

19 December 2021

Micah 5:2-4 – A Strong Shepherd for the flock

Background

Micah prophesied between 750 and 686 BC. He spoke out about the oppression of the poor and destitute, and how the nation's moral covenant which mandated a loving spirit towards God and one's neighbour had been sadly replaced. God waited for a change of heart before handing the people over to Assyria. Micah recognized that most of the former kings of Israel had dismally failed and that only new leadership could provide the answer to their future. Micah announces the Messianic age.

The Shepherd-King has a strong ancestry

- As God had selected David to be his king so now God declares that from David's line God will raise up another king from the town of Bethlehem.
- He would be obedient to God's plans

Note: Ephathrah meaning 'fruitful' is the name of a district in Judah where Bethlehem is located.

Questions:

1. Can you make comparisons between the line of David, giving examples of these, with the life of Jesus Christ?
2. How does the above urge you, in all the advice given in the media, to "Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation"? Psalm 146 v 3

The Shepherd-King has a source of strength

- He will be endowed with 'Yahweh's' strength not ruling in his own might but with divine power and majestic authority derived from God.
- He will not succumb to human weakness.
- He is therefore a king to be trusted – just as sheep would trust a shepherd.

Questions:

3. Read the story of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 7 and try to picture the enormity of the problem that David faced. Can you give examples of situations in Jesus' life that required his reliance on God's strength for him?
4. Can you recall any situation when you were given God's strength for a particularly difficult situation?

The Shepherd-King will provide security

- Lack of security is a deeply rooted fear that affects all of us.
- The people of Israel had experienced kings who had not provided them with security.
- The manifesto of the Messiah is radically different.
- In him alone, our strong shepherd, do we find security: for the present, for the future trusting in the cross to bring us peace.

Questions:

5. Do you agree that 'lack of security is a deeply rooted fear that affects all of us?' Give examples.
6. If we're honest, do we try and do everything we can to allay our fears – and pray later?
7. Read Luke 4:18-19: are you able to identify ways in which as children of the kingdom, we too, are able to give assurance and comfort to others?