

ADRIAN ROGERS

# LEGACY

C O L L E C T I O N



M I C A H

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# Micah

## 1. Christmas in the Old Testament | *Micah 5:2*

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# Christmas in the Old Testament

*By Adrian Rogers*

**Scripture: Micah 5:2 / John 5:39 / Book chapter(s) verse(s) Date Preached:  
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**Main Scripture Text: Micah 5:2**

*“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”*

MICAH 5:2

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## Introduction

Would you be finding the little book of Micah. Micah chapter 5, and in just a moment I'm going to be reading verse 2. The title of our message today: “Christmas in the Old Testament.” The Book of Micah is a small book, and in the Book of Micah—in this small book—it speaks of a small town. And in that small town, a very small little human being is going to come into the world. But the Bible says, “Don't despise the day of small things” (Zechariah 4:10), because wonderful things come in small packages.

Look, if you will, in Micah chapter 5, verse 2: *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee”—out of Bethlehem—“shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting”* (Micah 5:2). Jesus had His birth at Bethlehem, but He did not have His beginning at Bethlehem. He has been from everlasting.

Now people sometimes say, “How can I understand the Bible?” and, especially, “How can I understand the Old Testament?” There is a master key that will help you to understand all of the Bible—the Old Testament and the New Testament. That *master key* is a person—His name is Jesus. All of the Bible is about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the theme of the Bible; Jesus is the hero of the Bible; Jesus is the message of the Bible; and, rightly understood, He is the author of the Bible. And so if you want to understand any book, if you know the author, and understand the theme, and are related to the hero, I think indeed you could understand that book.

The Bible is a *Him-book*; it is about *Him*—the Lord Jesus. Now sometimes people mistakenly get the idea that the Old Testament is about Israel, and the ceremonies of the Old Testament, and that the New Testament takes a new departure, and now the New Testament is about Jesus. But I want to show you, friend, that all of the Bible is about Jesus—and He Himself said so. For, Jesus said, in John chapter 5 and verse 39—and you might want to put this in your margin—He is speaking to the religious leaders of the day, and He throws them this challenge. He says, “*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life:*”—and then He said—“*and they are they which testify of me*” (John 5:39). And when he said, “*Search the scriptures*” to that crowd, the New Testament had not yet been written.

So there are three things I want you to see this morning with me. First of all, I want you to see some portraits of Jesus in the Old Testament. Secondly, I want you to see some prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament. Thirdly, as night follows day, the presentation of Jesus from the Old Testament.

## **I. Portraits of Jesus in the Old Testament**

Now there is in Washington—I believe it’s in Washington—a very beautiful work of art. What the artist has done, he has taken the Constitution of the United States of America, and he has written it in calligraphy across the page—word for word—the Constitution of the United States is written. But the artist, very skillfully, very cunningly, has shaped and shaded the letters, as he writes the Constitution of the United States of America. And as you stand there, close to it, and you read it, it reads, word for word, the Constitution of the United States of America. But when you step back and see what the artist has done, the way he has shaped and shaded the letters, there comes out a portrait of George Washington. It’s there, but you just have to step back and look at it, and all of those letters and so forth is George Washington, the father of our country.

Now God wrote the Old Testament the same way. God, the Holy Spirit, inspired the writers of the Old Testament, and they shaped and formed their writings so that it says exactly what it says. There’s the history of Israel, there are all of the ceremonies, all of these things; but, when you step back and look, you see the face of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “*Search the scriptures, these are they which testify of me*” (John 5:39). And I want to say that, without the Lord Jesus, you do not have the master key that unlocks the Old Testament. Without the Lord Jesus, the Old Testament is simply a bundle of unfulfilled prophecies, of unexplained ceremonies, of unattainable laws. But when you bring Jesus

into it, it unlocks the whole thing.

Now the Old Testament was finished 400 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and the Jews have taken the Old Testament and they have divided into three sections. Section number one: *the law*; section number two: *the prophets*; section number three: *the writings*—sometimes they would call that *the Psalms*, because the Psalms is the first in these three sections, so sometimes it would be called *the writings* or *the Psalms*. Now this was their Bible, their Old Testament Bible. Jesus came to this earth, was born in Bethlehem, lived a righteous life, was falsely accused, nailed to a cross, suffered, bled, and died, was buried in a borrowed tomb, rose from the dead the third day, and then, He is walking with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They do not recognize Him in His resurrected form. And outside Jerusalem is that city of Emmaus—I've been there a number of times, and I've walked that Emmaus road; what a thrill that is! And as Jesus is walking with these two disciples after his resurrection, He takes the Old Testament Scriptures, and He begins to explain the Old Testament Scriptures to them.

Now here's the verse I want you to get. It is found in Luke chapter 24 and verses 44 and 45: "*And he said unto them,*"—now remember, this is Jesus—"*These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you,*"—now listen to this, listen—"*that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.*" (Luke 24:44). That was their Bible—the law, the prophets, and the Psalms. And Jesus explained to them, in the law, in the prophets, and in the Psalms, all of those things that concerned Him. I would have loved to have had a tape recording of that Bible conference, wouldn't you? To hear the Lord Jesus Christ explain how He Himself is found in the Scriptures. Because, you see, He is the fulfillment of all of these things.

Now in the monarchy, and in the theocracy, when Israel was a nation, there were three officials who received an anointing—if you will—a *christening*, or a *Christ-ing*. Three officials. You know who they were? The king was anointed. Do you know who else was anointed? The priest was anointed. Do you know who else was anointed with the holy oil? The prophet was anointed. Only those three: the priest, the prophet, and the king.

Now why? Because all of these were figures, all of these were types, all of these were emblems, of man's greatest longing. What does man need more than anything else? He needs a prophet who can speak the Word of God with truth and finality. Not only does he need that, but he needs a priest, someone who can deal with his sin and bring him to God. And not only does he need a prophet, and not only does he need a priest, but he needs a king, a righteous ruler who can rule with authority.

And in the Old Testament the prophets and the priests and the kings always pointed

to someone great. The Old Testament scholars used to study the rabbis and they would say, “Are we going to have three Messiahs? Are we going to have one who will be a prophet? Or, will we have one who will be a priest? Are we going to have one who will be king?” But we find that all three of these come together in one person who is prophet, priest, and king; and His name is Jesus. That is the name of this one.

In the Gospels—in the Gospels in the New Testament—you see Jesus, the anointed Prophet, preaching. In Acts and the Epistles, you see Jesus, the anointed Priest, interceding, saving us, and bringing us to God. In the Book of Revelation, you see Jesus, God’s anointed King, reigning, because He is the fulfillment of all of these prophecies. *You see, it’s all about Jesus—Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament says, “Behold, He comes.” The Gospels say, “Behold, He dies.” Acts says, “Behold, He lives!” The Epistles say, “Behold, He saves.” And Revelation says, “Behold, He reigns.”* That’s Jesus. That’s Jesus. All of the Bible, old and new, is about the Lord Jesus Christ. And you see Christ.

## **II. Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament**

Not only in persons, but you see Him in ceremonies. For example, there’s one who will fulfill all of these unexplained ceremonies, and all of these people in the Old Testament. You see, Jesus is the last Adam, who the first Adam prefigures. Jesus is a prophet like Moses. Jesus is a priest like Aaron. Jesus is a champion like Joshua. Jesus is an offering like Isaac. Jesus is a king like David. Jesus is a counselor like Solomon. Jesus is a beloved, rejected, exalted son, and Heaven’s bread supplier like Joseph. Jesus helped us to understand the Ark of the Covenant, because He is the Ark of the Covenant. He is the Mercy Seat and the Sanctuary. He is the water from the rock. He is the manna from the sky. He is the brazen serpent lifted up for our sins. He is the Passover lamb. He is the scapegoat that carries away our sins. He is the Lion of Judah. He is the Good Shepherd. He is the Lily of the Valley. He is the Root out of dry ground. He is the Faithful Branch. He is the one without form, nor comeliness, and yet altogether lovely. His name is Jesus.

If you read the Bible and you don’t see Jesus, go back and reread it! You missed the message. Jesus said, “Search the scriptures,”—He’s talking about the Old Testament—and He said, “for these are they which testify of me” (John 5:39). And without Him, all these things become a dead-end road, leading to nowhere.

When I was a little boy—I can remember it as though yesterday; I’d not yet started school—I came into the kitchen and my mother was fixing a pie. I hung around, and then, I watched—you talk about classic disappointment. She pulled that thing out of the oven and, Brother Whitmire, what she pulled out of the oven was a pie shell. She’d not put the filling in—it was a lemon meringue pie. I didn’t understand how they made pies. I

thought my mother was either the stupidest, or the meanest, woman in the world. Who would bake a nothing pie. I mean, here it was, just the shell, nothing in it. I was incensed. I really was. How could my mother do such a thing, to bake a pie with nothing in it?

Friend, I want to tell you that that's what the Old Testament is, just a pie with nothing in it, if you don't put Jesus in it. Jesus is the theme of the Bible. "Search the scriptures," He says, "for these are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). And He showed them in the prophets, in the law, in Moses, in the Psalms, all of the things concerning Himself.

Now you see portraits of Christ in the Old Testament, and you see prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament. May I tell you this morning that fulfilled prophecy—listen—fulfilled prophecy is the great truth of the inspiration of the Bible—it is the great truth of the deity of Jesus Christ. There are more than 300 direct prophecies that prophesy the coming Messiah.

Now that this could've happened by chance is a mathematical absurdity. There is a mathematical law called the law of probability. It is a very, very real law. Insurance companies operate on the mathematical law of probabilities. For example, for less than a hundred dollars a month an insurance company will insure a young thirty-year-old man, and will promise to pay his heirs, if he dies, over a million dollars. Why would they do that for less than a hundred dollars a month? Because they have studied the mathematical laws of probability, and they know what the probability is that this young man will die in that year. They're not there to lose money; they understand that they will risk billions of dollars in industry based on the mathematical law of probability.

Now I want you to think about these three hundred prophecies concerning the Lord Jesus, and I want you to take the mathematical law of probability and see how it works.

Let me illustrate what I'm talking about. I have a son who is a missionary in Spain, and I dial him very frequently and talk with him. By the way, if you want to make a good investment, find out what long distance phone business that Joyce has engaged and buy stock in that phone business, because we talk with our son and we talk with our grandson in Spain, as I did yesterday. We have a new grandbaby in Spain, and I'm getting ready to go over there to see him very soon, but when I want to call my son, do you know how I get him? There are almost six billion people on the face of this earth. But when I pick up the telephone, immediately I eliminate all the other people in the world who don't have a telephone—right?—'cause I've picked up the telephone. Then, when I dial 0-1-1, I eliminate all the people who live in the United States, because now I'm dialing overseas. Then, when I dial 3-4, I eliminate all the rest of the nations overseas except one: Spain. Then, when I dial the next digits, I eliminate all of the areas in Spain except the area that he lives in. And then, when I start to dial a successive series of numbers, each number I dial, more and more people fall away, until I dial that

final last number—and you see how the focus is getting tighter and tighter and tighter—and then the phone rings, and one person picks it up. And it's my beloved son, and I recognize his voice. Now how does that happen? It's just simply the law of elimination—as the focus gets tighter and tighter and tighter and tighter and tighter and tighter, until we dial that last digit, and then, out of almost six billion people on the face of the earth, one individual picks up the phone.

Now suppose we wanted to dial the Messiah's number. Suppose we picked up the Old Testament and we say, "Now let's find out who the Messiah of Israel is." First of all, Messiah must come from the human race. A race, because Genesis chapter 3, verse 15, says this: "*And I...*"—God is speaking and He says to the serpent—"*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed*"—that is, the offspring of the serpent—"*and her seed;*"—her descendancy—"*it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*" (Genesis 3:15). Now what this first evangelistic message is, is this: that God is going to send the seed of the woman to be the Messiah, to bruise the serpent's head, both a birth, a bruising, and a blessing, is in that one verse. It speaks of the Messiah that will come. And no angel can redeem us, no animal can redeem us; no—it must be the seed of the woman.

And by the way, the Old Testament rabbis used to ponder over this. Why? Because, generally when seed is spoken of, it speaks of the seed of the man, not of the woman. But of course, we know that Jesus was virgin born. There is a race. All right, right away, we eliminate all of the angels, and all of the animals.

Now secondly, God narrows the focus a little more, and there is a section out of that race. You will remember that the human race corrupted itself. God sent a flood, and out of that flood, there came what? Three families. There was the family of Ham, of Shem, and Japheth. Well, which section of that race did God choose? Genesis chapter 9 and verse 26: "*And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem*" (Genesis 9:26). So now, we have not only a race, but a section of that race. But now, God's going to tighten the focus a little more. And God is going to get us a nation out of that section, out of that race. So we go to Genesis chapter 12, and we find where God chose a man named Abraham, the brightest star in the Hebrew heaven. In Genesis chapter 12, verse 1: "*Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee*" (Genesis 12:1–2). Now we have a nation out of that section out of that race.

But now, wait a minute—we're going to tighten the focus a little more. And God says, "I want a tribe out of that nation, out of that section, out of that race," and so, God chooses a tribe. You see, Isaac was born to Abraham, and Isaac had two sons. And his two sons were Jacob and Esau. And God chose Jacob. Numbers 24, verse 17: "*I shall*



*see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob*" (Numbers 24:17). And so you see how God now is beginning to tighten the focus. Abraham's grandson Jacob is the one from whom Messiah is going to come. But Jacob had twelve sons. Which one of those twelve sons would Messiah come from? Genesis chapter 49, verse 10: *"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be"* (Genesis 49:10).

Notice how God is tightening the focus. Notice what God is saying: there must be a race, there must be a section out of that race, there must be a nation out of that section, there must be a tribe out of that nation—out of that section, out of that race—and the tribe is the tribe of Judah. But God tightens the focus a little more. There must be a family out of that tribe, out of that nation, out of that section, out of that race, and God chooses a family out of Judah. Isaiah chapter 11, verses 1 and 2: *"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots"* (Isaiah 11:1)—because Jesse was of the tribe of Judah, and Judah was a part of the family of Abraham, and Abraham was a Shemite, and a Shemite was a human being, born of woman.

But now, God begins to tighten the focus a little more, and God gets not only a family—the family of Jesse—but God gets a household out of that family—the house of David, who is the son of Jesse, who is one of Judah, who is born of Abraham, who is a Shemite, who is a human being, and the focus gets tighter and tighter. For, God says, concerning David in 2 Samuel chapter 7, verse 8, *"Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts..."* (2 Samuel 7:8)—and verse 16: *"And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever"* (2 Samuel 7:16). It is not by accident that Jesus was born in the city of David. Jesse had eight sons, but there was only one son.

Now do you see what I'm saying? There must come a household, out of a family, out of a tribe, out of a nation, out of a section, out of a race. But God is not finished yet, and God takes of the family of David, and God says there must be a woman out of the family of David—not just any woman, but a special woman. Isaiah chapter 7 and verse 14: *"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and be with child"* (Isaiah 7:14). And God found that one woman, out of that one household, out of that one family, out of that one tribe, out of that one nation, out of that one section, out of one race, and this particular woman God has chosen to be the mother of the Messiah. Do you think this is—do you see the law of mathematical probability building? Do you understand what we're saying?

And now it wraps up when we come to Micah chapter 5, verse 2 (Micah 5:2). And this Son is born. Who is Messiah? He is—listen—He is the Son of that woman, out of that household, out of that family, out of that tribe, out of that nation, out of that section,

out of that race, and his name is Jesus—Jesus. Friend, do you think all of this just happened by chance? That this could happen by chance is the same chance that I could pick up a telephone, and just dial some numbers at random, and my son would answer. No! It's a mathematical impossibility.

Peter Stoner has written a book called *Science Speaks*. And in that book, he talks about the mathematical law of probability. I said, there are over 300 prophecies that deal with the coming of Messiah. I have mentioned less than 20, as I've talked to you right now. Peter Stoner mentions 300, but then he takes only 8 prophecies—only 8 of these more than 300—and he says, "What is the mathematical probability that these could have been fulfilled by chance?" Do you know what it is? It is 1 in 10 raised to the 17th power. I don't know how to explain a number like that. It's just—take a 1 and write 17 zeros after it.

"Well," you say, "I can't relate to that." Neither can I, so here's the illustration he gave. He said, if you were to take the state of Texas, border to border, and cover the state of Texas with silver dollars 3 feet deep, from border to border—and by the way, the Texans would like that—but if you were to do that, 3 feet deep, and have one significantly marked silver dollar, then blindfold a man or take a blind man, drop him by helicopter anywhere there in the state of Texas, and out of those billions and billions and billions of silver dollars, if he were to choose the right one, that would be the same law of probability that all of just only 8 of these prophecies—not all of them—just 8 of these 300, could be fulfilled by chance. Friend, I am telling you that Messiah came according to prophecy in the Old Testament. Do you believe that? I believe that with all of my heart.

But now listen. We said that this had to be a son of that woman, of that household, of that family, of that tribe, of that nation, of that section, of that race—but not just any son. This Son had to be born in Bethlehem. Had He been born any other place, it would not have counted. This Son had to be rejected by His people, and accepted by the Gentiles—Isaiah 53. This Son had to be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver—Zechariah 11, verses 12 through 13 (Zechariah 11:12–13). This Son had to be crucified by the piercing of His hands and His feet—Psalm 22, verse 16: "*They pierced my hands and my feet*" (Psalm 22:16). This Son had to be raised from the dead—Psalm 16, verse 10: "*For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption*" (Psalm 16:10). Not just any Son, the virgin born Son of God—perfect life, who lived, who died, who bled, who was buried, who rose, who was ascended. His name: Jesus. And He's born in Bethlehem.

### **III. Presentation of Jesus in the Old Testament**

Now what does all of this mean to us? I've talked to you about portraits of Christ in the

Old Testament. I've talked to you about prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament. Then that leaves the presentation of Christ. He's presented to you. He's presented to me. How are we going to deal with it? What must I do? The question is always, "What will you do with Jesus?" You crown Him or you crucify Him. You believe Him or you disbelieve Him. You accept Him or you reject Him. But I'll tell you one thing you cannot be with Jesus: you cannot be neutral. Jesus Himself said, "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathers not with me scatters abroad" (Matthew 12:30). What will you do with Jesus?

## **Conclusion**

### **A. You Can Believe the Bible**

Let me tell you the conclusions I have come to as I have studied these scriptures. Number one: You can believe the Bible. No way possible, no way possible that this tapestry could have been woven without rent or tear. No way possible that this song could've been written in perfect harmony. No way possible that this portrait could've been drawn by many people over different centuries. No way possible that these prophecies could've been fulfilled apart from divine inspiration. You can believe the Bible.

### **B. You Can Trust the Savior**

Second thing: you can trust the Savior, because the Bible presents Him. Jesus said, "Search the scriptures...for these are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). Again, because you can trust the Scriptures, you can trust the Savior; and because you trust the Savior, you can trust the Scriptures. And that is not a circular argument. These fold into one another, these blend into one another. You see, listen—listen. The same Bible that prophesied His first coming—are you listening?—is the same Bible that prophesies His second coming. And if I can believe that these Scriptures were so minutely fulfilled in His first coming, why should I not believe that they will be fulfilled when He comes again? Isn't that true? Isn't that true?

Now here's the point: the Savior who came the first time as Messiah is the One who's coming the second time as King of kings, and Lord of lords. It is the One who has come who is getting me ready for the One who is coming. He is Prophet, Priest, and King.

You may be saying to me, "Adrian, I don't understand it all." Come up here close and let me tell you something: Neither do I. And let me tell you something else: I am glad I don't understand it. Now if you studied physics, I think you know this: that no container can contain more than its capacity, isn't that right? No container. Now if I could understand it, that would mean that God is no greater than the capacity of my intellect,

and that God is a God too small for me to trust. I don't understand it. I know Him, I love Him, and He has been revealed to me in the Word of God. And you can trust the Scriptures, and you can trust Him that said, in Micah 5:2, a little baby is going to be born in Bethlehem. Isn't that wonderful? Hallelujah, what a Savior! What a book! Isn't Jesus wonderful?

Let's pray together. Father God, I pray that should there be someone here today who's not said yes to Jesus and received Him as Lord and Savior—Prophet, Priest and King—that today they might receive Him as Prophet—Your Word to them; as Priest—the One who is the Perfect Sacrifice, and who has made the perfect sacrifice for sin; and as King—the only One who has the right to truly rule over us. And if you've not been saved, why don't you pray this prayer: Lord Jesus, come into my heart, forgive my sins. Save me, Lord Jesus. I receive you by faith, as my Lord and Savior. As you were born in Bethlehem, be born in me, and may I be born again. Amen.