

## Micah 5:2 Prophecy about Jesus

In Micah 5:2, we find a prophecy stipulating the place of the Messiah's birth and the family of his birth. Only a person born at a particular place into a particular family would qualify for the office of Messiah.

When the wise men from the east came to Jerusalem looking for the birth place of the king of the Jews, Herod asked the chief priests and scribes where the Messiah would be born. They quoted Micah 5:2, which predicts that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Mt 2:5-6). The religious leaders alive at the time of Christ believed that Micah 5:2 pertained to the coming of the Messiah.

The book of Micah was written about 700 years before the birth of Christ. The prophet Micah lived around the same time as the prophet Isaiah.

In chapter 5, Micah is discussing the glorious future that is in store for Israel. In vs. 1, the king/judge in Israel will be struck with a rod on the cheek. In verse two we find another king who will bring lasting security to Israel.

Jesus fulfilled this prophecy; he is ruler who will come forth and establish an eternal kingdom. This ancient prophecy tells us some important things about Jesus.

Let's consider several important truths about Jesus that we should incorporate into our understanding of Christmas.

### **I. Jesus fulfilled prophecy.**

A. He fulfills prophecy in the *place* of his birth.

1. This short passage foretells *where* the Messiah would have to be born. There's only one place on earth where he could be born—a town called Bethlehem.

2. And what if there were more than one town called Bethlehem? Another word describes this place—“Ephratah” is the ancient name of Bethlehem and distinguishes it from other towns named Bethlehem, such as the one in Zebulun.

According to this prophecy, there is only one place where the Messiah could be born, and that was Bethlehem of Judea. And it’s only because of a unique set of circumstances that Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem. God arranged all the circumstances to bring the right people to the right place at the right time.

B. He fulfills prophecy in the *tribe* of his birth. “of Judah”

1. Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah.
2. There were 12 tribes in Israel. The rulers of Israel were supposed to come through Judah.

*Gen 49:10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him [shall] the gathering of the people [be].*

3. This ruler in view in this prophecy had to be from a particular tribe in Israel—he had to be from Judah. And of course Jesus was from the tribe of Judah.

C. Why is this a critical prophecy?

1. How many of you chose where you were born? Could a normal person scheme to be born in a certain city? No, we don’t have any control over where we are born.
2. Can a normal person choose the family into which he is born? No. Some of us probably wish we could.
3. Only God could determine these circumstances. He put Mary and Joseph at the right place and at the right time.

D. Of course, Jesus fulfills these two requirements. He was born in Bethlehem and into a family from the tribe of Judah.

Fulfilled prophecy is a very convincing proof of the truth of Scripture. And this prophecy is one of many. There are many prophecies regarding the Messiah in the OT that Jesus fulfilled. They were all written long before Jesus was born.

- E. It would be impossible for anyone other than the Messiah to fulfill these OT prophecies. A normal human cannot choose or determine the place or family of his birth. Only a person chosen by God could fulfill these prophecies.

**Trans:** One good reason to believe in Jesus is that he fulfilled prophecies written about him centuries before his birth. He fulfilled these prophecies and no one else did or could.

## II. Jesus came to fulfill the purposes of God.

- A. God says in the prophecy that the ruler is to come forth “unto me.” That little phrase indicates purpose—“unto/for me.” This king will come forth to fulfill God’s purposes for him.
- B. What was the ultimate purpose for Jesus coming into the world?
1. Was Jesus merely an example for us to follow? Jesus set a good example for us, but his purpose in coming to earth was more than merely to set a good example.
  2. Did Jesus come to teach us a set of moral guidelines? Yes, it’s important that we follow Jesus’ teaching about behavior, but that’s not the most important reason Jesus came into the world.
  3. The highest and most significant purpose for Jesus was to live a perfect life and die a sacrificial death for mankind.

Notice the following statements of purpose:

Luke 5:32 *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Luke 19:10 *The son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

1 Timothy 1:15 *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*

1 John 4:10 *[God] sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

- C. The purpose for this whole plan was to save people from sin. There are plenty of other examples for us to follow, and many others could have taught us how to behave. But only one person could save us from our sins.

Mt 1:21 *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

- D. It's the purpose of God that those who turn from their sin and trust in Christ are saved from their sins. When you trust in Christ as your savior, God forgives your sin and makes you part of his family.

**App:** Can you say that Jesus has saved you from your sin? We are all sinners, and the penalty for sin is death. But through faith in Christ, we can be forgiven of sin and sin's penalty can be removed. Perhaps there is someone here today who could fulfill God's purpose for sending Jesus—to save you from your sins.

**Trans:** Jesus came to save his people, but the purpose goes beyond that. The reign of Christ on David's throne is another purpose for which God sent his son into the world.

### III. Jesus is the king of Israel.

“... ruler in (over) Israel”

- A. Remember that the angel said of Jesus,

Luke 1:32–33 *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.*

- B. Remember that the wise men asked, “Where is he that is born king of the Jews?” The wise men were looking for the king.
- C. Remember that Jesus presented himself as the king.  
*Mark 1:15 [Jesus said], “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”*
- D. What did the people say of Jesus when he entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey?  
*John 12:13 ... [they] cried, Hosanna: Blessed [is] the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.*
- E. Remember that Jesus affirmed the fact that he was the Messiah and King of Israel.
1. He said it to the woman at the well—“I that speak unto thee am he” (Jn 4:26).
  2. He affirmed it in his trial before Pilate (Jn 18:37).
- F. Did Israel as a nation recognize Jesus as their king? No. You may recall that the leaders of Israel said to Pilate, “We have no king but Caesar” (Jn 19:15). Some of the Jews accepted Jesus’ claim to be the Messiah, but the nation’s leaders did not. The leaders of the nation crucified Jesus for making such a claim.
- G. Jesus did *not* establish an earthly kingdom while he was here. But he will establish an earthly kingdom when he returns. At that point, he will reign on the throne of David over the nations from the city of Jerusalem. He will rule over Israel, over the Jews.  
*Rom 11:26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

- H. Note that the text doesn't say "ruler in the church." We know that Jesus is the head and ruler of the church. But that's not what the prophecy says. It says "ruler in Israel." He will sit on David's throne and reign over the house of Jacob. Is Jesus currently ruling over Israel in this way? No, he's not.
- I. So this aspect of the prophecy has not yet been fulfilled; it is still future to us. Jesus is the king of Israel, but he has not begun to reign in Israel. One day he will.

**Trans.:** The purposes of God will be fulfilled. Jesus will reign in Israel and over all the earth. This prophecy remains unfulfilled until Jesus reigns on David's throne over Israel.

The day is coming when "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil 2:10-11). It's best to do that now voluntarily rather than in the future when you will do it involuntarily.

#### **IV. Jesus is God in the flesh.**

"... whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

- A. Everything in the prophecy up until this point could have been true of a Jewish person from the tribe of Judah born in Bethlehem. There's nothing supernatural about those things.
- B. This part of the prophecy tells us that the expected ruler will be distinct and different from ordinary people. His existence extends to ancient days. He is "from everlasting." No ordinary person is "of old, from everlasting." Only a divine person has an eternal existence.
- C. The Bible teaches that Jesus' existence predates his birth in Bethlehem. He is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity, the eternal Son of God. He is an eternal person. His existence is "everlasting."

Cf. Isaiah 9:6 *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.*

John 8:58 *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

- D. The expression “to go forth” means “to conduct one’s activities.” This future king has been active for a long time.

What was Jesus doing prior to his birth in Bethlehem?

1. Active in planning for the salvation of mankind (Eph 1:4)
2. Active in creation (Jn 1:1f; Col 1:17)
3. He shows up in the form of the Angel of the Lord on several occasions.
4. Any time we find an appearance of God in the OT, that is likely an appearance of Christ.

- E. The Bible tells us that “in the fullness of time, God sent forth his son” (Gal 4:4). When the right time came for all of these prophecies to be fulfilled, God sent Jesus into the world. God the Son took on human flesh. That’s what we celebrate at Xmas time—the incarnation.

- F. The Bible says that Jesus “took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men” (Phil 2:7).

“To incarnate” means to take on human flesh. This is what happened at Jesus’ birth into the human race – God took on human flesh.

- G. His name *Emmanuel* means “God with us.”

John 1:14 *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.*

- H. The Deity of Christ is a very important Christian doctrine. Jesus is God; he's the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity. That baby in the manger was the Creator of the universe. Genuine Christianity affirms this great truth. Anyone denying the deity of Christ is outside the boundaries of the Christian faith.

**Conc.:** We rightly celebrate Jesus' *birth* at Christmas time. But Jesus is much more than just a baby in a manger.

Jesus is the subject of prophecy. Many centuries before his birth, the prophets foretold of his arrival. Jesus fulfills those prophecies, which shows us that the Bible is true. Fulfilled prophecy proves that Jesus is whom he claims to be.

He came to fulfill the purposes of God—to save people from sin and to reign on earth on the throne of David. Jesus' earthly reign is still in the future, but Jesus is able to save people from sin right now. God's intent in sending Jesus was to save sinners, and you can be saved through repentance and faith.

Jesus is the king of Israel, the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God. Those who follow Jesus recognize that he is king of kings and Lord of lords.

As we focus at this time of year on Jesus in the manger, Jesus as a baby, let us not forget that Jesus is God in the flesh, the king of Israel, the one sent by God to save us from our sins.