

The Shepherd King

Matthew 2v1-6; Micah 5v1-4.

Thinking about Christmas and the coming of Christ. See the fulfillment of the prophecies of the OT. in his birth. Want to look at the prophecy in Micah 5v2.

8th century BC. Time of prosperity for Israel and Judah. In the north Jeroboam 11 had forced back the frontiers of Israel and had seized control of the major trade routes. Uzziah had been successful also in the south and the country had become more prosperous than it had been for centuries. Uzziah was succeeded by Jotham, a good king, but then by Ahaz, an evil character who brought in so many evil practices. Now we see the worship of Baal and the sacrifices of children to Moloch. Extremes of wealth and poverty with the rich building up huge estates with the help of corrupt judges. The dispossessed would migrate to the commercial life of the cities in search of a livelihood where wealth and poverty, luxury and misery, religion and vice are side by side.

Micah came on the scene, contemporary with Isaiah, Hosea and Amos. He came from an outlying town, as Isaiah was in Jerusalem. He pictures besieged Jerusalem gathers its various detachments of defenders and troops. But a new ruler is to arise over God's people. He is going to come from a small town. Here we have the story of the advent, the story of Christmas. Micah writes about the one who was to come.

HE HAD A HEAVENLY ORIGIN.

'whose goings fourth...' the one born was no ordinary baby – he is 'from of old'. He pre-dates the time of his appearing. He is the eternal son. John 1v1. The plan also of course goes back into eternity. Gal.4v4; 1 Peter 1v18-20.

HE HAD A HUMBLE BIRTH.

'though thou be little' Isaiah, the contemporary of Micah had prophesied the birth of the one who was to come as well. He was to be born of a virgin and his name would be called Immanuel. It is Micah who gives us the humble place of his birth. Its insignificance is clear. It was not even mentioned when the cities were originally allocated to Judah (Jos.15v21-63).It was at the time too small to be reckoned among the 'thousands' of clans of Judah.

Here we see his humble origin. A peasant woman (Lk.2v24), A makeshift cot (2v7) A humble home (2v39). 2 Cor. 8v9.

We can learn from what God has done. The way up is down. Matt.5v3; Jam.4v10.

HE HAD A HIGH CALLING.

'to be ruler' Matt.2v4-6. It is a high calling. He is a king or Governor. He is Lord. But the emphasis here is on the fact that he is a different kind of king i.e. he is to rule as a 'shepherd' as well. See v4 he stands and feeds – NIV 'shepherd'. Stands = he is alert and ready to respond or to act in feeding or providing for his people. He has come to dwell with his people, to be smitten for them. After a time of judgement (v3) she will bring fourth.

HE HAD A HEALING MINISTRY.

V4 his people would be secure in him and his saving power would extend to the ends of the earth. NIV 'He would be their peace'. He would deliver them from their foes.