

The Gospel Project for Adults, Winter 2014-15  
Extended Instructional Approaches for Alternate Session

***Introduction: Connect to one of the central points of the lesson.***

This Sunday is often a time for out-of-town guests and visitors. So begin with an easy, fun activity and connect your group members to one of the themes in this Christmas lesson from Micah 5. *Hope* is an important emotion as well as a state of mind. Get your members working together in the following active learning technique:

Explain to the class that this is a light-hearted competition. Divide the class into groups of 4-6 participants. Each group is to make a list of things that they associate with “hope” when the Christmas season comes to mind. Your instructions should include the time limit (no more than two minutes) and that the longest list wins (not who has the best answers). For example, “I hope to share Christ with some family members.” Or “I hope she likes what I picked out.” Or “I hope my in-laws don’t stay too long.”

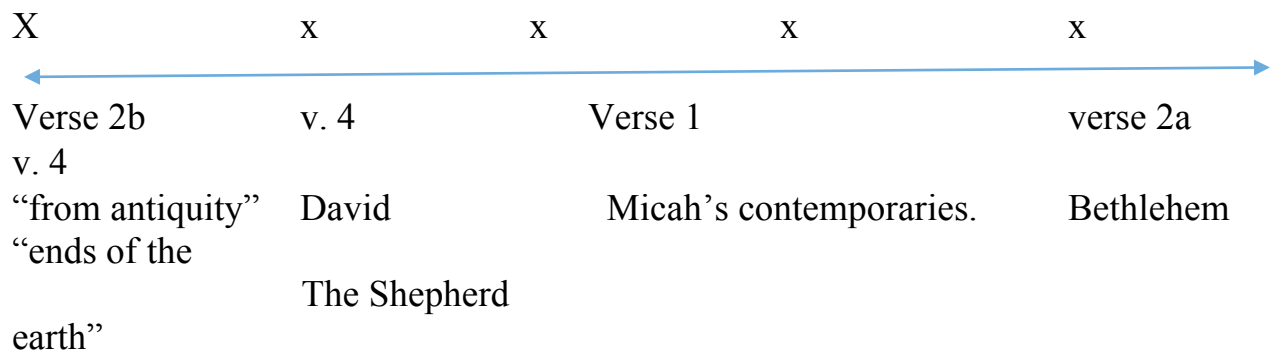
Ask who has the longest list. The winning group reads their list. Invite other groups to read their lists, omitting duplicate ideas.

**Transition...** “The original audience who heard this prophecy from Micah would soon be in desperate need of *hope of rescue*. But then, all of mankind throughout history has been hungry for hope.”

**Identify the theological ‘big picture’ concepts that are touched on in Micah 5.**

Do a Google search for a national park in Colorado Springs named The Garden of the Gods. Locate a picture that you can show your group of these breathtaking ‘red rocks.’ Now explain that while they are massive and imposing while you stand next to them, a visitor to Pike’s Peak has to really search the landscape to locate this outcropping of rock. (Search “Garden of the Gods” and “Pike’s Peak” on Google Images for numerous pictures from which to choose.)

Now connect this to the Scripture by saying the following: “Like the impressive contrast in this scene, Micah makes reference in this passage to the entirety of human history. *How you view it depends on where you are standing*. Please take your notecard that I gave you and plot out a timeline of history mentioned in these five verses...”



### Exploring for details:

In addition to the concept of hope, examine the passage for descriptors of Christ, the coming Messiah, being depicted by Micah:

Ruler (v. 2), Shepherd (v. 4), Strength (v. 4), Security (v. 4), and Peace (v. 5)

### Closer:

Read one of the many free online versions of Willa Cather’s short story, *The Christmas Burglar*. Summarize the events in the story, and say, “Like the main character in this story we are surrounded by folks who are spiritually starving and desperate. As Micah proclaimed in his day, Jesus offers, through Himself, a way home where we find restoration, security, and peace.”