

## A Ruler of Peace Promised

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Date: 16 March 2025

Preacher: Rev Calum M Smith

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, we begin our worship this morning. We're going to sing to God's praise in Psalm 115. In the Sing Psalms version, page 152 of the psalm books. We're going to sing from verse 1 to verse 9. The tune is Belmont. Psalm 115, Lord, not to us, O not to us, to your name be the praise, because your love and faithfulness endure, O Lord, always. We'll sing from verse 1 to 9, and we stand to sing to God's praise.

He knows your love and faithfulness, and you, O Lord, always.

Why do the nations question us? Where is the God we sing?

Our God in heaven's heaven light, and over all who swear, their voyque voyque voyque  
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voy voyque voy voyque voy voy voyque voy voy voy voy voy voy voy voy Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 3 : 19 ]      Thank you.

Thank you. He is the mighty health and shield of all who are his own.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Please, voy voy voy voy voy  
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voy voy voy voy voy voy Have you ever played the game Chinese whispers?

[6:00] At least that's what it was called when I was younger. Maybe it's not called the same thing now. Some people just call it whispers. Other places I think they call it telephone. It's kind of a wee strange thing to say, but it's about sharing something, whispering something into somebody's ear, and then they pass on what they've heard to the next person.

So very often you might be sitting in a circle, and there's a few of you in a circle, and one person is given something, maybe on a bit of paper, to say, and they have to say it to the person beside them, but they're not allowed to let anybody else hear.

And so they whisper it in their ear. For example, you might say, I'm going to school, and you whisper that into somebody's ear. And then the person beside you hears, David's going to school, and that's what they pass on to the next person, but is that what they hear?

Not very often. It might be David's playing in school. And then by the time it comes all the way around, instead of being, I'm going to school, it's something like David's playing pool.

And it's just lost its whole meaning. It's not what the first person said at all. It's completely different. But it's what people's ears are picking up as they're going along, when you're whispering it in their ears.

[ 7 : 19 ] And it can happen quite often. Maybe even you're speaking to someone who's beside you, and you say something, and they pick it up completely wrong, and they misunderstand everything.

Now, how would the last person who maybe said, David's playing pool, know that they're wrong? Or how would the person who's beside them know where it's gone wrong?

They would have to go back to the piece of paper that it was written on. I'm going to school. And there they would see, well, that's what was right.

That's what was true. And yet we made all these mistakes along the way and got it wrong. Well, what about when we think of the Bible? Imagine if the Bible was only spoken and shared in that way, where we passed it on to others just by whispering in their ear.

How many mistakes would be made along the way? How many things would we get wrong? And that's what often happens. People just hear something of the Bible, and they misunderstand it, and they pick it up wrong, and therefore they don't understand maybe who God is, how real he is.

[ 8 : 27 ] They don't understand Jesus and what he's done for us. They don't understand what our lives mean and what's important, and that there's an eternity before us because it's picked up wrong, or it's passed on wrong.

So what do we have to do? Well, we come back to the Bible, and we read the Bible, and that's why it's important that we always have our focus on the Bible.

Otherwise, we would make mistakes. In John chapter 17, Jesus is there praying for his people, and he's teaching his people, and he says something very important in verse 17 of John 17.

He says, Your word is truth. Your word, the Bible, your word is truth. So this is what we always have to come back to.

It's not about Chinese whispers where we end up getting it all wrong, but always coming back to the word of God, the Bible, and seeing his word is truth.

[ 9 : 30 ] And that's where we learn from today and every day as we share together. We learn from the word of God, which is truth. So if we think we've got things wrong, we can come back and see what God's word says, and that is where we find what is right and what is true.

So it's important for us always not just to listen to what other people are saying. We might pick things up wrong, but to listen to what God is saying through his word and to read the Bible and see here is God's truth to us that he has shared with us.

And what a blessing it is for us today and every day we come to learn more about God's truth. And may you be blessed today as you continue to hear from God's truth about the amazing love of Jesus towards us.

Well, we'll say the Lord's Prayer together now. Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[ 10 : 45 ] For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. Well, we'll sing again to God's praise now in Psalm 96.

This is in the Scottish Psalter version, page 358. Psalm 96. We're going to sing from verse 1 to verse 6.

Psalm 96, page 358. O sing a new song to the Lord. Sing all the earth to God. To God sing, bless his name, show still his saving health abroad.

We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 6. And the tune is Newington. Stand to sing to God's praise. singing singing, singing singing, our sing-blessed sing-blessed chosen his singing help our heart the heathen nations his glory to prayer our our To all the people show His words that wondrous are.

For great the Lord and great thee is to be glorified.

[ 12 : 43 ] Yea, worthy to the dear is He, that the Lord was beside.

For all the consarites come, which Thine invitations fear.

But her God is the Lord by whom the Hens created were.

Great honour is before His face, and majesty divine.

Strength is with His holy grace, and their blood and beauty shine.

[ 13 : 57 ] We turn to read God's Word together.

Now we're reading in the Old Testament, in the book of Micah. the book of Micah the prophet we're reading in chapter 4 taking up our reading at verse 6 and reading into chapter 5 down to verse 6 you find it about page 941 of the church bibles Micah chapter 4 taking up our reading at verse 6 Micah was a prophet the same time as Isaiah and he came with a message to the people of God a people who were prospering in many ways but yet turning away from God and he comes with a powerful warning to them but also a great promise as we're going to look at together today the promise of a ruler who would come from Bethlehem so we're going to take up our reading in chapter 4 and at verse 6 in that day declares the Lord I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away and those whom I have afflicted and the lame I will make the remnant and those who are cast off a strong nation and the Lord will reign over them in Mount Sion from this time forth and forevermore and you O tower of the flock hill of the daughter of Sion to you shall it come the former dominion shall come kingship for the daughter of Jerusalem now why do you cry aloud is there no king in you has your counselor perished the pain seized you like a woman in labor writhe and grow no daughter of Sion like a woman in labor for now you shall go out from the city and dwell in the open country you shall go to Babylon there you shall be rescued there the Lord will redeem you from the hand of your enemies now many nations are assembled against you saying let her be defiled and let her eyes gaze upon Sion but they do not know the thoughts of the Lord they do not understand his plan that he has gathered them as sheaves to the threshing floor arise and thresh O daughter of Sion for I will make your horn iron and I will make your hooves bronze you shall beat the pieces many peoples and shall devote their grain their gain to the Lord their wealth to the Lord of the whole earth now muster your troops O daughter of troops siege is laid against us with a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek but you O Bethlehem Ephathra you who are too little to be among the clans of Judah from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel whose origin is from of old from ancient days therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who was in labor has given birth then the rest of the brothers shall return to the people of Israel and he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God and they shall dwell secure for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth and he shall be their peace when the Assyrian comes into our land and threads in our places then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men they shall shepherd the land of Assyria with a sword and the land of Nimrod at its entrances and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian when he comes into the land and threads within our border and so on and may God bless that reading from his word again bow our heads in a word of prayer let us

pray our gracious father in heaven we do continue to praise your name for the truth that you have given to us in your word through the prophets of old as we read here in Micah we thank you for the wonderful promises that we see told to our people long before they would come to fruition and we thank you that your promises are both warnings but also promises of your glory being revealed to us and especially through the revelation of your son Jesus Christ the one who would be king and ruler of all and so we thank you that in your word we have that message that has passed on to all generations that that truth that is shared and retained in its wonderful power and in its authority and in all that it has to say to us we thank you that there is no mistake with your truth but your word is truth and so help us to hear it and to receive it as such to understand the wonder of it the wonder of your voice speaking to us anew today and the wonder of your salvation that it offers to a people who have as we all have like sheep gonna stray but we thank you for that shepherd who has promised who will gather his people in and may you gather even this day may you bring into your fold those who are your people those who are called to be saved we thank you that you have your people even here and throughout our islands and throughout the nations of the world a people that you are calling to yourself and we pray that your voice will be heard far and wide that you would help us to have that faith to understand and to heed your call and to come and follow you so may you bless the preaching of your word near and far as we thank you for all who go out with your truth today to all ends of the earth we thank you that although we live in a day that seems so far removed from your truth that there are glimmers of hope as it were that your truth is impacting a people and generations and nations and peoples all to all ends of the earth that as your word goes out there is that promise behind it that it will accomplish all things for your purpose and we do pray lord that you would continue to pour out your blessing on us to guide us as a people to help us in all our different needs today to see that you are one who is able to provide and we thank you that that is through even for ourselves here individually and collectively that whether it's in our homes or our families where we might have worries and concerns of ill health or grief or anxieties about work or money all these different things that come our way day by day we thank you that we can come to you in prayer and collectively too that as a congregation of your people we can pray for your leading and guiding and help in these days but also for the community around us that we can pray oh lord that we would know your spirit working and moving among us in power to bring people to hear the good news of the gospel to bring people to understand their need of a savior that sin is a curse in this world a curse that brings with it the pain of death but we thank you that in Jesus we have one who is the cure one who has defeated that curse one who came to lay down his life but also to take it up again as we remember even this day your day the first day of the week that we come to worship our risen savior one who is at your right hand even now as we pray we pray in his name so we thank you for all the gracious benefits you give to us each and

every day and may we not forget them but may we remember all of them and especially to remember you and give thanks to you for all the desires from your hand and through your son so hear our prayers and continue with us throughout this day we pray your blessing on the preaching of the word this evening as we look forward to reverend Joe Hall being with us we pray that you'll be with him this morning in Calanish and then as he is with us this evening here lord that we would again hear your voice speaking to us so continue with us lord watch over us we pray refresh us in your day by your spirit lord guide us and lead us that's all we ask we ask with the forgiveness of our sin in Jesus name amen but before we turn back to look at this passage in Micah we're going to sing again to God's praise in Psalm 47 we sing Psalm's version on page 62 Psalm 47 on page 62 we sing the whole of this Psalm the tune is Warrington all nations clap your hands and shout let joyful cries to God ring out how awesome is the Lord most high great King who rules the earth throughout we'll sing the whole of this Psalm to God's praise all nations clap your hands and shout let joyful cries to God ring out how awesome is the Lord most high the Lord most high great King who rules the earth throughout we have yea as a duty our feet the nations the nations

A heritage for us he chose. God has gone up with shouts of joy, The Lord and the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord.

[ 25 : 10 ] Sing praise, sing praise to God, O Son, To God our King, let grace abide.

For God is King of all the air, Sing sounds of praise to Him alone.

For whose the nations come on high, He sits upon His holy throne.

The leaders of the nations come, To hear themselves to heaven's God.

To Him belong, and she is over. Exalted with me is the Lord.

[ 26 : 34 ] We can turn back to a reading in Micah in chapter 5, At the beginning of this chapter.

I'm going to look at verse 1 to 5 of this chapter today. We see the promise of a ruler given, A promise in the midst of the threat that's around them, Of an invading army, as well as you see in chapter 4.

But then it says in the beginning of chapter 5, Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops. Siege is laid against us. With a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek.

But you, O Bethlehem, Ephrathah, Who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you shall come forth. For me, one who is to be ruler in Israel, Whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

And so on. In the midst of the great nations that are around in Micah's day, There is this promise of one who will come from a small place, A place of almost insignificance.

[ 27 : 47 ] And yes, a place of such importance as we know ourselves, As you see the name Bethlehem. And yet it was a place that nobody would expect much to come from.

And when you think of the scale of the world in which we live in today, And the population of the world today, You hear of the numbers in our world, 8.2 billion people.

And you look at the scale of the world, The size of the nations and the continents, And all of these things. The enormity of it. And yet you think of little places.

Even think of our own island here, Tiny in comparison to the rest of the world. A population of 8.2 billion in the world, And we've got about just over 20,000 Between Lewis and Harris.

In many ways it seems so insignificant. And yet, This is an important place, With an important people. Because it's a place where God is.

[ 28 : 50 ] A place where we know that God is speaking to us, And that God has his people. So, It's an important place. In fact, You can see it as an important place, In so many different ways.

When you think of the wealth, Of knowledge, In our islands. The wealth of talents and produce, That our islands is known for. Far and wide.

You think of how many people, Have gone away from here, To work in all ends of the earth. Using their gifts and their talents, To bring their gifts to others, Throughout the world.

Or to be used in various industries, And fields throughout the world. There's a wealth of talent. You think of the produce, That comes from our island. You think of Harris Tweed.

You think of black pudding. You think of all the different produce, That goes far and wide, To all ends of the earth. It's quite remarkable, That from such a small place, Comes so much.

[ 29 : 48 ] And you think even of, People who have gone from here, With the gospel, To different parts of the world. We have Muriel, From our own congregation here, Who is in Cambodia, Ministering there, To the children there, And to others around, Being a witness for Christ, Having come from this small place, Insignificant place, In many ways, But being used, By the Lord, For his glory.

If you come along this evening, To the fellowship, After the service, You'll hear from Andrew McKeever, As he speaks about his work, In Myanmar. Again, A place far off, And yet here, We have someone, Who has gone away, To these places.

It's remarkable, What small places, Can produce. And we think here, Of just how people, Would see and hear, Of Bethlehem, As Micah, Is giving this prophecy, To the people, But you, O Bethlehem, As he says in verse 2 there, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, Who are too little, To be among the clans, Of Judah.

It's almost like, This place is just so small, And insignificant, In so many ways, And yet it says, From you, Shall come forth for me, One who is to be ruler, In Israel.

And it goes on, To speak then in verse 3, About therefore, He shall give them up, Until the time, When she who is in labor, Has given birth. So there's this ruler, Who's going to come, From Bethlehem, From one of the most unlikely, Of places, As the people would see it, And who is it, That is going to come?

[ 31 : 24 ] Who is it, That is going to be this ruler? Well it's none other, Than the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself. The one who is promised, Through scripture.

The ruler, Of the world. We hear so much, In these days, Of rulers, And authorities, And the powers, That they have, The control that they have, In our world.

We're tired, Maybe of hearing, Of the different powers, And authorities, Of this world, And what they are doing, And the uncertainty, In our world, The uncertainty, All of these decisions, That are being made, Whether it's, For peace, Or war, There's so much, Going on around us, And so many of these people, They will come across, As being full, Of promises, For good, Promises, That all will go well, If we trust them, And that they know, What they are doing, And we see it, All over the world, We see it, In our own nation, You think of, Times of general election, When there are so many, Promises put across, That if we vote, For a certain person, Or a certain party, That things are going, To go well, A brighter, And better future, And yet, The reality, Is so often, Different, Promises are broken, Things change, But it was the same, In Micah's day, It's the same, Down through all the generations,

Where there are so many, Man made promises, That cannot be kept, Or are broken, So quickly, And yet here, As we see Micah, Bringing the word of God, To the people, And to ourselves, Today, It is with this promise, Of a king, One who would rule, One who would fulfill, All the promises, Given by the prophets, By the word of God, That will be fulfilled, In him, And even though, As Micah is writing here, It's going to be, 700 years later, Before this promise, Is seen, In the person, Of Jesus coming, It is still a promise, That is secure, For their day, That there is going, To be restoration, That there is going, To be healing, That there is going, To be good, For all the people of God, To put their trust, In this king, In this ruler, So Micah, Has an important message, For the people then, He has an important message, For ourselves today,

From a small place, Bethlehem would come, This ruler, And in many ways, We look at smallness, Here as well, In Micah himself, Someone who people, Would have seen as, Almost insignificant to, Micah was, A farmer's son, He lived in, In a farming community, About 20 miles south, Of Jerusalem, A place of, Real insignificance, In many ways, Itself, And yet, He was called, By God, To minister the word, Throughout the nation, Of Judah, This small, Farmer, From a small community, Called by God, To minister the word, Of God, To a people, Who initially, Would not listen, But who would see, The importance, Of listening, To the word, Of God, Micah was a prophet, At the same time, As Isaiah, And yet, Maybe in many ways, Little known, Compared to Isaiah, But his name,

[ 34 : 52 ] Is even interesting itself, His name, Micah means, Who is the Lord, And so even his name, Would speak to the people, And it speaks to us today, We're hearing from the prophet, Micah, Whose name means, Who is the Lord, And that's immediately, A question for ourselves, As we hear the word of God, Through Micah here, Who is the Lord, The psalms which we've sung today, Have all had an emphasis, On that God is king, He reigns over all, But is that true for us, Who is the Lord, Chapter seven of Micah, Ends on that theme, The question, Who is a God, Like you, There is no one, Who compares, To God, So here we're hearing, From a farm boy, Called, To the city, To the people of Judah, To minister among the people, They are people, Who are comfortable, Well off, Rich in so many ways,

And yet spiritually, Falling, To pieces, Spiritually, At a low, Eb, And it just speaks, Of the day, In which we live, Ourselves, Micah was speaking out, Against idolatry, The idolatry, Of the people, Were involved in, Is a huge problem, Worshipping all kinds, Of gods, Our world, Is the same, We are many gods, Many different gods, And idols, He speaks, Against the way, That they are wrongly, Seizing people's property, And people's lands, Again, It speaks, Into our world today, He speaks, Of the failure, Of government leaders, He speaks, Of the failure, Of priests, And prophets, Who are going against, The word of God, And speaks so clearly, To our day as well, When we turn away, From the word, Of God, People doing things, With wrong motives, It speaks,

He speaks against, Corrupt business practice, Again, It speaks into our world, But the question is, Do we listen? He could be speaking, To our day and he is, As much as he was speaking, Into his own, And so what he's saying, Is important for ourselves, Today, As well, And I want us to hear, Three things, Three points, About what he's speaking, About in verse one, To verse five, And the first thing, We see with him, Is he has a resounding truth, Is an amazing truth, To bring to the people, And initially, It's not a truth, That they would want, To hear, If there's one thing, We so often see, Lacking, In our day and age, It's, And it's been the case, For a long time, It's truth, Truth, What is truth, What can we believe, What can we read,

And say, Well that must be true, Because we've read it there, Or we've heard it, On our televisions, Or we've seen it, On the internet, It must be true, And yet, Today we're so confused, Because we don't know, What to believe, What's real, You can even watch things now, You can see people speaking, And you think it's them, It must be, But artificial intelligence, Can make someone look, As if they're speaking, And saying what you want, So we live, In a world that's confused, We live in a world, That's looking for truth, But doesn't know, Where to find it, It's like the Chinese whispers, We were speaking about before, One person's passing on a message, And it's being misunderstood, But it's being heard as truth, So what is true today, What do you believe, What is the truth, Of the situation we're in, It's a case of, This is my truth, Now tell me yours, Because there's no standard, And that's the situation,

That Micah was in too, The truth, That was here before them, In the word of God, They were pushing away, They were worshipping, Their own idols, Listening to their own wisdom, And it was at a cost, And so Micah brings, A resounding truth, To them, And for ourselves today, That's what we hear as well, This resounding truth, Speaking into our situation today, The need to see that truth, As we look for it, Is found in the word of God, In the word of God, As we hear it, And as we read it, We see here is truth, Here is all the warnings, That we are to heed, And here is the reality, Of what we need, For our salvation as well, So Micah, Is coming among the people, Here of Judah, He's speaking to them, And he's warning them, Of their actions, And of their behaviours, And all of these things, And he's saying, It's going to come, At a cost,



[ 39 : 56 ] They've enjoyed, So much prosperity, They're rich, In so many ways, But Micah comes, To point the finger, And say, There is disaster, Coming upon you, A time of humbling, Is coming, And that's highlighted for us, In verse one, Where you see him, Say there, Muster your troops, O daughter of troops, Siege is laid against us, The armies are there, Coming, To invade, And it says there, With a rod, They strike the judge of Israel, On the cheek, What's he saying, He's saying, A time of humiliation, Is coming, They have felt strong, They have felt, Untouchable, In so many ways, But he's saying, You are going to be humbled, You are going to be humiliated, The judge, Who has, The rod, That rod is going to strike, His cheek, What does it mean?

What does that mean? Well, The judge, The king, Of that time in Israel, He would have a rod, In his hand, And that would be the symbol, Of power, And authority, That he had, And what Micah is saying, Your day of humiliation, Is coming, Because that rod, Is going to be snatched, From your hand, And it's going to be used, To strike you, On the cheek, It's going to be used, To defeat you, To take you hostage, And to take you in, To captivity, As they're told later, You will be going into Babylon, A powerful nation, Their enemy, Was going to bring humiliation, Upon them, It's the equivalent today, Of seeing, Russia or America, Brought to their knees, Humiliated, By somebody else, Losing all their power, All their authority, It would seem, It seems impossible, For us that that could happen, And it seemed impossible, In the day of Micah, That this could happen, To Israel,

That this could happen, To God's people, They wouldn't, They couldn't believe it, It was unbelievable, That this could happen, And yet that's the warning, That they're given, It's an uncomfortable, Truth for them, But it's a truth, That they need to hear, And that's the truth, That the Bible tells us, Of today as well, The truth that, We too, Will face, This humiliation ourselves, This being brought down, If we do not turn, From our wickedness, Turn from the path, Of going away from God, Instead turn, Back to him, There is consequences, For our sin, Of the rejection of God, And the consequences, Are dire, But what, Do we believe, What do we listen to, Do we hear, This word, That for so many people, Is irrelevant, There was a survey done,

Of Christian beliefs, In the United Kingdom, In 2019, In 2019, And in that survey, Those who were surveyed, Only 19% of the population, Said the Bible, Had any relevance, Just being, Kind of relevant, For our day, But that relevance, Is not enough, And then there was, Another question, Asking, Do you believe, The Bible is true, And only 5%, Of that survey, Said they believed, It was true, We have gone, So far, Away, And yet there are, Glimmers, Of hope as well, Even just this week, There was a newspaper, Article speaking, About the change, There is, In the sale of Bibles, That there is, An uprise of people, Who are looking, And searching, For truth, And it was saying, That since 2019, Sales of the Bible, Have gone up 87%, So there is,

Something going on, People are looking, For truth, And instead of, Looking for it, In the world, They are starting, To return, To look for it, In the word of God, So we do not, Lose heart, And that is, The hope, That Micah, Had here as well, Even as he is, Telling them, Of this, Astonishing truth, Of what is going to come, That siege, Is going to be laid, Against them, That they are going, To be taken captive, We are still to hear, That there is hope, But it is, What do we believe, Do we believe, Truth apart from, The word of God, Or do we believe, The word of God, All the promises, Apart from God, Are lies, As Jesus says, In Mark 8, He asks the question, What does it profit, A man, To gain the whole world, And yet forfeit, His soul,

[ 45 : 00 ] And so that's a challenge, For us here, From Micah as well, What profit, Is for us, If we gain everything, That this world, Has to offer, And yet do not listen, To the truth, Of the consequences, Of our sin, That brings humiliation, That brings disaster, So we need to hear, The danger, That we're in, And that leads us then, Into the second thing, Where we see Micah, He gives us a restoration, Shown, That there is a way, We see here Micah, He tells the truth, Of the dire situation, But there is also, The truth, That will lead them, Out of it, And lead them, In a better way, A truth, That is also, Hard to believe, We think of living, In a generation, Who have neglected, God for so long, Pinning hopes, On prosperity, And freedom, And a better life, In so many different ways, All the things, That we've offered, Over these last number,

Of years, You think of, Lottery, And how that's come in, And that phrase, It could be you, It's going to transform, Your life, Could be you, Giving that hope, Of money, Being the cure, For everything, Yet so often, It ends, In tears, And you think, Of all the promises, That we've seen, From politicians, Over the year, Whether it's, Brexit, Or independence, Or all, The different views, That are put across, Of what we need, For our good, And for the better, Of our nation, It's all about, What we can do, It's like, We were thinking last week, That DIY disaster, If we try and do everything, Ourselves, And we, The psalm, That we sing at the end, Psalm 146, A quote from it, We are told, In that psalm, Do not put your trust, In princes, Mortal men, Who cannot save, All their plans, Will come to nothing, When they perish, In the grave, There's that warning, To us, In that psalm,

That that is not, Where our hope is found, And that's the warning, That Micah is giving to, Do not put your trust, In princes, Do not put your trust, In mortal men, Instead, He gives them this hope, Of the one who has come, From Bethlehem, The ruler who would come, There is, There is good news, That the way, To hope, And the way to salvation, Is found in God, Who is going to provide, A ruler for them, One who would bring, Restoration, And you would expect, The people to listen to this, And think, Well, Where is this ruler, Going to come from, He must come, From a powerhouse, He must come, From Jerusalem, Our own city, Or you must come, From a powerful nation, A powerful place, But Micah says, But you, O Bethlehem, Ephathra, You who are too little, To be among the clans, Of Judah, From you, Shall come forth, For me, One who is to be ruler,

In Israel, It would have been, A shock, To them all, The hope of the world, Was going to come, From little Bethlehem, The most unlikely, Of places, David, Was an unlikely king, That came from Bethlehem, And now Micah is saying, Even through David's line, Is going to come, Another, The son of God, Jesus Christ, And it speaks here, About the one, Who is going to be born, When she who is in labor, Has given birth, So it's looking ahead, To the coming of Christ, And in Matthew chapter 2, When Herod hears, From the wise men, That they are coming, Because they have seen, A star of the new born king, Of the Jews, He asks his own wise men, Where is this Messiah, Supposed to be born, And they all have the answer, In Bethlehem of Judea,

For it is written, By the prophet, And you, O Bethlehem, In the land of Judah, Are by no means least, Among the rulers of Judah, From you shall come, A ruler who will shepherd, My people, They're looking, To Micah, They're listening to Micah, Do they believe it though?

[ 49 : 22 ] It's just like, This Chinese whisper, Well we've heard this, But is it true? And that's true for ourselves, Today as well, We're hearing this, That a ruler will come, One who will save his people, But do we believe it?

He has come to save his people, From their sins, There is a way, To restoration, Micah was called, To minister to the people, Because God saw, Their need, He saw that, They were wandering off, In the wrong direction, And he's calling them back, To himself, Because, The Lord has, This view over us all, In the same way, As he does today, It's, Coming into spring, We hope now, When you see, The day is getting longer, And the weather is starting to change, And it will soon be, Lambing time once again, And, One thing about lambing time, Is it's a busy time, Checking on the sheep, Day and night, To make sure, That things are going well, And I remember, When we were down in Uist, At this time, It was always busy, But, Some of them had started, To use different ways, Of checking on their sheep, Rather than just going out, And walking around the croft, Crofts that could be, A fair size, There was a few,

Who had started using drones, They could just watch, From their house, Put the drone down the field, And just hover, And see where all the sheep were, And what was happening, And it was, There was wisdom in it, In so many ways, Because you were seeing from above, What was going on, So when you were on the ground, Maybe you would miss a sheep, A sheep had maybe rolled over, In a ditch, And you couldn't see it, A drone would reveal it, And in many ways, That's what we see, When we think of God, And how he sees us, He is seeing things from above, And Micah is being used, To reveal God's word, To the people, Because he's seeing, The bigger picture, They might think, Their restoration is in themselves, Their own riches, Their own power, And authority, But no, God is saying, If you look from above, There's a greater threat, There is Babylon, And so you have to listen, To me, And God sees their need, And God sees our need,

God sees his people, Just like in the days of Moses, God saw his people, In Egypt, And God took action, We think of our own day, God sees our need, And he's taking action too, In Hebrews 1, Verse 1, It says, Long ago, At many times, And in many ways, God spoke to our fathers, By the prophets, Just like Micah, But he says, In these last days, He has spoken to us, By his son, His son, Who is speaking to us, Through the word, Of God, But are we listening, Are we listening, To the way of restoration, And the one, Who would be ruler, One who would be born, In Bethlehem, The king, Of the world, Well, If we begin, To listen, The final thing, We see here, Is a ruler, Will reign, And he will reign, For the good, Of his people, What happens today, When a new ruler,

Is installed, Whether it's, Prime minister, A president, Or a king, We see it in so many, Different ways, Around the world, Does it bring peace, So often, It's the opposite, So often, It's anarchy, So often, It's a rejection, A turning against them, You see protests, In countries, And cities, All over the world, Not my prime minister, Is the slogan, Or not my president, Not my king, We don't want this person, To rule over us, And here in verse four, We're told, That this ruler, Is going to come, And he shall stand, And shepherd his flock, In the strength of the Lord, In the majesty, Of the name of the Lord, His God, And they shall dwell, Secure for now, He shall be great, To the ends of the earth, And he shall be, Their peace, You see this ruler, Who's offered, He shall shepherd his flock, He'll be their strength,

[ 53 : 43 ] The majesty of the name, Of the Lord, Will be in their midst, They will be secure, They will have peace, All these promises, But what do the people say?

So many of them say, No, We will not have, This man, Rule over us, Even though you have, All these promises, Of great things, Shepherding, And the care, And attention, Of the Lord, The majesty of God, In their midst, The security, That he is able to bring, And the peace, That he offers, And yet people say, Not my ruler, He will give them peace, And you think of, The time of the birth, Of Jesus, When the shepherds, Were out in the field, They heard the angels, Singing glory to God, In the highest, And on earth peace, That there is a way, To peace, That he has come, To bring peace, And yet we say, No, A parable that Jesus tells, In Luke 19, It says there, His citizens hated him, And sent a delegation, After him, Saying, We do not want this man, To reign over us, We want nothing,

Of this man, And that's just the way, Jesus was received, He was not received, By his own, They rejected him, We don't want this man, To reign over us, And you see it, At the cross, As they crucify him, John 19, Verse 15, As he's, There before Pilate, Jesus is before Pilate, And the crowd are there, The crowd cry out, Away with him, Away with him, Crucify him, And Pilate said to them, Shall I crucify your king?

And the chief priest answered, We have no king, But Caesar, He's no king, Of ours, I can say, With all confidence, Today, That everyone here, And everyone throughout, All the world, And every generation, Past, Present, And future, Will one day acknowledge, That he is Lord, That is the truth, That the word of God says, For in Philippians, Chapter 2, We read, Therefore God has highly exalted him, That's Jesus, And bestowed on him, The name that is above every name, So that the name of Jesus, Every knee should bow, In heaven and on earth, And under the earth, And every tongue confess, That Jesus Christ is Lord, To the glory of God, The Father, The day is coming, When that will be, Jesus Christ is Lord,

But the question is, Do we see, Jesus Christ, As the ruler, Who is promised here, The one who would come, From Bethlehem, The one who would be born, Into this world, The one who would live, Among his people, The one who would die, On the cross, The one who rose again, On the third day, Is he, The ruler, Of your heart today, The word, Is truth, It speaks, A resounding truth, To us, That there is consequences, For turning away, From God, But we see, A restoration promised, A hope, That there is a ruler, Who would come, For his people, And to his people, And is none other, Than the king, The Lord Jesus Christ, The ruler is here, And he is speaking, His truth, The truth, That this world,

[ 57 : 31 ] Needs to hear, The question is, Is he your king, Is he your ruler, Is he your lord, Before it's too late, The day will come, When we will all confess, That Jesus Christ, Is lord, But may that day, Be a day where you say, He is my lord, And my king, My ruler, Who came, For me, Let us pray, Our father in heaven, We thank you, For the truth, Of your word, And pray that, Your spirit, Will apply it, To our hearts, That you would help us, To understand, That we are in, Great danger, In the world, In which we live, Not because of the, Human threats, Alone that we see, Around us, But because of the power, Of sin, Even in our own hearts, And that warning, Is there for us,

But we thank you too, That there is one, Who has come, To save us from our sin, That ruler, Who would be born, Into this world, A ruler, Who came from Bethlehem, A place so small, And insignificant, In many ways, And yet so important, For us, To know that, You sent your son, From that place, Into this world, To come, And save his people, So help us to hear, Lord, Your word, Speaking to us, Help us to understand, And what it means, To put our trust in you, So that when the day comes, We will say, That Jesus Christ, Is not just Lord, Not just our ruler, But that he is my Lord, And my God, Help us to confess, Even these words, As we ask in Jesus name, Amen.

We're going to conclude, By singing to God's praise, In Psalm 146, Sing Psalm's version, Page 191, Psalm 146, Sing from verse 1, To verse 6, These words of verse 3, We quoted in the sermon, Do not put your trust, In princes, Mortal men, Who cannot save, Or their plans, Will come to nothing, When they perish, In the grave, But instead, We are seeing there, In verse 5, Blessed is the one, Who truly looks for help, To Jacob's God, Blessed is the one, Who places, All his hope, Upon the Lord, We'll sing from verse 1, To 6, To God's praise, Praise the Lord, My soul, Praise him, I excel him all my days,

While I live to God, My Savior, From my heart, I will sing praise, Do not put your trust, In princes, For the men who cannot save, All their plans, Will come to nothing, When they perish, In the grave, Blessed is the one, Who truly looks for help, To Jacob's God, Blessed is the one, Who places, All his hope, Upon the Lord,

He who made the earth, And heaven's, And the sea's, With all earth's, For he who teaches, Every promise, Who is faithful, Evermore.

[ 61 : 51 ] After the benediction, I'll go to the door to my right, We'll close with a benediction. Let me pray, Let your grace, Mercy, And peace, From God, Father, Son, And Holy Spirit, Rest upon, And abide with you all, Now and forevermore, Amen.

Thank you.