

Read: Micah 5:2-5a

Christmas brings happy, noisy peace!

Micah 5:2,4,5

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel... He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God... And he will be our peace.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Peace and quiet.” Ever hear an adult complain that’s what they want? Have you found peace and quiet as you celebrate Christmas? Maybe the most peaceful part of it in your mind is when all the worshipers at church are holding lit candles and listening to the account of Jesus’ birth, or that moment when the wrapping paper is all cleaned up and everyone falls asleep in their beds. Peace and quiet.

But peace isn’t always quiet. The word God uses for peace is “shalom.” It’s a Hebrew word that means that everything is in its right place—just the way it should be. That’s why Jesus came, stepping out of his world and entering our world. That’s why he was born as a small child in one of the smallest towns, so that he could live the life God demands from us, pay the price for our sins and bring us back to him. That’s peace—but it’s not always quiet.

It’s like a shepherd standing in front of his flock. They’re safe and happy and eager for his voice. Do you hear him calling them to cool waters? Do you hear the joyful bleating and baa-ing of the sheep?

It’s like a mighty King protecting his people. The air rings with his promises that everything will be okay. Your whole body shakes with their clapping and cheering as they rejoice in his care.

And it’s like you. Maybe you had a “noisy” Christmas, filled with relatives and friends and crowded parties. Maybe it was noisy with problems and fights. Or maybe it was a bit quieter, and you didn’t have many people to celebrate it with.

But Jesus was there. The God who gave his life for you is still living with you. He’ll be with you when your home is filled with celebrating (or squabbling) loved ones, and he’ll be with you on the days you’re all alone. Sometimes it’ll be peaceful and sometimes noisy, but when Jesus is there as your Savior, you’ll always have peace.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Who is the loudest, noisiest person in your family? Is it a big person or a small person?
- God promised Jesus would be born in a small town called Bethlehem. What is a “big thing” God can do through “little you”?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Jesus is described as a shepherd here. How is Jesus like a shepherd?
- How did Jesus bring us peace?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- What makes it more difficult for you to feel close to God—the loud, busy times or the quiet and lonely times?
- What do you think it means that Jesus’ origins “were from of old”?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Lord, when you fill my life with people and busyness, help me proclaim your good news to them. When you fill my life with quiet times or loneliness, help me remember you’re there with me. But above all, fill me with your peace. Amen.