

# MICAH: GOD'S PUNISHMENT AND HIS RESTORATION

## VII: Messiah's First Advent

(Micah 5:2-3)

### I. Introduction

- A. Micah, who was “a Judean from Moresheth in the SW of Palestine, preached to the common people of Judah.” (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1283, “Introduction to the Book of Micah: The Prophet.”)
- B. The message of Micah's prophecy was that God's coming judgment for Judah's sin would be unavoidable and severe, but in the end, His Abrahamic Covenant would be honored, and Israel would be blessed.
- C. In welcome relief from God's judgment for sin, Micah 5:2-3 predicted the Messiah's first advent, the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we view that passage for our insight and edification (as follows):

### II. Messiah's First Advent, Micah 5:2-3.

- A. Having predicted in Micah 5:1 the sad end of Judah's last monarch Zedekiah who in sin would be abusively treated with Babylon's invasion of Jerusalem, Micah 5:2a begins with a welcome contrast: the verse starts with the expression, “But **you** . . .” where the pronoun “you” (*‘attah*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 938; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 61) is written separate from and before the verb, making it emphatic.
- B. This emphatic pronoun “you” is identified in the verse as Bethlehem of Ephrathah, “Ephrathah” being the ancient name of the town and its surrounding district, including the fields where the angels would appear to the Bethlehem shepherds at Christ's birth in His first advent! (Micah 5:2; *Ibid.*, Ryrie, fn. to Micah 5:2)
- C. Though Bethlehem was home of one of the smaller clans of the tribal territory of Judah (Micah 5:2b NIV; Leslie C. Allen, The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah, 1976, p. 339), from Bethlehem would come forth unto God One Who would be sovereign over Israel, one whose origins went back to “days of yore,” to Christ's preincarnate appearances as the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament, Micah 5:2c; *Ibid.*
- D. The “days of yore” (*ye me ‘olam*) can refer to eternity past, but elsewhere in the Old Testament it “is always set within a historical framework,” so here it refers to the days of ancient Ephrathah mentioned earlier in the verse when Israel conquered the land under Joshua by the power of the Preincarnate Christ who led Joshua as the Captain of the Lord's army, Joshua 5:13-15; *Ibid.*, p. 343. Thus, opposite the Micah 5:1 impotent, godless Zedekiah who was abused by invading Babylonians, the Preincarnate Christ in Micah 5:2 would come forth from Bethlehem to rule Israel in power and victory as in “days of yore!” [cf. John 1:1-3 on Christ's eternity!]
- E. Also, God would surrender Judah to her Gentile foes in discipline until “she who travails” (*yoledah*, *Ibid.*, Kittel; *Ibid.*, B. D. B., p. 408-409) “gives birth” (*yaladah*, *Ibid.*, Kittel; *Ibid.*, B. D. B.), Micah 5:3a. This woman is often figuratively viewed as Israel who travails under Gentile oppressors, but elsewhere where Israel is seen as a woman in travail, the reference is “relevant” as an “easily recognizable motif” in the context, what is “absent here” in Micah 5:3. (*Ibid.*, Allen, p. 345, fn. 32) Rather, the woman here in Micah 5:3a is Mary who gave birth to Jesus (*Ibid.*; *Ibid.*, Ryrie, fn. to Micah 5:3), a truth that provides significant application:
  - 1. Since Mary experienced **labor** to give birth to Jesus, she was under the **Adamic curse** (Genesis 3:16).
  - 2. If she was under the **curse**, she was a **sinner**, contradicting the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, that Mary was born without sin! (Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 158-162)
- F. [After the Messiah is born, the rest of His Hebrew brethren will be restored to their people, a reference to the unification of Judah and Israel in a single monarchy at Christ's Second Coming, Micah 5:3b; *Ibid.*, Ryrie, fn. to Micah 5:3. The reason this last part of Micah 5:3 is yet to occur is that Israel rejected her Messiah at His first advent, what led to the postponement of the institution of the Messianic Kingdom until Israel finally repents as a nation in reference to her Messiah under great trials in the coming Great Tribulation Period.]

***Lesson:*** *In glorious contrast to the tragic end of Judah's last king Zedekiah, out of little Bethlehem Ephrathah would One come forth unto God Who would rule Israel, His goings forth from God as the Preincarnate Lord having been from Israel's ancient glory days of conquering the land. God will give up His people to Gentile rule until she who would bear the Messiah would have gone into labor and given birth to Him. After that, due to Israel's rejection of the Messiah, the divided nation would be reunited at Christ's Coming after the Tribulation.*

***Application:*** *(1) May we rejoice that Christ has indeed been born of Mary in fulfillment of Micah 5:2-3a and hope for His coming Kingdom of Micah 5:3b and following. (2) May we also realize that just as Romans 3:23 states, all people have sinned, including Mary the earthly mother of Jesus! (3) May we also realize that the problem of sin and its effects are what have delayed the arrival of the Millennial Kingdom and thus depart from sin today.*