

Micah 5 - The Location of the Messiah's Birth; The Magi; "The Assyrian"

III. Condemnation of Israel's corrupt leadership in comparison to future kingdom glory and messianic deliverance (Micah 3:1—5:15)

(2) Eventual future blessing (Micah 4:1—5:15)

(B) Coming King (5:1-5a)

(a) Present subjugation of Israel's ruler (5:1)

(b) Messiah's first coming (5:2)

(c) Messiah's second coming (5:3-5a)

(C) Destruction upon enemies of God's people (5:5b-9)

(a) Israel saved from the Assyrian (5:5b-6)

(b) Regathered remnant to be delivered from her enemies (5:7-9)

(D) Cleansing of Israel (5:10-15)

(a) Weaponry removed (5:10-11)

(b) Occultism removed (5:12)

(c) Idolatry removed (5:13-14)

(d) Enemies removed (5:15)

Micah 5

(B) Coming King (5:1-5a)

(a) Present subjugation of Israel's ruler (5:1)

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

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."

1 "Now marshal yourselves as troops. He has laid siege to us. They will strike the judge of Israel on the cheek with a rod."

1 Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a **rod upon the cheek**."

[The Hebrew text divides the verses differently: Chapter 5:1 is the last verse of Chapter 4 in the Hebrew text]

- "...rod...on the cheek" - this would seem to be a reference to the shameful treatment of King Zedekiah at the time of the Babylonian invasion of Judah

— The degradation of the “judge of Israel” will be contrasted with the greatness of the future ruler of Israel which will be highlighted in the next verse

- Jeremiah had predicted that his “eyes should see the eyes of the king of Babylon” (Jer 32:4; 34:3), yet Ezekiel foretold that he should “not see Babylon,” though he would die there (Ezek 12:13)

— Josephus indicates that Zedekiah thought the two prophecies so inconsistent with each other that he believed neither; yet both were exactly fulfilled, and the enigma of Ezekiel explained, when Zedekiah was brought to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, where he had his eyes put out, and was then carried to Babylon, and there he died (Jer 39:6; 52:10-11).

(b) Messiah's first coming (5:2)

2 **“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah,** From you One will come forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His times of coming forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”

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.”

2 “As for you, Bethlehem of Ephrathah, even though you remain least among the clans of Judah, nevertheless, the one who rules in Israel for me will emerge from you. His existence has been from antiquity, even from eternity.

2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

- “But” - the word (adversative conjunction) puts the following in contrast to the previous passage. Another in David’s line is still yet to come...

— This is a well-known verse, especially around the Christmas season, but richly abundant in far more significance than geography alone!

— It is so familiar to most of us that we might miss some of the astonishing implications included in this famous passage.

- “...Bethlehem Ephrathah” - there were other Bethlehems (Joshua 9:15)

— Ephrathah makes it specific to the one 6 miles SW of Jerusalem and the birthplace of David (Cf. Ruth 1ff)

— It means “House of Bread” and it would bring forth “the Bread of Life” (John 6:33-51)

- “...little among the clans of Judah” - it was too insignificant to be mentioned among the cities of Judah in Joshua 15, or in the list of cities in Neh 11. It was a little hamlet.

Specifications Fulfilled

- He would be born of a virgin (Is 7:14); And He was (Matt 1:18-25)

- He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2); And He was (Matt 2:1-6)
- He would be taken into Egypt (Hosea 11:1); And He was (Matt 2:15)
- He would heal the sick and make people whole (Is 53); And He did (Matt 8)
- He would be crucified (Ps 22:14-17); And He was (Matt 27:31)
- He would die for our sins (Is 53); And He did (John 1:29; 11:49-52)
- He would be raised from the dead (Ps 16:10); And He was (Matt 28:1-10)

(c) Messiah's second coming (5:3-5a)

3 Therefore He will give them *up* until the time When **she who is in labor has given birth**. Then the remainder of His kinsmen Will return to the sons of Israel.

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.

3 Therefore that ruler will abandon them until the woman in labor gives birth. Then the rest of his countrymen will return to the Israelis."

3 Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

- "...she who is in labor has given birth" - this goes far beyond the travail of Mary; it is the travail of "the woman" whose "Seed" was predicted in Gen 3:15 and is summarized in Rev 12:4-6 (Cf. Is 66:7-9)

— It includes the *Diaspora* and climaxes in the Great Tribulation (Dan 12:1, Matt 24:21ff); Cf. "The Time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer 30:7)

- "Then the remnant of his brethren shall return"...

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.

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.

4 "Then he will take his stand, shepherding by means of the strength of the LORD, by the power of the name of the LORD his God. And they will be firmly established; indeed, from then on he will become great— to the ends of the earth.

4 And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

- Here the Lord Jesus is depicted as the Great Shepherd who feeds and cares for His flock
— There is no more expressive designation of Christ in the OT or NT than that of Shepherd of His Flock (Cf. 2 Sam 5:2; 7:7; Is 40:11)

(C) Destruction upon enemies of God's people (5:5b-9)

(a) Israel saved from the Assyrian (5:5b-6)

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 people.

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.

5 And he will be our peace." "When the Assyrian invades our land, trampling through our palaces, we will raise up seven shepherds against him, even eight significant men.

5 And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men.

6 They will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, The **land of Nimrod** at its entrances; And **He will rescue us** from the Assyrian When he invades our land, And when he tramples our territory.

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.

6 The shepherds will devastate the land of Assyria with the sword, along with the entrances to the land of Nimrod. "This is how he will vanquish Assyria when he invades our land, trampling within our borders:

6 And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.

- The confederation of nations that will come against Israel in the Tribulation period

- "...land of Nimrod" - Nimrod was the original founder of both Babel (Babylon) and Assyria (Gen 10:10)

- "...He will rescue *us*" - yet, the Chief Shepherd will deliver them when He, once again "treadeth within their borders"

- His presence shall bring peace in a threefold sense:

(1) He will defend Israel against her enemies (v5-6)

(2) He will empower her to overcome her enemies (v7-9)

(3) He will destroy weapons of warfare and idolatry (v10-15) so that warfare will no longer be a possibility (Cf. Is 9:4-6; Zech 12:1—13:1)

(b) Regathered remnant to be delivered from her enemies (5:7-9)

7 Then the **remnant** of Jacob Will be among many peoples Like dew from the LORD, Like showers on vegetation That do not wait for man, Or delay for mankind.

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.

7 The survivors of Jacob will live among many nations, as dew from the LORD, as showers upon the grass. They will look to no one, and will place no hope in human beings.

7 And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

- "...remnant" - the dew and rain refer to the blessing the people of Israel will be among the nations

— Since rain does not fall in Israel from the beginning of May to the latter part of October, the dew, the night mist of the summer months, is essential to the summer crops

8 The remnant of Jacob Will be among the nations, Among many peoples Like a lion among the animals of the forest, Like a young lion among flocks of sheep, Which, if he passes through, Tramples and tears, And there is no one who can rescue.

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.

8 The survivors of Jacob will live among the nations; they will live among many nations, like a lion among flocks of sheep, who, if he passes through, will trample and tear down with no one to deliver.

8 And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

- This passage certainly does not depict the Israel of today: in a precarious predicament continually, but God has a destiny for them.

— Their situation derives from their attitude toward the will of God: when contrary to that will, she is in distress and oppression and humiliation; when in the center of that will, she is a source of refreshing, power and blessing in the hand of God.

9 Your hand will be lifted up against your adversaries, And all your enemies will be eliminated.

9 Your hand will be lifted up against your adversaries, And all your enemies will be cut off.

9 You will turn your power against your adversaries, and all of your enemies will be cut down."

9 Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.

- Ultimate victory is assured.

(D) Cleansing of Israel (5:10-15)

(a) Weaponry removed (5:10-11)

10 "And it will be **on that day**," declares the LORD, "That I will eliminate your horses from among you, And destroy your chariots.

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

10 "It will come about at that time," declares the LORD, "I will tear away your horses from you, and I will destroy your chariots.

10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots:

- To be usable in the hand of the Lord, He will remove all carnal supports in which she trusted

— A contemporary parallel passage (Cf. Is 47:6-22)

- Horses and chariots were forbidden even in the time of Moses (Deut 17:16)

- "...on that day" - in case an amillennialist attempts to apply this to some other time, Micah emphasizes that this will come to pass "in that day" which is yet future

11 "I will also eliminate the cities of your land, And tear down all your fortifications.

11 "I will also cut off the cities of your land And tear down all your fortifications.

11 I will cut off the cities of your land, and I will tear down all of your fortifications.

11 And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds:

(b) Occultism removed (5:12)

12 "I will eliminate sorceries from your hand, And you will have no fortune-tellers.

12 "I will cut off sorceries from your hand, And you will have fortune-tellers no more.

12 I will render your witchcraft powerless, and mediums will no longer exist among you.

12 And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers:

(c) Idolatry removed (5:13-14)

13 "I will eliminate your carved images And your memorial stones from among you, So that you will no longer bow down To the work of your hands.

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.

13 I will separate you from your carved images and sacred pillars, and you no longer will worship what you've made with your hands.

13 Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands.

14 "I will uproot your **Asherim** from among you, And destroy your cities.

14 "I will root out your Asherim from among you And destroy your cities.

14 I will uproot your cultic gods from you, and I will tear down your cities.

14 And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee: so will I destroy thy cities.

- "...Asherim" - trees carved as phallic symbols for pagan rituals, etc.; places of idol worship

— They were prohibited (Deut 16:21) and to be destroyed (Ex 34:13), but persisted among the ungodly in Israel nonetheless (2 Kings 13:6; 23:6; et al)

- God's purification will include giving up:

- Foreign alliances (v10,11)
- The occult (v12)
- False gods (v13-14)

(d) Enemies removed (5:15)

15 "And I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath On **the nations which have not obeyed.**"

15 "And I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath On the nations which have not obeyed."

15 I will execute vengeance, anger, and fury on the nations who do not obey."

15 And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon **the heathen, such as they have not heard.**

- "...the nations" - the nations arrayed against Jerusalem in the "Day of the Lord," the Great Tribulation period (Cf. Ps 2; Joel 2; et al.)

- "...which have not obeyed" - they haven't been listening!