

AN EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF ISAIAH 9:6-7 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS  
FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN DEGEMA TOWN COMMUNITY IN  
RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate and analyze Isaiah 9:6-7 and its implication for peace and justice in Degema community. It is designed to address the issue of chieftaincy conflicts, social and economic injustice, thus portraying the Prince of peace as the right personality who is capable of restoring peace and justice in the Degema community. The researcher adopted an exegetical approach to unravel the original intent of the author of Isaiah 9:6-7. Hence, the work entails the historical background of Isaiah, the lexical, grammatical and syntactical analysis of the text. Perspectives on the concept of justice, peace and the relationship between justice and peace are considered. The findings reveal that the promised child as prophesied by prophet Isaiah is the Messiah who has the nature of God-man. His teachings would marvel many who heard it. Relying on His counsel would cause healing, prosperity and freedom to the nations. He is an everlasting father whose reign is without end. He is Christ the power and the wisdom of God. He instills peace, establishes justice and upholds righteousness. Therefore, the research shows that Isaiah 9:6-7 can serve as a model in instilling harmonious living, good interpersonal relationship, prosperity, fairness, equality, personal integrity and moral probity in the Degema community. Harmony can only take place where the Prince of peace is given the supreme place in the affairs of the community. Prosperity emanates from a qualitative covenant with God and justice always calls for equity. Degema community would rise to greatness if the people are ready to abide by these principles.

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

Justice is a prerequisite of true peace that produces development in any community. Adhering to fairness and due process in resolving conflicts without any form of discrimination based on status, age, sexual relations, gender, circumstance and place of birth would go a long way in resolving conflicts in Degema bringing about the much needed development desired. The man “Amos is often called the prophet of social and economic justice.” He vehemently spoke against the rich and the powerful of his time (Amos 5:7,10-11a, 12b): “You who turn justice into bitterness and cast righteousness to the ground... You hate the one who reproves in court and despise him who tells the truth. You trample on the poor and ....You oppress the righteous and take bribes and you deprive the poor of justice in the courts.” In Amos 5:24 he proceeded by saying, “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! Social and economic justice is a matter of structures but it is also a matter of personal behavior, as portrayed by Isaiah in Isa, 58,6-7: “is not this the fast that I choose: to lose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?” God’s demand for justice is total and absolute. As the Prince of peace He establishes justice and upholds righteousness’ (Isa.9:7). Hence the need to rely on Him for the

institution of justice and righteousness in its entire ramification in the Degema community is of utmost importance.

Also, the scripture has revealed that God Himself is a God of peace for he Has clearly stated that: “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give you; not as the world gives do I give to you (Jn.14:27a).” which is an indication that God’s concept of peace is distinct from the world’s. Job 22:21 states that, “Submit to God and be at peace with Him; in this way prosperity will come to you.” In other words peace can only reign in Degema when the leaders and the subjects in one accord submit to the leadership and direction of the Holy Spirit. Besides, they must be determined to love, cherish and pursue peace at all cost. Psalm 37:37 is a vivid reminder that “the future awaits those who seek peace” and “those who promote peace have joy” (Pro. 12:20) In James 3:18 “peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.” Jeremiah 33:6 adds, “My people will enjoy abundant peace and security.” “These prove that peace and prosperity, peace and justice and peace and security are indissolubly linked with each other”. Peace is a priceless virtue and it is only in the atmosphere of true peace that a community like Degema can experience growth and development.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the aforementioned explanations in Isaiah 9:6,7 regarding the role of the Prince of peace as a model of justice and peace in resolving conflicts in Degema Community the following recommendations are made:

- 1 All members of the community especially those in positions of trust should develop a social sense of responsibility and consider the consequences of their actions.

- 2 Leaders and opinion leaders should remain anchored on the fear of God and principles of fairness and equity.
- 3 Only people of proven integrity, disciplined behavior and honor should be allowed to be involved in resolving conflicts.
- 4 Community resources should not be in the possession of a few.
- 5 Public and wide consultations should be carried before embarking on community projects to ensure mutual agreement
- 6 Inhabitants of Degema should imbibe the culture of forgiveness. Forgiveness involves showing mercy and letting go of the need to avenge oneself. It should involve showing empathy toward the other person, and a letting go of resentment.
- 7 Truth and Reconciliation committees should be inaugurated and properly equipped to resolve conflicts instead of seeking redress in courts.
- 8 The churches in the community have to lead the way in areas of women empowerment and the promotion of youths' advancement through income generating projects.
- 9 The churches should be ready to stand for righteousness in the face of social and economic injustice. To speak in order to change structures and policies in favor of the less privilege.
- 10 The church should promote the ideals of harmonious living, good interpersonal relationship, fair treatment, equality and probity and accountability amongst indigenes of Degema community.

11 The churches should be involved in peace-making and peace-keeping by fostering peace initiatives and reconciliation as well as conflict prevention.