

Morning Sermon December 20, 2020
“The Place, Bethlehem ...” – Micah 5:1-4

I. The prophecy of Christ’s birth is couched in a context of calamity caused by sin –

5 Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; He has laid siege against us; They will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek. Micah 5:1 (NKJV)

- 1. Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, his ministry extended from around 735 BC near the end of the reign of Jotham, through the reign of Ahaz, who wrongly allied Judah with Assyria, until the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah 715 BC, who bought back some worship of God and revolted against Assyria.*
- 2. It is not clear who is the particular “judge” of Israel mentioned in Micah 5:1, but it is clear from the history given in Scripture, that the siege mentioned and the insult to a judge were just the beginning of a seven hundred year plus trial of Israel, including an invasion from Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon, rule after of the Medes and Persians, Greece and finally Rome when Christ is born –*

2 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. Luke 2:1 (NKJV)

- 3. In the days of Micah and Isaiah and later under Jeremiah things go from bad to worse, sin-wise, and punishment of sin-wise; and the people sinning as much as any one else are the Israelites, who God is judging ... POINT IS, even the best are BAD –*

⁹ What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. ¹⁰ As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. Romans 3:9–11 (NKJV)

- 4. Whenever or wherever Jesus would have come into the world, there would be a mess of sin to clean up, but that is why He comes –*

²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” Matthew 1:21 (NKJV)

II. Yet, the prophecy is precise, Jesus will be born in Bethlehem –

² “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 (NKJV)

- 1. Some 700 plus years before Jesus Christ is born, it is prophesied He would be born in Bethlehem – Micah 5:2*

- 2. It was a small town, not Jerusalem, not New York, Rome or Tokyo –*

3. Out of you, why? Because Bethlehem was the City of David –
⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. Luke 2:4–5 (NKJV)

- A. Joseph was of the house and lineage of David, so was Mary his wife, because of Mary, Jesus was also, humanity-wise, of the house and lineage of David!*

- B. As a human baby Jesus is born in Bethlehem, identifying Him also with King David –*

²⁷ When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, “Son of David, have mercy on us!” Matthew 9:27 (NKJV)

- 4. Jesus, though was different than Joseph & Mary and all of us as according to His Divine nature, He was not born in time – ... Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2 (NKJV)*

See, Micah not only prophesies where Jesus would be born; but also that He is the Son of God, Who had been alive forever, before born into our world!

III. Bethlehem is significant, for reasons beyond it being the City of David -

The word "Bethlehem" meant "house of bread", bread was food, a staple, a necessary food and Jesus is the Bread of Life -

³⁵ And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. John 6:35 (NKJV)

1. Yet, pre-Bethlehem God gives His people, Israel, Judah up -

³ Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time *that* she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel. Micah 5:3 (NKJV)

A. This meant God let Israel and Judah go without their own king

"Israel was without a Davidic king from the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. until the Advent of Christ.

she who is in labor - A reference ... to Mary, the mother of Jesus, ...

the remnant of His brethren - Thousands of Israelites were converted after Pentecost (Acts 2:41, 47)." R.C. Sproul, Reformation Study Bible

B. Why does God give His people, Israel up?

B1. First, for the judgment of the ungodly, they did not deserve a good king -

¹⁵ But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" John 19:15 (NKJV)

B2. That the remnant might realize what they were missing, a real relationship with and provision from God!

IV. Jesus, born in Bethlehem, provides what we really NEED -

⁴ And He shall stand and feed *His flock* In the strength of the LORD, In the majesty of the name of the LORD His God; And they shall abide, For now He shall be great To the ends of the earth; ⁵ And this *One* shall be peace. Micah 5:4-5 A (NKJV)

1. Notice the word "feed" Jesus is the Bread of Life -

⁵³ Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever." John 6:53-58 (NKJV)

2. Notice the words "His flock" -

¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. John 10:10-11 (NKJV)

3. Notice the extent of His greatness, the end of verse :4, this verse hints at the salvation of Gentiles, like Isaiah did -

⁶ Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' " Isaiah 49:6 (NKJV)

4. Notice the beginning of verse :5

⁵ And this *One* shall be peace. Micah 5:5 A (NKJV)

¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this *will* be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Luke 2:11-14 (NKJV)

Jesus provided our peace with God through His death on the cross!

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