



December 10, 2023

Ancient Words, Present Hope
God is Merciful to His Children

Matthew 2; Micah 5:2; Hosea 11:1; Isaiah 11:1

For Discussion and Reflection

1. Matthew records three locations from which Messiah would ascend: Bethlehem, 2:5; Egypt, 2:15; Nazareth, 2:23. In each of these texts, Matthew says, “as it is written.” What does his affirmation of these Old Testament texts (Micah 5:2, Hosea 11:1, Isaiah 11:1), some which seem obscure, communicate about the apostle’s confidence in the veracity of the Old Testament? How do you interact with the statement, “The Bible wasn’t written to you, but it was written for you”? Romans 15:4.
2. Go to the promise in Micah 5:2 concerning a ruler from Bethlehem. Remember that the people of God were worshipping idols, corrupting the people of God, stealing from the poor and vulnerable to enrich themselves. Read his accusation against the rulers, 3:1-3. How will this ruler from Bethlehem care for God’s people, Micah 5:4-15? Notice several aspects of his care for and to his people. How does this frame the ministry of Christ for his people? For you?
3. How does the context of Micah frame his famous verse, 6:8? How does Micah respond in hope in chapter seven? What assurance is given, 7:18-20?
4. Hosea’s prophecies largely concern Israel, the northern nation that split from the south after Solomon. Read chapters 1-3, Hosea’s relationship with Gomer, which is a picture of God’s relationship with his people. In chapter 11, God wrestles with his response to Ephraim (Hosea’s word for Israel), concluding that he can’t give them up, vv8-9. Israel and Judah try to make alliances with other countries instead of returning to God and trusting in his deliverance. How does that frame his statement, “out of Egypt I have called my son”? Consider v5, “They shall not return to the land of Egypt.” What does coming out of Egypt represent to God’s people?
5. What does God’s chosen ruler coming out of Egypt mean to the nation? What does God say about his people when they came out of Egypt, v2? How will this ruler, coming out of Egypt, be different than the nation? What hope does this give you about Messiah?
6. While we can’t be adamant about Isaiah 11:1 being Matthew’s reference, what does a stump and shoot represent? What about this person stands out, Isaiah 11:1-5? What will his reign produce, Isaiah 11:6-9? What will God do for his people, Isaiah 11:10-16? How will God’s people respond, Isaiah 12?
7. What does the imagery of a “shoot” communicate? Consider Isaiah 53 in this context.
8. What did the Spirit of God communicate to you today? What hope is God giving you?