

## Ancient Anticipation Part 1: The Birthplace of Jesus

November 26, 2023

Micah 5:2

>>Ancient anticipation is found described in Peter 1:10-12, “things which angels desire to look into.” See also Is. 46:10. The prophets spoke over and over of the coming Christ King who would rule over Israel. The coming King comes from insignificant Bethlehem, Micah 5:1-2.

**What is the context of Micah 5:2?** The rulers of Israel hate good and love evil (3:2), yet they think God will hear their prayers (3:4, 11). **A simple outline of Micah:**

**Judah’s Punishment and Future Restoration, Chapters 1-2:** Micah is a few years younger than Isaiah at the same time of Isaiah. Samaria is the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel which will be taken over by Assyria in 722BC. **Ch. 1:** V13, Lachish is targeted as being the place of the beginning of wickedness. There is wickedness throughout Israel and Samaria (V5) and God is coming down to bring judgement (V3). **Ch. 2:** The wicked oppress and devise evil against their countrymen (V1-2), the wealthy are trying to exploit others. There are young prophets trying to prophesy against Isaiah and Micah who speak of the coming destruction of Israel. God does good to those who obey as He has always (V7). God will gather a remnant of Jacob (V12).

**Coming Messianic Kingdom, Chapters 3-5:** **Ch. 3:** V1 & 4, the elite will be rejected by God when Babylon comes and destroys Jerusalem (586BC). V5-7, the false seers of Israel who had false visions now go dark and can see nothing. V8, Micah is full of the Spirit of the Lord and speaks God’s words to the people of their sin and transgressions. V12, Jerusalem will be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon). **Ch. 4:** V4, there will be peace for those in Israel. V7, the lame and outcast will return to Zion and be ruled by Yahweh. V11-13, the evil nations don’t know the mind of the Lord, but God will gather them and break them to pieces. **Ch. 5:** V1-6, there is hope of a King, born in Bethlehem, who will bring peace. V7-8, Israel will one day be a strong nation in the midst of many others, as a lion in the presence of other beasts.

**God’s Indictment and Promises, Chapters 6-7:** **Ch. 6:** V1-2, God has a complaint against His people. V3-4, God purchased them from Egypt. V7-8, sacrifices don’t replace the need to demonstrate true faith that shows mercy, acts justly, and walk humbly before the Lord. V9-16, judgement is issued against Israel, because of their sins (V13). **Ch. 7:** V1-6, a lament of Micah that there are no clusters of grapes (land flowing with milk and honey as it once was). V2, there are no faithful men, no holy families, only men desiring to be successful at committing evil. V7, Micah waits in hope that God will hear his prayer. V8-10, Micah tells Israel’s enemies that God’s people will be vindicated. V11-13, Jerusalem will be rebuilt, and the boundaries of Israel will be extended far beyond what they have ever been. V14-17, the nations will fear Messiah. V17, they will lick the dust and crawl from their holes and be afraid. V18-20, Micah praises the mercy and kindness of God towards His people and in forgiving their sins.

**Now to Micah 5:2.** V1, A city is under siege, likely references Sennacherib of Assyria from Micah 5:5 in 701BC. This event is recorded in Is. 36-37, 2 Kings 18-19, and 2 Chron. 32. God calls Assyria the “**rod** of My anger” in Is. 10:5 as described in Micah 5:1. Lachish is mentioned in 1:13 and referenced where Rabshakeh is arrogantly cursing Israel and defying Yahweh, making himself to be strong and unstoppable, 2 Kings 18:17-37. Hezekiah has given Assyria all the wealth they had to entreat them to stop from destroying Israel (2 Kings 18:14-16) and still Assyria is coming against Israel to destroy them.

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Micah in 5:2 speaks of the birth of Jesus and His second coming “the One to be Ruler in Israel.” Jesus comes from the once small and insignificant Bethlehem. Micah’s prophecy speeds ahead to the time Israel is faithful to the Lord.

Micah outlines details of the coming King of Israel:

- 1) **King’s Place:** Micah 5:2, Micah uses the full name of the city: Bethlehem Ephrathah. Herod sends soldiers to murder the boys of Bethlehem in Matt. 2. There is weeping from the death of Rachel’s children (Jer. 31:15-16) which is the place Rachel was buried, in Bethlehem (Gen. 35:16-22). Ruth and Boaz were from Bethlehem, Ruth 1:2, 2:4. Obed, Jesse, and David were from Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary are now appointed to go to Bethlehem because Jesus’ time has come, Luke 2:1.
- 2) **King’s Progress:** Ephrathah means “fruitful.” 1 Sam. 17:12, Jesse called Ephrathah. Jesse’s seed called a branch and shoot, Is. 11:1. David is from Jesse, and Christ from David’s lineage. Bethlehem was once insignificant, now the birthplace of kings and the King.
- 3) **King’s Priority:** the coming of Christ was first and foremost for God the Father, 5:2. Gen. 3:15, the Savior will come to save men from their sin. Job 19:25-26, the Savior will come in the flesh. Micah 5:2, the Savior will come from Bethlehem. Is. 53, the Savior will die for the sins of all who will put their trust in Him and be raised and ascend into heaven and bring other kingdom citizens to faith through the work of the Holy Spirit. Zech. 12 & 14, the Savior King will return and redeem Israel and gather all His people from the nations. The Savior will rule and reign for 1,000 years while Satan is bound after which all things restored and peoples judged and the saints made ready for the final state, Rev. 20-22. And then, 1 Cor. 15:24-26, Jesus delivers the kingdom to the Father for His glory.
- 4) **King’s Power:** Prophecies about Jesus’ 1<sup>st</sup> Coming and 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. V2, little among Judah, one day Ruler in Israel. Is. 9:6, a Child given and then the government being upon His shoulders. Micah 5:3-4, from His birth until He shepherds the nation when they return to Him. Is. 61:1-2, preaching the good news, then declaring the Day of Vengeance. Zech. 12:10, they will pierce the Lord (crucifixion) and then mourn for Him. He will conquer all the peoples deceived by Satan at the end of the Millennial Reign, Rev. 20:7-10 and at Armageddon, Rev. 16:14-16. Jesus once from the small insignificant town, now King of all.
- 5) **King’s Permanence:** 5:2, “from everlasting,” or “from all eternity.” V2, “whose goings forth,” describes His intentional and persistent presence in meetings in Israel’s history with Abraham, Isaac, Hagar, Gideon, Samson, etc. as the Angel of the Lord (AOTL). Jesus created all things Col. 1:16. He is the Ancient of Days, Daniel 7:9, 13, 22. He is the Alpha and Omega, Rev. 1:8, 22:13. He is from everlasting to everlasting, Ps. 90:2.

### Further Discussion and Application

From Matt. 12:30, whose side are we on? Are we with the Lord Jesus or with the wicked, opposed to God? All the prophets long for the King’s return. How has our hope in Jesus’ coming shaped our life and joy for the future? When do we share this hope with others?

What is evident about God’s position towards Israel? What has He promised to do? Does God acknowledge all their sins? How does God demonstrate His lovingkindness to those whom He calls to salvation? How is His desire for Israel being demonstrated to His church now?