
MICAH 4: 1 But in the latter days, it will happen that the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established on the top of the mountains, and it will be exalted above the hills; and peoples will stream to it.

In the commencement of this chapter we have a glorious prophecy of the establishment and prosperity of the Messiah's kingdom; its peaceful character, increasing spiritual and political influence, ultimate universality, and everlasting duration, Mic 4:1-4. Then breaks in a chorus of his people declaring their peculiar happiness in being members of his kingdom, Mic 4:5. The prophet resumes the subject; predicts the restoration and future prosperity of Israel, Mic 4:6-8; and exhorts them not to be discouraged at their approaching captivity, as they should in due time not only be delivered from it, but likewise be victorious over all their enemies, Mic 4:9-13. These last verses, which evidently contain a prediction of the final triumph of Christianity over every adversary, have been applied to the conquests of the Maccabees; but the character and beneficial results of their military exploits, as far as we have any account of them, correspond but in a very faint degree to the beautiful and highly wrought terms of the prophecy. The first three verses of this chapter are very similar to the commencement of the second chapter of Isaiah; and the fourth, for beauty of imagery and elegance of expression, is not unworthy of that prophet.

Verse 1

But in the last days it shall come to pass - These four verses contain, says Bp. Newcome, a prophecy that was to be fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah, when the Gentiles were to be admitted into covenant with God, and the apostles were to preach the Gospel, beginning at Jerusalem, Luk 24:47; Act 2:14, etc., when Christ was to be the spiritual Judge and King of many people, was to convince many nations of their errors and vices, and was to found a religion which had the strongest tendency to promote peace. Bp. Lowth thinks that "Micah took this passage from Isaiah;" or the Spirit may have inspired both prophets with this prediction; or both may have copied some common original, the words of a prophet well known at that time. The variations (few and of little importance) may be seen in the notes on the parallel passages, Isa 2:2, etc.; to which the reader is requested to refer.

MICAH 4: 2 Many nations will go and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For the law will go out of Zion, and the LORD's word from Jerusalem;

MICAH 4: 3 and he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off. They will beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war any more.

MICAH 4: 4 But they will sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and no one will make them afraid: For the mouth of the LORD of Armies has spoken.

Verse 4

Under his vine and under his fig tree - A proverbial expression, indicative of perfect peace, security, and rural comfort. See on Isa 2:1 (note). This verse is an addition to the prophecy as it stands in Isaiah. See Clarke on Mic 4:1 (note).

MICAH 4: 5 Indeed all the nations may walk in the name of their gods; but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

Verse 5

Every one in the name of his god - This shall be the state of the Gentile world; but after the captivity, the Jews walked in the name of Jehovah alone; and acknowledge no other object of religious worship to the present day.

MICAH 4: 6 "In that day," says the LORD, "I will assemble that which is lame, and I will gather that which is driven away, and that which I have afflicted;

Verse 6

Will I assemble her that halteth - driven out - afflicted - Under these epithets, the state of the Jews, who were to be gathered into the Christian Church, is pointed out. They halted between the true God and idols; they were driven out into captivity, because of this idolatry; and they were variously afflicted, because they would not return unto the Lord that bought them.

MICAH 4: 7 and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD will reign over them on Mount Zion from then on, even forever."

Verse 7

Her that halted a remnant - I will preserve them as a distinct people after their return from captivity, for the farther purposes of my grace and mercy.

And the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion - The Chaldee is remarkable here, and positively applies the words to the Messiah: "But thou, O Messiah, of Israel, who art hidden because of the sins of the congregation of Zion, the kingdom shall come unto thee."

MICAH 4: 8 You, tower of the flock, the hill of the daughter of Zion, to you it will come, yes, the former dominion will come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.

Verse 8

O tower of the flock - I think the temple is meant, or Jerusalem; the place where the flock, the whole congregation of the people assembled to worship God. Newcome retains the Hebrew word עֶדֶר *eder*, a tower in or near Beth-lehem, Gen 35:21 or, as some think, a tower near the sheep-gate in Jerusalem, I believe Jerusalem, or the temple, or both, are meant; for these were considered the stronghold of the daughter-of Zion, the fortress of the Jewish people.

Even the first dominion - What was this? The Divine theocracy under Jesus Christ; this former, this first dominion, was to be restored. Hence the angel called him Immanuel, God with us, ruling among us.

MICAH 4: 9 Now why do you cry out aloud? Is there no king in you? Has your counsellor perished, that pains have taken hold of you as of a woman in travail?

Verse 9

Is there no King in thee? - None. And why? Because thou hast rejected Jehovah thy king.

Is thy counsellor perished? - No: but thou hast rejected the words and advices of the prophets.

Pangs have taken thee - He is speaking of the desolations that should take place when the Chaldeans should come against the city; and hence he says, "Thou shalt go to Babylon;" ye shall be cast out of your own land, and sent slaves to a foreign country, He represents the people under the notion of a woman in travail.

MICAH 4: 10 Be in pain, and labour to give birth, daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail; for now you will go out of the city, and will dwell in the field, and will come even to Babylon. There you will be rescued. There the LORD will redeem you from the hand of your enemies.

Verse 10

There shalt thou be delivered - There God shall meet thee; and by redeeming thee from thy captivity, bringing thee back to thine own land, and finally converting thee unto himself, shall deliver thee from the burden of grief and wo which thou now bearest, and under which thou dost groan.

MICAH 4: 11 Now many nations have assembled against you, that say, "Let her be defiled, and let our eye gloat over Zion."

Verse 11

Many nations are gathered against thee - The Chaldeans, who were composed of many nations. And, we may add, all the surrounding nations were their enemies; and rejoiced when the Chaldean army had overthrown Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and led the people away captive.

Let her be defiled - This was their cry and their wish: Let Jerusalem be laid as low as she can be, like a thing defiled and cast away with abhorrence; that their eyes might look upon Zion with scorn, contempt, and exultation.

MICAH 4: 12 But they don't know the thoughts of the LORD, neither do they understand his counsel; for he has gathered them like the sheaves to the threshing floor.

Verse 12

But they know not the thoughts of the Lord - These think that God has utterly rejected his people, and they shall have a troublesome neighbor no more: but this is not his design; he will afflict them for a time; but these, the enemies of his people, he will gather as sheaves into the threshing-floor, there to be trodden, and the wheel to go over them. This is the counsel, the purpose of God, which these do not understand. The persons here referred to are not only the Chaldeans which were threshed by the Persians and Medes; but the Idumeans, Ammonites, Moabites, and Philistines, which the Jews afterwards subdued.

MICAH 4: 13 Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion; for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs brass; and you will beat in pieces many peoples: and I will devote their gain to the LORD, and their substance to the Lord of the whole earth.

Verse 13

Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion - This refers to the subject of the preceding verse. When God shall have gathered together all thy enemies, as into the threshing-floor, he will give thee commission and power to get a complete victory over them, and reduce them to servitude. And that thou mayest be able to do this, he will be on thy side as a powerful helper; here signified by the metaphors, iron horns, and brazen hoofs. Thou shalt have power, authority, and unconquerable strength; for thine enemies shall be no more against thee than the corn against oxen shod with brass, or a puny animal against the horn of a fierce bull tipped with iron.

I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord - What they have taken from thee in the way of spoil shall be restored; and again consecrated unto the service of him who will show himself to be the Lord, the Supreme Governor of the whole earth. Was not this prediction fulfilled when Cyrus gave the Jews permission to return to their own land, and gave them back the sacred vessels of the temple which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away? The Maccabees and their successors recovered much of the booty of which the neighboring nations had deprived the Jews; and the treasure taken was devoted to Jehovah. The first verse of the next chapter should conclude this.