

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Scripture Reading — Micah 5:2-4; Matthew 2:1-6

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. . . . — Micah 5:2

Many Old Testament passages point ahead to Jesus. We need to see that Jesus is the one “whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

The early church pointed to Isaiah 1:3 as evidence for Jesus’ birth among animals: “The ox knows its master, the donkey its owner’s manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.” Sadly, though animals witnessed Jesus’ birth and saw him lying in their manger (Luke 2:7), Israel’s leaders remained blind.

The early church also saw the coming of the Magi predicted in Isaiah 60: “Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn . . . camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the Lord.” Again Jerusalem missed it.

Bethlehem was small, but God often uses the little things of life to work out his plans. A great ruler from tiny Bethlehem was promised in Micah 5:2. Matthew 2:6 emphasizes Beth-le-hem’s importance, declaring, “You, Bethlehem . . . are *by no means* least among the -rulers of Judah.”

It is life-changing to realize that God is involved in the minute details of our lives. So be attentive. Where do you see God work-ing in your everyday life?

Prayer

Thank you, God, for your work even in the everyday details of our lives. May we praise our Savior from Bethlehem in all we do! Amen.

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