

Where Can We Find It? – Pr Jim Sprengle – Advent 4 – December 19, 2021

- I. **Micah 5:5a** - ⁵ And He shall be their peace.
- II. **Everything is going to be okay.**
 - a. Those words sound really nice, but do they really mean anything?
 - b. I suppose we hear words like that when someone wants to make us feel better about a bad thing going on in our lives.
 - i. They probably don't know what to say, but feel bad for you, so they just do the best they can
 - ii. But will it be ok?
 - c. I wonder sometimes, what is "okay"?
 - i. Does it mean we have nice things, a place to call home, a family, a church family... God?
 - ii. Being okay means something a little different to each of us – my okay might be a lot different than your okay.
 - d. The many trials and difficulties in life might make us wonder if positives can come from any of it.
 - e. Of course, this past several weeks have included multiple deaths of our friends and family – several people in the hospital with Covid – several people with new diagnoses of cancer and other major health problems.
 - i. Is it enough to simply say everything's going to be okay?
 - f. It might depend on who you ask...
 - i. If I say it's going to be okay to a Christian, they might understand that things don't always get better here, but they certainly do after we enter our eternal rest.
 - ii. I read both Revelation chapter 7 and 21 in recent memorials, and each of them speak of a wonderful connection with God Himself, with no more tears or pain of any type.
 - iii. Yes, if there is an "okay" – it would be in the arms of Jesus, in the home He has prepared for us (John 14:1-6).
 - g. Maybe that's the growth of a Christian – as we come closer to meeting Jesus face to face after we die, our outlook changes –
 - i. The things that seemed so important are no longer priorities.
 - ii. The trust we have in God's plan and provision becomes sharper.
 - iii. What used to bring fear and trepidation just don't bother us the same.
 - h. I'm not saying we don't have any fear, or that we become so holy nothing affects us – but certainly we know deep down that everything IS going to be okay.
 - i. When we have a deep sense that it will all be okay, we have peace.
- III. **Advent leading to Christmas, of all times, should bring us peace.**
 - a. This is the message of Micah the prophet today.
 - b. He is preaching and prophesying during a particularly bad time for the nation of Israel.

- i. Now remember, after King Solomon, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms – the northern kingdom was Israel, while the southern kingdom with Jerusalem and the temple was called Judah.
 - c. Unfortunately, the people and their leaders were running after things to make them feel better –
 - i. They were worshiping false gods and idols
 - ii. They were cheating people in business and personal matters
 - iii. They were not loving others, but stepping on them to get whatever they wanted
 - d. Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, where we read so many great prophecies of the coming Christ – and they both had a similar message.
 - i. Both saw the corruption and evil that plagued the kings of the northern kingdom – and the same trouble was happening down south
 - ii. You see, the southern kingdom of Judah was no better than their northern brothers and sisters.
 - 1. The northern kingdom would fall to the Assyrian empire around the time that Micah wrote these words, but Judah would hold on for another 136 years before Babylon took them out.
 - 2. And so Micah is looking WAY down range at the writing of a king coming from Bethlehem to lead the people.
 - a. Micah is seeing the destruction of both kingdoms and the kings would be no more...
 - e. But there is still hope that everything will be okay...
 - i. Out of the little town of Bethlehem will come someone from the line of David... someone who will right the wrongs and bring true peace.
 - f. Just imagine if you will, the northern kingdom is about to be invaded by a horrible occupying force, and the southern kingdom has nothing better to look forward to.
 - i. No, they may not have listened to the prophets like Isaiah and Micah, but nonetheless, they were telling the truth
 - ii. In the end, God's chosen people were crushed and hauled off into captivity without any king or temple to carry on
 - iii. And Micah says everything will be okay.
 - g. His words seem as silly as that phrase that comes out of someone's mouth when our lives are in shambles... when we've lost a loved one... when death is knocking at our door...
 - i. It's very hard to believe that everything will be fine – especially when you tell me that a king will arise out of the little town of Bethlehem –
 - ii. Just pick the smallest town you can think of in Oregon or Washington, and if I tell you a great leader will deliver the United States of America from its enemies... you would probably look at me like I was crazy.
 - iii. Yet, this is the message of Micah for the people of the northern kingdom about to be destroyed, and the future destruction of the southern kingdom – a great deliverer is coming.

IV. **Again, the peace we need is found in only one place.**

- a. Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:14 – “For He Himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility.”
- b. Jesus, the Messiah, is our peace – we cannot find it anywhere else – and it is the deeper sense that everything IS going to be okay – no matter what happens
- c. Micah is given words from God that are fulfilled at the coming of our Savior
 - i. It was more than 700 years later – but God is not slow as we count slowness, for the Lord, a day is like a thousand years, (2 Peter 3:8)
 - ii. Many of those people died with only the faith in a Messiah that was to come, but their reward was heaven as they left this earthly struggle behind.
- d. But at just the right time – as Galatians 4:4-5 says, “⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.” (Gal. 4:4-5 ESV)
 - i. Jesus came into the world just as Micah and all the other Old Testament prophets saw – a poor child, born in a tiny town with no standing, but destined to be the King and the Deliverer.

V. **God is funny that way** – because He uses the insignificant to do big things.

- a. Jesus was born in Bethlehem to a simple family, under extraordinary circumstances.
- b. The place He was born was certainly not fit for a king or mighty ruler – but that’s exactly how God would have it.
- c. As Jesus grew, He didn’t follow the typical leader protocol, and actually called into question many of the ways the leaders were acting
- d. Jesus was a servant king – and even went through the horrific torture of the cross to buy us back from an eternal life of exile
- e. What seemed impossible under the circumstances turned out to be our saving grace – a baby born in Bethlehem would redeem us from sin, death, and the devil.
- f. I know it sounds cliché to say everything’s going to be okay – but we who have faith in Christ and His redeeming work for us are in His hands.
- g. Where else can you find peace like that, except in the very one who is peace? (Eph. 2:14)
- h. As the challenges of life come your way, take heart, be at peace, because everything really will be okay. Amen.