

There are some things that might make us feel small. For example, compared to the vastness of the universe, I am smaller than a tiny speck. Or think even within our own planet. I am just one of billions of people on earth. Thinking about those things might make us feel small.

Sometimes everyday things can make me feel small. I feel small when faced with a messy room in my house. I have three toddlers and an infant at home and there have been times when our back playroom has been rubble. And trying to clean up that room makes me feel small.

What are some things that make you feel small? Maybe your everyday tasks are piling up, or maybe you are faced with an enormous project at work and it makes you feel small.

Or sometimes we might feel small in the sense of feeling insignificant. Maybe you feel like sometimes the people around you don’t seem to notice or care about you and that makes you feel small.

Or sometimes we might also feel small in the sense of feeling powerless. This year I think we’ve all felt powerless in the face of the Pandemic. Or maybe you feel powerless because of some disease, or maybe you live in fear of some disease.

When we feel small and insignificant and powerless, then this passage from God’s Word can help us: **“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel” (Micah 5:2)**. Bethlehem was a small town. It says, **“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah...” (Micah 5:2)**. In the eyes of the world, Bethlehem was insignificant. But God picked Bethlehem as the place where the Savior would be born.

God has a habit of picking small and insignificant things and people to do his work. Why do you think God does this? It’s to show that that the power is not from us. The power is from Him. In fact, if you look at it that way, it can even be an advantage to be powerless and insignificant because then at least you know that you can’t depend on yourself and you have to depend on God.

If you feel small and insignificant and powerless then this passage is for you. In fact, if you feel small and insignificant and powerless, then *Christmas* is for you. Because at Christmas the Son of God himself became small.<sup>1</sup> People who haven’t been around a new-born in a while will often say, “I forget how small they are.” The Son of God became small. The Son of God joined us in our smallness.

And yet he is a powerful, divine helper. It says that his **“origins are from of old, from ancient times” (Micah 5:2)**. Jesus took on human flesh in the womb of the virgin Mary, but as God he had always existed. We say in the Nicene Creed that Jesus is “eternally begotten of the Father.” He is the eternal Son of the Father. Jesus once said, **“Before Abraham was born, I am” (John 8:58)**. John said that Jesus was with God in the beginning (John 1:1). So in Jesus we have someone who joins us in our smallness, but is powerful enough to help us.

We needed a Savior and he came to help us. It says, **“Therefore Israel will be abandoned until she who is in labor bears a son” (Micah 5:3)**. Commentators explain that at the time of Micah, the Israelites had sinned against God. They angered him by worshiping other gods and by mistreating the poor and so as a punishment God gave them into the hands of other nations. The Assyrians conquered much of the land of Israel and then the Babylonians took Judah into exile.<sup>2</sup> But through it all God kept his promise to send the Savior. **“Therefore Israel will be abandoned until she who is**

---

<sup>1</sup> G. K. Chesterton has some helpful thoughts about the Christmas story and about how God the Son became a small infant. *The Everlasting Man in The Collected Works of G. K. Chesterton*, Volume II (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986), 301-303.

<sup>2</sup> I owe the insights in this paragraph to several commentators: Jason R. Soenksen, *Micah*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2020), 281-283; 382-383; 400-403; Cyril Spaude, *Obadiah, Jonah, Micah*, People’s Bible (Milwaukee: Northwestern); Theodore Laetsch *Commentary on the Minor Prophets* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1956), 270-271; C. F. Keil, Keil-Delitzsch commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978 reprint), 482-483.

**in labor bears a son” (Micah 5:3).** We feel very small in so many ways, but at Christmas God kept his promise to send us his Son to deliver us.

Do you feel insignificant in the eyes of the world? You are extremely significant to Jesus. Christmas means that Jesus loved you so much that he came down to earth for you. Our passage tonight says, **“Therefore Israel will be abandoned until she who is in labor bears a son and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites” (Micah 5:3).** That’s talking about people being converted to faith in Jesus. But I want you to focus in especially on the word **“brothers” (5:3).** You are not insignificant. You are a brother or a sister of the King of the Universe.<sup>3</sup> And you will sit with him on his throne. You are so significant to Jesus that Jesus considers something done for you as done directly for him. Because remember he said, **“What you have done for *one of the least* of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25).** We’re small, but in Jesus we’re not insignificant.

Do you feel powerless? Jesus is our powerful Shepherd. It says, **“He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD” (Micah 5:4).** As our powerful Shepherd Jesus cares for us in so many ways. The most important way Jesus cares for us is that he laid down his life for us. One time Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). Jesus laid down his life to save us from our sins. And now he lives as our powerful Shepherd. He tends us and gives us the strength to face the challenges of each new day. **“And they will live securely” (Micah 5:4).** Jesus was once talking about his sheep and he said, **“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:28).** We might feel powerless sometimes, but we will live securely forever in heaven.

Sometimes we might feel small. And that’s OK. That’s OK because we are sheep, and we have a powerful Shepherd. In Luke chapter 1, Mary said, “My soul magnifies the LORD.” Sometimes we might feel small, but our God is great. Whenever you feel small just look into the manger and see there God’s great love for you. Amen.

---

<sup>3</sup> I owe this insight to Theodore Laetsch *Commentary on the Minor Prophets.*