

LET EARTH RECEIVE HER KING: The King Promisedⁱ Micah 5:2-5

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Good morning, Church Family. I want to take this opportunity at the start of our service this morning to focus our hearts and minds on The Lord as we gather together today to worship Him. In many ways, Psalm 98 is considered a Christmas Psalm as it points to our deliverance through the person and work of Jesus. That God has done something wonderful in providing our salvation. This truth serves as a reminder of the motivation we have to come and worship Christ The King. I want to read Psalm 98 over us as we focus our minds attention and our hearts affection on Jesus.

Psalm 98. *Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. ²The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. ³He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. ⁴Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises! ⁵Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody! ⁶With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord! ⁷Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it! ⁸Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together ⁹before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.*

Let's stand together and worship this morning.

INTRODUCTION:

Well, good morning, Church Family! It is so good to see you this morning. I greatly missed being with you last week, but man, what a blessing it was to hear from Aaron Blankenship! I am truly grateful for him and his family.

For those of you that are our guests, we are especially grateful to have you join us today. We'd love to connect with you. There are a couple of ways you can help us do that. One, feel free to text, anytime, the keyword TBCMP, which stands for Trinity Baptist Church Mt. Pleasant to the number 94-000. When you do, you'll be sent a link where you can share with us basic contact information. I will then look forward to following up with you this coming week. Or another

way you can connect with us is by stopping by our information center located in the main lobby area under the banner "Hope is Here." We have a gift there for you to say thanks for joining us today. It is the highlight of my week to visit with those of you that are our guests. We are thrilled you have joined us today.

SERIES OVERVIEW:

I want to invite you to take your Bibles and turn with me to the Old Testament. We are going to be in the book of Micah this morning. If you are new to Bible study, and it is okay if you are because we are all new to Bible study at some point, Micah is located between Jonah and Nahum, toward the end of the Old Testament. We will be looking at chapter 5 this morning.

Today we are launching a new teaching series called, "Let Earth Receive Her King." It is Christmas time, my favorite time of the year! And the Christmas season is an opportunity for us to focus on the reason for celebrating, that being the birth of Jesus, who is the King of kings. It is my heart's desire over the next few weeks that the familiarity and events surrounding this season would not drown out the significance of it. But rather we would leverage this time of year to bring special attention to the work of God in our lives.

I think the reason I love this time of year so much is all the tradition that surrounds Christmas. Everything from hanging lights to the food and specialty coffees, I mean when else can you get a peppermint latte? I mean, I guess you could drink that in the summer, but it would just be weird. There are also family gatherings and traditions around giving and receiving gifts. Christmas is just filled with so many great things. But Christmas exists for one reason; our savior has come! And it is vitally important that we focus our attention on that truth, especially during the Christmas season.

OPENING ILLUSTRATION: Christmas Movies

One favorite Christmas traditions is watching Christmas movies. How many of you make sure you watch Christmas movies this time of year? I think I saw the movie "Elf" 3 times over Thanksgiving! How many of you are Hallmark movie fans this time of year? It's okay, this is a safe place, you can admit to that.

I like watching iconic movies like A Christmas Story, It's a Wonderful Life, and of course, Christmas Vacation. But when I think about a Christmas movie that kinda defines the season, it would be A Christmas Carol. You know the movie. Hard-nosed, Christmas hating Ebenezer Scrooge, is visited by 3 ghosts that

reveal his past, present, and what will be his future if he doesn't change his behavior. As a result, he promises to change for the remainder of his life. He then becomes a joyful and benevolent person and seeks forgiveness. He then began treating everyone with kindness, generosity, and compassion.

While theologically lacking, it does embody the real Christmas story. God, revealing Himself in flesh in Jesus, ultimately dying for sinful humanity that we can be redeemed and begin to reflect His goodness by living by the guidance of The Holy Spirit. That's what Christmas is all about, and that's what we will be focusing on in this teaching series.

This morning we are going to look at a promise made, a promised king, and a promised peace. That is where we are going this morning.

BACKGROUND:

Before we jump into that, I want to set the stage for us by looking at the background to the Prophet Micah's writing. Chapter 5, verses 2 through five have been called the quintessential Christmas text.ⁱⁱ The prophet lived between 750 and 686 B.C. It was a time of international conflict as the nation of Assyria was a constant threat to Israel. In fact, Micah lived through several decades of international unrest. It was a time of war and injustice.ⁱⁱⁱ Yet in the midst of all that, God speaks through the prophet and provides hope of coming salvation. This just might be the same message we all need to hear this year.

MESSAGE:

So, with that background, let's jump in. The first thing we see is...

1) A Promise Made.

Through the prophet, Micah, God reminds the people of a promise that He had made. Chaos is surrounding us but remember the promise. Let's read together verses 2 and 3 of Micah 5. *But you, O **Bethlehem Ephrathah**, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, **whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.***³*Therefore he shall give them up until the time when **she who is in labor has given birth**; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.*

There are a few obvious reminders of God's promise of a Messiah, a Savior, here in this passage. In what we just read we hear the location of the Savior's coming, Bethlehem. We also read that the Savior will be a fulfillment of a

promise made from of old and ancient days. And we also read of how He will come, by way of birth. This mentioning is an echo of a promise God made from the beginning of time. And throughout the Old Testament, Scripture repeats God's promise. The reason for that repeating was to fill God's people with hope. Let's look at a couple things in Micah's prophecy.

First, he says that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. Now this is significant because there are multiple promises wrapped up in this one statement. Bethlehem is the hometown of king David. That is significant because God promised king David that the Messiah would come from his line, his family. And Psalm 89, reveals that promise to David. It reads, verse 3, ***You have said, "I have made a covenant** [a promise] **with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: "I will establish your offspring forever, and build your throne for all generations."*** Tie that with Jeremiah 33, where God says in verse 14, ***"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch** [notice the capital B] **to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land."*** So, it is clear, the Savior will come from the family line of king David.

Then Micah says that the Savior will be born. Verse 3 of Micah 5, ***"Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth."*** So, not only will the Messiah be from the line of David but will be born of a woman. Now we know that woman to be Mary who had found favor with God.

When you come to the gospels, the first 4 books in the New Testament, 2 of them mention the genealogy of Jesus, Matthew and Luke. In Matthew's gospel, the genealogy of Joseph is tied to king David. Now, Jesus was conceived by The Holy Spirit of God and Joseph had nothing to do with that because Mary was a virgin. So, how then is Jesus from the lineage of David if He has no biological ties to Joseph?

Well, that's where Luke's gospel comes in. Chapter 3 of Luke traces Jesus' ancestry through Mary's line. She also is a descendant of David.^{iv} Therefore, Jesus comes from the line of David. And Him being born in Bethlehem is the collision of Micah's prophecy and God's promise. Born in the line of David.

The second thing we learn in verse 2 is that the Savior's quote, ***"coming forth is from of old, from ancient days."*** Now, this can be interpreted that the Savior is

eternal in nature. And I think that would be an accurate interpretation because that is a true statement of Jesus. But some scholars believe that this could be interpreted another way. That Micah is not so much talking about the preexistence of Christ, but that he could be talking about God's faithfulness in keeping a long-held promise. In other words, the one that is to come from Bethlehem will fulfill the promise from of old, dating back to ancient days.^v

Did you know that Christmas was mentioned from the very beginning of time? God promised a Savior all the way back in the Garden of Eden. Talk about being from of old, from ancient days! And we see proof of this in Genesis.

In chapter 1 of Genesis, God creates the heavens and the earth. Then chapter 2 talks about His most prized creation in detail, that being the creation of Adam and Eve. Then in chapter 3 of Genesis, we have the fall of man, that is that they sinned. It was at that point that God came walking through the Garden and He dealt out the consequences of sin. He pronounced curses on Adam, then on Eve, and then on the serpent that tempted them, that we know to be Satan. And when God cursed the serpent, He made mention of Christmas.

I want to show it to you. Genesis 3:14 and 15. *¹⁴The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he [being the offspring of the woman] shall bruise your head, [or break^{vi} the head of the serpent] and you shall bruise his heel."* Now, Jesus dealt the crushing blow to Satan at His resurrection, though the devil had bruised Jesus' heel in the crucifixion. If we take the view that Micah's prophecy is from of old, ancient days, way back in the past, then this is the promise, which dates back to the beginning of time.

See, the point is that God made a promise, and He was going to make good on that promise. And He has made good on that promise. And the reoccurring mentioning of the promise of God gave people hope. The application to us today is that God keeps His Word.^{vii} Christmas is proof that God always keeps His Word. We can hold onto the promises of God, even when there is chaos surrounding our lives. Why? Because God has promised us a future and ultimate redemption. And listen, He will make good on it. And just like God made good on His promise of a Savior, He will make good on His promises to

us. That means that we have hope in any and every situation. Because God has promised ultimate victory!

So, we see a promise made. Secondly, we see...

2) A Promised King.

The promise was made of a Savior, but that Savior would be a king. Look again at verse 2 of Micah 5. *But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel.* In other words, a king.

Now, this has been what has tripped many up. If this prophecy is pointing to Jesus, and we know that it is, then Jesus would have to be a ruler, a king. And many Jews have held to the Messiah being a ruler, a political leader, and as a result have rejected Jesus as the Messiah because He never ruled a nation.

But it is important to pay attention to the wording here. Notice the prepositional phrase, "for me," or literally translated, "to me."^{viii} In other words, the ruler that is to come is a representative of God's Kingdom.^{ix} Jesus has to be the fulfillment of this prophecy because He is the promised King of Heaven. Jesus is King. He's King of something much greater than a nation. He sits enthroned above the rulers of every nation.

In John 18, when Jesus was arrested and He was standing before Pilate, Pilate asked Him a question, "Are you the king of the Jews?" And in verse 36 of John 18, *³⁶Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."*

God promised a king, but not an earthly king. Jesus is the King of Heaven and is therefore the King of all kings. And when we sing at Christmas, "Let Earth receive her king," we are talking about making Jesus king of our lives. Allowing the King of Heaven to be the ruler and king of our hearts.

And the application here is that Jesus can't be King of our hearts, and we still occupy the the throne. Either Jesus is King or He is not. Either we are yielded to Him, or we are not. We are either surrendered to His ways, or we are not. There is no neutral ground when it comes to Jesus' Kingship. If Jesus is our Savior, then He must also be our King.

So, we've looked at a promise made and a promised king. The third observation we make in the Micah passage is...

3) A Promised Peace.

In the promise of Christmas, the promise of a Savior, God also promises peace. Verses 4 and 5 of Micah 5 describe the Savior which is The Lord Jesus Himself. Let's look at those verses. *4And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. 5And he shall be their peace.* Jesus brings peace. In Isaiah 9, He is called the Prince of Peace.^x

It was at the very first Christmas, when Jesus was born, that the angels announced to shepherds in a field, keeping watch over their flocks by night, Luke 2:10, *10Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. 13And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!* Christmas is the announcement that God has fulfilled His promise of peace. And His peace comes in a few ways.

First, Christmas brings peace with God. In Romans 8:7, the Bible says, *7For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.* All of us have sinned, and in our sin, we stand opposed to God. In our sin, we do not have peace with God. But, by way of the cross of Jesus, we have peace with God. Romans 5:1 says, *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God [how?] through our Lord Jesus Christ.* When we place our faith in Jesus, we are forgiven, we are at peace with God, and that results in a relationship with God.

But the second way we have peace is with others. Not only did Christ come to bring peace with God, but He also reconciles us to one another. Ephesians 2:14 says, *14For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility.* Even the most broken of relationships, the most hostile, can be restored by the work of Jesus.

But there a third way Jesus brings peace. It's the peace of certainty in the midst of uncertainty. Remember when Micah 5 was written, it was penned during a time of international turmoil. And what brought hope then brings hope today.

Micah lived in a day in which the world was full of international conflict, economic uncertainty, and social challenges.^{xi} Sounds familiar, huh? When problems, at times, seem beyond solution, and the potential for anxiety runs high, we, can have a peace that passes all understanding. Why is that the case? Because God is on His throne. He has promised to take care of us, He has made good on all His promises, and He is working toward the fulfillment of another promise: the return of Jesus, a new heaven and a new earth, and the establishment of perfection forever. God promised peace back then and He delivered in Jesus. He promises peace for us now and the future, and He will make good on that promise.

A promise made, a promised King, and a promised peace.

CONCLUSION:

As we close this morning, we do so by exclaiming, "Let earth receive her king." My question for you today is, "Have you received Jesus as King?" Is He the King of your heart? Have you trusted Him and your Lord and Savior. Has there been a time in your life where you have been born again unto a relationship with Jesus?

If you are here today and you would answer those questions by saying, "no," or "I don't know," I want to encourage you to come and visit with us. We would love nothing more today than to share with you how you can be saved, how you can begin a relationship with Jesus. I know that The Lord is speaking to your heart this morning. I want you to respond to that prompting.

We will have elders here at the front to receive you this morning. If you would like to trust Jesus as Lord and Savior, come, take us by the hand, and simply say, "I need Jesus."

Maybe you have a prayer concern, a burden you are carrying. We want to pray with you and over you. Maybe you simply want to come and make these steps an altar of prayer to The Lord. I'm going to pray, we will stand and sing, but let's all respond to The Lord's prompting on our hearts. [PRAY]

ENDNOTES:

ⁱ Works consulted in preparation for this message: A. Rowland, "The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database: Micah 5:2," published by Biblesoft, 2010, accessed online: https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/rowland/the_promise_of_messiah.htm; Mitchell Jolly, "Advent: Micah 5:2-5," published by Theology in the Dirt, December 19, 2021, accessed online: <https://theologyinthedirt.com/2021/12/19/advent-micah-5-2-5-sermon-notes/>; Stan Mast, "Micah 5:2-5a Commentary," published by the Center for Excellence in Preaching, December 17, 2018, accessed online: <https://cepreaching.org/commentary/2018-12-17/micah-5-2-5a-2/>; Got Questions, "What is Mary's Lineage?," article published by GotQuestions.org, accessed online: <https://www.gotquestions.org/Mary-lineage.html>; Micahel Ryan Stotler, "Micah 5:2-4: The Promise of Christmas," published by Sermons By Logos and Laughlin Community Church, accessed online: <https://sermons.logos.com/sermons/517517-micah-5-2-4-the-promise-of-christmas>; Skip Heitzig, "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem," sermon preached at Calvary Albuquerque, Sunday, January 15, 2017, accessed online: <https://calvarynm.church/connectwithskip/teachings/#/series/33/sermon/311>.

ⁱⁱ Stan Mast.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Further discussion on this can be found at Got Questions, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Mary-lineage.html>.

^v Mitchell Jolly.

^{vi} Strong's Concordance, 7779, shuph.

^{vii} Ibid.

^{viii} Interlinear Bible accessed online: <https://biblehub.com/interlinear/micah/5-2.htm>.

^{ix} Stan Mast.

^x Isaiah 9:6.

^{xi} Mast.