

Zion's Breadth and Depth in Victory

Micah 5:7-13

Introduction – The church today, along with the world, thinks about Christmas in a sentimental way. A babe in a manger, angels singing “Peace on earth” in a ‘little town of Bethlehem’, and gifts of frankincense (He probably exchanged that) and gold. Micah is dwelling on the One who will be born in Bethlehem as well (v 2) and speaks of Peace (v5), but this stirs quite different visions for him. As the aged Simeon said, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel,” (Luke 2:34).

Externally: Inevitable and Relentless Dominion (vv7-9) – Remnants, like small towns, can look so insignificant. So did Jesus Christ and His small band of disciples. So does the church in most history books, and in the mind of modern man today. But God is not acting ‘like a gentleman’, nor waiting to be invited. He has given His Son the world.

The Remnant of Jacob (v7 & 8) – These are the faithful, those who have believed on the One from Bethlehem (5:2). The church is therefore this ‘remnant’.

Dew From the Lord (v7) – The people of God will show up everywhere, like dew on the grass. They will not wait for the plans of man, for fallen man will never seek God. The nations will be as effective at keeping the gospel out as they are at keeping the weather out. The Spirit of God will blow where it wishes (John 3:8).

Like a Lion (v8) – The lion is a relentless force in his hunt, and who can stop him? In the same way, the church shall be among the unbelieving world - - hunting for souls - - and no one can stop her. In addition, it will tear apart the strongholds that imprison those souls and nations, treading them down through the unceasing roar of the gospel-herald.

Destroying Enemies (v9) – Paul makes clear that our battle is not against flesh and blood (Eph 6:12). Our weapons are not carnal (2 Cor 10:4-5), but this sword is intended to rip out hearts of stone. The point, then, of vv 7-9 is that the Great Commission will be accomplished. This is how the message of triumph began (4:1-5).

Internally: A Portrait of Sanctification (vv10-14) – Over and over, the Lord promises to ‘cut off’ and ‘destroy’ whatever we might have placed our trust in instead of Him. *“It is a great mercy to be deprived of those things in which we have reposed a confidence in competition with God, which we have made our arm, and after which we have gone a whoring from God”* – M. Henry. Not only has God given His Son the world, but the Bride He has selected is being purified and prepared for holiness.

“In that day” (v10) – Micah is still connecting all of these promises to the restoration which will take place ‘in the latter days’ of 4:1. These are the days of the Messiah, which began at the Incarnation and ministry of Jesus Christ and continue to this day as He rules at the right hand of God the Father. While we are still being sanctified, because God has promised it, it is as good as done (Heb 10:14, Rom 8:30).

Horses and Chariots (v10) – Messiah is our Peace (5:5) and we are to learn not to trust in our war-machines. This is not a call to pacifism, for David, who was a great military man, said the same thing (Psalm 20:7), trusting ultimately in the chariots of God (Psalm 68:17).

Cities and Strongholds (v11) – Messiah is our Peace and so we must not trust in our Towers of Babel to reach heaven or establish peace on earth. We do not become immortal because of our associations, our corporations, or our technological or medical accomplishments. When Jerusalem trusted in her walls but not in the Lord, the Lord tore down her walls.

Sorceries and Soothsayers (v12) – We have enjoyed a great time of economic prosperity in our country. Who gets the credit? Bill Clinton, Ronald Reagan, or Alan Greenspan – or how about the ‘hard-working people of America’? Our trust in the economy will be our economic ruin. But for the remnant, God will use this to teach and remind us that He is the only One to ultimately trust.

In the same way, we turn to all kinds of ‘sorceries’ for inner-peace, be they psychological or pseudo-religious in nature. Many Christians are like the Israelites in Egypt, who were brought out in a glorious Exodus, but still carry with them idols and idolatrous practices.

Images and Idols (v13-14) – Where are our idols? Whether actually manufactured, or simply conjured up in our minds, our systems, and our worldviews, they will be crushed as the Lord instructs us to *‘no more worship the work of your hands’*. Paul says that *‘covetousness is idolatry’* (Col 3:5), for then we are not trusting and thanking God for our situation, we are demanding that we have what God has granted to someone else.

God's Vengeance (v15) – God purifies the church on the inside and protects the church on the outside. He does this, not just for His own glory, but also from His jealous love over us. He is our King and our Defender and He vindicates those who have been wronged.

For the church – His jealous love is over you now (2 Cor 11:2-4). You must find your greatest desires met in your only Husband, your only God.

To the world – You have heard the gospel (Matt 21:42-44). Now you must hear *and* obey.