

The Greatest Expectation Realized

Micah 4

Introduction:

1. Charles Dickens began writing his novel Great Expectations in December of 1860. It is about a young boy named Pip. The story begins with Pip in a graveyard, where he is accosted by an escaped convict named, Abel Magwitch.
2. I suppose great expectations are in order when the story begins with you being accosted by a convict in a graveyard. Seems there is no place to go but up.
3. Such was the circumstance in Israel at the time of the prophet Micah.
 - a. He writes during the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings in Judah (1:1).
 - b. Assyria was threatening Samaria. Jerusalem would be destroyed by Babylon.
 - c. Micah's message: The Lord God is a witness against you for your rebellion and for all the sins of the house of Israel. Samaria will be a heap. Zion (Jerusalem) will be a plowed field and will become a heap of ruins.
4. Like young Pip, Jerusalem is in a graveyard, and will be accosted by a convict named, Babylon.
5. BUT, the Lord reveals the greatest expectation. What is it and when will it be?
6. Reading Micah 4:1-7.

Discussion:

I. Observations.

- A. It will happen in the last days (1).
- B. The peoples will stream to it (1-2a).
- C. It will be founded upon the word of God (2b).
- D. It will be characterized by peace (3-4).
- E. Even the outcasts will be blessed (6-7a).
- F. The Lord will reign over them (7b).

II. Prophecies like this one created an expectation that had extended into the people of the first century.

- A. We see this in passages like Lk. 2:25-38, and Matt. 2:1-6. Cf. Acts 1:6.
- B. Other passages like Isa. 2:2-4 and Dan. 2:28ff added to the expectation.
- C. It would happen in the last days.
 1. This phrase is interpreted by many today to refer to days yet in the future.
 2. But Simeon and Anna, Herod, the chief priests and the scribes (and Matthew and Luke, inspired by the Holy Spirit) interpreted them as beginning with Jesus' birth.
- D. They were expecting a King and a Kingdom.

III. The prophecy of Micah 4 was given as a message of hope in light of the historical circumstances of Judah and Jerusalem (4:10). Cf. Isa. 39:1-8.

- A. The circumstances are described in 3:5ff.
- B. From the graveyard to Great Expectations!!!
- C. There is a time coming when the Lord will reign over His people.
 - 1. Peoples (nations) will stream to it.
 - a. The kingdom of God will be so attractive that the nations will desire it.
 - b. Not only will they come from Israel.
 - 2. It will be founded upon God's word (2).
 - a. Always, God had intended His kingdom to be founded upon His word.
 - b. He had led the people originally through prophets (cf. 1 Sam. 8:1ff).
 - c. Their rebellion against His prophetic word was what had led to them this graveyard in the first place (Micah 3:5ff).
 - d. Any expectation would have to be founded upon submission to God's word.
 - 3. It would go forth from Jerusalem.
 - a. One cannot read Acts 2 and overlook the impact of the events described there as Peter proclaims Christ as King seated at the right hand of God.
 - b. Cf. Acts 2:42; Eph. 2:19-20; Heb. 1-2a; 2:1-4.
- D. It will be a kingdom of peace (3-4). Cf. Eph. 2:14-20.
- E. Even the outcasts will be blessed.
 - 1. Those scattered will be put together like sheep in the fold (Micah 2:12).
 - 2. Rom. 11:17-24.

IV. We have received this kingdom (Heb. 12:18-29).

- A. We are recipients of the Greatest Expectation.
- B. We have come to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the firstborn ones.
- C. We have received an unshakeable kingdom (Cf. Matt. 16:18-19).
- D. "Therefore, . . . let us show gratitude, offer to God acceptable service with reverence and awe."
- E. The judgment of God fell on those in Micah's day. Note Heb. 12:29. "Our God is a consuming fire."
- F. It is either the graveyard to be accosted by the escaped convict or "The Greatest Expectation."

Conclusion:

- 1. What is it for you?
- 2. Do you understand the blessings of the kingdom of God?
- 3. Do you neglect them? Would you come to Zion? Would you give your life to the King?