

Why Bethlehem?

Word

Scripture Reference

Micah 5:2-4

Discussion Questions

1. What is one significant thing about the place where you were born?
2. Read Micah 5:2-4. In the first Christmas, the wise men must have wondered why the Messiah was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem, a tiny town, instead of in Jerusalem, which was the city of all other kings. Bethlehem was not known for political or commercial significance, nor was it known for culture or education, but the Bible tells us three important truths why God chose Bethlehem. First, Bethlehem reminds us that it's all about God's glory (v. 2). Bethlehem contrasts the lowness or smallness of the clan of Judah with the greatness of the ruler that would come from it. What happens when God chooses something small or insignificant to show His greatness? How was this shown in King David's life and his defeat of the giant Goliath? Discuss what happened when God used small things—Bethlehem, a youngest son, a slingshot, or a manger—to accomplish major events in history. Share with the group how a seemingly insignificant matter in your life had been used by God to show His greatness. Is there anything that you can boast about without God's mercy and grace (1 Corinthians 1:27-31; Ephesians 2:8, 9)?
3. The second reason why God chose Bethlehem is because it gives the assurance that God keeps His promises. For a believer, it is about holding on and having faith in God's promises in spite of the fact that life is not easy. Read 2 Samuel 7:12-13. From whose descendant was the Messiah prophesied to come from, long before Micah prophesied about it? What does it tell you about God fulfilling His promises? What would be the condition of Israel when the Messiah would be born according to Micah (v. 3)? What promise from the Word of God are you holding on to in the

midst of problems or hardship in your life? Do you believe that what God had promised is as good as done? Do you believe that when God has spoken, it will come to pass? How much do you trust His Word? Share and discuss.

4. The third reason why God chose Bethlehem is because it guarantees that He protects His people. How did Micah describe the way God would protect His people (v. 4)? Discuss how everyone needs a Shepherd. Describe how the Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of your life. In what way does He lead you? How is He able and willing to help you? How does the knowledge that no force can threaten your security in Him help you?

Walk

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie.
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

As you think of Bethlehem, may it remind you that it's all about God's glory. You cannot boast of anything because everything is about His grace and mercy. May Bethlehem assure you that God keeps His promises, that when your Heavenly Father made a promise, it was good as done. May Bethlehem also guarantee you that God protects His people, and you, being His child, do not have to go through life alone because He is there with you. Ponder on these thoughts as you celebrate Christmas.

Worship & Prayer

Father, I don't stop to think of it often enough, but I am in awe of what you have done for me. Jesus Christ coming to earth to be my Savior is a promise fulfilled. If you could fulfill that great a promise, how can you not with others? Forgive me for the times I question and doubt You. Teach me to trust You. Open my eyes that I may see your greatness revealed in the smallest and simplest of things, that I may see the countless ways You fulfill Your promise every day in my life. And as much as You have blessed me, allow me to praise and honor Your name. I thank You, Father, for all that You are. In Christ's name. Amen.