

“The Prophecy of the Lord’s Birthplace”

Micah 5:1-5

INTRO:

In **Galatians 4:4-5**, the Apostle Paul wrote to us, **“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”** **“In due time,”** at just the right moment in history the Lord Jesus Christ was born. From the time that Adam and Eve sinned, God had a plan and a schedule for the plan to unfold. God gave us tantalizing glimpses of His eternal plan of redemption through-out the Old Testament. In our text for today, He gave us through Micah a statement of where this miraculous birth would take place.

The Jewish scribes recognized for centuries that Micah’s prophecy specified where the Messiah, the Christ would be born. Even when the Wise men entered Jerusalem and asked “Where was He who was born King of the Jews?” the scribes knew the answer.

“So they said to [Herod], ‘In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel’” (Matthew 2:5–6).

We will explore the original prophecy in **Micah 5:1-5a**. Our study will fall into two parts.

I. The Prelude to the Prophecy (4:9-5:1)

II. The Prophecy of the Messiah’s Birth (5:2-5a)

I. The Prelude to the Prophecy (4:9-5:1)

A. In the verses that precede this prophecy, we can observe a repetition that is significant. Three times Micah writes, **“Now”** in **4:9**, **11**, and **5:1**. These three references have to do with judgment; the LORD’s judgment upon His people Judah. Although the Hebrew means right now these all refer to the future siege by Babylon.

B. The culmination of these references of judgment in **Micah 5:1** lays the ground work for the prophecy of hope.

“Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; a siege is laid against us; they will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek.”

C. Ultimately Jerusalem will fall and the Judge (leader or King) of Israel will be struck down.

“They will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek.”

The king in view is probably the last King of Judah, Zedekiah. The last Davidic king to sit on the throne of Israel until Christ comes.

It is important to see the picture to set the stage for the prophecy. Because of Judah's fall it will appear that Judah's LORD has failed and His promise of an eternal Davidic kingdom is over.

That is what many may think. But God still has plan A and it has not failed yet.

II. The Prophecy of the Messiah's Birth (5:2-5a)

A. In contrast to the idea that God's plan has failed now comes the prophecy. (vs. 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."

Here is some more of God's plan revealed so you can know that God is not done with His people yet.

1. Messiah is coming and He will be born in Bethlehem. He will not be born in the royal city of David. He will come out of the stump of Jesse. The greater son of David will be born in the town where David was born. Little Bethlehem, the humble home town of David, would be the place that the Messiah would be born.

2. The once kingly line was not totally destroyed. Don't look for the Messiah in the palace. Look for Him in the humble place. God is not defeated, and His promises are not abrogated. He has not changed His plan; He has a purpose that even the scholars in Judah could not see.

3. Notice the One who is to be born in Bethlehem.

"Yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel."

He is a ruler who is born to further the LORD's purpose and plan.

B. In vs. 3, Micah shows us how this all fits together.

"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."

The "***Now***" of verse one described God's judgment upon Judah. He would give them over to Babylon for their sin. His total re-establishment of Israel will not come until the Messiah comes.

C. We see how future the view that Micah gives us of the work of the Messiah.

"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; and this One shall be peace" (Micah 5:4-5).

1. Part of the Messianic promises that Israel never understood was that someday Messiah will reign over all the earth. They did not understand that the "***now***" in vs. 4

is still future. Just as the Babylonian captivity was still future for them, the Messianic reign would not be right away, but future.

2. They did not understand that before He came to reign and bring peace to His people. He would come and die and pay for sin so that we could have a relationship with Him.

The prophet Isaiah wrote of His Messianic reign in **Isaiah 9:6-7**

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

This same Isaiah wrote of His humiliation and death in **Isaiah 53:4-6**.

“Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

D. As surely as the now of God’s judgment came upon Judah in the Babylonia siege, the now of the Messianic reign will come. He will feed and protect us His people. He will be great to the ends of the earth. He will be our peace. This will all be ours if He is our Savior today.

The Babe of Bethlehem did not just come to die. He was buried, resurrected, and ascended to the Father and someday He will return to reign on the earth. Do you know this Savior and King?