Elder's Corner

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.
(Mic. 4:1-3)

Reading these verses this morning made me wonder what kind of grammatic contortions replacement theologians must make to defend their view that, first of all the church has replaced Israel, and second, that we are in the kingdom now, with the church mediating the kingdom for Jesus Christ as He sits at the right hand of His Father in heaven. Study the verses above. Micah wasn't alone in writing in this manner, for his contemporary the prophet Isaiah wrote practically the same thing in **Isa. 2:2-5.** And they certainly are not alone among Old Testament prophets who wrote of a golden age for **Israel** and its people, along with the Apostle John in the New Testament giving us the knowledge that this unparalleled time in human history would last one thousand years. Couple all the above with the **covenant** that the **Lord God** made with Israel's great king, **David,** that he would not cease to have a descendant reigning from his **throne in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:3, 4, 34-37).** Yet, it is a fact that the Roman Catholic Church and most churches that arose from the Reformation are replacement theologians and they do not interpret the verses above and many that are like them in a literal manner.

Sadly, there are even evangelicals who back away from the literal/grammatic interpretation of the verses above. I was amazed when I found this comment on the verses above in a book in my library:

> The divine manifesto outlined in the second stanza strikes a responsive chord in every human heart, but its fulfilment essentially depends on the prior condition of the first stanza: submission to the God of Israel. One should not read into the passage clarifications that one would like to see. There is no sense of conversion[1] in the sense of abandonment of national religions; sacrifice plays no explicit part. The nations retain autonomy and self-government, but form a loose federation under Israel's God. Strangely perhaps, to judge from other part of the OT, there is no thought of an empire managed by Israel for God; Israel receives scant mention solely in a label by which to identify Yahweh.[2]

That author is well versed in the Hebrew language, but in this author's opinion, what he wrote above is ***ecclesiastical anti-semitism!***

Micah does consider the whole counsel of God for Israel. The verse immediately preceding those quoted above reveals that the Lord God does not overlook the disobedience and lack of faith of His people:

> **Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the temple like the bare hills of the forest. (Mic. 3:12)**[3]

As one reviews the history of **Israel and Jerusalem,** it's evident that prophecy has been fulfilled a few times already and it must be fulfilled again before the verses at the beginning of this article can be fulfilled. Despite the failures of the Jewish people, their faithful **Lord God,** for **the sake** of His glory and **holy name**, will bring His people back to Himself and He will be glorified by them:

> **But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went. "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord," says the Lord God, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.**
> **(Ezek. 36:21-23)**

Following that, the verses at the beginning of this article will be fulfilled literally to the last detail, regardless of what Leslie Allen thinks. Maranatha. Amen.

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[1] Has this author even considered the whole counsel of God—what a number of other Old Testament authors have written about these matters?

[2] Lelsie C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah,* gen. ed. R. K. Harrison, Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 326, 327.

[3] This verse saved Jeremiahs's life. See Jer. 26:18.