

# God's Victorious Justice (Micah 5)

## I. Introduction

### A. This morning we are continuing in Micah's second oracle looking at Micah 5

1. Remember that Micah is set during the tumultuous period of the Assyrian invasion - the Assyrians will come and conquer Samaria and Israel and then will march south and lay siege to Jerusalem
2. And Micah, the prophet, watches God's judgment fall on his people and Micah is torn - he sees that God must bring judgment because His people have transgressed the covenant, but how can God's judgment be good for God's people?
3. And that's the question that Micah's prophecies answer - how can God's judgment be good for His people?
4. God is going to answer that question three times through Micah's oracle

### B. We started in the first oracle, in Micah 1 and 2, and we saw that God's judgment is good because it is merciful

1. God declares that He is coming as a terrible judge, like fire on the mountains and before Him the earth will melt
2. And God declares that His people are guilty - they have sought out other gods and they have failed to love their neighbor - they have failed both sides of the covenant, their responsibility to God and their reflection of God to each other
3. So terrible destruction will come, but at the end of Micah 2 a promise is made - destruction will not be the last word
4. A shepherd/king will rise up and deliver God's people and lead them out of the destruction, in the midst of judgment God will have mercy - God's judgment is good because God's judgment is merciful, it ends in salvation

### C. Now we are in the second oracle, Micah 3-5, and we are seeing that God's judgment is good because it is gracious

1. Not only will God's judgment end in mercy, with salvation, God's judgment will be gracious - it will bring good to God's people, judgment itself will be a gift to God's people
2. And we're looking at this in three parts, so three weeks ago we looked at Micah 3 and saw God's responsive justice
  - a. God's people were full of injustice; God's land had even been founded in injustice and the leaders of God's people failed to love their neighbor as themselves, they failed to care for the weak and helpless and God's land had become a terror and a horror
  - b. But God responds with justice - He brings the evil of the oppressor back on his own head; the oppressor will not stand forever and oppression will not triumph - God will remove the terror of the land through judgment and destruction - the slate will be wiped clean, Jerusalem itself will be destroyed and the temple mount stand desolate
  - c. God's justice is gracious because it will remove the evil of the land - injustice will not stand, the land will no longer be a terror and a horror
3. And then last week we looked at Micah 4 and saw God's restorative justice
  - a. God's plan doesn't end with destruction - God destroys His people to wipe the slate clean, to wipe away injustice and remove the terror of the land, but after the slate is wiped clean, God's justice continues in restoration
  - b. The land will be restored and a temple will be rebuilt and the land will be everything that it was not before - it will be founded in justice and the Word and the Law of God will be known, and God's people will be gathered again
  - c. This was the purpose of God's judgment: to restore and purify His people - judgment would be like childbirth and like threshing, bringing great good out of evil and through violence purifying His people
  - d. God's justice is gracious because it will restore the land - the land will be founded again in justice and mercy and God Himself will rule over His people

### D. Today we are going to look at the last section of the second oracle in Micah 5 and see God's victorious justice

1. Micah 3 promised that God's judgment would completely destroy the evil of the land and Micah 4 promises that in the latter days God will restore His land - but how will this come about? How will God's people realize victory in the midst of defeat? How will God rescue and redeem His people from their enemies?
2. In Micah 4 we heard cries of sorrow as the people wailed over the loss of their king, the end of the Davidic line, but in Micah 5 we are going to see a new king raised up, one who will come in power to deliver God's people
3. In Micah 5, we see that the union of God's destruction and God's restoration will come through a king raised up from the most unlikely of places - Bethlehem - and He will bring God's justice to victory

### E. Read Micah 5

### F. Proposition:

1. And Unexpected Messiah Will Deliver God's People
2. The Unexpected Messiah Will Bring Victory to God's People
3. The Unexpected Messiah's Victory Will Bring Perfect Peace
4. We Must Live in the Messiah's Victory

## II. An Unexpected Messiah Will Deliver God's People

### A. The start of Micah 5 is very closely related to the end of Micah 4

1. If you were with me last week, you might remember that Micah 4 ended with two quick movements from the current disaster to the final victory - two movements that contained two metaphors - childbirth and threshing
2. These two movements both started with 'now'
  - a. Micah 4:9 - *Now why do you cry aloud? Is there no king in you? Has your counselor perished, that pain seized you like a woman in labor?*
  - b. Micah 4:11 - *Now many nations are assembled against you, saying, "Let her be defiled, and let our eyes gaze upon Zion."*
3. Micah 5:1 ends with a final 'now' and continues this pattern moving quickly from the current disaster to the final victory
  - a. Micah 5:1 - *Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops; siege is laid against us; with a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek.*
  - b. The city of Jerusalem will be surrounded and besieged, the kingship of Judah will be humiliated and destroyed, there will be no judge sitting over the people of God - the current disaster is terrible
4. But, like the other two movements, it quickly moves toward final victory with another 'but' - but unlike the last two movements which merely gave us a metaphor of what judgment was doing, this last movement introduces a new character who will bring about victory
5. Micah 5:1-5 - *Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops; siege is laid against us; with a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek. But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace.*
6. As we look at these verses, I want to see three important truths shining forth here

### B. First, God's deliverance would be His alone

1. These verses in Micah 5, in an obscure minor prophet, are some of the most well-known verses in the Bible, But sometimes our familiarity with them can cause us to overlook how shocking this statement would be
2. The people of Micah's day knew something about being besieged in Jerusalem - the Assyrians had only recently left, or depending on when you date the oracle, the Assyrians might be currently sieging the city
3. For those in the city looking for deliverance, Bethlehem would be the last place they would look - Bethlehem was a small and obscure village down from Jerusalem, it was not walled, it had very little importance and it never had - it was too small even to be listed among the cities of Judah in the list of Joshua 15 - as the people looked out from the city walls at the siege, they wouldn't be looking toward Bethlehem, waiting for deliverance
4. But God says that it would be out of Bethlehem that a deliverer would come - deliverance for Israel would come from the most unexpected place, deliverance would be raised up in a way that demonstrates that only God could bring deliverance
5. The people besieged in Jerusalem shouldn't be looking to earthly powers or resting in worldly strength - they need to look to Bethlehem and wait for God to raise up a deliverer

### C. Second, God's deliverance would be found in a new Davidic King

1. These verses should come as a shock to the reader, but once we ponder on this surprising promise, we might remember that there had been one other time Bethlehem had come to prominence several centuries before
2. The very words of the prophecy echo words that had been said long ago
  - a. Listen to Micah 5:2 - *But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel,*
  - b. And now listen to I Samuel 17:12 - *Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had eight sons.*
3. Another unknown and improbable king had come out of Bethlehem to deliver God's people, a king that was so improbable that the prophet Samuel nearly overlooked him
  - a. So God is saying that deliverance would be His alone, but also that He would deliver by raising up another king who was like David, even by keeping His promise to David that one of his sons would rule Israel forever
  - b. And like David this king would come like a shepherd, gentle with the sheep yet strong to deliver - He would shepherd the flock in the strength of God Himself
  - c. And like David, this king would bring victory and security to the people of Israel - He would be a great leader of war and God would give Him peace from His enemies on every side
4. Micah envisions the time of judgment to be like the time of Judges - a time of turmoil and distress without a king over the people of God, but also a time preparing God's people to receive God's king

**D. But third, God's deliverer would be more than simply another Davidic King**

1. As we hear the promise of a new Davidic king being raised up to shepherd his people, we might wonder - there had been many Davidic kings raised up and all had failed - the line of David produced many sons, but none finally delivered the people of God, the line of David would fail in judgment for a reason - why would this be any different?
2. But in the center of the prophecy, there is an astounding phrase that could be overlooked, Micah 5:2 - *But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.*
3. That phrase at the end is full of meaning - *whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days*
  - a. 'From of old' is a phrase that says the coming of this Davidic king would not be simply like all the rest - His coming had been prepared for before, it had even been foretold
  - b. This phrase carries the sense of the fulfillment of a promise - this king had been foretold, His coming was told in days long ago and now He will come
  - c. That phrase carries the sense that God's promise to David will finally come true - all of the other Davidic kings had been merely placeholders not promise-carriers, but now one who would bring the promise to pass would come
  - d. There would be a king who would reign over God's people forever, a king who God would call His own son
  - e. But, maybe Micah is looking even farther back to another promise, a promise made in the first days of creation when the first man and woman were being cast out of God's place, a promise that a son would be born that would deliver God's people and bring them back to His place - perhaps even this promise would now come true
  - f. The coming of this king had been foretold - His coming forth was from of old
4. But, like much Hebrew poetry, there is poetic repetition, not only was His coming 'from of old', it was 'from ancient days'
  - a. 'From ancient days' is a phrase that is hard to interpret out of the Hebrew - but usually it refers to a undefined length of time, even a length of time beyond imagining or knowing, a concept related to what we would call eternity
  - b. The coming forth of this king would be from of old - it was promised from the dawn of time - but that is not all, his coming forth is from beyond imagining, before the dawn of time
  - c. A promise had been made at the beginning, but the coming forth of this king was being prepared even before the beginning - which begs the question, what king was being brought forth before Adam's race was ever founded? What king has his origin before creation?
  - d. In subtle, yet deep hints, Micah 5 points us forward to one who would be David's son, but more than David's son, a king who would be man yet more than a man - a king that must somehow be identified with God Himself
5. And these dark hints give further dimension to the promise
  - a. Micah 5:4 - *And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.*
  - b. This king would come bearing the majesty of the name of YHWH, being not merely His servant but His son, and He would shepherd in God's strength, being not merely empowered but power Himself
  - c. This new king would have victory where so many others failed because this king would be God Himself come to deliver His people
6. So, kids, here's your first kid's question for this week: after deliverance what does God promise? To raise up a king in Israel

**E. So, it should be no surprise that the New Testament opens with this prophecy from Micah being fulfilled**

1. Matthew 2:1-6 - *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.""*
2. Jesus is the unexpected Messiah, come to deliver God's people, to redeem them and defeat every enemy and bring them into God's place again
3. Jesus is the king who will bring victory out of Judgment - He is the one who will bear the injustice of His people and take it to death, He is the one who will raise up another temple to which all nations will flow, He is the king that will break the siege and lead His people out, and He is the king that will gather His brothers in the land again
4. Jesus is God Himself come to deliver His people, the fulfillment of the promise to David, the fulfillment of the promise to Adam, the king coming before ever the world was created and He will win the victory
5. Kids, here's your second question for this week: who is the promised king? Jesus!
6. Which leads us to our next point:

### III. The Unexpected Messiah Will Bring Victory to God's People

#### A. As we continue, Micah's prophecy moves to a song of victory

1. Micah 5:5-9 - *When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men; they shall shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod at its entrances; and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian when he comes into our land and treads within our border. Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, which delay not for a man nor wait for the children of man. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, which, when it goes through, treads down and tears in pieces, and there is none to deliver. Your hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off.*
2. As Micah celebrates the coming of deliverance from the Messiah, he turns to look at the Messiah's people, and he sees them following after their victorious leader, sharing in His victory, so Micah sings a song of victory
3. And in Micah's song of victory, we see three truths:

#### B. First, the Kingdom of the Messiah will raise up a victorious army

1. Micah 5:5-6 - *When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men; they shall shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod at its entrances; and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian when he comes into our land and treads within our border.*
2. After announcing the coming and purpose of the Messiah, the Messiah is pictured as the commander of a victorious army
  - a. When the Messiah appears, the people of God will rise up against their enemies and defeat them
  - b. Under the Messiah, there will be raised up seven shepherds and eight princes or generals of men who will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword - the Messiah will raise up leaders of a new army who will defeat the enemy
  - c. And the numbers here are selected carefully - seven is the perfect number and eight is even more than enough - this army will be enough and more than enough to completely defeat the enemies of God's people
3. When the Messiah appears, no enemy will be strong enough to defeat His kingdom
  - a. And His people will participate in His victory - the victory will belong to the Messiah and He will deliver His people
  - b. But, in His power, His people will rise up and join Him in His victory - they will follow their king and bring the battle to the enemy

#### C. Second, the Kingdom of the Messiah will be a blessing in the midst of the earth

1. Micah 5:7 - *Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, which delay not for a man nor wait for the children of man.*
2. As the victorious armies of the Messiah spread throughout the earth, Micah sees them scattered among many people
3. And as the armies of the Messiah are in the midst of many people, they are a blessing to the nations - they are like dew from the Lord and showers upon the grass
4. The armies of the Messiah go out victoriously to bring blessing to all the nations, blessings that do not come from nor depend upon man - they will go out to spread the blessings of YHWH upon the earth
5. In sum, they will be the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, that the Son of Abraham would be a blessing to all nations - the armies of the Messiah go out to bring this blessing to the nations

#### D. Third, the Kingdom of the Messiah will be a terror in the midst of the earth

1. Micah 5:8-9 - *And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, which, when it goes through, treads down and tears in pieces, and there is none to deliver. Your hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off.*
2. As the armies of the Messiah push into the nations, they bring not only a blessing but a terror as well
3. The remnant will not only be like showers on the grass, but also like lions in the midst of sheep - treading down, tearing in pieces, terror with none to deliver
4. The victorious armies of the Messiah will not dwell passively among the nations, they will not be weak bearers of blessing but also a portent of doom and destruction, a messenger of death from the victorious Messiah
5. Those who stand against the Kingdom of the Messiah will fall and be destroyed

## IV. The Unexpected Messiah's Victory Will Bring Perfect Peace

### A. Micah's prophecy finishes with a song of peace

1. Micah 5:10-15 - *And in that day, declares the LORD, I will cut off your horses from among you and will destroy your chariots; and I will cut off the cities of your land and throw down all your strongholds; and I will cut off sorceries from your hand, and you shall have no more tellers of fortunes; and I will cut off your carved images and your pillars from among you, and you shall bow down no more to the work of your hands; and I will root out your Asherah images from among you and destroy your cities. And in anger and wrath I will execute vengeance on the nations that did not obey.*
2. At the end of his second oracle, Micah looks back at God's land and describes what he sees: a land filled with perfect peace
3. And we can see three things about the peace the Messiah brings here at the end of Micah 5

### B. Weapons of war will be set aside in favor of resting in the Messiah's victory

1. Micah 5:10-11 - *And in that day, declares the LORD, I will cut off your horses from among you and will destroy your chariots; and I will cut off the cities of your land and throw down all your strongholds;*
2. The peace that the Messiah brings will abolish any need for weapons of offense or defense - the mighty horse and the chariot, the defensive city and the stronghold will all be cast away because the Messiah's people fear no enemy
3. The horse and the chariot, the fortified city and the stronghold were all symbols of fear and evidences of running after worldly power to find peace, but the Messiah's victory has destroyed fear - the people of the Messiah have nothing to fear
4. So the people of the Messiah will rest in His peace, not swayed or shaken by any weapon or terror of this world - the peace that the Messiah brings is so deep that the world doesn't hold any terror for them anymore, nothing will frighten them and nothing will dissuade them, they will not need to raise up defenses against anyone
5. And because they rest in the Messiah's peace, the people of the Messiah will no longer be tempted to run after worldly power - they will not trust in the strength of their arm, or in any worldly power, they will rest in the peace of the Messiah

### C. Practices of idolatry will be set aside in favor of rejoicing in the Messiah's holiness

1. Micah 5:12-14 - *and I will cut off sorceries from your hand, and you shall have no more tellers of fortunes; and I will cut off your carved images and your pillars from among you, and you shall bow down no more to the work of your hands; and I will root out your Asherah images from among you and destroy your cities.*
2. Not only will the people of the Messiah not turn to embrace weapons of war and worldly power, but they will be freed from serving idols and running after other gods as well - they will be filled with true peace, the peace that holiness brings
3. I think these verses teach us an important truth - true peace cannot be found apart from holiness: there is no peace in this world where holiness is not found, and where holiness is found, there is true peace
4. The man and the house in which holiness is found will be truly at peace: at peace with God, at peace with each other and at peace with the world - no matter what the world may do to him; but the man and the house in which holiness is not found will never be at peace: there there is enmity with God, division with each other and fear of the world
5. Peace and holiness go together, and the Messiah brings both - He will establish the land in peace so that His people have no need for weapons of war and He will cut off the idolatry and sinfulness of the land so that His peace will be true peace

### D. Never again will God's people fear destruction, because God Himself executes vengeance for His people

1. Micah's oracle ends with a rather abrupt phrase, Micah 5:15 - *And in anger and wrath I will execute vengeance on the nations that did not obey.*
2. The purpose of this last statement is to declare that God Himself will be His people's peace - vengeance is the act of a protector and judge, One who rises up to defend His people against those who oppose them
3. When the Messiah comes and brings victory, God's people will have no need to fear because God Himself will be their protector - He will execute vengeance on their behalf
4. There is much overlapping of prophetic horizons in this oracle - the last days are not well separated into what happens when Christ comes the first time and when Christ comes the second time
5. But this last verse suggests that the peace the Messiah brings can be true even when there are still enemies that oppose the people of the Messiah - there may still be nations that disobey, nations that oppose the message of the Messiah, people that hate God's people - but such things will not threaten the peace that the Messiah brings
6. The peace that the Messiah brings is so deep that even in the face of enemies, God's people have nothing to fear - they rest in the Messiah's peace and trust that God will execute vengeance in the end
7. God's people will be setting aside weapons of war and worldly power and setting aside idolatry and worldly pleasures now in the first horizon after Christ's first coming because Christ has won perfect peace for us now - we rest in the Messiah's peace now and have nothing to fear
8. But we also look forward to an even deeper peace when Christ returns to execute vengeance - we are at peace because of what Christ has done, but we are also at peace looking forward to what Christ will do
9. If God is our protector, we know we have nothing to fear - we rest in the Messiah and in God's promise of peace

## V. We Must Live in the Messiah's Victory

As we finish this morning, I want to try to make some application of our passage this morning, and I'll do it in three points :

### A. We are the people beset by enemies, so we must look to Bethlehem for deliverance

1. Micah 5 starts with a promise to God's people besieged without hope that a deliverer will come and rescue them
  - a. So the first thing we need to ask is: what is the true enemy of God's people?
  - b. There could be several true answers to this question, and exactly what we're talking about will probably change the answer - but in a very real way, the true enemy of God's people is sin, and not any sin, but their own sin
  - c. God's people have been enmired, even besieged by sin; sin has surrounded them and is killing them; sin has infected them so that even God Himself has turned and become their enemy
  - d. And we are those people - we are the people besieged by sin, surrounded by our enemies with no hope of deliverance, and we need to recognize that truth - we are sinners, surrounded and defeated by our mortal enemy
2. But Micah 5 holds out to exactly that sort of people - a deliverer will come out of Bethlehem that will rescue you
  - a. Micah 5 calls those who are enmired and enslaved to sin to turn and look to the deliverer that came out of Bethlehem - to cry out to Jesus Christ for deliverance from sin, to rescue us from our enemies
  - b. This is the first and greatest response to Micah 5, to turn and embrace this deliverer - to recognize our need and cry out to Him - we need Jesus to rescue us from our enemies; we are hopeless unless Jesus comes and rescues us

### B. We are the army that the Messiah is leading to victory, so we must bring the battle to the enemy

1. Micah 5 promises those beset by their mortal enemies that a deliverer will come out of Bethlehem
  - a. But, when the deliverer comes out of Bethlehem, Micah 5 calls the delivered to go join the Messiah in His victory
  - b. If the Messiah has delivered us from our mortal enemy, then He will empower us to fight our enemy - if the siege is broken, then the Messiah will lead us to bring the battle to the enemy
  - c. And if our ultimate enemy is sin, if sin is the enemy that Jesus is delivering us from, then Micah 5 is calling us to battle sin, to refuse to let it enslave us anymore but rather to be putting it to death
2. In fact, this is what the New Testament calls us to do - if we have been delivered from sin then put sin to death
  - a. Romans 8 is perhaps the most powerful passage calling us to take the battle to sin - I won't read the whole chapter here, but a few important verses, Romans 8:12-13 - *So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*
  - b. Paul says that if we have been freed from sin by Christ, then we need to battle sin to the death, to no longer let it have power and sway over us, and he says something similar in Colossians 3:5 - *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*
3. This is the reflection of Micah 5 in our lives - the Messiah comes to give victory and His people rise and join Him in victory
  - a. Battling sin is living in the victory of the Messiah - Jesus has come to deliver us from sin, and He has delivered us from sin, so we will rise up and destroy the remnants of sin in our lives, living in the victory the Messiah brought

### C. We are the kingdom that the Messiah has scattered throughout the earth, so we must be a blessing and a terror in the earth

1. As Micah sees the armies of the Messiah spread throughout the nations, he sees a startling contrast - they will be both a blessing and a terror to the nations in which they are scattered - but what does that mean for us?
2. Honestly, that would be a hard passage to interpret, except that there is a passage in the New Testament that makes the same sort of contrast - a passage that starts with the victory of the Messiah and then envisions the people of the Messiah bringing both life and death to the world - II Corinthians 2:14-16 - *But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?*
3. Christ's people who have been led in triumphal procession should be both a blessing and terror in the earth
4. We should be a blessing, showers from the lord, an aroma of Christ proclaiming deliverance to anyone who would turn and embrace the deliverer - holding out the message of the gospel to the nations around us
5. But we should also be a terror, a lion among sheep, the aroma of death proclaiming judgment to anyone who would reject the message of the cross and the demands of our deliverer
6. In other words, the people of the Messiah must always faithfully proclaim the message of the Messiah - a message that we are enslaved and besieged by sin, that if we are not rescued from sin then we will be destroyed in sin, but also a message that there is a deliverer that we can run to, a deliverer that will cast off the shackles of sin and give us power to battle against sin so that we will not ultimately perish
7. The church should be bold with this message, neither shying from the unimaginable grace nor the uncompromising demand of the gospel - and as we are spread among the nations, living in victory over sin and proclaiming the message of the cross, we will be both a blessing and a terror in the midst of the earth