

O' Little Town of Bethlehem

Six messianic prophecies were fulfilled with the birth of Jesus Christ in Matthew Chapters 1-2.

- Matt.1:22-23 (Isa.7:14) Birth of Christ Immanuel
- Matt.2:2 (Num.24:17) Eastern star of birth of Christ
- **Matt.2:5-6 (Micah 5:2)** **Bethlehem, birth place of Christ**
- Matt.2:15 (Hosea 11:1) Egyptian connection to birth of Christ
- Matt.2:17-18 (Jer.31:15) Bethlehem babies murdered with birth of Christ
- Matt.2:23 (Isa.53:2-3; John 1:45-51) Christ, a Nazarene

Today's lesson is taken from (Micah 5:1-5) and the messianic prophecy of "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

<p style="text-align: center;">We will study four aspects of Micah's prophecy fulfilled by the birth of Jesus Christ recorded in (Matt.2:1-12)</p>

1. Note the difference between Micah's prophecy and Matthew's fulfillment in the birth of Jesus Christ.

(Micah 5:2) "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity."

(Matthew 2:6) "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah (Matthew), are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel (Matthew)."

Notice that Matthew left off the last underlined phrase of Micah 5:2. This phrase is a reference to the pre-incarnate existence of Christ (ELC) and (John 3:13, 31; 6:38, 42; Acts 1:11).

Doctrinal principle: "Now all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled." (Matt.1:22/ Gabriel to Joseph)

(Rom.10:4) "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."

2. Micah was like Bethlehem, "too little, to be among" the prophets of Israel. He was a contemporary prophet to Isaiah and Hosea.

We learn an important doctrinal principle from both Micah and Bethlehem. **Our significance in time and eternity is found in Christ and not in world.**

(Phil.1:21) "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Micah and Bethlehem have been made prominent by the prophecy of birth of Christ. Constantine's mother built a church called Church of Nativity at the site of the birth of Christ. O Little Town of Bethlehem is sung every Christmas around the world by the Christian church.

3. I find it interesting that Joseph and Mary had to be forced to go to Bethlehem for the birth of Christ.

Luke 2 recorded the Roman census forced Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem to register as members of house of David (2:1-20).

Mary received a special message revelation from heaven by the archangel Gabriel regarding her role in the birth of Christ in Luke 1:26-38 (31-35/ read).

Joseph received a special dream revelation from heaven by an angel of Lord regarding his role in the birth of Christ in Matt.1:18-25 (21-23/ read).

How is it possible for them not to know the prophetic place of birth of Christ within 9 months but Herod could know in just a few minutes from the religious leaders of Israel (Matt.2:1-6)?

TWO DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES:

- **First doctrinal principle** from this story is that the **Directive Will of God** is very important to your life in the plan of God.
 - (Eph.6:6) "Not by way of eye-service, as men men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, **doing the will of God from the heart.**"
- **Second doctrinal principle** from this story is to examine the subject of the Directive Will to connect the dots as the Plan of God unfolds in your life. They should have examined all the messianic Scriptures of birth of Jesus Christ after Gabriel gave key messianic Scriptures (CBD). They could have asked a rabbi like Herod.

4. Micah prophesied that Bethlehem would be the birth place of the Ruling Shepherd of Israel.

(Micah 5:2b) "From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel."

(Matt.2:6b) "For out of you shall come forth a Ruler who will Shepherd My people Israel."

Ruling Shepherd is 1 of 7 messianic titles given to Jesus Christ.

- Good shepherd (John 10:11, 18)
- Smitten shepherd (Matt.26:31-32)
- Great shepherd (Heb.13:20)
- Guardian of soul (1 Pet.2:25)
- Chief shepherd (1 Pet.5:4)
- Eternal Lamb shepherd (Rev.7:17)

When Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, Israel was described as nation of sheep without a shepherd (Matt.9:36-38).

Micah closed this part of his messianic prophecy with this statement - "This One will be our peace." Isaiah also prophesied - "For a child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; and the government will be upon His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, **Prince of Peace.**" (Isa.9:6)

THIS CHRISTAMS YOUR SIGNIFICANCE IS FOUND IN JESUS CHRIST - "I have been crucified with Christ; **and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;** and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." (Gal.2:20)