

THE BOOK OF MICAH
Lesson 8, Chapters 4 and 5

Last time we paused at verse 10 of Micah chapter 4. So far, chapter 4 has revealed that two empires are going to invade Israel and conquer them. Remembering that in Micah's day Israel was no longer a unified nation as it was under kings David and Solomon, but rather was now 2 separate kingdoms, then this gives way to the knowledge that both kingdoms will eventually be invaded, but by 2 different enemies. And, that there will be some undefined amount of time between these 2 different invasions.

Early in the 4th chapter we learn that Shomron (Samaria) will be the target and the first to be conquered. Samaria was capital city of the northern kingdom of Ephraim/Israel. Verses 9 and 10 tell us that what remains of Israel after the Assyrian conquest... which is the southern kingdom of Judah, with Jerusalem as its capital... will be conquered by Babylon. I can only imagine how difficult this would have been for the Israelites in Micah's era (the 8th century B.C.) to comprehend and accept. At that time, Assyria was the superpower empire of the Middle East, not Babylon. So, this would have made little sense to Micah's hearers to think how it could ever be that Babylon would take-over Jerusalem. Yet, as history reveals, this is exactly what happened, with the Assyrian and then the Babylonian conquests coming around 130 years apart.

This is a good object lesson for us all. As we read about the End Times, and who will be involved and what roles they will play, and we try to discern how some of this can possibly happen based upon how the world is ordered today, we need to realize that what is prophesied will occur just as it is presented to us in God's Word. It doesn't matter what our current conditions are; they are going to be different when that day comes. So, our speculations and opinions about how all of this is going to come about in the future need to be held very lightly. Unfortunately, so many Christian denominations have formulated their own doctrines about the End Times, and are quite rigid about it, calling all other speculations "wrong", even calling those who don't accept their doctrines "heretics". The danger in being wrong is that when these predicted things do come about, they will not be recognized for what they are or will be completely

misconstrued. This is what happened to Judah when the Messiah made His appearance. Their doctrines painted a different picture (a few different pictures, actually) based on the speculations of their religious leaders. Thus, when Yeshua didn't fit those speculative doctrines, He was rejected as that prophesied Messiah. The cost of this folly has been gargantuan.

Let's re-read the last half of Micah chapter 4 to refresh our memories.

READ MICAH CHAPTER 4:8 – 14

While chapter 4 is mostly about the welcoming news of restoration and redemption for Israel, brought about by God's great mercy upon His people, verses 9 and 10 are an insertion about the pain, suffering, and general misery for Israel that will accompany these various events leading up to it.

There is a God-dynamic playing out here that is unchanging from the moment of creation to the moment of the re-creation of the new heavens and earth. It is that God lays down His laws and commands for all to know and to obey. Then, when these laws and commands are disobeyed in an ever-increasing way, He sends prophets to warn His people to stop their evil and get back to following His ways. If they will, then He will withhold His wrath. But if they won't, then the prophesied wrath and punishment will fall down upon them. Even so, God's foreknowledge is so perfect, that He knows if or when His people will repent and change, and when they won't.

With Micah, the warning is not conditional. What is being prophesied is already set in stone. Why? That is best answered by consulting yet another prophet: Jeremiah. In this passage, we have God speaking.

CJB **Jeremiah 18:7-12** ***7 At one time, I may speak about uprooting, breaking down and destroying a nation or kingdom; 8 but if that nation turns from their evil, which prompted me to speak against it, then I relent concerning the disaster I had planned to inflict on it. 9 Similarly, at another time, I may speak about building and planting a nation or kingdom; 10 but if it behaves wickedly from my perspective and doesn't listen to what I say, then I change my mind and don't do the***

good I said I would do that would have helped it. ¹¹ **"So now, tell the people of Y'hudah and those living in Yerushalayim that this is what Yehoveh says: 'I am designing disaster for you, working out my plan against you. Turn, each of you, from his evil ways; improve your conduct and actions.'** ¹² **"But they will answer, 'It's hopeless! We will stick to our own plans; each of us will stubbornly follow his own evil desires!'**

God is saying that theoretically, repentance accompanied with real change by Israel will cause Him to stand-down from the impending punishments. But He already afore-knows they won't. So, as Jeremiah's message now carries over to Micah, the invasions, destructions and exiles Micah is talking about are inevitable. Not because God is going to make it happen that way regardless of how Israel responds, but because Israel will refuse to repent and reform in any meaningful, lasting way.

CJB Micah 4:11 Now many nations have gathered against you; they say, "Let her be defiled, let's gloat over Tziyon."

We run into another "now" that means a separate event is being spoken of. This means that these many nations gathering to attack Zion have nothing to do with the empires of Assyria or Babylon. This is an eschatological... an End Times... event. And to be clear, from where we stand in history at the end of first quarter of the 21st century, this is still future to us. Because of the Israeli-Gaza war, we see most nations on earth turning strongly against Israel and instead identifying with, and standing-up for, Israel's enemies: Iran and the Palestinians. Even nations like the USA, which has a government that has not officially joined that anti-Jew, anti-Israel group, nonetheless we see a large percentage of our political leaders and society leaning that way, and many groups openly suggesting that it ought to be back to the gas chambers for the Jews. And, that it would be better for the world if Israel ceased to exist as a nation. This reality that exists as I speak could well be the beginning stages of what Micah 4:11 is predicting. Or it might pass, and only be an example... a shadow... of what will come in the future with even more intensity. There is certainly nothing currently visible that says that his alignment against Israel and the Jewish people is going to pass. It only seems to be trending upward

more each day. And, so, this is one of several reasons that I feel so strongly that we have stepped over the threshold into the prophesied End Times era. Time will tell if it's a mirage or it is real.

There is no explanation given as to why the militaries of all these nations in Micah 4:11 should be so intent on invading and destroying Jerusalem, and by association, Israel. As I just said, a current and building bent towards supporting Gaza and the Palestinian people just might be that reason. If nothing else, it has certainly opened the door for it. Do you remember what we read in verse 2? Allow me to refresh your memories.

CJB Micah 4:2 *Many Gentiles will go and say, "Come, let's go up to the mountain of Yehoveh, to the house of the God of Ya'akov! He will teach us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For out of Tziyon will go forth Torah, the word of Yehoveh from Yerushalayim.*

Before verse 2 will happen, first verse 11 must happen. First the nations must come up against Israel to destroy her, but after their defeat, then they will know the power of the God of Israel, His favor of Israel, and in surrender go to Jerusalem to learn the ways of God...as taught in the Torah and the Prophets. They will have learned that switching is better than fighting, because winning is impossible. And, Church, hear me: you are going to be right in the middle of this because you deny the teaching and authority of the Torah and the Prophets, thereby denying the ways of God. So, no doubt, just like we have so many Christian denominations today standing against Israel and for their enemies, they will be supporting and joining the attacks against Israel. And they will be part of the earth's populations that, after learning how far from the truth they had strayed and the great cost for doing so, will urgently seek to sit at the feet of the king to learn the ways that they could have learned and obeyed centuries ago. But instead, they have vilified, excommunicated, and even killed thousands who sought the truth of God by means of the Torah and the Prophets. Harsh? Hard hitting? It certainly is; but, you have a chance right now to remedy this in your own personal life before it's too late. Even knowing this truth directly from the Word of God, history and prophecy reveal that the bulk of you will do as Micah says about Israel after God warning them

yet again: **12 "But they will answer, 'It's hopeless! We will stick to our own plans; each of us will stubbornly follow his own evil desires!"**

There will be a number of reasons that these militaries gather against Israel. Different nations will have different reasons. For some it is political. For others it is economic. And for others, as verse 11 says, it will be about defiling Zion. That is, it will be for religious reasons. Who in the world today has as its top priority defiling Zion for the sake of their religion? Without doubt perpetrator number one is Islam. But perpetrator number 2 is Christendom. This is nothing new in history. The first Islamic conquest of Jerusalem occurred between 637 and 638 A.D., when Rashidun Caliphate forces led by Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab took the city from the Byzantine Empire after a prolonged siege. 500 years later the infamous Christian Crusades began an attempt to take Jerusalem from the Muslims and any remaining Jews, at the behest of a series of Catholic Popes. While today Christians tolerate Jewish control of Jerusalem, Muslims are in a never-ending battle to violently take it from the Jews. Even so, Christians in general see Jewish control of Jerusalem as only Jews being temporary caretakers of Bible Land until Christ returns and the Church takes it over. So, the seeds of what chapter 4 verse 11 tells us were sown many centuries ago.

CJB Micah 4:12 *But they don't know the thoughts of Yehoveh, they don't understand his plan; for he has gathered them like sheaves on the threshing-floor.*

Apparently, this coalition of willing nations, each having their own reasons for wanting Israel to cease to exist as a Jewish nation, will believe that they have arrived at a plan that, working together, will deliver Israel to them. What they don't know is that they are being set-up by God due to their common evil mindset and will essentially face a divine ambush. Most Bible scholars and commentators will refer to the nations and peoples that join in the attack as "heathen". I think that is highly misleading. What these nations are, is deceived. There are a number of nations that will see themselves as Christian but still join in the fight against Israel. This is all the more astounding in that this is all pronounced in the Bible. It is there for those Believing individuals and those nations claiming at least Judeo-Christian ethic, to read and

understand. But they won't understand. Either willfully or having been blinded by God, they may well read but then turn around and not understand what they just read. I mean, would God really tell us some important things and yet blind many from being able to comprehend them? Certainly. Even Yeshua said so.

After pronouncing the Parable of the Sower in the Book of Matthew, we are treated to this scene:

CJB **Matthew 13:10-16** *¹⁰ Then the talmidim came and asked Yeshua, "Why are you speaking to them in parables?" ¹¹ He answered, "Because it has been given to you to know the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but it has not been given to them. ¹² For anyone who has something will be given more, so that he will have plenty; but from anyone who has nothing, even what he does have will be taken away. ¹³ Here is why I speak to them in parables: they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. ¹⁴ That is, in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Yesha'yahu which says, 'You will keep on hearing but never understand, and keep on seeing but never perceive, ¹⁵ because the heart of this people has become dull- with their ears they barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, so as not to see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and do t'shuva, so that I could heal them.' ¹⁶ But you, how blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear!*

This is yet another powerful lesson that actually bothers most Believers. While on the one hand it is God's will that all should hear, know, and observe the truth, He makes it clear that only a few ever will. The rest He purposely blinds. Essentially God is judging them based on not what they claim, but who they are in His eyes. And for those with sincere faith, and a true desire to seek truth, He will open our eyes. But, not for the others.

At the moment of the attack of the nations, God will empower Israel in a way never seen before in history. The illustration is of Israel becoming like a beast used to tread over the grain stalks in the threshing operation. The power of an ox over a bunch of inanimate dead, dry stalks of wheat strewn about a

threshing floor is self-evident. And that is how powerful Israel will be when the nations attack her. Still, while it might outwardly seem like Israel's might and strategy that is winning the day, in reality it is God providing the power.

Because we are reading Hebrew poetry, then we understand the need for verse 13, which otherwise seems rather superfluous.

CJB Micah 4:13 *Get up! Start threshing, daughter of Tziyon! "For I will make your horns like iron and your hoofs like bronze." You will crush many peoples and devote their plunder to Yehoveh, their wealth to the Lord of all the earth.*

This makes even more vivid use of the rather standard symbolism that uses an Ox or a Bull as representing the object of greatest strength. Horns like iron means supremely powerful. Hooves like bronze means an unbreakable force that can stomp on all who oppose it. Israel will crush these nations that attack her. There is a sort of hidden meaning here when it is said that Zion will devote their plunder (taken from the nations) to Yehoveh. It is this: Under the laws of Herem... the Law of the Ban... all the spoils of war in a Holy War ordered by God, are to go to Him. The victorious soldiers and leaders may keep only what God says they may have (if any at all). To NOT give it all to Him is to rob God. Thus, the war that we see depicted is, indeed, God ordained Holy War, even though the nations do not understand that. But Israel will be acutely aware of this. Perhaps not at first, but as they fight against insurmountable odds and are victorious, they will acknowledge the supremacy of God and that this is Yehoveh that is battling for them. So, their fighting is not about taking vengeance or on amassing territory or wealth for themselves.

The last few verses are all about a reversal. From being oppressed and having no hope, to being victorious and receiving redemption and restoration. What the enemy has historically done to Israel, Israel will do to the nations. Many Jewish and Christian scholars see this as less an End Times scenario and more about the Maccabees turning the tables and defeating the Syrians... something seen as practically impossible. However, this mindset is due to the false assumption that prophecies are fulfilled on one occasion alone. Two or even three fulfillments more fits with what we read in the Bible, and so I have no

doubt that the Maccabean war was one of the fulfillments, but there will be another. The next will be the End Times fulfillment when it happens in its fullest scope.

Micah chapter 4 ends with this:

CJB Micah 4:14 *Now gather yourself in troops, you who are accustomed to being in troops; they have laid siege to us. They are striking the judge of Isra'el on the cheek with a stick.*

The CJB translation is generally a poor one. So, let's look at the Young's Literal Translation for a better one.

YLT Micah 5:1 *Now gather thyself together, O daughter of troops, A siege he hath laid against us, With a rod they smite on the cheek the judge of Israel.*

The word "now" appears yet again, signaling another event. For me, it is the next and final prophetic fulfillment of the event being depicted. Vs. 14 is actually rather controversial among Bible scholars. Not because of its content in the sense of whether it is correct, but rather in the sense of where it belongs or ought to be attached to in the surrounding material of this chapter. The most basic division of opinion is: Is it to be connected with the preceding material? Or does it open up a new literary unit and so is connected to the contents of chapter 5? Therefore, some Bibles (like the CJB) include this with chapter 4, while others make it the first verse of chapter 5. There is not sufficient evidence to come to a firm conclusion about this, and I shall not attempt to make one.

Essentially this final (or first) verse begins with a call to war for Israel (Holy War, since God called for it). The CJB makes this appear that this is speaking of soldiers and armies. They are to form up and defend Jerusalem that is under siege. The judge of Israel is God. Some think this is talking about Christ, but I'm pretty doubtful. However, when looked at it more literally in the Hebrew, and we try to identify what "daughter of troops" means and who this is referring to, we are led to the conclusion that this is actually a figurative

expression meaning Jerusalem (Zion). This is because “daughter of” is nearly always meant figuratively of some city or place. The most likely place must be Jerusalem.

Part of what we’re dealing with in this verse is that a few key words have rather wide ranges of meanings. For instance: the Hebrew **masor** that is most often translated in this verse into English as “siege”, also is used for the word Egypt. It can also mean “stress”. The Hebrew **gedud** that is most often translated as troops, can also mean a band (usually a band of warriors). When we read “the judge” of Israel, indeed the Hebrew is **shophet**, which means judge. Yet, there are rare occasions that it can also mean “ruler”. So probably this term is referring to a king over Israel. Since we are dealing with Micah’s most difficult Hebrew poetry form, then we have to factor in the likelihood that once again the emotion of the words is much greater than the exact meaning of the words.

So, how are we to take it to mean? Here is what I favor but by no means am rigid about. I would translate the opening stanza more dynamically that emphasizes the underlying thought (rather than fully literally due the decidedly poetic literary structure). Therefore, it would be *“Now, crowd yourself together with fear in a band, O people of Jerusalem; for the enemy prepares a siege against us”*. The Judge of Israel must be referring to the king or magistrate who is residing in Jerusalem at the time of the siege. When this speaks of smiting the cheek of the Judge of Israel with a rod, this has to do with a social and cultural insult. In the ancient Oriental world, little was more shameful for a man than to be struck on the cheek. Therefore, although quite literal in meaning, the thought was for the king or magistrate of Jerusalem to be shamed. This great insult of being struck on the cheek has remained as something worth fighting and dying over to this day.

As an important aside, this passage is a great help in deciphering what Yeshua meant by one of His most popular statements that is used prolifically still in the 21st century. And please take note: nearly everything Yeshua said or predicted had already been said or predicted in the Torah and the Prophets. At most, He was paraphrasing. In His Sermon on the Mount, Yeshua says this:

CJB Matthew 5:39 *But I tell you not to stand up against someone who does you wrong. On the contrary, if someone hits you on the right cheek, let him hit you on the left cheek too!*

Or, more recognizably:

NAS Matthew 5:39 *"But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

This famous “turn the other cheek” saying has been terribly misunderstood and thus misused by Christianity and even by Christian based, although secular, societies. The Church will tell us that this is about criminality. It is about someone harming us, but we are to passively allow that harm and take no action to prevent it or to defend ourselves. Even saying that this New Testament instruction from The Son is meant to overturn the Old Testament instruction of His Father called and eye for an eye (proportional justice). This is because of the false Christian view of Jesus as the ultimate pacifist. Rather, the truth is that Orientals (the Middle Eastern people) were based on societies that operated on a shame and honor system (in fact, most of the Middle East remains this way). Shame and honor are about social status, with no one wanting to be in a social status of shame. Hitting a male on his cheek was an intentional act of inflicting shame on someone. It was not assault and battery... it was not a criminal offense so, the justice system played no role. Yeshua was saying to males that if someone slapped you on your cheek to shame you, let him shame you all the more by slapping you on the other cheek as well, because in the Kingdom of God, shame and honor doesn't exist. And more, in His day, it shouldn't exist because it was based purely on wrongminded manmade ideas. The main problem was that the only way to have shame removed and for a man to be restored to a recognized social status of honor, was to take revenge on the person who did the shaming, and that regularly included killing that person or harming one of his dearest family members. I'll emphasize: this was common practice; not rare. It happened constantly as something normal and customary, and Yeshua was speaking against the entire concept.

Thus, part of the reason for the siege of Jerusalem was to inflict the social status of shame upon Jerusalem's king or ruler... an enormous humiliation, to be sure. Let's move to chapter 5.

READ MICAH CHAPTER 5 all

The poetic majesty of verse 1 is overwhelming to the God worshipper. Even if one is not certain of who, exactly, is being identified, yet it brings on something inside of us that makes our souls soar. It tells us that God is going to choose one of the worst, most degrading times in Israel's long history to present to His people a very special ruler who will deliver the people from the oppression of their enemies, defend them from the great powers of those days, and establish a kingdom of purest **shalom**.

This future ruler will have a designated birthplace: Bethlehem Ephrata. Since Bethlehem (**beit lechem**) means "house of bread", and was a rather generic designation for grain storehouses, of which there were a few in Israel, then the addition of Ephrata identified which of the handful of Bethlehems is being spoken of. This is the one that lay on the immediate outskirts of Jerusalem... perhaps a 2-hour walk. And it was the birthplace of David.

Let's remember that chronologically speaking, this prophecy of Micah was given nearly 300 years *after* David was born. So, automatically, this cannot be directly referring to the King David of the Bible. Sorry to keep reminding you (but I find it critical to keep this constantly in view), this is written using Hebrew poetry, and so, all the attributes of poetry play a role in what is said and how it is said. Thus, by Micah's day, Ephrata was an already ancient term. It was barely still in use, nearly forgotten. So, when Micah spoke this word, it instantly brought with it a cherished memory with an archaic flavor, much the same that if we were in modern day America and the term Gettysburg was brought up, it would immediately take our mind back to the glory and horror of the Civil War of almost 175 years ago. Even so, Ephrata conjured up a wonderful memory of David and those heady times of his magnificent rule... a Golden Era, in reality... of Israel's history that all of Israel hoped would someday return.

When we read that Bethlehem Ephrata (also known simply as Ephrath) was so small among the clans of Judah, often we'll read something other than "clans" such as "thousands". The word being struggled with is **elep**. It is a very ancient word, whose meaning not only morphed over time, but each of those transformations didn't necessarily replace the earlier ones...rather they merely added to its range of meanings. Very early it meant "ox". Later it was a general number: "thousands". When referring to families it designated a family group somewhere in size between a tribe and an individual family of mom, dad, and the immediate children. The idea of this passage, then, is that Ephrata was so tiny that not even a single clan of a family lived there. Just some individuals and quite small immediate families. It was a backwater place of no importance at all. Therefore, this first verse was ironic. The smallest no-account little place would be the birthplace of the greatest ruler of Israel of all time. Even greater than the legendary King David.

CJB Micah 5:2 *Therefore he will give up [Isra'el] only until she who is in labor gives birth. Then the rest of his kinsmen will return to the people of Isra'el.*

Again, it is good sometimes to see a verse more literally to get a better idea of what it means. Using the YLT literal version we read:

YLT Micah 5:3. *Therefore he doth give them out till the time She who bringeth forth hath brought forth, And the remnant of his brethren return to the sons of Israel.*

This verse is complicated and has been interpreted a few different ways. Much of it is dependent upon the beginning words of "Therefore he". That is, if we take "therefore" to be causal... to mean "on account of" something that was previously mentioned... then of all things previously mentioned, which of those is the therefore attached to? And who is the "he"? Is the "therefore" attached to the first verse of chapter 5 (or the last verse of chapter 4 depending on your Bible version)? Is the "he" the ruler of Jerusalem or is it God or is God the ruler of Jerusalem? Hard questions due to the grammatical structure and the inherent problems of dealing with the imprecise nature of Hebrew poetry.

We could spend an hour going through the few different possibilities and the logic behind the support for each of them. We won't do that. In the end, I think that for the most part, Kiel and Delitzsch have come closest, using the preponderance of evidence, to decipher what it means to us using modern English. They say it means: "**Because the great divine Ruler of Israel, from who alone its redemption can proceed, will spring from the little Bethlehem, and therefore from the now degraded family of David...**"

They explain that this must necessarily be the case because history proves that the reason why God is going to turn over Israel to the powers of the world for a long time... and that He will not rescue His people any earlier, even out of His great mercy... does NOT depend upon the timing of the advent of their Messiah, but rather in His **place** of birth...Bethlehem as opposed to Jerusalem. Why is that the deciding issue? Because another name for Jerusalem in those times was the City of David. And for the Messiah to be born in the City of David would mean that Jerusalem and the family of David would have to have been in power and independent. But, because of Messiah being born in Bethlehem, the prophecy makes it more clear that the family of David would no longer be on the throne when Messiah was born. In other words, if a Davidic king over a still independent Israel was going to see the birth of his heir, it of course would have been in his own home... his palace... in Jerusalem. So, what Micah said would have been a shock to the people who heard his prophecy, because the people and the religious leaders of Israel in Micah's era would have assumed that the dynasty of David was everlasting, and that the Messiah would be another member of David's family who would bring Israel back to the glory that David had taken it to, so long ago. And this because several earlier prophets said so. What circumstance could be the only reason for the downfall of David's dynasty within the capital of Jerusalem? Only if a foreign power disrupted the chain by invading and taking away Israel's right to have an independent Israelite king. And that is indeed what happened.

In the northern kingdom of Ephraim/Israel, Jeroboam (the first king over the newly separated and established kingdom of Ephraim/Israel in the later 900's B.C.) was NOT of the dynasty of David. Rather he was from a prominent family of the tribe of Ephraim. However, in the southern Kingdom of Judah, a descendant of David remained on the throne, seated in Jerusalem, until the

Babylonian invasion and exile early in the 500's B.C. From that moment forward, right on through the time of Yeshua and on until today, there has been no king of Israel that was even an Israelite let alone a descendant of King David. So, we see that what is pronounced in our verse is what happened, but no doubt it befuddled those who heard it... for centuries. God would give over Israel to the rulership of gentile nations, and gentile nations would still be in power when their Messiah was born. And even though the ancient prophecies were that Israel's deliverer would be from the royal line of the family of David, David's dynasty would no longer be ruling, nor had they been ruling for a very long time. Thus, the birthplace of the Messiah would be tiny Bethlehem whose only connection with David (other than as a distant relative) would be their common place of birth.

There is more we need to discuss about this verse, including who "she who is in labor giving birth" is. We'll do that next time. Instead, I want to close with Isaiah 7 that gives us clarity by approaching what Micah is saying from a different perspective.

CJB **Isaiah 7:10-14** *¹⁰ Yehoveh spoke again to Achaz; he said, ¹¹ "Ask Yehoveh your God to give you a sign. Ask it anywhere, from the depths of Sh'ol to the heights above." ¹² But Achaz answered, "I won't ask, I won't test Yehoveh ¹³ Then [the prophet] said, "Listen here, house of David! Is trying people's patience such a small thing for you that you must try the patience of my God as well? ¹⁴ Therefore Adonai himself will give you people a sign: the young woman* will become pregnant, bear a son and name him 'Immanu El [God is with us].*

As we piece together the info from various prophets, we learn that the Messiah of Israel will be of a divine nature, and the young woman (meaning a virgin) will become pregnant and birth this, Messiah. Israel already had some inkling of this by the time Micah prophesied. Still, what Micah had to say boggled the mind, and most Israelites could not envision it, let alone accept it.