

**Big Idea:** We needed Jesus more than we knew.

**Primary Scripture:** Isaiah 9:6-7

**Supporting Scripture:** Micah 5:2-5a; John 10:24; John 10:30-31; Romans 10:9

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**CAPTURE (Why should students pay attention to and care about your message?)**

- IT'S ALMOST CHRISTMAS!!!
- While the polite thing to do is say that Christmas isn't about presents, let's be honest... we're all thinking about presents.
- One of the things I honestly love most about Christmas is the sense of anticipation.
- The presents are wrapped under the tree... the stockings are hung up with care... and if you're like most of us, you've probably done a little *investigating* (some might call it snooping, but we'll call it *investigating*).
- When Christmas morning finally arrives, you pick up the gift, tear it open with excitement, and take the gift from the box to see that you got... socks.
- You didn't ask for socks. You could probably use some new socks, but really, who wants socks for Christmas?
- What if you woke up one morning to find that literally ALL of your socks were missing?
- You could probably exist for a day or two just wearing Crocs or flip flops, but eventually, you'd really start wishing you had a pair of socks, right?
- That's why getting socks on Christmas morning is so weird. On the one hand (*or foot!*), we all need socks. But on the other, getting socks on Christmas morning is just... unexpected.
- The same thing happened two thousand years ago when Jesus arrived on earth.
- The Jewish people had been waiting for their *Messiah* (a Hebrew word that means *savior* or *deliverer*). And they all had expectations from Scripture and tradition about what *the Messiah* would be like.
- Jesus wasn't exactly what they were picturing, but He was exactly what they (and **we**) needed.
- Over the next few weeks, we're going to look at who Jesus is and what it meant for Him to show up as an actual person over 2,000 years ago in a small Middle Eastern village.

- By the time Jesus arrived, we had reached the point of desperation, and we probably didn't even know it.
- It's possible that some of us are still in that spot. Maybe you haven't yet realized how much you need Him.
- If that's you, I want you to know that I am so glad you're here. We want this to be a place where everyone is welcome, no matter where they are on their faith journey.

### **SCRIPTURE (What does God's Word say?)**

- Let's look at two passages from the Old Testament that are Messianic Prophecies—God telling people *ahead of time* about what the Messiah would be like.
- The first comes from the book of Isaiah, which was written somewhere between 600 and 800 years before Jesus was born.

*<sup>6</sup> For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven's Armies will make this happen! (Isaiah 9:6-7 – NLT)*

- The people expected a military ruler like King David to usher in a new era of victory and ultimately independence.
- Many (if not most) people of this time would have pictured *the Messiah* as a king who would bring the peace and justice they hadn't seen in hundreds of years.
- Isaiah wasn't the only one who was prophesying about a coming savior. Between 600-800 years before Jesus' birth, another prophet, Micah, was also challenging Israel to be on the lookout for a savior.

*<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel, whose origins are in the distant past, will come from you on my behalf. <sup>3</sup> The people of Israel will be abandoned to their enemies until the woman in labor gives birth. Then at last his fellow countrymen will return from exile to their own land. <sup>4</sup> And he will stand to lead his flock with the Lord's strength, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. Then his people will live there undisturbed, for he will be*

*highly honored around the world. <sup>5</sup> And he will be the source of peace. (Micah 5:2-5a – NLT)*

- After generations of suffering under foreign oppression, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, it makes sense that people would be thinking, “Finally! Someone’s going to come and set us free.”
- When we look closer at who Jesus is we’ll see that God was preparing to give them something they needed even more than they realized.

### **INSIGHTS (What might this Scripture mean?)**

#### **1. The Messiah’s arrival would be... unconventional.**

- Isaiah 9:6, it said, “for a child is born to us.”
  - What do we call a child right when it’s born? Nope, not *king*... definitely not *military leader*... we call them babies!
- In Micah 5:2, we’re also told that this baby would specifically arrive in Bethlehem.
  - Why is that such a big deal? Why does it even matter?
  - It shows that God has a tendency to work in ways that we just aren’t expecting, even when He tells us exactly what He’s going to do ahead of time.

#### **2. The Messiah would also be God.**

- Did you catch any of the names that Isaiah said the Messiah would be called?

*<sup>6</sup> For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6 – NLT)*

- It starts to become pretty clear that the Messiah isn’t just going to be a person sent by God to save Israel from oppression.
- Calling the Messiah “Mighty God” and “Everlasting Father” paints a very different picture indeed.

- If we look at the last verse of the prophecy from Micah, we see that the Messiah is also described in a way that could only mean that He would also be God.

<sup>5</sup>*And he will be the source of peace. (Micah 5:5a – NLT)*

- Saying that the Messiah is going to be “**the source** of peace” is not the same as saying that the Messiah is going to do something that brings about peace.
- Just because we can see that picture more clearly now doesn’t mean that people were able to see it before Jesus was born or even when He was alive.

<sup>24</sup>*The people surrounded him and asked, “How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” (John 10:24 – NLT)*

- Based on the passages we read from Isaiah and Micah, you’d think that the people would have been thrilled by Jesus’ answer, but that’s not exactly how it worked out.

<sup>30</sup>*“The Father and I are one.”* <sup>31</sup>*Once again the people picked up stones to kill him. (John 10:30-31 – NLT)*

- This shows us how desperate they were to finally find freedom from their oppression.

### 3. The Messiah would bring exactly what was needed to people who were hurting.

- Have you ever gotten a gift from someone that was so perfect that you didn’t even know you wanted (or even needed) it until you got it?
- That’s exactly what God did when He sent His Son, Jesus—the Messiah.
- God knew the people needed more than a change in government. They needed healing from sin. They needed restoration in their relationship with Him.
- Instead of sending a political hero, He sent a Savior.

- Instead of just giving us what we ask for, He meets our deepest needs—even the ones we aren't aware of yet.
- If God knew exactly what His people needed 2,000 years ago—even though what they needed wasn't what they were asking for—then the same is true today.
- God knows what will actually save us, sustain us, and change us—and it **all** starts with Jesus.

### **ACTION (How could we live this out?)**

#### **1. Recognize Jesus for who He really is.**

- If you haven't taken that step yet—really seeing Jesus as God, Savior, and the only one who can redeem us—that's where it starts.
- For those who are new to faith, the idea of following Jesus can feel overwhelming or complicated, but it doesn't have to be.

***<sup>9</sup> If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9 – NLT)***

- That's the invitation. Not easy, because believing He is Lord means surrendering your life to Him. But simple—because God has already done the work of salvation through Jesus.

#### **2. Look for people and places in need of hope.**

- When Jesus was born, the people of Israel were surrounded by chaos—political tension, cultural pressure, and personal pain.
- Scroll your feed, walk through your school, or look around, and you'll see it too: stress, anxiety, loneliness, and conflict everywhere.
- This week don't walk past it. Pay attention.
  - Ask yourself—Who is God putting in my path? Who's hurting? Who feels left out? Where do I see something that's just not right?
  - As you notice, write down at least one person or situation that God brings to your heart.
  - Take a few minutes each day to pray for that person or situation, asking God to show you if there might be an

opportunity for you to bring His hope into that person's life or that situation.

### **3. Be a voice and presence of peace.**

- What does it look like to be a voice and presence of peace?
  - Instead of adding to the drama, gossip, or negativity that's already swirling around, we can be people who speak life.
  - When someone is being talked about, we can choose not to participate.
  - When tensions are high, we can be the ones who try to calm things down rather than escalate them.
  - It also means being present in ways that bring comfort to others.
- This week look for at least one opportunity to be a voice and presence of peace.
  - Ask yourself: How can I bring Jesus' peace into this situation?