

Matthew 2:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Analysis

The priests and scribes accurately quote Micah 5:2, proving knowledge of Scripture doesn't guarantee faith. The phrase 'thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least' reverses Bethlehem's insignificance—from smallest town to birthplace of the Ruler who will 'rule' (literally: shepherd) God's people. This connects Jesus to David, the shepherd-king from Bethlehem.

Historical Context

Micah prophesied around 700 BC about Bethlehem Ephrathah (distinguishing it from Bethlehem in Zebulun). The religious leaders could cite Scripture but failed to recognize its fulfillment, showing the danger of academic knowledge without spiritual receptivity.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How can you avoid the error of knowing Scripture but not acting on it?

2. What does it mean that Jesus shepherds His people rather than merely ruling them?

Interlinear Text

Kαὶ	σὺ	Βηθλεέμ	γῆ	Ἰούδα	οὐδαμῶς	ἐλαχίστη	εῖ
And	thou	Bethlehem	in the land	G2448	not	the least	art
G2532	G4771	G965	G1093		G3760	G1646	G1488
ἐν	τοῖς	ἡγεμόσιν	Ἰούδα·	ἐκ	σοῦ	γὰρ	ἐξελεύσεται
among	G3588	the princes	G2448	out of	thee	for	shall come
G1722		G2232		G1537	G4675	G1063	G1831
ἡγούμενος	ὅστις	ποιμανεῖ	τὸν	λαόν	μου	τὸν	Ἰσραήλ
a Governor	that	shall rule	G3588	people	my	G3588	Israel
G2233	G3748	G4165		G2992	G3450		G2474

Additional Cross-References

Micah 5:2 (References Israel): But thou, Beth-lehem 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.

John 7:42 (Parallel theme): Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

Revelation 11:15 (Parallel theme): And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Genesis 49:10 (Parallel theme): 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.

Matthew 28:18 (Parallel theme): And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Revelation 2:27 (Parallel theme): And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

Isaiah 40:11 (Parallel theme): He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

2 Samuel 5:2 (References Israel): Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.

Colossians 1:18 (Parallel theme): And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Matthew 2:1 (Parallel theme): Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,