12:50; 25:40; Romans 8:29; Hebrews 1:11,12
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE REMNANT WILL RETURN

Note: This is a difficult verse from an eschatological perspective and as discussed below some writers favor one fulfillment at the Second Coming while others favor two fulfillments, one at the First Coming and then at the Second Coming. Despite the differences of opinion on the interpretation of this prophecy we do well to remember **Warren Wiersbe's** words -

"Whenever a prophet foretold the future, it was to awaken the people to their responsibilities in the present. Bible prophecy isn't entertainment for the curious; it's encouragement for the serious."

**Therefore (term of conclusion) He will give them up until (expression of time) the time when she who is in labor has borne a child.** - Why the **"therefore?"** What is Micah concluding? Barker explains that "because God has designed to punish his people before delivering them and because the Deliverer is to arise from the little town of Bethlehem, not the great city of Jerusalem—God will abandon Israel (Judah) by handing them over to their enemies. That condition will last until the promised Ruler is born and begins His rule." (**Editorial Note:** The Ruler has been born but He has not yet begun His rule over ALL His enemies as prophesied by the Apostle John in Rev 11:15-17-[explanatory note](#)) (**Logos Link**)

The first three questions offer relatively straightforward answers:

- **Who is He?** In context, the **He** is the Messiah (Jehovah).
- **Who is them?** In context, this is Israel, the Jewish people.
- **What does He will give them up signify?** It means that the Jews will be subject to Gentile dominion. The [Times of the Gentiles](#) (Lk 21:24+) began with Judah's defeat by the Gentile power Babylon in 586 BC. Israel has continually been under the authority of the Gentiles and this will only be relieved at the Second Coming of Messiah (cf Rev 11:2+ = .

**John MacArthur** agrees that **give them up** is "A reference to the interval between Messiah's rejection at His First Advent and His Second Advent, during the **times of the Gentiles** when Israel rejects Christ and is under the domination of enemies. Regathering of the **"remainder of His brethren"** did not occur at the First Advent but is slated for the Second Advent (cf. Isa 10:20–22; 11:11–16).

**ESV Study Bible** offers a questionable interpretation that this was fulfilled at the First Coming, but that does not fit with either the historical context or the Scriptural context.

"Israel's loss of king and subjection to enemies will [prevail until](#) the birth of the Lord's ruler." (Bolding added by me)

First note that [prevail](#) which is used in the ESV comment is a verb that means to overcome, to gain the victory, to gain predominant influence. Then note the word **until** in simple terms means something will happen up to a point in time and then won't happen. The **ESV** note would suggest that when the Lord's

ruler is born, the subjection to enemies will no longer **prevail**. This comment begs a simple question from all good Bereans [Acts 17:11+] When Messiah was born, was Israel free of subjection to Roman rule? What happened to [Jerusalem](#) in 70 AD, more than 50 years after the birth of the Messiah? What has happened to Israel for the last 2000 years? Israel's enemies have repeatedly **prevailed** over them! And so historical facts do not support the ESV comment.

**Who is she? And what time does word until demarcate?** The "reflex" explanation is that surely this is the Virgin Mary and a number of evangelical commentaries (ESV Study Bible, KJV Study Bible, Believer's Study Bible = W A Criswell, Defender's Study Bible = Henry Morris, Wycliffe Bible Commentary) do indeed feel that the pronoun **she** refers to Mary. But does Mary fit with the context? Note that the implication of the word "**until**" (see importance of **expressions of time**) is that Israel will be given up to the Gentiles until the time **she** has borne a child, but not after that birth. Clearly Israel remained under Gentile rule after Mary bore the Messiah (e.g., Rome destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 70AD-[See the Siege of Jerusalem](#)) . In fact even today [Temple Mount](#) remains under Gentile (Muslim) control!

#### **Some writers favor one fulfillment of this prophecy:**

**Walter Kaiser** - From the Babylonian Exile to the present day, God has abandoned Israel and will continue to do so **until** the one in labor has given birth." Therefore, it seems most reasonable to interpret **she** not as Mary, but as **Israel** (personified as a woman, as she clearly is in Rev 12:1-4, 5, 6<sup>note</sup>) and her **labor** as not referring to Mary's labor, but to the nation of Israel's **labor** so to speak.

**Thomas Constable:** Yahweh would give the Israelites over to chastening until Israel had ended her painful period of suffering (like a woman in labor, Micah 4:9) and she had brought forth a child. In view of previous revelation about Israel's continuing discipline by God until her Redeemer appeared (Micah 4:10), this seems to be a reference to the Second Coming of Messiah, not His First Coming. This interpretation gains support from the promise in the last half of this verse. Then the remainder of the Redeemer's brethren, the Jews, will experience a regathering (cf. Micah 2:12; 4:6-7). They will return to the land and rejoin other Israelites. ([Micah 5 Expository Notes](#))

**John Martin** sees only one fulfillment commenting that "the time will come when the labor will end and birth will come. This refers not to Mary's giving birth to Jesus, but to Israel's national regathering (cf. Mic 2:12+; Mic 4:6-7+), likened here to a childbirth." (BKC)

**Warren Wiersbe** sees only one fulfillment noting that "Between the cross and the Kingdom Age, Israel will be "given up" by the Lord **until** the time when Jesus returns and the nation is "born" into her kingdom (see Isa. 66:8). This King will reign to the ends of the earth and will bring peace to all nations.

**A C Gaebelain** interprets **she** as Israel explaining that "Israel will be in travail pains to give birth to the remnant, so prominently mentioned in prophecy. Since the nation rejected the Messiah they have had nothing but suffering, but the great travail pains come in the future. "For thus says the LORD, 'I have heard a sound of terror, Of dread, and there is no peace. 6 'Ask now, and see, If a male can give birth. Why do I see every man With his hands on his loins, **as a woman in childbirth?** And why have all faces turned pale? 7 'Alas! for that day is great, There is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob's distress, But he will be saved from it.'" (Jer 30:5-7). That godly remnant turning then to the Lord, born in that future travail, are called here "**His brethren**."

#### **Other writers favor two fulfillments of this prophecy:**

**Tony Garland** suggests that "Scripture record's **two pregnancies in relation to Messiah**. The first labor (Mic 5:3) terminates in the First Coming of Messiah (Rev 12:2-4<sup>+</sup>). The second labor terminates in the ushering in of the Millennial Kingdom. It is this second period of labor, subsequent to the going forth of Messiah from Bethlehem, which Micah 5:4 sets forth. This second labor leads to the millennial age "**at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth.**" The time of Jacob's trouble describes the labor pains associated with the second "pregnancy." ([Jacob's Trouble and the Great Tribulation](#))

**Charles Ryrie** also sees two fulfillments, noting that "**she** (the virgin Mary, Isa. 7:14+) gives birth to Messiah, Who will reunite Israel (a work in connection with His Second Coming)."

**KJV Bible Commentary** sees two fulfillments, noting that "Just as surely as God in His sovereign program has brought Messiah upon the scene historically (**ED: FIRST "FULFILMENT"**), so He will bring the believing remnant into existence (**ED: See phrase borne a child**); and in His time both redeemed people and reigning Messiah will be brought together!"

**McGee** - You may think that this verse still has reference to the birth of Christ. Well, it is true that it speaks of



the fact that Mary travailed, but you can't read this passage without realizing that it also refers to the **nation of Israel**. It speaks not only of their worldwide dispersion—they were scattered by the judgment of God—but of their travail. The Great Tribulation Period is the travail through which the nation must pass. "Then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel." The Jews will be regathered from their worldwide dispersion. (Thru the Bible)

**Then the remainder (remnant) of His brethren will return to the sons of Israel** - [Then](#) is an important marker of time (**expression of time**) especially in prophetic passages for this conjunction usually signifies something following next in order. In the **context** (see connective conjunction "**and**" in Micah 5:4), the return of the **sons of Israel** corresponds to the end times (cf [last days](#)) when Messiah returns to regather the believing remnant of Israel and restore the nation to worldwide prominence in the **Millennium** (cf Mic 5:7-8).

#### Related Resource:

- Remnant of Israel

**Micah 5:4 - And He will arise and shepherd His flock In the strength of the LORD, In the majesty of the name of the LORD His God. And they will remain, Because at that time He will be great To the ends of the earth.**

- **Arise** Mic 7:14; Ps 23:1,2; Isaiah 40:10,11; 49:9,10; Ezekiel 34:22-24; John 10:27-30
- **Shepherd** Matthew 2:6;
- **in the majesty** Exodus 23:21; 1Chronicles 29:11,12; Ps 45:3-6; 72:19; 93:1; 145:12; Matthew 25:31; John 5:22-29; 10:38; 14:9-11; Revelation 1:13-18
- **the Lord** John 20:17; Ephesians 1:3
- **shall remain** Matthew 16:18; 1Peter 1:5; Jude 1:1
- **Will he be great** Ps 22:27; 72:8; 98:3; Isaiah 49:5; 52:10; Zechariah 9:10; Luke 1:32; Revelation 11:15
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## GOD WILL ARISE

There is probably a play on words for because Jesus did **arise** from the grave, He will **arise** and return in the last days to rescue Israel (the believing remnant) and set up His kingdom over all the (cf "**at that time He will be great To the ends of the earth**")

**And He will arise** - Naturally, this begs the question "Who is **He**?" In context this refers to the [Messiah](#) (cf Mic 5:5a and Eph 2:14+) When Messiah returns (**Second Coming**), He will be the **Great Shepherd** (Zechariah 10:3, cf Micah 2:12+, Micah 7:14+, Jn 10:11, Mt 26:31, 1Pe 5:4+, Heb 13:20+; see Jehovah Roi = Shepherd) of the sheep (believing **remnant**), and will rule over the world with **rod of iron** (Rev 12:5+, Rev 19:15+).

**G Campbell Morgan** - With loins girt about, and lamps burning, we must wait for the flaming of the glory of His advent feet (**ED**: cf Zech 14:4+); and we must watch, not gloomily, but with sunlight in the heart, and confidence in the life, knowing that at last He will abolish chariots and horses, cities, strongholds, and all the things of the dust (**ED**: cf Da 2:34-35+) in which men put their confidence; and establish the Kingdom of God in the eternal strength of righteousness. ([Living Messages - Micah](#))

**And they will remain** ("They will live securely" NET), **because at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth** (cf Messiah's rule in Zech 14:9+) - At the time of the establishment of Messiah's **Millennial Kingdom**, Israel **will remain** (be secure) because Messiah is their protecting Shepherd (cf Zech 14:11+) Who is "**mighty to save**." (Isa 63:1b+).

#### Related Resource:

- Remnant of Israel

**Tony Garland**: Scripture record's two pregnancies in relation to Messiah. The first labor (Mic 5:3) terminates in the First Coming of Messiah (Rev 12:2-4+). The second labor terminates in the ushering in of the Millennial Kingdom. It is this second period of labor, subsequent to the going forth of Messiah from Bethlehem, which Micah 5:4 sets forth. This second labor leads to the millennial age "**at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth**" The time of Jacob's trouble describes the labor pains associated with the second "pregnancy." ([Jacob's Trouble and the Great Tribulation](#))

See Spurgeon's Sermons on this passage -

- [Christ is Glorious-Let Us Make Him Known \(560\) - Micah 5:4](#)
- [Our Lord's Transcendent Greatness \(3382\) - Micah 5:4](#)

**Micah 5:5 - This One will be our peace. When the Assyrian invades our land, When he tramples on our citadels, Then we will raise against him Seven shepherds and eight leaders of men.**

- **This One** Psalms 72:7; Isaiah 9:6,7; Zechariah 9:10; Luke 2:14; John 14:27; 16:33; Ephesians 2:14-17; Colossians 1:20,21
- **When the** Isaiah 7:14; 8:7-10; 37:31-36; 65:8; Jeremiah 33:15
- **Then** Isaiah 44:28; 59:19; Zechariah 1:18-21; 9:13; 10:3; 12:6; Revelation 17:14; 19:14
- **seven** Job 5:19; Proverbs 6:16; 30:18,29; Ecclesiastes 11:2; Amos 1:3,6
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**This One will be our peace (shalom)** - Notice that true **peace** is not just a precept but a Person! This **One** is the **Prince of Peace** (Isa 9:6-note, Lk 1:79, 2:14, 19:38, 42, Jn 14:27, 16:33), the Messiah Who alone will bring **peace** - He brought **peace** to hearts of believers with His first coming (Ro 5:1-2-note, cf Isa 52:7 where "announces peace" and "brings good news" are the same verb in Lxx = **euaggelizo/euangelizo**), but will bring **peace** to the earth at His **Second Coming**. **Peace** will characterize the **Millennial reign** of **Messiah** (Isa 11:6-9-note, Isa 55:12; 66:12; Jer 33:6; Ezek 34:25; 37:26). **Are we telling the lost around us of this promised personal and prophetic peace?** (Acts 10:36, Mt 5:9-note, Eph 6:15-note)

**When the Assyrian invades our land, when he tramples on our citadels, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight leaders of men.** - This is a difficult verse in my opinion. To whom does Assyria refer? While one might consider **the Assyrian** at the time of Micah's prophecy, the next verse says **they** (7 shepherds and 8 leaders ~ idiomatic way of saying that Israel had an adequate numbers for the task) **will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword**, something that did not happen in Micah's day. This fact supports the interpretation of a future, yet unfulfilled prophecy. Most conservative commentators agree with **MacArthur** who says "Assyria, God's instrument against Israel (722 B.C.) and Judah (Sennacherib's siege in 701 B.C.) is here used as a **representative** of enemy nations in opposition to the Lord."

**Ryrie** feels **the Assyrian** is "**typical** of all Israel's enemies."

**Constable** - **Assyria** was the main threat to the Israelites in Micah's day, but this prophecy predicts Israel's victory over the Assyrians. **This did not happen in the history of Israel; Assyria defeated the Northern Kingdom and most of the Southern Kingdom.** Thus this prophecy must continue the vision of the distant future that God gave Micah (Micah 4:1 to Micah 5:5a). When future Assyrians, representative of Israel's enemies (cf. Micah 7:12; Isaiah 11:11; Zechariah 10:10), again invade the Promised Land and break down its mansions (cf. Zechariah 12:9; Zechariah 14:2-3), the Israelites will rise up against them. ([Expository Notes](#)) (Bolding added)

**Wiersbe** - "The **Assyrian**" named in verse 5 isn't the Assyrian army of Micah's day, for the Jews in that day certainly didn't defeat Assyria and rule over her land. The Assyrians soundly defeated Israel, and the land of Israel was ruined. "The Assyrian" is another way of saying "the enemy," and here it refers to Israel's enemies in the last days when all nations will gather against her (Zech. 10:10-11; 12:9; 14:1-3)

**Walvoord** - One of the prophecies concerning the destruction of Assyria is found in Micah 5:5, 6 where the context seems to indicate a millennial situation. Some expositors have identified "**the Assyrian**" of Micah 5:5 as the "Little Horn" of Daniel 8 and conclude that the future world ruler who will head the Roman Empire will be an Assyrian. This identification, however, is doubtful, and it is more probable that Micah, living in the period of Assyria's ascendancy, is merely contrasting here the future glory of Israel with the destruction of Nineveh and of Assyria which actually took place in the seventh century BC. ([The Nations In The Millennium And The Eternal State](#))

**Henry Morris** (I agree with Walvoord's preceding comment and question this interpretation but include it for completeness) - Since Assyria was the chief threat to Judah at the time Micah was writing, many expositors assume that "**the Assyrian**" in this verse is simply a metaphor for all her enemies. The context in this passage, however, is strongly Messianic and prophetic, and Assyria was a dead nation long before even the first coming of Christ. With this context in mind, it seems most likely that "**the Assyrian**" here is a name for the Antichrist of the last days, the leader of the last great invasion of Israel before the second coming of Christ. He is an Assyrian not by nationality (the Assyrians of antiquity have long vanished from history) but by geography, since his capital will be at restored Babylon (see on Zechariah 5:5-11). In the last days, the "Assyrian" (or Antichrist, or the Beast) will be seeking to establish his world government and especially to eliminate the nation Israel and all Christians in every nation. At that time, this particular prophecy will become clear. There has been no historical fulfillment of this prophecy as yet, which makes it even more obvious that the major context of this whole section must relate to the future. At that time, the Lord will raise up leaders —perhaps from Israel—to

organize escape routes and resistance to the Assyrian's armies and death squads. ([Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Micah 5:6 - They will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod at its entrances; and He will deliver us from the Assyrian when he attacks our land And when he tramples our territory.**

- **they** Isaiah 14:2; 33:1; Nahum 2:11-13; 3:1-3
- **land of Nimrod.** Genesis 10:9-11
- **entrances** Isaiah 14:25; Luke 1:71,74
- **the Assyrian** 2Kings 15:29; 17:3-5; 18:9-15; 19:32-35; 2Chronicles 33:11; Isaiah 10:5-12
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**They will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod at its entrances-** Since this prophecy predicts that Israel will be victorious over Assyria and the land of Nimrod (some favor this as Assyria, others as Babylon - cf Ge 10:8-12), this must refer to a yet unfulfilled future time. The nation of Assyria will not exist in the future, but it most likely is used here as a picture of the nations which will attack Jerusalem in the future, even as Assyria attacked Jerusalem in Micah's day (cf Past history = 2Chr 32:10, Future fulfillment = Zech 12:9, Zech 14:2-3).

**And He will deliver us from the Assyrian when he attacks our land (Israel) and when he tramples our territory** (Note the context - the deliverer arrives when the "hour" is dark for the nation of Israel) - In context **He will deliver** refers to the Messiah Who will rescue Israel at His Second Coming. The Lxx translates the Hebrew for "deliver" with the Greek verb **rhuomai**, the same verb Paul used in his prophecy of the "**Deliverer** (rhuomai) [the Messiah Who] will come from Zion" saving all Israel ("all" of the **believing remnant**) (Ro 11:26-note). Micah 5:7-8 supports this "Messianic" interpretation, for these passages describe a time when the remnant of Israel is compared to a lion among sheep (Gentile nations). This prophecy clearly has never been fulfilled. Again **the Assyrian** is thought by some to be the future Antichrist, but that is speculation.

**Micah 5:7 - Then the remnant of Jacob will be among many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on vegetation which do not wait for man or delay for the sons of men.**

- **the remnant** Micah 5:3,8; Ezekiel 14:22; Joel 2:32; Amos 5:15; Zephaniah 3:13; Romans 11:5,6
- **Dew** Deuteronomy 32:2; Judges 6:36; Psalms 72:6; 110:3; Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; 66:19; Ezekiel 47:1; Hosea 6:3; 14:5; Zechariah 14:8; Matthew 28:19; Acts 9:15; 11:15; 13:46; Romans 11:12; 15:19,20; 1 Corinthians 3:6
- **Wait** Isaiah 55:10; Jeremiah 14:22; Acts 16:9; Romans 9:30; 10:20
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **THE BLESSING ON THE REMNANT OF JACOB**

**Then** - Always pay close attention to this important **expression of time**, especially when used in the context of eschatological passages.

**The remnant of Jacob** - This is a description of believing Jews and is a repeated truth in Micah's prophecy - Mic 2:12, 4:7, 5:8, 7:18.

### **Related Resource:**

- Remnant of Israel

**Matthew Henry** interpreting this passage literally says " The remnant of the Jewish nation shall return to the spirit of the true genuine children of Israel, a people in covenant with God the hearts of the children shall be turned to the fathers, Malachi 4:6+." (Matthew Henry's Complete Commentary)

**Will be among many peoples** - Jews will live all over the world in the **Millennium**.

**Like dew from the LORD** - The **simile** of **dew** is a symbol of divine blessing (Ps 133:3, Hos 14:5, Zech 8:12) Dew and rain are given by the sovereign timing of God, not men.

**Like showers on vegetation** - This **simile** suggest Israel will be a source of blessing to the Gentile nations in the age to come (cf Zech 8:22, 23).

**Which do not wait for man or delay for the sons of men.** - **NET** = "that does not hope for men to come or wait around for humans to arrive."

**NET note** interpretation - Men wait eagerly for the dew and the rain, not vice versa. Just as the dew and rain are subject to the LORD, not men, so the remnant of Israel will succeed by the supernatural power of God and not need the support of other nations. There may even be a military metaphor here. Israel will overwhelm their enemies, just as the dew completely covers the grass (see 2Sa 17:12).

**Spurgeon's Faith's Checkbook - At God's Bidding** - (Micah 5:7) If this be true of the literal Israel, much more is it true of the spiritual Israel, the believing people of God. When saints are what they should be, they are an incalculable blessing to those among whom they are scattered. They are as the dew; for in a quiet, unobtrusive manner they refresh those around them. Silently but effectually they minister to the life, growth, and joy of those who dwell with them. Coming fresh from heaven, glistening like diamonds in the sun, gracious men and women attend to the feeble and insignificant till each blade of grass has its own drop of dew. Little as individuals, they are, when united, all-sufficient for the purposes of love which the Lord fulfills through them. Dew drops accomplish the refreshing of broad acres. Lord, make us like the dew! Godly people are as showers which come at God's bidding without man's leave and license. They work for God whether men desire it or not; they no more ask human permission than the rain does. Lord, make us thus boldly prompt and free in Thy service wherever our lot is cast.

**Micah 5:8 The remnant of Jacob Will be among the nations, Among many peoples Like a lion among the beasts of the forest, Like a young lion among flocks of sheep, Which, if he passes through, Tramples down and tears, And there is none to rescue.**

- **Like a lion** Mic 4:13; Ps 2:8-12; 110:5,6; Isaiah 41:15,16; Obadiah 1:18,19; Zechariah 9:15; 10:5; Zechariah 12:3; Matthew 10:14; Acts 18:6; 2Corinthians 2:15-17
- **sheep** Ps 50:22; Hebrews 2:3; 12:25
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**The remnant of Jacob will be among the nations**(Gentiles), **among many peoples like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep, which, if he passes through, tramples down** (When the Redeemer returns He brings a radical reversal - compare Israel being trampled in Mic 5:5, 6) **and tears, and there is none to rescue** (NLT says the "nations will be like helpless sheep, with no one to rescue them.")- To other Gentile nations Israel will be like a fierce **lion** (cf "the head" over the nations - what Israel could have been if she had been obedient - Dt 28:13), able to easily consume those who hate them. (cf many OT allusions to Israel as victorious over the **nations** in the last days = Isa 11:14, Zech 12:2, 3, 6, Zech 14:14)**Patterson** - "Reversal characterizes the day of the Lord. The picture of Israel as a flock of sheep, scattered, lame, and weak (Mic 4:6-7), gives way to a portrait depicting the Hebrew people as... a roaring lion among the nations (Mic 4:13)."

**Related Resource:**

- Remnant of Israel

**Micah 5:9 - Your hand will be lifted up against your adversaries, And all your enemies will be cut off.**

- **hand** Ps 21:8; 106:26; Isaiah 1:25; 11:14; 14:2-4; 26:11; 33:10; 37:36; Luke 19:27; 1Corinthians 15:25; Revelation 19:13-21; 20:8,9
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Your** (Israel's) **hand will be lifted up** (uplifted hand pictures Israel's triumph - cf same Hebrew idiom Ps 89:13) **against your adversaries, and all your enemies will be cut off** (Heb = karath = cut down, destroyed; Lxx = exolethreuo = utterly destroyed, completely rooted out, cf use in Acts 3:23). - How many of her enemies? **All** (Lxx = pas = all w/o exception!) of Israel's **enemies** have never before been **cut off** which speaks of a yet to be fulfilled prophecy. Anti-Semitism will be rooted out forever when the Greatest "Semite," the Messiah returns and leads Israel in triumph (cf Mic 5:4)!

**Micah 5:10 It will be in that day," declares the LORD, "That I will cut off your horses from among you And destroy your chariots.**

- **that I** Ps 20:7,8; 33:16,17; Jeremiah 3:23; Hosea 1:7; 14:3; Zechariah 9:10
- **will be cutoff TSK Comment:** This seems to refer to those happy times when the Jews shall be converted and restored to their own land: and all their enemies being destroyed, they shall have no further need of cavalry or fenced cities.
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**It will be in that day," declares Jehovah, "That I will** (first of 6 successive "I will's" from Jehovah)**cut off your horses from among you** (cf divine prohibition Dt 17:16 from Israel's birth) **and destroy your chariots** (cf Zech 9:10 - context also = Second Coming). - **Horses** and **chariots** will be cut off because they will be unnecessary when the Messiah returns to fight and then reign (cf Rev 19:11-16-[note](#)). Israel stripped of all human resources (cf Israel's false reliance in Hos 10:13), will be forced to rely solely on their Savior (cf Ps 20:7-[note](#)). **Sometimes God has to strip us of all our ability/capability so that we might learn to rely on His fully sufficient strength** (2Cor 12:9,10-note, cf Ps 119:67, 71-[note](#)). **Are you being "stripped" even as you read this note?**

**Micah 5:11 I will also cut off the cities of your land And tear down all your fortifications.**

- **and tear down** Isaiah 2:12-17; Ezekiel 38:11; Zechariah 4:6
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**I will also cut off the cities of your land and tear down all your fortifications.**- Heretofore Israel had relied on their human strength. When Messiah returns Israel will no longer rely on human **fortifications** (defenses constructed by men) but solely on their Savior King Jesus!

**Micah 5:12 I will cut off sorceries from your hand, And you will have fortune-tellers no more.**

Isaiah 2:6-8,18,20; 8:19,20; 27:9; Zechariah 13:2-4; Revelation 19:20; 22:15

Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**I will cut off** (Heb - karath - see note on Mic 5:9) **sorceries from your hand, and you will have fortune-tellers** (cf. [Soothsayers; Divination](#) Jer 27:9) **no more.** - Israel will be finally and fully purged of these evils **in that day.**- Sorceries ([Witchcraft](#)) was strictly forbidden (Lev 19:26; Dt 18:9-14). The Septuagint translates **sorceries** with the Greek noun **pharmakon** which meant a drug, and then a drug used as a controlling medium (enchanted or magic potion, spell, charm. Pharmakon is used once in NT, in the "occult revival" just before Messiah returns. See Rev 9:21-[note](#)), which shows the strong correlation between illicit drug use and the demonic world! (See discussion of related word Sorcery = pharmakeia in Gal 5:20-note)

**Micah 5:13 I will cut off your carved images And your sacred pillars from among you, So that you will no longer bow down To the work of your hands.**

- **carved** Isaiah 17:7,8; Ezekiel 6:9; 36:25; 37:23; Hosea 2:16,17; 14:3,8
- **sacred pillars** Isaiah 2:8
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**I will cut off** (Heb - karath - see note on Mic 5:9) **your carved images and your sacred pillars** (freestanding stones associated with abominable Canaanite fertility cult worship - their utter destruction commanded - Ex 23:24; 34:13; Ex 34:13, Dt 7:5; 12:3) **from among you, so that you will no longer bow down to the work of your hands** (cf Hos 14:3 = also in context of Israel's end time repentance and return to her Messiah - Hos 14:1-2, 4-6). - Idolatry will be removed (Mal 1:7), for now Israel will bow down to the true and living God, their Messiah! Is there any work of your own hands to which you are bowing down? Zechariah's prophecy reiterates that when Messiah returns, He "will cut off the names of the idols from the land (of Israel) and they will no longer be remembered." (Zech 13:2).

**Micah 5:14 I will root out your Asherim from among you And destroy your cities.**

I will root out your **Asherim** (plural of **Asherah**) (Heb - asherah = [0842](#)) from among you (2Ki 17:10) and destroy your cities. - **Root out** indicates a definitive and final removal of Israel's idolatrous worship of this goddess of fertility, which was associated with abominable sexual perversions and both male and female prostitution in the name of "religion" ([Reference](#))! Failure to obliterate idolatry and Asherim was one reason the divided kingdoms was sent into exile (2Ki 17:16-18 = Israel, 2Ki 21:7 = Judah).

**Micah 5:15 Commentary And I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath On the nations which have not obeyed.**

- Micah 5:8; Ps 149:7; 2Thessalonians 1:8
- Micah Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**And I will execute vengeance in anger** (Lxx = **orge**) **and wrath** (Lxx = **thumos**) **on the nations which have not obeyed** (cf Messiah's victory and reign - Ps 2:9-[note](#), Rev 12:5-[note](#), Rev 19:15-[note](#)).- **Jehovah-Jesus** will execute His **vengeance** on the disobedient Gentile nations (see parallel passage = Isa 61:2b "day of vengeance") **Vengeance** is divine retribution, or the demonstration of "God's righteousness in compensating the wrong with right" (Elwell 1996:795). "Divine vengeance relates to God's sense of justice in restoring what is right and good... d redemption for Israel and the nations (Isa 61:2; 63:4). God's vengeance is directed against the nations for their sins against humanity, wanton militaristic imperialism, oppression, social injustice, and the rejection of what God has established as right and good according to his revealed word (Isa 47:3; Nah 1:2; cf. Amos 1:3-2:3). God's vengeance is directed against his people Israel for breaking his covenant (Lev 26:15). This divine retribution against Israel "is usually disciplinary in nature and aims at the restoration of lawfulness and the covenant in order that Zion will turn into a 'city of righteousness' again (Isa 1:24-26)" (Patterson) Daniel summarizes this execution of justice on all the Gentile kingdoms of all time in Da 2:34-35-note, Da 2:44-45-note where the **Stone** = **Christ**. "Vengeance is the punitive retribution of God usually set in the context of war or breach of covenant. The notion of vengeance is the prerogative of God because He is Creator, King, and Judge (cf. Dt 32:35; Ro 12:19-note; Heb 10:30-note). One of Yahweh's titles is "the God of Vengeance" (Ps 94:1). God avenges His covenant (Lev 26:25), His enemies (Dt 32:41), the sins of the nations (Ps 149:7), His people (Isa 63:4), and His Temple (Jer 50:28)."



**DISCLAIMER:** Before you consult commentaries, sermons or other resources, first consult the Word of God, studying the Scriptures diligently (2Ti 2:15-note) and inductively (See inductive Bible study) in dependence on your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, Who Jesus promised would [guide](#) us into all truth (John 16:13).

## THOUGHTS ON INTERPRETATION OF PROPHETIC BOOKS

In regard to the **OT Prophetic books** such as **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and the 12 "Minor" Prophets**, remember that the most accurate interpretation is derived by applying the following principles:

(1) Read the Scripture **literally** (unless the text is clearly figurative, e.g., Jesus said "I am the door..." Jn 10:9). If one interprets a text symbolically ([allegorically](#), figuratively, spiritualizing) when that text makes **good sense** literally, one potentially opens themselves to the danger of inaccurate interpretation, for then the question arises as to who's "symbolic" interpretation is correct and how imaginative one should be in evaluating a "supposed symbol"? Many of the commentaries and sermons on the OT prophetic books unfortunately are replete with **non-literal** interpretations (except when it comes to Messianic Passages, which are usually interpreted literally). Therefore the watchword when reading any commentary on Old Testament prophecy is caveat emptor ("buyer beware"). Read all commentaries like the Bereans (Acts 17:11-note).

(2) Study the **context** which is always "king" in interpretation (don't take verses out of context.)

(3) Passages addressed to **Israel** should be interpreted as directed to the literal nation of Israel and should not be interpreted as addressed to the **NT Church**, an entity not mentioned in the Old Testament. The promises of **Jehovah** to the **nation of Israel** (e.g., see **Millennial Promises**) remain **valid** (Jer 31:35, 36, 37, Nu 23:19, Lk 21:33) and have not been passed on to the **NT Church** because Israel has "defaulted" (See study Israel of God). Remember that while Scripture has only **one correct interpretation**, there can be many legitimate **applications** (See Application), and therefore the OT prophetic books are extremely applicable in the lives of NT believers.

(4) Scripture is always the best commentary on Scripture. While an attempt has been made to list resources that adhere to these basic interpretative guidelines, not all the works listed in these collections have been read in detail. Therefore should you discover a resource you feel is NOT conservative and/or orthodox, please email your concerns.

### Related Resources:

- Inductive Bible Study - Guidelines to Assure Accurate Interpretation
- Inductive Bible Study Interpretation of Prophetic Scripture
- Interpretative Views of the Revelation of Jesus Christ
- [Allegorical Interpretation - Tony Garland](#)
- [Interpreting Symbols - Tony Garland](#)
- [Basic Considerations in Interpreting Prophecy - John Walvoord](#)
- Millennium - Biblical descriptions of this time on earth, primarily from the OT prophets

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