

Review

Last week, we began our study in the book of Micah. Micah was a prophet whose ministry overlapped the time when Isaiah and Hosea were also prophesying, in the eighth century, BC.

As we saw in the first three chapters, Micah has been prophesying of terrible judgment coming upon the Jews for their idolatry and apostasy. But he has also given them hope (2:12-13). While their shepherds were eating the flesh of the sheep, one day the Lord was going to be their Good Shepherd, leading them out.

Now, as we pick up in chapter four, he is expounding upon those days when the Lord shepherds the people of Israel.

4:1-4 Familiar Words

Some of these words may sound more familiar to you than you might expect them to. That's because they are also in the book of Isaiah (2:24), in nearly word-for-word repetition. Some people jump on the mirroring between Micah and Isaiah and claim plagiarism. These are the same people who read the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and insist that they stole from each other.

You know, I don't have any problems with the fact that different books of the Bible have word-for-word repetition. The way I look at it, is...

2Cor. 13:1 ...EVERY FACT IS TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES.

Rather than consider the repetition to be evidence of falsehood, it simply confirms the truth for me.

In The Last Days

Now, let's look at what is being said in these familiar words. The idea just before (Micah 3:9-12) had said that the people, the priests, and the prophets were steeped in sin, yet said,

Mic. 3:11-12 ..."Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us." Therefore, on account of you Zion will be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the temple will become high

places of a forest.

Judgment was sure, but Micah then directs their attention to the last days, a time when God is dwelling on earth, in His temple on Mount Zion, and among His people. The judgment to befall Jerusalem will not devastate it permanently, and the Jews will not be forsaken completely.

He is of course talking about the time of the Millennial Reign of Christ, described in many places in the Bible, like Revelation 20.

In that time, the nations will come from all over the world to learn the Word of God directly from His mouth.

The words of verse three have often been quoted. The United Nations garden contains a statue called "Let Us Beat Swords Into Plowshares," which was given to the UN by the Soviet Union in 1959.

And across the street, a huge curved granite wall has most of this verse inscribed upon it. It's too bad that the United Nations are trying to accomplish the job in their own strength, and are excluding the One mentioned in the first part of the verse.

There will not be war during those days, but it won't be because of man's effort. The Bible tells us that Jesus will have to...

Rev. 19:15 ...rule them with a rod of iron...

Mankind will be far from perfect. There will be conflicts between nations, but Jesus will be judging between them, and making the decisions. Notice that these decisions are for..

Mic. 4:3 ...mighty, distant nations...

It is not often that I find anything encouraging about the United States' future in the Word of God, but this does give me hope that this nation might still be around in the Millennial Kingdom.

If our nation is still in existence, then the streets will finally be safe to walk at night. There will be no need for fear when Jesus is in charge. Not because man will be sinless, but because Jesus Christ will be king.

4:5 We Will Walk

Micah says, "Today, everyone is walking in the name of his own god. But in that future day, there will be only the name of the Lord forever." In the Millennial Kingdom, the Jews will no longer be bowing down to idols.

4:6-8 Outcasts, Lame, Afflicted Made A Remnant

The Jews who will have suffered miserably during the Great Tribulation will be assembled before the Lord and made strong. The nation of Israel, which will at that point have recently come close to extinction through the genocidal agenda of the antichrist will be made a strong nation, and the Lord will be their King. God promises that this future hope will come to Jerusalem.

4:9-10 Rescued And Redeemed From Babylon

Micah comes back to the here and now for the sinful Jews. They will be taken to Babylon soon, but will be rescued in the future.

He speaks of that day of judgment, when they will cry out, but have no kingly counselor to turn to. This was fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, put Jerusalem to siege during the reign of King Tsid-kee-YAW of Judah (2Kings 24-25). Jeremiah tells us,

Jer. 52:7-11 Then the city was broken into, and all the men of war fled and went forth from the city at night by way of the gate between the two walls which was by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. And they went by way of the Ar-aw-BAW. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook Tsid-kee-YAW in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him. Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Rib-LAW in the land of Kham-AWTH, and he passed sentence on him. The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Tsid-kee-YAW before his eyes, and he also slaughtered all the princes of Judah in Rib-LAW. Then he blinded the eyes of Tsid-kee-YAW; and the king of Babylon bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon and put him in prison until the day of his death.

Without the protection of their men of war, the people scattered into the fields, were captured by Nebuchadnezzar's army, and taken off to Babylon. Among those taken were four young men named Daniel,

Shad-RAK, May-SHAK, and Ab-ADE Neg-O.

Micah prophesies that from that captivity, they would be rescued and redeemed. In fact, as you read the book of Ezra, you see that happen. The Babylonian Empire was replaced by the Medo-Persian Empire. And King Cyrus of Persia had his heart stirred by the Lord to release the Jews from their captivity to restore and rebuild the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 1).

This is why it is described as a woman in childbirth. They will go through a time of pain and suffering, but there will be joy at the end, when the release is brought forth.

4:11-5:1 Gathering Against Jacob

Micah again moves even further into the future, prophesying of the day when all the nations of the earth will be gathered against Jerusalem. We read of this in our studies of Zechariah 12 and 14.

Zech. 12:2-3 "Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it."

Zech. 12:6 "In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem."

Zech. 12:8-9 "In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."

Zech. 14:1-4 Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the

spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

Micah and Zechariah both make these things clear: all the nations of the earth will gather against Jerusalem, thinking that they have certain victory. It will appear to them that they are winning, but God has set a trap for them. He will make the Jews mighty in battle, and will lead them Himself, pulverizing the nations.

Now, another amazing detail about Israel's Ruler in that day is given...

5:2-6 The Messiah From Bethlehem

You have no doubt heard part of this section of Scripture many times. The prophecy that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Not the Bethlehem way up north in the territory of Zebulun (Josh. 19:15-16), but the Bethlehem in Judah, the one called Ephrath, or Bethlehem **Ef-RAW-thaw**, the birthplace of King David (1Sam. 17:12).

This was known by all the theologians of the day. Remember that when Magi from the east came to Jerusalem looking for He Who had been born King of the Jews, Herod was greatly troubled.

Matt. 2:4-6 Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet: 'AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH;

**FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A RULER WHO
WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL."**

He was born of a woman, and yet He was eternal. He will be the Great Shepherd of the flock of Israel, when the Assyrian attacks. Now, if you recall from our study of "Iraq in Prophecy," "the Assyrian" is an Old Testament title of the antichrist.

When the antichrist's armies attempt to invade and destroy Jerusalem, Jesus Christ will return in power and decimate them.

5:7-9 The Remnant Victorious

In the day when Jesus rules and reigns on earth, the nation of Israel will be the greatest of all nations.

Being a Jew in the world today is difficult. Anti-semitism is practiced by hateful, ignorant people, and driven by the devil himself. But in the Millennial Kingdom, it will be "cool" to be a Jew!

Zech. 8:22-23 "So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD." Thus says the LORD of hosts, "In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'"

5:10-15 God Rids The Nations Of Idolatry

There will be no need for instruments of war, or protection from enemies. There will be no more Halloween, Harry Potter, or horoscopes. Idolatry and immorality will be gone.

And yet still there will be nations who are disobedient to the Lord. We read in Zechariah 14 that when the nations of the earth are commanded to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles, there will be some who don't (Zech 14:16-19).