

The Shepherd King

Read Isaiah 40:9-11; Micah 5:2-5; Ezekiel 34:2-5, 20-24

Sheep and shepherds were a fixture of daily life in biblical times. Everyone was familiar with them. Thus “shepherds” was a common figure of speech for leaders, from kings on down. These “shepherds” were to lead their flock to food and water. They were to provide protection for everyone and special care for those who needed it.

But not all shepherds took their jobs seriously. Ezekiel spoke of leaders who cared for themselves rather than the flock. The *fed* on the flock rather than *feeding* the flock. Through both Ezekiel and the prophet Micah, God said that He would not stand by while His flock was neglected. The unfaithful shepherds would be judged and struck down.

But He would not leave His people without a shepherd. Both prophets said that God would send a Greater Shepherd, His own Anointed One, Messiah, who would shepherd His people as Loving God desired. This Great Shepherd would be from the line of King David, who himself had been a shepherd.

In fact, says Micah, this Shepherd would come from David’s home town, Bethlehem. This tiny village, insignificant by human standards, would provide a second great leader, even greater than King David. God said this leader would come as God’s own agent, not man’s choice. His origins would be “from of old, from ancient times”; that is, He would be part of God’s timeless plan, working since before the foundation of the world. This Leader would “*stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.*” His power would not be limited by human weakness but would be the power and authority of Sovereign God Himself. God’s people would finally live in total security, and the King’s rule would reach “*to the ends of the earth*”.

This King would not simply *bring* peace. He Himself would *be* their peace. Over 700 years later the Apostle Paul would say the same of Jesus Christ,
He himself is our peace. (Ephesians 2:14, NIV)

How appropriate that when Jesus came and was opposed by the false shepherds of His day, He characterized Himself this way:

I am the good shepherd.

The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

(John 10:11, NIV)

To our picture of the mighty Messiah King, the Shepherd King brings a personal flavor, a tenderness, an individual attention that all who know Jesus Christ will recognize immediately.

Jesus said, “*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.*” (John 10:27-28, NIV)

*Father, Jesus Christ is my shepherd.
His every word is love, and
His every path leads to You.*

Hymn: [Peace, Peace, Peace](#)

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