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Fellowship at Cross Creek  
***Micah 5:1ff***  
***He will be Bethlehem's peace!***  
12.22.02

**Pray; read three times and ask questions...**

Micah 5:1 Marshal your troops,  
O city of troops,  
for a siege is laid against us.  
They will strike Israel's ruler  
on the cheek with a rod.

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
though you are small among the clans of Judah,  
out of you will come for me  
one who will be ruler over Israel,  
whose origins are from of old,  
from ancient times. "

3 Therefore Israel will be abandoned  
until the time  
when she who is in labor  
gives birth  
and the rest of his brothers  
return to join the Israelites.

4 He will stand and shepherd his flock  
in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they will live securely,  
for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.

5 And he will be their peace.

**Notes...**

Micah 5:1 Marshal your troops,  
O city of troops,  
for a siege is laid against us.

(What troops? How many did they have? Is this a command? Would it guarantee success? Whose troops? Who were they fighting? What city? Why are they called a city of troops? Do they have many troops? Who is laying the siege? How long? How bad? Starvation? This sounds like it is at the beginning of the siege because they are marshalling troops.)

They will strike Israel's ruler  
on the cheek with a rod.

(City of Israel? Jerusalem? Is this symbolic? Will they defeat him? When? There was a siege in 701 in which the Assyrians were destroyed by the Angel of the Lord, and then again in 586 when the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem. Striking a ruler with a rod seems like a symbolic term for defeat.)

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
though you are small among the clans of Judah,  
out of you will come for me  
one who will be ruler over Israel,  
whose origins are from of old,  
from ancient times. "

(Does Bethlehem stand in contrast to the other city? Why is it called Ephrathah? Are clans subsets of tribes like counties or cities are subsets of states? Who is the me? God? David was from Bethlehem hundreds of years before? How old? David? Boaz and Ruth? Before this? What does origins mean? Descendent from? Or something more?)

3 Therefore Israel will be abandoned  
until the time  
when she who is in labor  
gives birth  
and the rest of his brothers  
return to join the Israelites.

(When? How long? How? From the siege above? Another time?  
Who is she? Israel? A real person? Is this Mary? Who are his  
brothers and when will they return?)

4 He will stand and shepherd his flock  
in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they will live securely,  
for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.

5 And he will be their peace.

(He, the ruler? What does stand mean? Who is his flock? Israel?  
Who is they? Israel? In contrast to the other siege? Not just  
Jerusalem? The entire world?)

**Who?** Your troops, us, they, Israel's ruler, you, me, one who  
will be, ruler of Israel, whose origins, she who is in labor, his  
brothers, the Israelites, He, of the Lord, the Lord his God,  
they...

**Where?** City of troops, on the cheek, Judah, out of you, over  
Israel, return, to the ends of the earth...

**When?** Will (future), until the time when she who is in labor  
gives birth, then his greatness will reach to the ends of the  
earth...

**What?**

- Gather your troops. Your city is about to be besieged and  
your king defeated.
- In contrast, out of Bethlehem will come a very old ruler.
- In the meantime, Israel will lie abandoned until the birth  
of some child had he is rejoined by his brothers.

- He will rule the entire world with God's validation; and God's people will rest securely.

**Summary...**the tale of two cities...one, along with its king, and despite its best efforts will be humiliated; but from the other, which is small in comparison, a great ruler supported by God will arise, rule the earth and bring peace for the nation.

**Bottom line...**one city despite its best efforts will be defeated; but from the other, a timeless king will arise to rule the earth peacefully.

### **Why?**

- God knows and reveals the future; but he doesn't reveal all the details clearly. We are forced to ready, study and attempt to put the pieces together.
- God does not always pick the biggest and best to do his will; quite often he honors the smaller and less significant.
- God does have a ruler that will rule the entire world in God's strength and majesty and will bring peace to the nations or world.
- The world tumultuously awaits the time when God's ruler does bring the world into submission and peace.

### **So What?**

**My struggle...**tired, not motivated to prepare, not motivated to do much about Christmas, bumming about our debt, living expenses, not being able to travel like so many others...

**Truth...**1) the first shall be last and the last shall be first someday; God has not forgotten the Bethlehems of the world; Jerusalem will experience her downfall. 2) There is a ruler who will bring peace to the world.

**Application...**Don't worry about other's abilities to take trips while you remain home due to financial considerations. There are some who have it worse than you. God has not forgotten the Bethlehems of the world. They will be honored and blessed. Look forward to the day when my Lord will rule and his people will know his blessing...peace. Rest in him. Be content.

**Others...**

**Struggles...**Grisham's post-Hannah surgery, Duedes have a new baby, Christmas pressures...gifts, finances...Christmas blues, pressures, and expectations...travel, family...

**Truths...**Bethlehem in the shadow of Jerusalem being greatly honored, but not without a price...

**Applications...**wait your time, bide your time, patiently living in the shadows, first shall be last and the last first...you have a role, it may cost,

You may not have what others have...you may not be able to celebrate or decorate, or celebrate with family...bide your time...God has not forgotten you; you still have a role to play...

**Goal...**to not compare my life or Christmas to others' lives or Christmases..Christmas right now is a thing between you and God...

Joe Cross