

Micah 4:11 - 5:6

This reading includes the Messianic prophecy:

Micah 5:2 - "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

This of course relates to Hanukkah and Christ's conception.

Also this Haftarah refers to "seven shepherds and eight principal men" who waste the land of Assyria and the land of Nimrod, perhaps seeing in it a reflection of Abraham's defeat of Chederloamer and the four kings and the rescue of Lot in Genesis 14.

Micah 5:6 - "And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders."

The previous chapter also coincides with Genesis 14 story of Melchizedek as King of Salem (Peace) blessing Abraham.

Micah 4:3 - "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Who are the seven shepherds in Micah 5:5?

In a tradition linked to the Feast of Tabernacles, the seven shepherds of Israel: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David - are invited to participate.

During Sukkot the souls of the seven great leaders of Israel – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and King David – actually leave the Garden of Eden to partake in the divine light of the earthly Sukkot (Zohar - Emor 103a).

Jewish mystical texts explain that each of the seven Ushpizin correspond to a fundamental spiritual pathway (sefirah) through which the world is metaphysically nourished and perfected (Derech Hashem 3:2:5, Zohar Chadash, Toldot 26c; cf. Zohar 2:256a).

- Abraham represents love and kindness
- Isaac represents restraint and personal strength
- Jacob represents beauty and truth
- Moses represents eternity and dominance through Torah
- Aaron represents empathy and receptivity to divine splendor
- Joseph represents holiness and the spiritual foundation
- David represents the establishment of the kingdom of Heaven on Earth

These are all combined in Messiah.

Who are the eight principal men?

Seven represents the week, the days of linear time. The number eight represents resurrection, the “extra” day outside of time. “The eight principal men” and by extension the “remnant of Jacob” also mentioned - could be a reference to the church, and Messiah working through his body on earth.