

## Take Courage!

### Scripture Reading — Micah 5:1-6; John 10:14-18

*“Out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel.”*

*Micah 5:2 —*

Great leaders usually come from great places. They graduate from Harvard or Stanford or West Point or Oxford. We don't usually expect greatness to rise from little villages. But God works in surprising ways.

Israel was in crisis. As the Assyrian army closed in, Micah warned that Israel's king would be struck on the cheek—an act of humiliation. Destruction was certain, and Israel was desperate for a savior.

Micah then says that a new ruler would rise from, of all places, the small town of Bethlehem. Israel would suffer for a time and experience the “labor pains” of defeat. Yet the pain of defeat would give birth to victory! God would send a leader to deliver his people, and this leader would tend them like a shepherd.

In time, God sent the good shepherd, Jesus. He was born in Bethlehem, and he grew up to be the perfect shepherd of God's people. He was struck on the cheek for our guilt and humiliated for our sin and shame. But through his death on the cross he destroyed our enemy! He saved us from the curse of sin and death.

Jesus now shepherds us “in the strength of the Lord.” When we face opposition and struggles in this world, we can take comfort from Jesus' promises. He will care for us, lead us, and carry us through our struggles. And we can find rest in him.

### Prayer

*“Savior, like a shepherd lead us.” Help us to look to you for our peace and security. May we trust in your guidance and rest in your peace. In your name, Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Minor Prophets](#)

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