

Bible Verse of the Day, Dec. 9th: Advent Season, Micah 5:2-3

Micah 5:2-3

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
although you are small among the tribes of Judah,
from you will come forth for Me
one who will be ruler over Israel.
His origins are from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore He will give them up,
until the time when she who is in labor has given birth,
and the rest of his brothers will return
to the children of Israel.

The Gift of Forgiveness and Restoration

The prophet Micah was given a message to deliver of God's displeasure with the sinning of Israel and the judgment that would come to them as a result. It was a hard message, and one that shows the absolute reality of God's total hatred of sin.

But he was also given the message of God's compassion and love and willingness to forgive and restore the one who turns to God in repentance and sorrow. When we experience the grace of God leading to salvation, that abundant grace permeates our entire being—body, soul, and spirit—with the ability to change every fiber of our makeup. As we yield to the ongoing, life-changing power of salvation, we can begin to understand wholeness. We are meant to be whole. When we came to the Lord, no matter what age we were, most of us were fragmented, with pieces of our lives scattered here and there. Why? Scattering is a curse that we come under as a result of sin. When we sin,

pieces of the person God intends for us to be are left behind. We trade purity, blessing, health, and/or a part of God's perfect plan for our lives for a sin we have committed. Therefore, parts of the whole person God intends for us to be lie scattered along the paths of our lives at each point where we have chosen sin.

Although we in the Western world tend to compartmentalize our lives into physical, mental, and spiritual categories (or body, soul, and spirit), the fact is that a proper biblical worldview is one of a unified, whole person in whom these parts are not separate entities but are interconnected. First Thessalonians 5:23 says, "May the very God of peace sanctify you completely. And I pray to God that your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here we see that God's interest in sanctifying is not limited to the spiritual being of a person but extends to the whole person. The concept of dealing with a person holistically did not originate in the Far East or in New Age thinking; it originated with God.

In fact, Jesus' message was one of wholeness. Many times He would respond to those He touched by saying, "Your faith has made you whole." Why? As previously mentioned, sin can leave us scattered. Sin also affects each part of us. Sin is not just a dark blot on the invisible realm of the soul; it can affect us physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually. But divine healing and renewed hope can transcend normal healing processes. Divine forgiveness, reconciliation, deliverance, restoration, and renewal bring healing and wholeness. Only God has the power to gather the scattered pieces of our sin-ridden lives and bring them back into wholeness. {eoa}

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