

Scripture Passage: Micah 5:2-5

Memory Verse: Micah 5:2

Theme Song: Ends of the Earth

Big Idea: God can use ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

ADVENT: WEEK 2

Advent, the celebration of Christ's coming, begins four Sundays before Christmas and concludes on Christmas. The five-part Family Advent Kit consists of four weekly devotionals plus a fifth devotional to be used on Christmas. If you celebrate Advent as a family, consider creating an Advent wreath. An Advent wreath hold fours candles and a fifth candle, called the Christ Candle, is placed in the middle. One candle is lit each week, with the Christ Candle lit last of all, on Christmas Day. Before you begin each time of family worship, light the appropriate candle(s) on the Advent wreath to remind your family that you are celebrating the arrival of the Messiah, Jesus.

READ

Read Micah 5:2-5 aloud to your family. If your kids can read, consider having one of them read or letting them take turns reading.

Micah 5:2-5

- ² “But you, Bethlehem,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”
- ³ Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.
- ⁴ He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.
- ⁵ And he will be our peace.

SING

Play “Ends of the Earth” from the *Doorpost Songs: Unto Us* album and sing together. Think about how you can model worship for your family as you sing together. If needed, print copies of the lyric sheet for your family.

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MEMORIZE

Pick a section of the verses to memorize as a family. Use the suggestions below or choose your own. Use the long version for older children and the short version for preschoolers.

Long Version (Micah 5:2)

But you, Bethlehem, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel.

Short Version (Micah 5:2)

Out of [Bethlehem] will come one will be ruler over Israel.

LEARN

Read the Big Idea and short devotional aloud to your family. If you have time, use the discussion questions at the end of the devotional.

What's the Big Idea?

God can use ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

Family Devotional

Good things come in small packages. Have you ever heard that expression? It reminds us that bigger is not always better, that sometimes the way something looks on the outside is not the most important thing. It's what's on the inside that counts.

Did you know that God lives by that rule, too? The Bible says in 1 Samuel 16:7, "People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." People might care what you look like on the outside, but God doesn't. In fact, the Bible is full of stories where God used ordinary people and ordinary things to accomplish his extraordinary purpose.

So when God decided to send his son Jesus as the Messiah – the one who would save people from their sin – where did he decide that Jesus would be born? It seems like an important decision! After all, Jesus is God's Son. He is the Creator of the World and the ruler of God's kingdom. Surely he would be born in an important place like Jerusalem or some other big, important city. And there would be plenty of important people there to see him, lots of important, official proclamations to celebrate his birth, and a big, important crib for him to sleep in, right?

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But that's not what happened. God decided that his Son would be born in Bethlehem, a tiny, sleepy, sheep-town out in the countryside. There would be no important people there, just a handful of dirty, smelly shepherds. There would be no official proclamations from the king or emperor, although God *did* send the best angel-choir he could pull together. There would be no big, important crib for him to sleep in, just a manger, an animal's feeding trough.

But these ordinary, humble beginnings were not the end of the story. Today's scripture passage tells us that the greatness of Jesus reaches "to the ends of the earth." (That's just a fancy way of saying "everywhere.") Eventually all the world will know that Jesus is the Messiah, and that he came to forgive our sin and make a way for us to know God.

It shouldn't surprise us that God chose this way for his Son to make his arrival. God loves to use ordinary things - ordinary people just like you and me - for extraordinary purposes. During Advent we not only celebrate that the Messiah came, we celebrate that you don't have to be important or good-looking or strong or intelligent or a super-Christian for God to love you. People might look at what is on the outside, but God just wants a heart that loves him and is ready to follow him. He can use that kind of heart to do something extraordinary.

TALK

Talk about what you have learned as a family. Use the questions below or ask some of your own.

1. What is something good that comes "in a small package"?
2. What does it mean that God "looks at the heart"?
3. Why do you think God loves to use ordinary people for extraordinary things?
4. What were some of the "ordinary" things about the birth of Jesus?

PRAY

Pray together. Here are some ideas:

- Thank God that he doesn't look at our outsides. He sees our hearts.
- Pray that God would help us to have hearts that love him and want to follow him.
- Thank God that he can use ordinary people to do extraordinary things.