***“Studying the Southern Kingdom Prophets”—Micah 5, a Ruler from Bethlehem***

**It is particularly amazing that the birthplace of the Messiah, an insignificant little hamlet in the Judean countryside, was prophesied-about over 700 years before He was born. And this prophecy was well documented in the Septuagint Translation of the O. T. in 270 B. C, centuries in advance of His coming to earth.**

1. **Please note that verse 1 is actually the last verse in chapter 4 in the Hebrew text. Re-visit the implications of the “rod on the cheek” phrase.**
	1. **Could this be a reference to Zedekiah?**
		1. **Compare the “apparent contradiction” of Jeremiah 32:4, where Jeremiah predicted that Zedekiah would “see the King of Babylon,” with Ezekiel 12:1, where Ezekiel told Zedekiah that “he would die in Babylon.”**
			1. **Josephus tells us that Zedekiah thought these two predictions were inconsistent, and he chose to believe neither. Discuss how they were, indeed, exactly accurate.**
			2. **See also Jeremiah 39:6 and 52:10-11.**
	2. **Could this be Jesus? Discuss “goings forth from of old, from everlasting.” Review John 1:13 and Colossians 1:16-17.**
		1. **See also Psalm 90:2 and Proverbs 8:22-23.**
		2. **“He came forth from the Father”—John 16:28.**
		3. **“Before Abraham was I Am”—John 8:58.**
		4. **“His voice was the burning bush”—Exodus 3:14.**
		5. **Where does the Bible tell us that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the “Beginning and the End?”** [**Revelation 22:13**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+22:13&t1=en_nas)**.**
		6. **Bring-in John 17:5.**
			1. **See also Luke 1:31.**
		7. **How do we know that before Bethlehem, Jesus was the creator of all things? See** [**John 1:1-3**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=John+1:1-3&t1=en_nas)**.**
		8. **In the Old Testament, Jesus appeared as “God Made Visible,” or “The Angel of the Lord,” a Theophany, or Christophany, where individuals have had a face-to-face with an encounter with the LORD. List some.**
			1. **Genesis 16:7-13, JESUS TALKS TO HAGAR.**
			2. **Genesis 18:1-5, JESUS APPEARS TO ABRAHAM.**
			3. [**Genesis 32:24-32**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+32:24-32&t1=en_nas)**, JESUS WRESTLES WITH JACOB.**
			4. [**Joshua 5:13-15**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Joshua+5:13-15&t1=en_nas)**, JESUS BATTLES AT JERICHO.**
			5. [**Judges 6:11-12,**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Judges+6:11-24&t1=en_nas) **JESUS APPEARS TO GIDEON and** [**Judges 13:8-24**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Judges+13:8-24&t1=en_nas)**, JESUS APPEARS TO SAMSON’S FATHER.**
			6. **Daniel 3: 23-25, JESUS IN THE FIERY FURNACE.**
			7. **I Peter 1:20, JESUS WAS BEFORE TIME and** [**Ephesians 1:4**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ephesians+1:4&t1=en_nas)**.**
				1. **Use Psalm 90:2, Isaiah 9:6-7 and Proverbs 8:23-25.**
	3. **Could this be a parallel with Jesus’ brutal treatment at the crucifixion? Use Isaiah 50:6.**
2. **What other “so-called” contradictions ABOUT THE MESSIAH appear in Scripture?**
	1. **That He would be a Nazarene; see Matthew 2:23, and Isaiah 11:1; see Isaiah 11:1, where the literal spelling of the word, “branch,” would be, “NZR,” or NaZaReth.,**
		1. **See Jeremiah 33:15 and Zechariah 6:12.**
	2. **That He would be “called out of Egypt.” Examine Hosea 11:1.**
	3. **Called out of Egypt—use Matthew 2:13-23 and Jeremiah 31:15.**
	4. **That He would be called “the Branch”—Isaiah 4:2.**
	5. **What other prophecies came true about Jesus?**
		1. **Royalty from David’s lineage—Jeremiah 23:5**. **and 33:15**.
		2. **Servant of Jehovah—Zechariah 2:8.**
		3. **Will build the Temple—Zechariah 6:12.**
		4. **Born of a virgin—Isaiah 7:14 =Matthew 1:18.**
		5. **Born in Bethlehem—Micah 5:2=Matthew 2:1-6.**
		6. **Taken to Egypt—Hosea 11:1=Matthew 2:15.**
		7. **Heal the sick and make people whole—Isaiah 53:4-5 =Matthew 8:14-17 ,**
		8. **Would be crucified—Psalm 22:14-17= Matthew 27:31.**
3. **Would die for our sins—Isaiah 53=John 1:29, 11:49-52.**
4. **Would rise from the dead—Psalm 16:10=Matthew 28:5-6.**
	1. **Discuss those three apparent “inconsistencies”—Messiah born in Bethlehem, Messiah a Nazarene, Messiah called out of Egypt.**
5. **Verse 2’s “come forth to Me” implies what**?
	* 1. **Refer to Ephesians 1:4 and Acts 2:23.**
6. **Why is verse 2 one of the most important prophetic verses in the entire Bible**?
	1. **Where is Bethlehem Ephrathah?**
		1. **Note other Bethlehem’s in the Bible. See Joshua 9:15.**
		2. **Is this the birthplace of David? Refer to Luke 2:4, 11and John 7:42.**
		3. **Discuss David’s mother and father. Nitzevet and Jesse.**
		4. **Review that Micah’s passage from Micah 5 was quoted by the chief priests and teachers of the law when Herod asked about the birth of the Messiah in** [**Matthew 2:5-6**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+2:5-6&t1=en_nas)**.**
	2. **What does the name “Bethlehem” mean? See John 6:35. Bethlehem means *House of Bread*, and Jesus is the Bread of Life.**
		1. **Compare this with what Jesus called Himself, the bread of life, in John 6:35-38.**
	3. **What about the meaning of the word, “*Ephrath*ah?”**
		1. **Was it a small village?**  yes
	4. **Compare Micah 5:2 with Isaiah 7:14.**
7. **Discuss the reign of Jesus. Refer to 2 Samuel 7:16,** .**Malachi 1:11, and 14.**
	1. **Review Luke 1: 31-35.**
8. **Reference the birth of Jesus with a review of the Magi. Use Psalm 72:10, 68:29,**

**Jeremiah 39:3, Daniel 4:9 and 5:11.**

* 1. **Why was Herod alarmed at their appearance? Reference Matthew 2:1-12.**



**Rome versus Parthia** (Parthian Empire 250 B.C.-224 A.D.)

The Romans and Parthians fought a series of wars beginning with Crassus' invasion in 52-53 BC and ending with Macrinus' ignominious defeat and retreat in 217 AD. During this time it became clear to both sides that a natural boundary existed in northern Mesopotamia beyond which it was difficult, if not impossible, for either side to maintain a permanent foothold. The Parthians were generally less aggressive than the Romans, and generally sought to maintain the status-quo, particularly with regard to Armenia, in part because they were nearly constantly engaged in suppressing internal rebellions, fighting civil wars, or defending their eastern borders. The Romans invaded Parthian territory under Crassus, Mark Antony, Nero, Trajan, Lucius Verus, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Macrinus. The only lasting result of these invasions was the takeover of part of northern Mesopotamia by Trajan in 116 AD, a permanent loss to Parthia which was enlarged under Lucius Verus in 165 AD.

1. **Explain the phrase, “who is in labor has given birth.” THIS GOES FAR BEYOND THE TRAVAIL OF MARY TO “THE TRAVAIL” OF THE WOMAN WHOSE SEED WAS PREDICTED IN GENESIS 3:15.**
	1. **This passage is paralleled in Revelation 12:4-6 and Matthew 24:21.**
	2. **Examine the idea that Jesus is the “shepherd.” Use 2 Samuel 5:2 and Isaiah 40:11.**
	3. **What is the “Shepherd Trilogy?”**
		1. **Psalm 22—“The Good Shepherd” who lays down His life for the sheep.**
		2. **Psalm 23—“The Great Shepherd” who keeps His sheep, even today.**
		3. **Psalm 24—“The Chief Shepherd” who is coming in glory.**
	4. **Summarize John 10”s description of “The Shepherd.”**
		1. **John 10: 11, 15, 17, and 18.**
		2. **John 10:14.**
2. **Describe how this “shepherd” I linked with “peace.” See Ephesian 2:14.**
3. **Who is the “Assyrian?”**
	1. **Compare with the Egyptian/Assyrian Pharaoh who held Israel in captivity. See Isaiah 52:4 and Exodus 1:8-10.**
	2. **Compare with Sennacherib of the Assyrian army fame.**
	3. **Examine Isaiah 10:5, 10: 24, 14:25-26, Joel 3, Zechariah 12 and 14—the Tribulation.**
	4. **Who are the seven shepherds and eight princely men? Refer to Revelation 17:11.**
		1. **Does this set of numbers mean “adequacy?” Use Proverbs 6:16-19 and Ecclesiastes 11:1-2.**
		2. **Could this refer to “near history?”** .
		3. **Could this mean an “indefinite number?” See Job 5:19.**
		4. **Could the prophet mean the chiefs of the Medes and Babylonians who took Nineveh?**
		5. **Some believe these numbers refer to the invasion of Judea by Cambyses, when the Lord raised up against him the seven magi. Discuss.** .
		6. **Could the men be David in the midst, Adam, Seth, Methuselah, on his right hand (Kimchi has it, Seth, Enoch, and Methuselah), and Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, on his left hand; and the eight principal men are, Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zedekiah (in Kimchi and Rabbot it is Hezekiah), Elijah, and the Messiah**
		7. **Could these be men raised to support Jesus’ New Testament ministry?**
		8. **Could these be writers of the New Testament?**
4. **Could these be the seven angels in Revelation 16 and 18?**
5. **Verse 6, what is the land of Nimrod? Review Genesis 10:10.**
6. **Who is the remnant of Jacob?**
7. **What is the dew?**
8. **Verse 8 implies a glorious destiny for Israel. Has it happened yet?**
	1. **See also Deuteronomy 28:13.**
	2. **When will Jesus restore Israel?** **Use Hosea 5:15.**
9. **Re-state the promise of verse 9**.
10. **Verse 10 portrays a total reliance on God is demanded. Use Isaiah 47:6-9 and Deuteronomy 17:16.**
11. **Discuss the phrase “in that day.”**
12. **How does God execute vengeance on the enemies of Israel? Refer to Psalm 2, Joel 2, and Habakkuk 1:5.**
13. **Sum-up the lesson from Micah 5.**

**And, here are the promises…**

**Micah 7:18, “Who *is* a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights *in* mercy.”**

**Colossians 1:16-17, “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist**.”

# Micah 6:8, “He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”

**\*\*\*\*\*AND A JEWEL OF THE BIBLE! \*\*\*\***

**Micah 5:2, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
*Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah,
*Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me
The One to be Ruler in Israel,
Whose goings forth *are* from of old,
From everlasting.”**

***\*\*\* (Insert: Nitzevet, Mother of David) \*\*\****

***Save me, O G‑d, for the waters threaten to engulf me. . .***

***I am wearied by my calling out, and my throat is dry. I’ve lost hope in waiting. . .***

***More numerous than the hairs on my head are those who hate me without reason. . .***

***Must I then repay what I have not stolen?***

***Mighty are those who would cut me down, who are my enemies without cause. . .***

***O G‑d, You know my folly, and my unintended wrongs are not hidden from You. . .***

***It is for Your sake that I have borne disgrace, that humiliation covers my face.***

***I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother’s sons.***

***Out of envy for Your House, they ravaged me; the disgraces of those who revile You have fallen upon me. . .***

***Those who sit by the gate talk about me. I am the taunt of drunkards. . .***

***Disgrace breaks my heart, and I am left deathly sick.***

***I hope for solace, but there is none; and for someone to comfort me, but I find no one.***

***They put gall into my meal, and give me vinegar to quench my thirst. . .* (Psalm 69)**

This psalm describes the life of a poor, despised and lowly individual, who lacks even a single friend to comfort him. It is the voice of a tormented soul who has experienced untold humiliation and disgrace. Through no apparent cause of his own, he is surrounded by enemies who wish to cut him down; even his own brothers are strangers to him, ravaging and reviling him. Amazingly, this is the voice of the mighty King David, righteous and beloved servant of G‑d, feared and awed by all. What caused King David to face such an intense ignominy, to be shunned by his own brothers in his home (“I have become a stranger to my brothers”), by the Torah sages who sat in judgment at the gates (“those who sit by the gate talk about me”) and by the drunkards on the street corners (“I am the taunt of drunkards”)? What had King David done to arouse such ire and contempt? And was there no one, at this time in his life, who would provide him with love, comfort and friendship? **This psalm, in which King David passionately gives voice to the heaviest burdens of his soul, refers to a period of twenty-eight years, from his earliest childhood until he was coronated as king of the people of Israel by the prophet Samuel.**

David was born into the illustrious family of Yishai (Jesse), who served as the head of the *Sanhedrin* (supreme court of Torah law), and was one of the most distinguished leaders of his generation. Yishai was a man of such greatness that the Talmud (Shabbat 55b) observes that “Yishai was one of only four righteous individuals who died solely due to the instigation of the serpent”—i.e., only because death was decreed upon the human race when Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge at the serpent’s instigation, not due to any sin or flaw of his own. **David was the youngest in his family, which included seven other illustrious and charismatic brothers.** Yet, when David was born, this prominent family greeted his birth with utter derision and contempt. As David describes quite literally in the psalm, **“I was a stranger to my brothers, a foreigner to my mother’s sons. . . they put gall in my meal, and gave me vinegar to quench my thirst.”**

Legend says: David was not permitted to eat with the rest of his family, but was assigned to a separate table in the corner. He was given the task of shepherd because “they hoped that a wild beast would come and kill him while he was performing his duties,” and for this reason was sent to pasture in dangerous areas full of lions and bears.3 Only one individual throughout David’s youth was pained by his unjustified plight, and felt a deep and unconditional bond of love for the child whom she alone knew was undoubtedly pure. **This was King David’s mother, Nitzevet bat Adael**, who felt the intensity of her youngest child’s pain and rejection as her own. Torn and anguished by David’s unwarranted degradation, yet powerless to stop it, Nitzevet stood by the sidelines, in solidarity with him, shunned herself, as she too cried rivers of tears, awaiting the time when justice would be served. It would take **twenty-eight long** years of assault and rejection, suffering and degradation until that justice would finally begin to materialize.

**Why was the young David so reviled by his brothers and people?**

To understand the hatred directed toward David, we need to investigate the inner workings behind the events, the secret episodes that **aren’t recorded in the prophetic books but are alluded to in Midrashim**, the **midrashim** is the body of exegesis of Torah texts along with homiletic stories David’s father, Yishai, was the grandson of Boaz and Ruth. After several years of marriage to his wife, Nitzevet, and after having raised several virtuous children, Yishai began to entertain personal doubts about his ancestry. True, he was the leading Torah authority of his day, but his grandmother Ruth was a convert from the nation of Moab, as related in the book of Ruth. During Ruth’s lifetime, many individuals were doubtful about the legitimacy of her marriage to Boaz. The **Torah specifically forbids an Israelite to marry a Moabite convert**, since this is the nation that cruelly refused the Jewish people passage through their land, or food and drink to purchase, when they wandered in the desert after being freed from Egypt. Boaz and the sages understood this law—as per the classic interpretation transmitted in the “Oral Torah”—as forbidding intermarriage with converted *male* Moabites (who were the ones responsible for the cruel conduct), while exempting female Moabite converts. With his marriage to Ruth, Boaz hoped to clarify and publicize this Torah law, which was still unknown to the masses. **Boaz died the night after his marriage with Ruth. Ruth had conceived and subsequently gave birth to their son Oved,** the father of Yishai. Some rabble-rousers at the time claimed that Boaz’s death verified that his marriage to Ruth the Moabite had indeed been forbidden. Time would prove differently. Once Oved (so called because he was a true *Oved*, servant of G‑d), and later Yishai and his offspring, were born, their righteous conduct and prestigious positions proved the legitimacy of their ancestry. It was impossible that men of such caliber could have descended from a forbidden union. However, later in his life, doubt gripped at Yishai’s heart, gnawing away at the very foundation of his existence. Being the sincere individual that he was, his integrity compelled him to action. If Yishai’s status was questionable, he was not permitted to remain married to his wife, a veritable Israelite. Disregarding the personal sacrifice, Yishai decided the only solution would be to separate from her, no longer engaging in marital relations. Yishai’s children were aware of this separation. After a number of years had passed, Yishai longed for a child whose ancestry would be unquestionable. His plan was to engage in relations with his Canaanite maidservant. He said to her: “I will be freeing you conditionally. If my status as a Jew is legitimate, then you are freed as a proper Jewish convert to marry me. If, however, my status is blemished and I have the legal status of a Moabite convert forbidden to marry an Israelite, I am not giving you your freedom; but as a *shifchah k’naanit*, a Canaanite maidservant, you may marry a Moabite convert.” The maidservant was aware of the anguish of her mistress, Nitzevet. She understood her pain in being separated from her husband for so many years. She knew, as well, of Nitzevet’s longing for more children. The empathetic maidservant secretly approached Nitzevet and informed her of Yishai’s plan, suggesting a bold counter plan. “Let us learn from your ancestress and replicate their actions. Switch places with me tonight, just as Leah did with Rachel,” she advised. With a prayer on her lips that her plan succeeds, Nitzevet took the place of her maidservant. That night, Nitzevet conceived. Yishai remained unaware of the switch.

After three months, Nitzevet’s pregnancy became obvious. Incensed, her sons wished to kill their apparently adulterous mother and the “illegitimate” fetus that she carried. Nitzevet, for her part, would not embarrass her husband by revealing the truth of what had occurred. Like her ancestress Tamar, who was prepared to be burned alive rather than embarrass Judah, Nitzevet chose a vow of silence. And like Tamar, Nitzevet would be rewarded for her silence with a child of greatness who would be the forebear of [Moshiach](http://www.chabad.org/library/moshiach/default_cdo/jewish/Moshiach-101.htm).

Unaware of the truth behind his wife’s pregnancy, but having compassion on her, Yishai ordered his sons not to touch her. “Do not kill her! Instead, let the child that will be born be treated as a lowly and despised servant. In this way everyone will realize that his status is questionable and, as an illegitimate child, he will not marry an Israelite.” From the time of his birth onwards, then, Nitzevet’s son was treated by his brothers as an abominable outcast. Noting the conduct of his brothers, the rest of the community assumed that this youth was a treacherous sinner full of unspeakable guilt. On the infrequent occasions that Nitzevet’s son would return from the pastures to his home in Beit Lechem (Bethlehem), he was shunned by the townspeople. If something was lost or stolen, he was accused as the natural culprit, and ordered, in the words of the psalm, to “repay what I have not stolen.” Eventually, the entire lineage of Yishai was questioned, as well as the basis of the original law of the Moabite convert. People claimed that all the positive qualities of Boaz became manifest in Yishai and his illustrious seven sons, while all the negative character traits from Ruth the Moabite clung to this despicable youngest son.

**Anointing King David**

We are first introduced to David when the prophet Samuel is commanded to go to Beit Lechem to anoint a new king, to replace the rejected King Saul. Samuel arrives in Beit Lechem, and the elders of the city come out to greet him, nervous at this unusual and unexpected visit, since the elderly prophet had stopped circulating throughout the land. The elders feared that Samuel had heard about a grievous sin that was taking place in their city. Perhaps he had come to rebuke them over the behavior of Yishai’s despised shepherd boy, living in their midst. Samuel declared, however, that he had come in peace, and asked the elders, and Yishai and his sons, to join him for a sacrificial feast. As an elder, it was natural for Yishai to be invited; but when his sons were inexplicably also invited, they worried that perhaps the prophet had come to publicly reveal the embarrassing and illegitimate origins of their brother. Unbeknownst to them, Samuel would anoint the new king of Israel at this feast. All that had been revealed to the prophet at this point was that the new king would be a son of Yishai. *When they came, Samuel saw Eliav (Yishai’s oldest son), and he thought, “Surely G‑d’s anointed stands before Him!”* *But G‑d said to Samuel, “Don’t look at his appearance or his great height, for I have rejected him. G‑d does not see with mere eyes, like a man does. G‑d sees the heart!”* *Then Yishai called Avinadav (his second son), and made him pass before Samuel. He said: “G‑d did not choose this one either.”Yishai made Shammah pass, and Samuel said, “G‑d has not chosen this one either.”* *Yishai had his seven sons pass before Samuel. Samuel said to Yishai, “G‑d has not chosen any of them.”* *At last Samuel said to Yishai, “Are there no lads remaining?”* *He answered, “A small one is left; he is taking care of the sheep.”* *So Samuel said to him, “Send for him and have him brought; we will not stir until he comes here.”* *So he sent for him and had him brought. He was of ruddy complexion with red hair, beautiful eyes, and handsome to look at.* *G‑d said: “Rise up, anoint him, for this is the one!”* ([I Samuel 16:6](http://www.chabad.org/15845#v6)–12)

**The Small One, Left Behind**

As Samuel laid his eyes on Yishai’s eldest son, he was certain that this was the future king of Israel. Tall, handsome and distinguished, Eliav was the one whom Samuel was ready to anoint, until G‑d reprimanded Samuel to look not at the outside but at the inside. No longer did Samuel make any assumptions of his own, but he waited to be told who was to become the next king. All the seven sons of Yishai had passed before Samuel, and none of them had been chosen. “Are these all the lads?” Samuel asked. Samuel prophetically chose his words carefully. Had he asked if these were all Yishai’s *sons*, Yishai would have answered affirmatively, that there were no more of *his sons*, since David was not given the status of a son? Instead, Yishai answered, “A small one is left; he is taking care of the sheep.” David’s status was small in Yishai’s eyes. He was hoping that Samuel would allow David to remain where he was, out of trouble, tending to the sheep in the faraway pastures. But Samuel ordered that David immediately be summoned to the feast. A messenger was dispatched to David who, out of respect for the prophet, first went home to wash himself and change his clothes. Unaccustomed to seeing David home at such a time, Nitzevet inquired, “Why did you come home in the middle of the day?” David explained the reason, and Nitzevet answered, “If so, I too am accompanying you.” As David arrived, Samuel saw a man “of ruddy complexion, with red hair, beautiful eyes, and handsome to look at.” David’s physical appearance alludes to the differing aspects of his personality. His ruddiness suggests a warlike nature, while his eyes and general appearance indicate kindness and gentility. At first Samuel doubted whether David could be the one worthy of the kingship, a forerunner of the dynasty that would lead the Jewish people to the end of time. He thought to himself, “This one will shed blood as did the red-headed Esau.” G‑d saw, however, that David’s greatness was that he would direct his aggressiveness toward positive aims. G‑d commanded Samuel, “My anointed one is standing before you, and you remain seated? Arise and anoint David without delay! For he is the one I have chosen! As Samuel held the horn of oil, it bubbled, as if it could not wait to drop onto David’s forehead. When Samuel anointed him, the oil hardened and glistened like pearls and precious stones, and the horn remained full. As Samuel anointed David, the sound of weeping could be heard from outside the great hall. It was the voice of Nitzevet, David’s lone supporter and solitary source of comfort.

Her twenty-eight long years of silence in the face of humiliation were finally coming to a close. At last, all would see that the lineage of her youngest son was pure, undefiled by any blemish. Finally, the anguish and humiliation that she and her son had borne would come to an end. Facing her other sons, Nitzevet exclaimed, “The stone that was reviled by the builders has now become the cornerstone!” ([Psalms 118:22)](http://www.chabad.org/16339#v22) Humbled, they responded, “This has come from G‑d; it was hidden from our eyes” (ibid. verse 23). Those in the hall cried out in unison, “Long live the king! Long live the king!” Within moments, the once-reviled shepherd boy became the anointed future king of Israel.

**Nitzevet’s Legacy**.

But it was undoubtedly from his mother that the young David absorbed the fortitude and courage to face his adversaries. From the moment he was born, and during his most tender years, it was Nitzevet who, by example, taught him the essential lesson of valuing every individual’s dignity and refraining from embarrassing another, regardless of the personal consequences. It was she who displayed a silent but stoic bravery and dignity in the face of the gravest hardship.

It is from Nitzevet that King David absorbed the strength, born from an inner confidence, to disregard the callous treatment of the world and find solace in the comfort of one’s Maker. It was this strength that would fortify King David to defeat his staunchest antagonists and his most treacherous enemies, as he valiantly fought against the mightiest warriors on behalf of his people.

Nitzevet taught her young child to find strength in following the path of one’s inner convictions, irrespective of the cruelty that might be hurled at him. Her display of patient confidence in the Creator that justice would be served gave David the inner peace and solace that he would need, over and over again, in confronting the formidable challenges in his life. Rather than succumb to his afflictions, rather than become the individual who was shunned by his tormentors, David learned from his mother to stand proud and dignified, feeling consolation in communicating with his Maker in the open pastures.

She demonstrated to him, as well, the necessity of boldness while pursuing the right path. When the situation would call for it, personal risks must be taken. Without her bold action in taking the place of her maidservant that fateful night, the great soul of her youngest child, David, the forebear of Moshiach, would never have descended to this world.

The soul-stirring psalms composed by King David in his greatest hours of need eloquently describe his suffering and heartache, as well as his faith and conviction. The book of Psalms gives a voice to each of us, and has become the balm to soothe all of our wounds, as we too encounter the many personal and communal hardships of life in *galut* (exile).

As we say these verses, our voices mesh with Nitzevet’s, with King David’s, and with all the voices of those past and present who have experienced unjustified pain, in beseeching our Maker for that time when the “son (descendant) of David” will usher in the era of redemption, and true justice will suffuse creation.

# King David said ”In sin did my MOTHER conceive me”, but it’s no support for a sinful nature Ps. 51:5

**Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me (Ps. 51:5).** This verse concerns two people – **King David and his mother\*)**. No one else is spoken about so we can’t assume that all the people in the world are referred to here. The event spoken of is the **conception** of David and not the birth of David, and  David is not saying that he was born as a sinner but possibly that his mother was in sin when she got pregnant. It could very well be that she was sinning when she conceived him, and a case could be made that this verse is talking about the defilement of David’s mother – because she was previously the wife (or concubine) of a heathen king.

The book of psalms is a **poetic book** and this means that it can be taken literally or figuratively depending on the context, so we must therefore be careful so we don’t end up starting a new doctrine based on pure poetry. It’s never a good idea to take a verse from Psalms, Proverbs or other poetic texts, to make a doctrine out of it which is contrary to other more clear verses in the Bible. We can reach all kinds of crazy conclusions with such methods. This particular verse in Psalms has often been used as an attempt to prove that David and ALL people under the sun are born in sin, but it fails miserably.

**Some facts concerning David and his mother**

David had two half-sisters (1 Chron. 2:13-16), and the father was not Jesse but Nahash (2 Sam. 17:25, 2 Sam. 10:2) who was an Ammonite king (1 Sam. 11:1; 1 Sam. 12:12). David’s father might not have been Jesse, and/or David’s mother might have been a second wife of Jesse. The first wife of Jesse would have been considered superior to his second wife, and this would explain why David’s half brothers viewed themselves as superior to David and this may also explain why David was not called before Samuel among the other sons, as he was possibly viewed as an illegitimate child (1 Sam. 16:11). Maybe David’s mother was not married to Jesse when she became pregnant, or maybe she was still the concubine of, or married to Nahash when she conceived David. It might also be as per [this story](http://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/280331/jewish/Nitzevet-Mother-of-David.htm#footnoteRef4a280331), which reminds the reader of Jacob and Leah + her sister Rachel. If that story is true, then Jesse is indeed David’s father without even knowing it due to a sneaky plan carried out by his wife, and David’s brothers would regard him as an illegitimate and hated son of their mother.

Psalm 69:8 **I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children**.— 19 Thou hast known my reproach, and **my shame, and my dishonour:** mine adversaries are all before thee.—21 They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.22 Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.

David was not blaming his sin on his birth, but he was simply stating that even the circumstances related to his birth were surrounded by sin, and he also says that he was ”wonderfully” and ”marvelously” made by God in the womb (Ps. 139:13-14). David is in Psalms 51 speaking to the Lord but he is not trying to ask God for forgiveness for that he (David) had the nerve to be born with a sinful nature – because that would hardly be David’s fault. On the contrary, it would be something that he could blame GOD for IF it were true – which it isn’t.

Psalm 22:9But **thou art he that took me out of the womb:** thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts.**10I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly.**

Psalm 139:14 I will praise thee; for **I am fearfully and wonderfully made**: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

David had two half-sisters (Zeruiah, Abigail).....:1CHR 2:13-16 13 “And Jesse begat his firstborn Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third, 14 Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, 15 Ozem the sixth, David the seventh: 16 Whose sisters were Zeruiah, and Abigail. And the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three. 17 And Abigail bare Amasa: and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmeelite.”

....and the father of David's half-sisters was not Jesse, but Nahash: 2Sam 17:25 “And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man's son, whose name was Ithra an Israelite, that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruiah Joab's mother.”Nahash, the father of Zeruiah and Abigal, David's half-sisters, was an Ammonite king.

1Sam 11:1 “Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabeshgilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.”

1Sam 12:12 “And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king.” David's father was Jesse, not Nahash. Zeruiah and Abigal were David's half-sisters through his mother's previous marriage to Nahash. This would also help explain why Nahash showed kindness to David, perhaps out of respect for David's mother, Nahash’s former wife and the mother of two of Nahash's children.

2 Sam 10:2 “Then said David, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.” David's mother was most likely the second wife of Jesse, the first wife being the mother of David's half-brothers. Jesse’s first wife's standing before the `righteousness of the law', (her not having been married to, or the concubine of, a heathen king, as was David’s mother), would have been superior to that of David's mother, and explains why David's half-brothers, Jesse's other sons, would have felt they were superior to David, and why he would be accused of being prideful, for thinking he was as good as them....

1Sam 17:28-30 28 “And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? And with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. 29 And David said, 'what have I now done?' Is there not a cause? 30 And he turned from him toward another and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.”...and why David was not considered, by his father Jesse, as `true' a son as his half-brothers. Samuel had called Jesse and his sons, and thus expected `all' his sons, to the sacrifice (1Sam 16:5, 11). Jesse, having been told to bring `his sons' by a prophet of the Lord everyone feared (1Sam 16:4), was confident he had obeyed the prophet, even knowing he did not bring David....1Sam 16:11 “And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said345 unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.”....which would be consistent with God's sometimes choosing that which men esteemed as worthless (the `least') to be the greatest: (Gideon- Jud 6:15; King Saul- 1Sam 9:21; Jesus- Mt 2:6, Lk 9:48) David's mother was apparently a Jewish woman, because `no Ammonite shall enter the congregation of the Lord to the 10th generation’ (Deu 23:3), and yet in PS 86:16 and PS 116:16, David refers to himself as "the son of thy handmaid", which would seem to testify to his mother's relationship with the Lord. David's mother was, in the eyes of Jewish law, considered `defiled' by her previous relationship to an Ammonite.

**Nu 25:1, 2; De 7:3, 4; 1Ki 11:2-4, Ezr 9:2; Ne 13:23, 25; 2Co 6:14-17**