

Majesty in Micah—The Unrivalled God: The God of Redemption (Micah 4-5)

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Dominant Thought: Jesus rules and redeems our souls.

Objectives:

I want my listeners to understand the images of labor pains and ruling in [Micah 4-5](#).

I want my listeners to feel God's care for us and His victory over evil.

I want my listeners to trust the rescue of Jesus and wait patiently for His final victory.

I want to thank Tom Ewald and Nic Babbs for preaching the past two Sundays. We had a positive experience with our trip to Georgia for the International Conference on Missions. I told Nic, "It's hard for these kids to become missionaries if they never meet a missionary." You provided 18 people the opportunity to meet missionaries, pray with them, hear their stories, and gain a vision for their role in God's global kingdom.

We need more missionaries. We need more people who will go, send, and pray for our missionaries. I pray we will raise up missionaries from Berlin Christian Church. I hope you will join me in that prayer.

Today, we continue listening to Micah's message to God's people. Micah preached for about 50 years around 740 BC - 690 BC.

The words of Micah had a message for his people in their day. It also would find fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Before running to the fulfillment of the New Testament, let's examine what's happening in Micah's day.

[Micah 4.9](#) begins with a couple questions, "Why do you now cry aloud—have you no king? Has your ruler perished, that pain seizes you like that of a woman in labor?" Sure, they have kings. The prophecy of Micah opens in [Micah 1:1](#) "The word of the Lord that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem." Jotham was a good king. Ahaz was a bad king. Hezekiah was mostly good but struggled with pride and possessions.

In [Micah 4.9-12](#), he warns God's people of pain, agony, and defilement. He warns that they must leave their city and go to Babylon. Nations will gather against God's people. Enemies will gloat over Jerusalem (Zion). [Micah 5.1](#) opens with a siege laid against God's people. Later, he will talk about Assyria invading their land and marching through their fortresses ([Micah 5.5](#)). These are not good times that are coming. Danger, hunger, exile. Babylon and Assyria were the world powers during the days of Micah. They will do whatever they want.

In [2 Chronicles 32.10-15](#), Sennacherib king of Assyria sent officers to deliver a message of intimidation for King Hezekiah and all the people of Judah. Listen to part of that message.

2 Chronicles 32:10–11 NIV

“This is what Sennacherib king of Assyria says: On what are you basing your confidence, that you remain in Jerusalem under siege? When Hezekiah says, ‘The LORD our God will save us from the hand of the king of Assyria,’ he is misleading you, to let you die of hunger and thirst.”

2 Chronicles 32:15 NIV

“Now do not let Hezekiah deceive you and mislead you like this. Do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to deliver his people from my hand or the hand of my predecessors. How much less will your god deliver you from my hand!”

2 Chronicles 32:17 NIV

The king also wrote letters ridiculing the LORD, the God of Israel, and saying this against him: “Just as the gods of the peoples of the other lands did not rescue their people from my hand, so the god of Hezekiah will not rescue his people from my hand.”

This message of intimidation and threats was met with prayer from Hezekiah. Check out their response and God's answer to their prayers.

2 Chronicles 32:20–21 NIV

King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz cried out in prayer to heaven about this. And the LORD sent an angel, who annihilated all the fighting men and the commanders and officers in the camp of the Assyrian king. So he withdrew to his own land in disgrace. And when he went into the temple of his god, some of his sons, his own flesh and blood, cut him down with the sword.

It may be possible that Micah could be describing some of these events. Micah commands his listeners, “Writhe and groan...Writhe in agony like that of a woman in labor” ([Micah 4.10](#)). This is the second time he’s used the image of pain in childbirth. He will continue by warning them they will go into exile far away from home in Babylon. Pain in childbirth points back to Adam and Eve in the garden. When sin entered the world, God punished in [Genesis 3:16](#) “To the woman he said, ‘I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.’”

Even though Micah warns of the dangers to come because of the unfaithfulness of God’s people. He still offers glimpses of hope and redemption. In [Micah 4.10](#), Micah shares, “There the LORD will redeem you out of the hand of your enemies.”

To redeem means to buy back. There is a true story about a widow named Ruth who is looking for a husband. God provides an older man named Boaz. He is called a kinsman redeemer. He’s eligible to marry her and take care of this widow who is not from Israel. She’s from an enemy group called Moab. As the scenes unfold, Boaz plans to redeem Ruth. However, there’s another eligible bachelor that has an inside track to marry Ruth according to the law. Boaz challenges the young man saying that if you want the man’s property, you also get his widow. He chooses not to redeem Ruth. Boaz marries Ruth and redeems her. Here is how Ruth’s first mother-in-law, Naomi, responds to this marriage. [Ruth 4:14](#) “Then the women said to Naomi, ‘Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel!’” Ruth and Boaz would have a son and name him Obed. Obed would have a son and name him Jesse. Jesse would have a son and name him David, King David. It would be through this line of Boaz and Ruth by way of King David, that Jesus, our King, would come. Oh yeah, Boaz’s hometown? Bethlehem. The same hometown of David. The same town where Jesus would be born.

Before we go to Bethlehem, I want us to hear [Micah 4:12](#) “But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord; they do not understand his plan, that he has gathered them as sheaves to the threshing floor.” These words remind us that God is deeper and stronger and wiser than humans. He can even use the pains and difficulties of this world to accomplish His redeeming plan. The threshing floor is where the wheat was separated from the chaff. It is also where Ruth met Boaz to seek His protection and care.

With that thought in mind let’s look at [Micah 5](#), and encounter four images of Jesus.

First, Jesus is our ruler ([Micah 5.2](#)).

In Bethlehem, a small town, a ruler will come. God specializes in using small things and small places. He used a small boy, David, to take down a giant named Goliath ([1 Samuel 17](#)). He used a boy and his lunch of five loaves and two fish to feed thousands ([John 6.9](#)). Jesus taught how a small mustard seed can grow like the kingdom of God ([Matthew 13.31](#)). Jesus saw a widow give two copper coins and said she gave more than all the wealthy people before her ([Luke 21.2](#)). We will see reference to a remnant later in [Micah 5.7](#). A small group of faithful followers will persevere.

Even the context of [Micah 5.1](#), speaks to the importance of Bethlehem in the midst of conflict. “Marshal your troops now...” When I visited Bethlehem, I expected to have this peaceful Christmas feeling, but what I encountered was razor wire. I still remember entering Bethlehem and seeing the sign to Rachel’s Tomb and seeing razor wire behind it. Bethlehem is part of the West Bank that still sees tensions to this day. Micah says a ruler will come from Bethlehem, the house of bread.

Philipps Brooks, a preacher at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia during the American Civil War, was given the opportunity to visit the Holy Land. On Christmas Eve 1865, he was at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (show pic). A couple years later, he wrote a poem that became a popular Christmas hymn, O Little Town of Bethlehem.

O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight

In [Matthew 2](#), magi from the East follow a star to Jerusalem in search of a king. Their question is, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?” ([Matthew 2.2](#)). King Herod is distressed at this news because he was only half Jewish. And now strangers from the East are asking questions of the rightly heir to the throne. Herod calls the chief priests to help answer their question of where the king was to be born. They respond by quoting from Micah. Hear the response of the chief priests in [Matthew 2:5–6](#) “They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: “‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of

Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.' ””

The chief priests knew the answer but were unwilling to travel the six or seven miles to Bethlehem to investigate.

It was in this small town that a king would be born. Even Micah shares another woman in labor image, “Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor bears a son” ([Micah 5.3](#)).

This baby will be a ruler. He will also be a shepherd.

Second, Jesus is our shepherd ([Micah 5.4](#)).

The role of a shepherd was not one that was respected in the ancient world. The shepherds were nomads. They moved with their flocks to where they could find grass and water. Their word was not trusted. And yet, Micah and Matthew highlight Jesus as one who will shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord.

If you go to Bethlehem today, chances are you will visit the Church of the Nativity. (Show picture). The entrance of the Church of the Nativity has changed over the years. During the Crusader times, it had a large arched door where you could enter the church on horseback. Later, the door was lowered to where you would have to duck to enter. It is called the “Door of Humility.” It was lowered to prevent looters. It’s also taken on a spiritual reminder that no matter who you are, you must bow as you enter the place remembering the birth of our Shepherd-King Jesus.

Verse 3 from O Little Town of Bethlehem:

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

Jesus Christ is our King. He is our Shepherd. He is also our peace.

Third, Jesus is our peace ([Micah 5.5](#)).

Last week, Nic shared from [Micah 3-4](#) how our unrivaled God is a God of peace. Instruments for war would be turned into farming tools ([Micah 4.3](#)).

Micah foretells when the Assyrians will come and invade their land and march through their fortresses. And in the midst of political turmoil, wars, siege, and famine. God will provide peace.

Verse 2 from O Little Town of Bethlehem:

For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And Peace to men on earth

He's our King, our Shepherd, our peace, and our deliverer.

Fourth, Jesus is our deliverer ([Micah 5.6](#)).

This ruling king will deliver people from Assyria. The invaders will eventually be overtaken. God will bring a group of people back to their homeland.

Verse 4 from O Little Town of Bethlehem:

O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel

How will you respond today? What image of Jesus do you need to lean into today? Jesus as your Ruler, your Shepherd, your peace, your Deliverer. He's all of them. Do you need to give deeper allegiance to King Jesus? Do you need to trust your faithful Shepherd to care, provide and protect you? Do you need His peace that passes all understanding to calm your fears and anxieties? Do you need Him to deliver you from secret sins, habits, or something that is holding you back from a deeper relationship with Him and your family?

Jesus rules and redeems our souls.

We have experienced the truth of God's Word today. We now have the answers. The question is, "Will we be like the chief priests in Herod's court who know the answer, but fail to investigate King Jesus?" Or "Will we be like those magi who bow down and worship our Ruler and Redeemer, Jesus Christ?"