

“The Mountain of the LORD” (Micah 4:1–5)(3.27.22)

INTRODUCTION:

Normally, we start with the scripture; but not today. This week on social media, I saw this poem by Art Smith. I don't know anything about Art Smith except what is revealed by this poem.

*Woke up warm and safe in my bed;
While someone else heard bombs over their head.
I jumped into a nice hot shower,
While some else has lost all power.
I hugged my family, we were all together,
While others said goodbye, possibly forever.
While I fear the money that I will spend,
Others worry of losing the country they defend.
In the time it took for me to write this post,
Many have lost the things they love most.
So, when I start to gripe and want to complain,
I will stop myself and pray for Ukraine.*

A few minutes ago, we sang “Down by the River” where the chorus proclaimed, “I ain't a gonna study war no more.” Friends, while we sing that today, it is a song of prophecy. It is future based. It is hope based. Unfortunately, today we do not have the option of not studying war. The reality is that we live in a war-torn world.

Now, I am going to share a three-minute video titled "'Achilles' heel': Putin Faces Growing Problem at Home." While it is unusual for me to show a video like this in church, there are four reasons why: 1) It shows a snapshot of modern warfare history. 2) It shows weapons of war. 3) It is current and relevant. 4) I believe it will whet your appetite for the scripture and God's promises.

(show video)

On Friday, I read a blog by Philip Jenkins titled, "The Ukraine War: Three Thoughts." I want to share his closing paragraph:

"Presently, we are all greatly enjoying the utter incompetence of the Russian "armed forces," and relishing their accumulating disasters. I am no exception to that rule. But before celebrating too much, always remember the famous words variously attributed to a number of statesmen, including Bismarck and Churchill (or Talleyrand, or Metternich...): "Russia is never as strong as she appears, or as weak as she appears." Keep repeating that sentence over the coming months and years. There is a great truth there."

Most of you have heard that maxim, "Those who do not know history, are doomed to repeat it." Well, how is it that the human race repeatedly makes war a solution to conflict and disagreement?

James 1:15 (NIV84) "Then, after desire (or lust, or coveting) has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."
Maybe knowing history isn't enough. We must know what the holy inspired word of God tells us about human nature.

Micah 4:1–5 (NIV84) *The Mountain of the Lord*

4 In the last days

the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established

as chief among the mountains;

it will be raised above the hills,

and peoples will stream to it.

² Many nations will come and say,

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,

to the house of the God of Jacob.

He will teach us his ways,

so that we may walk in his paths."

The law will go out from Zion,

the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

³ He will judge between many peoples
and will settle disputes for strong nations far and
wide.

They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

⁴ Every man will sit under his own vine
and under his own fig tree,
and no one will make them afraid,
for the Lord Almighty has spoken.

⁵ All the nations may walk
in the name of their gods;
we will walk in the name of the Lord
our God for ever and ever.

The word of God for the people of God.

LET US PRAY.

Title: **"The Mountain of the LORD"**

BODY:

This passage points the Messianic Kingdom where the Messiah will be crowned king and reign. The passage is nearly identical to Isaiah 2:2-5, which we will look at in a few minutes. Four years ago, I preached to you a sermon called "Zechariah, Tell Me About Zion," which also addressed the Messianic Kingdom. The mountain of the Lord is Mount Zion. Our passage from Micah continues, Micah 4:6-7 (NIV84) *The Lord's Plan*

⁶"In that day," declares the Lord,

"I will gather the lame;

I will assemble the exiles

and those I have brought to grief.

⁷ I will make the lame a remnant,

those driven away a strong nation.

The Lord will rule over them in Mount Zion

from that day and forever.

Certainly, you can see the great promises given to the nation of Israel. These promises would give them hope and help sustain them. The promises would also remind them that the Hebrew God,

Yahweh, was the One and only God who is sovereign.

Here is one summation of the promises Micah delivers:

"1) Jerusalem will be the *religious* capital of the world (v. 2a). All nations of the earth will stream to Jerusalem to learn the ways of God. Down through the centuries, generation after generation of people have forsaken the Lord and refused to acknowledge Him as their Creator. They have rejected His way of righteousness. But in the last days, this will totally change. A glorious time is coming! At long last, all the people of the earth will seek to know God. They will yearn to accept and to follow the righteous ways of their loving Creator. They will flow like a river into the holy city of Jerusalem where their Savior and Redeemer, Christ Jesus Himself, rules.

In addition to people's discovering God's laws and ways, they will also obey Him. They will "walk in His paths." What a stark contrast to Israel's (and the world's) long history of idolatry and to reality today. People of all generations have known that a Supreme Being (God) exists and they have some sense of righteousness in their hearts, a sense of right and wrong. Since the beginning of time these truths have been made clear. They are written in

the stars and embedded in the conscience of man (see Ro. 1:19–20; 2:14–15). Yet people of every generation have refused to heed the message of creation and their own consciences. This, too, will totally change. When Christ [the Messiah] establishes God’s Kingdom on earth, people will finally obey the laws and ways of the Lord. They will *know* the truth; they will live and walk in it.

2) Jerusalem will be the *legislative* capital of the world (v. 2b). Thus God’s law and Word will go out from there to govern the ends of the earth, all nations and people. The rulers and legislative bodies of the earth will look to Christ [the Messiah] as the Supreme Ruler. They will establish God’s law as the law of their nations, and they will seek the counsel and guidance of Christ as they govern day by day.

3) Jerusalem will be the *judicial* capital of the world (v. 3a). From Jerusalem, the Lord will execute true justice and settle disputes between all nations of the world. In that glorious day, the human race—every individual of every nation—will finally submit to Christ’s [the Messiah’s] rule.”

In today’s fifth verse, Micah says, “All the nations may walk in the name of their gods; We will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.” This is a great proclamation. It quickly

brings to mind Joshua's words to Israel: Joshua 24:15 (NIV84) "But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Isaiah and Micah were contemporaries. It should not be surprising that they shared a very similar message of the Messianic Kingdom. Isaiah has a seemingly small difference in the fifth verse that actually has amazing implications.

Isaiah 2:2–5 (NIV84) *The Mountain of the Lord*

²In the last days

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³Many peoples will come and say,

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
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The law will go out from Zion,
the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

⁴ He will judge between the nations
and will settle disputes for many peoples.

They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

⁵ Come, O house of Jacob,
let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Walking in the **name** of the Lord and walking in the **light** of the Lord, at first glance, might not seem significant. But consider the Gospel of John’s description of the anointed One’s coming. John 1:4–8 (NIV84)

⁴In him was life, and that life was the **light** of men.

⁵The **light** shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John.⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that **light**, so that through him all men might believe.⁸ He himself was not **the light**; he came only as a witness to the **light**.

Then consider John 8:12 (NIV84) When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Isaiah's use of the word light is no accident. The Apostle John's use of the word light is no accident. Our Lord Jesus is saying that HE is the fulfillment of prophecy. He is the long awaited light; the long awaited Messiah – the Christ, the Anointed.

Both the Micah passage and Isaiah passage address an amazing life lived in peace. It is not just the absence of war. In fact, war isn't an option. There are no weapons of war for they have been converted into tools for farming and growth. The concept of war is even irrelevant because there isn't any training or preparations for war.

Micah takes it even further: Every man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid. It sounds idyllic. There is abundance and everyone has what they need. There is peace of mind because even sources of fear have been overcome.

My friends, have you heard about the Millennium? It is the thousand year reign of Christ. It is also known as the thousand year's of peace. This makes sense because Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Make note – this is not the New Heaven and New Earth. There is only one New Testament scripture that describes the Millennium.

Revelation 20:1–10 (NIV84) *The Thousand Years*

20 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain.² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.³ He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

⁴I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection.⁶

Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Satan's Doom

⁷When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.⁹ They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.¹⁰ And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

We do not have time to explain this passage. I just submit it to you as that to which our Old Testament prophecies pointed. Three things I will say: 1) Peace is possible when Satan is bound in the Abyss. 2) There is judgment. 3) God is victorious.

CONCLUSION:

In our Lord's Prayer, we pray Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; and, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Are these but empty words that we pray in vain repetition? Or, are they empowering promises of the Most High God?

In the second verse of Forward through the Ages, we just sang in the second verse:

2. Wider grows the kingdom, reign of love and light;
for it we must labor, till our faith is sight.
Prophets have proclaimed it, martyrs testified,
poets sung its glory, heroes for it died.

How does the kingdom grow? In what ways do we labor for that kingdom? To a large extent, we answered that last week in the sermon, "Doing What is Good," which can be reviewed on our website. The kingdom grows when we preach, teach, and model a life-giving gospel.

Alexander Maclaren preached, "**A man's god is what rules his practical life.**" Who is your God? Is it the Prince of Peace? Can others see Christ in the way you walk in the name of God? Can others see Christ in the way you walk in the light of the LORD?

I pray that they can.

Amen and amen. Let us pray.