

# Micah (Quality Good)

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Date: 23 December 2001

Preacher: Dawson, Colin

[ 0 : 0 0 ] as we think about that momentous event of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem and of all that follows from that his life, his death, his resurrection his ascension, his work in heaven and his future coming again to this earth as we think about what the New Testament has to tell us about Jesus there's one thing that we have to bear in mind it's very important that we are absolutely sure that the Jesus of the New Testament is the same as the one who was foretold in the Old Testament not just being pedantic for if it could be proved that the one whom Christians worship

Jesus Christ of Nazareth is not the Messiah forecast in the Old Testament then we could not possibly worship him sad to say of course it is the conviction of many Jews that Jesus of Nazareth is not the Messiah promised in the Old Testament sadly their eyes are blinded there are those Jews who do believe in Jesus and we are so thankful today that there are increasing numbers of those of the Jewish family who are coming to realize that Jesus is their true Messiah and with tremendous joy they receive him and worship him and follow and obey him but so it's important that everything that the Old Testament had to say about the Christ the Messiah is actually fulfilled in the New Testament in our two midweek meetings last week we were considering the Isaiah passages that spoke of the coming Messiah and we notice how that the New Testament and what the New Testament has to say about Jesus is in perfect harmony with what the Old Testament prophet in that case Isaiah had to say about him now this morning

I want to turn to another of the prophets the prophet Micah and to consider together what he has to say about the Christ and to hopefully establish that everything that Micah prophesied is fulfilled in the New Testament Micah 5 verse 2 of course this is one that is often thought of in connection with the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ so we'll just look at that for a moment Micah 5 verse 2 but now Bethlehem Ephratah though thou be little among the thousands of Judah yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be a ruler in Israel whose goings forth have been from of old from everlasting it was Micah then who foretold the actual birthplace of the one that was to be the ruler in Israel the Messiah so there's no doubt that the New Testament also declares that Bethlehem was indeed the place where Jesus was born and Luke gives us a very interesting account of how that came to pass

Mary and Joseph were not residents of Bethlehem at all they dwelt in Nazareth and it was only through the edict of the Roman authorities that all had to be taxed and everyone would have to go to their own city that they ever came down to Bethlehem but all that was overseen and overruled by God that this ancient prophecy of Micah should be fulfilled but really the proper way of looking at Micah 5.2 is to look at it in its place in the larger messianic prophecy which begins at verse 1 in chapter 4 so that is the word the children are looking for the messianic prophecy a prophecy about the messiah so it begins you'll notice back in chapter 4 verse 1 where

Micah is speaking about what will happen in the last days sometimes the timing of prophecies is clearly settled sometimes it isn't but in this case it is what Micah was prophesying about is something that would occur in the last days in that final period of time in the history of the world that was ultimately to be ushered in by the birth of our saviour the Lord Jesus Christ so Micah 4 1 to 10 is certainly a messianic prophecy dealing with events that will happen in the last time dealing with events that will happen in connection with the coming of the messiah the first thing for us to notice in verses 1 and 2 is that in the last days there would be established a new kingdom that Christ's kingdom would be established we can look at the terms in which

[ 7 : 13 ] Micah speaks of this coming kingdom it will be established in the top of the mountains it will be exalted above the hills many people will go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob it's referred to as Zion and Jerusalem these are words then used to describe the kingdom that will be ushered in in the last times much of the terminology could be understood as linking up with the topography of the land it talks about mountains and hills it talks about the city of Jerusalem and part of that city

Zion but a closer examination of these prophecies indicates that there is more to it than that that these terms with which the people of Micah's day would have been fully conversant had a deeper meaning a more spiritual meaning and the whole thrust of the kingdom as we shall discover is that it is a spiritual kingdom the fact that it is not a kingdom restricted to the Jewish people is obvious because many nations will come other people will come and join in the worship of God it was a great privilege of the Jewish people and the house of David to be singled out by

God to be his people and to be the people and the family through which humanly speaking the Christ would come there were tremendous privileges granted to the Jewish people but they were privileges that were to be shared the kingdom was no longer to be identified with a nation but it was to be identified with the people of God and they would come from other nations and they would come and worship the king in Zion they would worship the Messiah of the Jews central to their worship central to Christian worship then is the Jewish Messiah he will teach us of his ways we will walk in his paths oh this is that wonderful kingdom of our

Lord Jesus Christ he he will judge among many people the meaning I take to be this that the Lord Jesus Christ is the final judge in all matters in his kingdom weapons of war will have no place in the weapons of our warfare the apostle writes are not carnal but mighty through God to the bring down of strongholds and in this kingdom nations shall not lift up sword against nation Christians do not go to war against other nations sadly there have been some instances of this happening the whole history of the Christian crusades was a great tragedy it never was the mind of the great head of the church that his people should go forth and arm themselves and do battle with Muslims and isn't his will they should today either that's not what the kingdom is all about it is a kingdom of great peace

Jesus himself described the kingdom in these words which John tells us of my kingdom is not of this world if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight and those words were spoken right at the end of Jesus' life as he's standing before Pilate if his kingdom were of this world then that would have been the signal and Jesus would have gathered around him the army of his disciples and his people and they would have fought they would have come with sword and spear and they would have defended their Lord from the attacks of the Jews but his kingdom is not of this world it's not what Christianity is about to get involved in battles and fighting in fact the opposite they shall beat their swords into plowshares their spears into pruning hooks wherever there is this tendency to to get uptight and to get involved in a conflict and that's a moment to lay down all those things for he is the final judge he is the final Lord in his kingdom verse 4 speaks of every man sitting under his vine and under his fig tree none shall make them afraid his is a kingdom of peace of security and of safety this expression that we have here about men sitting under their vine and fig tree is an expression which is used to describe times of great peace and happiness and prosperity it was said of the kingdom of Solomon that Judah and Israel dwelt safely every man under his vine and under his fig tree from Dan even to Beersheba all the days of Solomon we are accustomed to thinking of the Holy Land being wracked with conflict how wonderful those days of Solomon were when there was total peace absolute safety and security throughout the length and breadth of the land well now that figure of speech is used here to describe the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ perfect love casteth out fear there are no fears in the kingdom of Christ fear fear hath torment but here there are no fear there is perfect peace security and safety oh friends if you and I by God's grace belong to this heavenly kingdom then no man shall make us afraid then nothing should give rise to fear and uncertainty here is perfect safety and security our souls are safe in the keeping of our saviour then there is another indication of the kingdom in verse 5 all people will walk everyone in the name of his God and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever it is

[ 16 : 03 ] two things here it is a kingdom of great liberty and it is a kingdom that will endure forever it is an everlasting kingdom oh if the sons will make you free you shall be free indeed Jesus sets sinners free free from the guilt of their sin free from the fear of the punishment of their sin oh it is a kingdom which people can walk about in which will walk in his ways it is not a cramped kingdom it is not a tiny kingdom it is not a sort of ghetto it is a wonderfully free kingdom where there is liberty to move about and no one stop you oh how this describes the kingdom of God's grace but it is an everlasting kingdom well it is only in the kingdom of God's grace this perfect freedom can be found this utter peace can be enjoyed but verse 6 speaks of it as a growing kingdom in that day saith the Lord will I assemble her that halteth and I will gather her that is driven out and her that I have afflicted the halt the driven out the afflicted these are going to be added to the kingdom they are going to be gathered into the kingdom we can think of the good shepherd at work here he is going and he is finding the straying sheep and the lost ones and he is bringing them back into his wonderful kingdom the halt already thought about the lame ones here are those that are spiritually halt those that are crippled those who perhaps their legs are broken and they can't walk the halt the driven out well historically the Jews knew a lot about being driven out and many battles had been fought over their land and sometimes they were driven out and invaders came in but those that are driven out those that may have felt have been driven out of the kingdom of God for one reason or another but he will assemble these people he will gather them together the afflicted ones it is a growing kingdom we should ever realise this that God's kingdom is growing it grew yesterday it will grow today it will grow tomorrow because the

Lord is at work in the earth he is there saving souls he is there applying his word with power to the hearts of men he is there changing individuals oh what a wonderful kingdom this is and it's still growing and then we've got verse 7 our mate her that halted a remnant her that was cast far off a strong nation the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion the weak are made strong yes the very most incapable of people naturally speaking the lame the whole the blind these people are made strong strong in the Lord because he reigns oh friends we have the most wonderful king over this kingdom we have the Lord who will reign over them in

Mount Zion from henceforth even forever he reigns he reigns over Mount Zion you glimpse here the Lord Jesus Christ the great head of the church that's where he reigns that's where his people are and that is where he is bringing them one by one two by two singly in groups just as it pleases him to work they shall come to Zion I will build my church the Holy Spirit added unto the church daily such as were to be saved in the times of the apostles and I believe is still doing so in our own times oh it is a growing kingdom and is becoming a strong nation the Christian cause may appear to be weak and insignificant in the world but it is not it is not because the Lord is king it is not because he entrusts his people tremendous power the power of the Holy Spirit they wielded the power of the Holy

Spirit through their prayers this is a mighty kingdom a strong kingdom a kingdom that can never be destroyed then verse 8 we reference to the stronghold of the daughter of Zion to the tower of the flock it was often the habit of Jews to build a watch tower on their property particularly if they had vineyards and an area of ground where there might be other crops or flocks and the watch tower would be there so that someone could from the vantage point of the top of the tower survey the whole of the property so that the owner could be warned of any dangers that were threatened or any enemies that may be advancing seen well we got the tower of the flock the stronghold what does this remind us of well it reminds us of the fact that the kingdom of God comes under attack it reminds us of the fact that there are many enemies although we have that perfect safety and security in the kingdom of

God there is no safety and security outside of the kingdom of God and out there are wolves out there are enemies out there is the devil and his agents and so there is a strong tower and there is a warning note that is continually given throughout the kingdom for to flee into the stronghold to remain in the place of safety well from the next verse I think Micah has to deal with more contemporary issues and so we're going to pass over that come into chapter 2 but before we do are you part of this kingdom are you by God's grace gathered out of the world no longer left to roam around in the world but enjoying the privileges being amongst the people of God if so what an amazing privilege is yours what a great blessing

[ 23 : 43 ] God has given to you and to me we didn't deserve it we didn't even ask for it we were content where we were but God in his infinite mercy quickened our souls into life and brought us into the kingdom of God well let's move on then to chapter 5 for the messianic prophecy resumes here in chapter 5 and verse 2 the coming one features here just as in 4 8 we've got the coming one here in Micah 5 2 out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel what is interesting here isn't it he doesn't come forth from Jerusalem which you might have thought would have been the case

Jerusalem which signifies the the center of the worship of God where the temple was no not from Jerusalem but from Bethlehem little among the thousands of Judah sprinkled over the land many little communities even the term village would be too big to describe them tiny little clusters of homes it's possible that Bethlehem had no more than just a handful of buildings in it little among the thousands of Judah all these little homesteads gathered over the land and among even them Bethlehem was counted to be quite small isn't there some significance in that well I think there are a couple of things first of all it was a little place when Jesus came into the world the son of

God he was a little child there was nothing ostentatious nothing great when earthly kings bring forth their children they want to bring them forth in the midst of the splendor of their earthly palaces they want to surround them with gold and silver and all that money can buy Jesus the son of God the lord of lords the king of kings no pomp no ceremony just a small little homestead a cluster of a few homes little among the thousands of Judah yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel there was perhaps another reason that Bethlehem was the ancestral home of David and the messiah is to come from the line of David this would be emphasised and understood by the reference to

Bethlehem see how he is described though whose goings forth have been from of old from everlasting we're indebted to John at the beginning of his gospel aren't we for some tremendous words in the beginning was the word and the word was God the word was with God and the word was God whose goings forth have been from of old from everlasting before Abraham was Jesus said I am as we think of the babe of Bethlehem let us remember this babe is special this babe is unique this babe before he was a babe was

God whose goings forth have been from of old from everlasting he was indeed the creator of the world and now he comes down into the world that he has created to this smallest of small little dwellings in Judah where there is no preparation made for him and isn't even any room for him Joseph and Mary put up in a very poor accommodation she brings forth a firstborn son lays him in a manger well surely then we can say without any hesitation that the one who is being spoken of by Micah is indeed the dear saviour the son of

[ 29 : 21 ] God the king of kings the lord of lords can we say that he is my saviour he's my lord i worship him our friends if we being reminded of these things worship him at this season it will be a good season it will be a happy christmas indeed if we come as the shepherds did as the wise men did to worship he is god the god of all then if we can just conclude the rest of this messianic prophecy down to verse 8 what else have we got verse 3 therefore will he give up give them up until the time she which travaileth has brought forth the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of

Israel I think perhaps this verse can best be understood in the light of two others so I'm going to just read to you those others one is a quote from the old testament the others from the new but firstly Isaiah 66 verses 7 to 8 gesehen in the way as soon as Zion ■■■■ traveled she brought forth her children.

Just leave that quote with a question in your minds. Who traveled? Who is the child that is brought forth?

Before answering that question, let me turn to Revelation. Revelation, chapter 12. The opening verses, there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet.

Upon her head, a crown of twelve stars. She, being with child, cried, traveling in birth and pained to be delivered.

[ 32 : 16 ] And there appeared another wonder in heaven. Behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads. And his child drew the third part of the stars of heaven and had cast them to the earth.

And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man-child who was to rule all nations with the rod of iron.

And her child was caught up unto God and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness where she hath a place prepared of God that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore years.

We can see here very closely linked to the birth of Christ is the birth of the church.

And that is what Micah is here speaking about. There will be this amazing birth linked by John here in this vision that he saw in Revelation.

- [ 33 : 31 ] There's the child who was taken up into heaven. He's the man that's to rule all nations. Perfectly linking up there with Micah. The child was caught up unto God and to his throne. We have the account of that in the Gospels. The woman fled into the wilderness. So there's a sense in which the woman is the church. The Old Testament church. Jesus is born in the midst of that church. The family of God. The house of David. And there's the ongoing church. The church under attack. The church, the embattled church. The church opposed by Satan. But, at a place prepared for her, the Lord watches over his people continually.
- [ 34 : 34 ] So, next we have in verse 5, this man shall be peace. When the Assyrians shall come into our land and so on. Well, who is this man? Who is the man who is the peace? It must be Jesus. No one else can bring peace. Peace. It's one of the, the names that Isaiah gave, wasn't it? The Prince of Peace. I think we've slipped over verse 4 in the process. We can link that up because verse 4 speaks of the shepherd king. So, we can look at those two verses together. He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. He'll be the feeder of the flock, the shepherd. He is the king. He is the prince of peace. Oh, remember Jesus gave that parting gift to his disciples when he left them?
- [ 35 : 45 ] My peace give I unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Not a gift that will wear out with the using, but a gift that will be permanent in its duration. A gift that will ever remind them of the giver, the prince of peace. Peace. Peace in our hearts, an inner peace. Peace that the world doesn't know anything about. Peace in the midst of trouble. Peace in the midst of affliction. Peace in the midst of all kinds of difficulties that come. A peace that is the gift of God to his people. This man shall be the peace. Do you know anything of peace in your heart sometimes? Peace when all around is difficult and hard and troublesome and trying and inner peace. This is the privilege of God's people. This is what singles them out from the world. The world sees this and sees that in a calm and quietness. when they're all in a high state of worry and concern.
- [ 36 : 52 ] This Christian person is just suffering just as they are but he's at peace or she is at peace because this man should be at peace. It's a wonderful gift, precious gift. But it is given in the context of war. this man should be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land. When he shall tread in our palaces. Again the figures used are figures that would have been understood by the people but they have a deeper significance. They refer to the attack that the church of God will suffer throughout its history down to the end of time. We are an attacked people. That's why for instance Paul writing to the Ephesians reminds them of the spiritual armour. Remember that section in Ephesians 6 which speaks of the whole armour of God begins with the exhortation finally my brethren be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.
- [ 38 : 08 ] There's that wonderful peace granted but you're at war. There's contradiction in terms you might think but it's not really.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

There's a glimpse of the church at peace, at peace with God, at peace with themselves but nevertheless still in a state of war.

Not a crusade, not a carnal warfare, but a war that is brought to them. Enemies who approach to them the spiritual forces of Satan which are lined up against them.

Don't we get a glimpse of that even in the Old Testament? Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?

[ 39 : 29 ] Who is she? She is the spouse, the bride, the church of Christ. Just one final thing.

Verses seven and eight, you've got the phrase the remnant of Jacob. The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people.

Here's a glimpse of the church of God. Not identified with one nation, not centred on Jerusalem as the place where God is worshipped, but in the midst of many people.

Verse eight, shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people. So here Micah is prophesying of the advance of the church of God.

He is speaking of how the gospel was to be proclaimed among all nations. And God's people would be as a remnant. You hear the word used sometimes about a Christian nation.

[ 40 : 55 ] You won't find that in the Bible. The only reference to the people of God is a scattered people. Scattered amongst all the nations.

We're not a Christian nation. But if we are, Christianity must be a pretty miserable thing. We're not a Christian nation, but in the midst of the nation, there's the remnant of Jacob, scattered.

People who belong to a kingdom, but it's not a kingdom of this earth. It's a kingdom of Jesus Christ. The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass.

Here, he's speaking of the influence of God's people among the nations. The church is to exercise a Christian influence among the nations.

The kingdom of God is to be seen for what it is. We can't identify Christianity with a nation, neither can we identify Christianity with a national church.

[ 42 : 15 ] No such idea in the Bible at all as a national church. But if a people scattered through all the nations, but who themselves exercise this Christian influence as a dew, it's a good thing for any nation to have Christians among them.

that the presence of God's people in a nation, often, historically, has been a means of the protection of that nation.

Think of how Abraham pleaded with God with regard to Lot in Sodom. But there comes a point when the sin of the nation becomes so extreme as in the case of Sodom, that not even the company of a tiny, tiny handful of believers would be enough to keep that city from destruction.

The remnant will be finally, verse 8, as a lion among the beasts of the forest. As a young lion among the flocks of sheep.

Though it's a remnant, though it is small, yet there is great power vested in this tiny minority in the church of God.

[ 43 : 47 ] Remember, Jesus is introduced as the lion of the tribe of Judah. When he's spoken of in revelation as the lion of the tribe of Judah, his next scene as the lamb in the midst of the throne.

And although there is that lion-like gift bestowed upon the church of God, fearless before her enemies.

Think of the death of the martyrs, fearless before their enemies. Yet, there's a spirit of the lamb. Jesus is both the lion and the lamb.

And his people are the same. So, what have we done? Well, we've considered very hastily this messianic prophecy given through Micah, centering on the person of the one that was to come.

and what all the events would be surrounding his coming. And I suggest to my friends that there is absolutely no doubt at all that the Jesus of the New Testament is the one at the heart of Micah's prophecy.

[ 45 : 19 ] prophecy. And the events surrounding the one at the heart of Micah's prophecy had their fulfillment in the events surrounding the coming of Christ and continue to this day as the proof that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ.

He has one people now scattered amongst the nations and he is the one who gathers them. They are gathered into the one body of Christ.

Again, what an amazing mercy is ours if we belong to that people.