***The Hope of Every Nation and Every Person is the Coming Prophet, Priest, King***

**Bethlehem, the City of Hope**

**I. Isaiah and Micah, Contemporaries of Diverse Background**

* **Isaiah: royal linage (maybe from Anathoth), born into wealth, educated, primarily addressed the kings and their abuses along with their evil coalitions**
* **Isaiah’s Message: Quit trusting in political intrigue or foreign kings but instead trust completely in God**
* **Isaiah’s Prophetic Hope: Despite the failure of the kings of Judah and Israel, God has preserved a remnant and out of that remnant of faithful followers God will bring forth His Promised Davidic Messiah-King. The Messiah will suffer before receiving His everlasting Kingdom as a reward for His faithfulness.**

**II. The Introduction of Micah, Micah 1:1**

* **The source of his oracles: Divinely given by the Lord**
* **The identity of the prophet: Micah of Moresheth – likely of common lineage**
* **The time of his prophetic ministry: The reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah**
* **The focus of his prophecy: Samaria and Jerusalem**

**III. The Warnings of Micah**

* **Judgment is coming because of:
1. the idolatry of Judah and Israel (1:2-7)
2. unethical land deals (2:1-5)
3. ill treatment of travelers, soldiers returning from battle, widows and orphans (2:6-12)
4. the leaders of Judah and Israel allow injustice to reign (3:1-12)
5. they have forgotten all that the Lord has done (6:1-5)
6. they have become rich by cheated others through unethical business practices (6:9-7:6)**

**IV. The Promises of Micah**

* **God will preserve a remnant even in the midst of His judgment of the evil of Judah and Israel (2:13-14)**
* **God will institute a just, peaceful and everlasting kingdom and the whole earth will come to Jerusalem to celebrate. The abused, the poor and the destitute will have a share in this everlasting kingdom. (4:1-8)**
* **God will send the nation into exile in Babylon because of their evil but He will bring the remnant back from captivity and establish her again in the land (4:10-13)**
* **God is a light and our salvation. God will demonstrate His righteousness and truth. He will keep all of His promises because He is a gracious God who forgives sins and delights in His unchanging love. (7:7-20)**

**V. God’s Clarion Call on Our Lives, Micah 6:6-8**

* **God does not delight in heartless religious expression (6:6-7)**
* **Instead God requires that we**
	+ **Do justice**
	+ **Love kindness**
	+ **Walk humbly with Him**

**VI. The Promises of the Coming King, Micah 5:1-15**

* **God will bring forth His anointed King**
* **Surprisingly this coming king will be born in Bethlehem**
* **He will restore Jerusalem**
* **People from every nation will be brought under His rule**
* **He will bring final judgment to all the evil nations who rebellion against His reign**

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**More than A King, He is Our Majestic Sovereign**

**More than A King, He is OUR Majestic Sovereign (Header Slide)**

* **Slide 2**
* **Read Luke 2: (Slide )**
* **Bethlehem and Herod the Great**

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| **Study: Christian population shifts from Europe** By RACHEL ZOLL AP Religion Writer |
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http://analytics.apnewsregistry.com/analytics/v2/image.svc/AP/RWS/hosted.ap.org/MAI/V0826-2011-12-19T1616Z/E/prod/AT/ANEW YORK (AP) -- The Christian population has shifted dramatically over the last century away from Europe to Africa, Asia and the Americas, yet Christians overall remain the largest religious group in the world, according to a new analysis released Monday.Europe is home to about one-quarter of the world's Christians, compared to two-thirds a century ago, according to the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life. About one-quarter of the global Christian population can now be found in sub-Saharan Africa, while 37 percent live in the Americas and 13 percent reside in the Asia-Pacific region.Brazil has twice as many Roman Catholics as Italy, while Nigeria has more than twice as many Protestants as Germany, where the Protestant Reformation began, the study's authors said.Despite these changes, Christians are still the world's largest faith group, with nearly 2.2 billion adherents. Muslims comprise the second-largest group, with about 1.6 billion people, or slightly less than a quarter of the global population, the study's authors said.Pew compiled the study from national censuses, population surveys, estimates from church groups and other sources in which respondents identified their religion. Analysts compared the findings to surveys from 1910, including data from the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Mass.The shifting Christian population has been a major concern of church leaders, as they try to build stronger ties with fellow believers across geographical boundaries and reconcile differing views of the Bible.As just one example, mainline Protestants in the developing world tend to be more theologically conservative than church members in the United States and Western Europe. The tensions have been most visible in the global Anglican Communion since 2003, when the Episcopal Church, which is the Anglican body in the United States, elected the first openly gay bishop, V. Gene Robinson of New Hampshire. The 77-million-member fellowship has been fracturing ever since.Pew researchers concluded that the Christian population is so widely distributed that no specific region can claim to be the center of the faith.The smallest concentration of Christians can be found in the area where the faith began, the Mideast and North Africa, where Christians are only about 4 percent of the population. Egypt has the largest Christian population in the region, with about 4.3 million Christians, mostly Orthodox, who have been targets of violence, especially in the upheaval since the fall of President Hosni Mubarak.Still, all but 10 percent of the world's Christians live in countries where they are the religious majority, according to the study.The countries with the largest number of Christians are the United States, Brazil, Mexico and Russia. Christians comprise nearly 80 percent of the U.S. population, and about 74 percent of Russian citizens.About 5 percent of China's residents, or 67 million people, are Christian, according to the study's authors. However, accurately estimating China's Christian population is notoriously difficult, due to the mix of government-sanctioned churches and grassroots house churches that operate illegally underground. |