[[@Micah]]

Micah

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH

This book is called, in the Hebrew copies, "Sepher Micah", the Book of Micah; in the Vulgate Latin version "the Prophecy of Micah"; and in the Syriac version "the Prophecy of the Prophet Micah". This prophet is not the same with Micaiah the son of Imiah, who lived in the times of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, 1Ki 2**2:**8; for, as Aben Ezra observes, there were many generations between them, at least many reigns of kings, as Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah, all which made up a hundred and thirty years; their names indeed seem to be the same, since he that is called Micaiah, 1Ki 2**2:**8; is called Micah, 2Ch 1**8:**14; and this our prophet is named Micaiah in Jer 2**6:**18; which is with some of the same signification with Michael. So Abarbinel interprets, it, "who [is] as God"; see **Mic 7:18**; which Hillerus {a} confutes, and renders it, "the contrition, attrition, attenuation, and depauperation, of the Lord"; deriving it from Kwm, which signifies to be depressed, humbled, weakened, and impoverished, as others do; which name, some think, was given him by his parents, because of their low estate, their meanness and poverty; but of them we have no account: however, this is much more probable than the reason Cornelius a Lapide gives of his name, that he was so called because he prophesied of Christ, who was poor, and that he should be born in a poor country village. As for his country, and the place of his birth, and the time in which he lived, they may be gathered from **Mic 1:1**; by which it will appear that he was not of the tribe of Ephraim, as Pseudo-Epiphanius {b} says but of the tribe of Judah; whose kings' reigns in which he prophesies are only made mention of; though his prophecies concerned both Israel and Judah, and he reproves both for their sins, and foretells their various captivities; and, for the comfort of God's people, says many things concerning the Messiah, his incarnation the place of his birth, which no prophet so clearly points at as he, the execution of his offices, prophetic, priestly, and kingly; the blessings of grace that came by him, pardon of sin, atonement, &c. and the happiness and glory of his church in the latter day. The authority of this book is confirmed both by the elders of Judah in the times of Jeremiah, who quote a passage out of it; **Mic 3:12**; which they improve in favour of that prophet,

Jer 2**6:**17; and by the chief priests and Scribes in the time of Herod, who refer that prince to a prophecy in this book for the place of the Messiah's birth, **Mic 5:2**; see **Mt 2:4**. He is thought to have prophesied thirty or forty years, Bishop Usher {c} places him in the year of the world 3291 A.M., and 713 B.C.; but, according to Mr. Whiston {d}, he prophesied 750 B.C., and so Mr. Bedford {e}, and three after the building of the city of Rome; and he foretells the captivity of the ten tribes thirty years, and the coming of Sennacherib forty years, before they came to pass; but when and where he died, and was buried, no certain proof can be given. Pseudo-Epiphanius, confounding him with Micaiah in Ahab's time, says {f} he was killed by his son Joram, who cast him down from a precipice, and was buried at Morathi, his native place, near the burying ground of Enakeim, and his grave was well known to that day. And, according to Jerom {g}, the grave of this our prophet was at Morasthi, and in his time turned into a church or temple. Sozomen {h} reports, that, in the times of Theodosius the elder, the body of Micah was found by Zebennus bishop of Eleutheropolis at Berathsalia, a mile and a quarter from the city, near which was the grave of Micah, called by the common people the faithful monument, and in their country language Nephsameemana.

{a} Onomast. Sacr. p. 14, 466, 494, 542. {b} **Deuteronomy** Prophet. Vit. & Inter. c. 13. {c} Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3291. {d} Chronological Tables, cent. 8. {e} Scripture Chronology,

p. 662. {f} **Deuteronomy** Prophet. Vit. & Inter. c. 13. {g} Epitaph. Paulae, tom. 1. operum, fol. 60. A. B. {h} Histor. Eccles. l. 7. c. 29.

[[***@Micah 1]]***

Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION TO MICAH 1

This chapter treats of the judgments of God on Israel and Judah for their idolatry. It begins with the title of the whole book in which is given an account of the prophet, the time of his prophesying, and of the persons against whom he prophesied, **Mic 1:1**; next a preface to this chapter, requiring attention to what was about to be delivered, urged from the consideration of the awful appearance of God, which is represented as very grand and terrible, **Mic 1:2**; the cause of all which wrath that appeared in him was the transgression of Jacob; particularly their idolatry, as appears by the special mention of their idols and graven images in the account of their destruction, **Mic 1:5**; which destruction is exaggerated by the prophet's lamentation for it, **Mic 1:8**; and by the mourning of the inhabitants of the several places that should be involved in it, which are particularly mentioned, **Mic 1:10**.

[[@Micah **1:**1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Micah **1:**1]]. ***The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morasthite***,.... So called, either from Mareshah, mentioned **Mic 1:15**; and was a city in the tribe of Judah, Jos 1**5:**44; as the Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Zacutus {i}; or rather from Moresheth, from which Moreshethgath, **Mic 1:14**; is distinguished; which Jerom {k} says was in his time a small village in the land of Palestine, near Eleutheropolis. Some think these two cities to be one and the same; but they appear to be different from the account of Jerom {l} elsewhere. The Arabic version reads it, Micah the son of Morathi; so Cyril, in his commentary on this place, mentions it as the sense of some, that Morathi was the father of the prophet; which can by no means be assented to:

in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, [and] Hezekiah, kings of Judah; by which it appears that he was contemporary with Isaiah, Hoses, and Amos, though they began to prophesy somewhat sooner than he, even in the days of Uzziah; very probably he conversed with these prophets, especially Isaiah, with whom he agrees in many things; his style is like his, and sometimes uses the same phrases: he, being of the tribe of Judah, only mentions the kings of that nation most known to him; though he prophesied against Israel, and in the days of Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea:

which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem; in the vision of prophecy; Samaria was the metropolis of the ten tribes of Israel, and is put for them all; as Jerusalem was of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and is put for them Samaria is mentioned first, because it was the head of the greatest body of people; and as it was the first in transgression, it was the first in punishment.

{i} Juchashin, fol. 12. 1. {k} Prolog. in Mic. {l} Epitaph. Paulae, ut supra. (tom. 1. operum, fol. 60. A. B.)

[[@Micah **1:**2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Micah **1:**2]]. ***Hear, all ye people***,.... Or, "the people, all of them" {m}; not all the nations of the world, but the nations of Israel, so called from their several tribes; though some {n} think the rest of the inhabitants of the earth are meant: thee are the same words which are used by Micaiah the prophet in the times of Ahab, long before this time, from whom they might be borrowed, 1Ki 2**2:**28. The phrase in the Hebrew language, as Aben Ezra observes, is very wonderful, and serves to strike the minds and excite the attention of men; it is like the words of a crier, in a court of judicature, calling for silence:

hearken, O earth, and all that therein is; or, "its fulness" {o}; the land of Israel and Judah, the whole land of promise, and all the inhabitants of it; for to them are the following words directed:

and let the Lord God be witness against you; or, "in you" {p}; the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; let him who is the omniscient God, and knows all hearts, thoughts, words, and actions, let him bear witness in your consciences, that what I am about to say is truth, and comes from him; is not my own word, but his; and if you disregard it, and repent not, let him be a witness against you, and for me, that I have prophesied in his name; that I have faithfully delivered his message, and warned you of your danger, and reproved you for your sins, and have kept back nothing I have been charged and entrusted with: and now, you are summoned into open court, and at the tribunal of the great God of heaven and earth; let him be a witness against you of the many sins you have been guilty of, and attend while the indictment is read, the charge exhibited, and the proof given by

the Lord from his holy temple, from heaven, the habitation of his holiness; whose voice speaking from thence should be hearkened to; who from thence beholds all the actions of men, and from whence his wrath is revealed against their sins, and he gives visible tokens of his displeasure; and especially when he seems to come forth from thence in some remarkable instances of his power and providence, as follows:

{m} Mlk Myme "populi omnes ipsi", Montanus, Drusius, Piscator, Tarnovius. {n} So Burkius. {o} halmw "et plenitude ejus", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Cocceius, Burkius. {p} Mkb "in vobis", Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius.

[[@Micah **1:**3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Micah **1:**3]]. ***For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place***,.... Out of heaven, the place of the house of his Shechinah or Majesty, as the Targum; where his throne is prepared; where he keeps his court, and displays his glory; from whence he removes, not by local motion, since he is everywhere; but by some manifest exertion of his power, either on the behalf of his people, or in taking vengeance on his and their enemies; or on them sinning against him, in which sense it is probably to be understood. It signifies not change of place, but of his dispensations; going out of his former customary method into another; removing, as Jarchi has it, from the throne of mercies to the throne of judgment; doing not acts of mercy, in which he delights, but exercising judgment, his strange work. So the Cabalistic writers {q} observe on the passage, that

"it cannot be understood of place properly taken, according to

Isa 4**0:**12; for God is the place of the world, not the world his place; hence our wise men so expound the text, he cometh forth out of the measure of mercy, and goes into the measure of justice;"

or property of it. Some understand this of his leaving the temple at Jerusalem, and giving it up into the hands of the Chaldeans; but the former sense is best:

and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth; which are his footstool; Samaria and Jerusalem, built on mountains, and all other high towers and fortified places, together with men of high looks and haughty countenances, who exalt themselves like mountains, and swell with pride: these the Lord can easily subdue and humble, bring low and tread down like the mire of the street; perhaps there may be an allusion to the high places where idols were worshipped; and which were the cause of the Lord's wrath and vengeance, and of his coming forth, in this unusual way, in his providences.

{q} Kabala Denudata, par. 1. p. 408.

[[@Micah **1:**4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Micah **1:**4]]. ***And the mountains shall be molten under him***,.... As Sinai was when he descended on it, and as all nations will be at the general conflagration; but here the words are to be taken, not literally, but figuratively, for the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and for the kings, and princes, and great men in them, that lifted up their heads as high, and thought themselves as secure, as mountains; yet when the judgments of God should fall upon them, their hearts would melt through fear under him; as well as all their glory and greatness depart from them, and they be no more what they were before, but levelled with the meanest subject:

and the valleys shall be cleft: have chasms made in them by the melting of the mountains, or by the flow of water from the hills: these may design the lower sort of people, who shall have their share in this calamity; the inhabitants of the valleys and country villages; who, though mean and low, shall be lower still, and lose that little substance, that liberty and those privileges, they had; as valleys may be cleft, and open, and sink into the lower parts of the earth; so it is signified that these people should be in a more depressed state and condition:

as wax before the fire; melts, and cannot stand the force of it; so the mountains should melt at the presence of the Lord; and kingdoms and states, and the greatest and mightiest of men in them, would not be able to stand before the fierceness of his wrath; see **Psalm** 6**8:**2;

[and] as the waters [that are] poured down a steep place; that run with great swiftness, force, and rapidity, and there is no stopping them; so should the judgments of God come down upon the lower sort of people, the inhabitants of the valleys; neither high nor low would escape the indignation of the Lord, or be able to stand against it, or stand up under it.

[[@Micah **1:**5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Micah **1:**5]]. ***For the transgression of Jacob [is] all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel***,.... All this evil, all these calamities and judgments, signified by the above metaphorical phrases, these did not come by chance, nor without, reason; but were or would be inflicted, according to the righteous judgment of God, upon the people of Israel and Judah, for their manifold sins and transgressions, especially their idolatry: and should it be asked,

what [is] the transgression of Jacob? what notorious crime has he been guilty of? or what is the iniquity the two tribes are charged with, that is the cause of so much severity? the answer is,

[is it] not Samaria? the wickedness of Samaria, the calf of Samaria? as in **Ho 7:1**; that is, the worship of the calf of Samaria; is not that idolatry the transgression of Jacob, or which the ten tribes have given into? it is; and a just reason for all this wrath to come upon them: or, "who [is] the transgression of Jacob?" {r} who is the spring and source of it; the cause, author, and encourager of it? are they not the kings that have reigned in Samaria from the times of Omri, with their nobles, princes, and great men, who, by their edicts, influence, and example, have encouraged the worship of the golden calves? they are the original root and motive of it, and to them it must be ascribed; they caused the people to sin: or, as the Targum,

"where have they of the house of Jacob sinned? is it not in Samaria?"

verily it is, and from thence, the metropolis of the nation, the sin has spread itself all over it:

and what [are] the high places of Judah? or, "who [are] they?" {s} who have been the makers of them? who have set them up, and encouraged idolatrous worship at them?

[are] they not Jerusalem? are they not the king, the princes, and priests, that dwell at Jerusalem? certainly they are; such as Ahaz, and others, in whose times this prophet lived; see 2Ki 1**6:**4; or, as the Targum,

"where did they of the house of Judah commit sin? was it not in Jerusalem?"

truly it was, and even in the temple; here Ahaz built an altar like that at Damascus, and sacrificed on it, and spoiled the temple, and several of the vessels in it, 2Ki 1**6:**10.

{r} bqey evp ym "quis est praevaricatio Jacobi?" **Deuteronomy** Dieu; so Pagninus, Burkius; "quis defectio Jacobi?" Cocceius; "quis scelus Jacobi?" Drusius. {s} hdwhy twmb ym "quis est excelsa Judae?" Montanus, Drusius, **Deuteronomy** Dieu; "quis cesla Judae?" Cocceius; "quis fuit causa excelsorum Jehudae?" Burkius; so Kimchi.

[[@Micah **1:**6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Micah **1:**6]]. ***Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, [and] as plantings of a vineyard***,.... As a field ploughed, and laid in heaps; see **Mic 3:12**; or as stones gathered out of a field, and out of a vineyard planted, and laid in a heap; so should this city become a heap of stones and rubbish, being utterly demolished; and this being done according to the will of God, and through his instigation of Shalmaneser king of Assyria to it, and by his providence succeeding his army that besieged it, is said to be done by him. With this agrees the Vulgate Latin version,

"I will make Samaria as a heap of stones in a field, when a vineyard is planted;"

see **Isa 5:2**; for the city, being destroyed, cannot be compared to the plants of a vineyard set in good order, beautiful and thriving; but, as to heaps of stones in a field, so to such in a vineyard; or to hillocks raised up there for the plants of vines; and if the comparison is to plants themselves, it must be to withered ones, that are good for nothing. The note of similitude as is not in the text; and the words may be read without it, "I will make Samaria an heap of the field, plantings of a vineyard" {t}; that is, it shall be ploughed up, and made a heap of; turned into a field, and vines planted on it; for which its situation was very proper, being on a hill where vines used to be planted, and so should no more be inhabited as a city:

and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley; the stones of the buildings and walls of the city, which, being on a hill, when pulled down, rolled into the valley; and with as much

swiftness and force as waters run down a steep place, as in **Mic 1:4**; where the same word is used as here:

and I will discover the foundations thereof; which should be fused up, and left bare; not one stone should be upon another; so that there should be no traces and footsteps of the city remaining, and it should be difficult to know the place where it stood. This is expressive of the total desolation and utter destruction of it: this was not accomplished by Shalmaneser when he took it; for though he carried captive the inhabitants thereof, he put others in their room; but this was entirely fulfilled, not by Jonathan Maccabeus, though he is said {u} to besiege it, and level it with the ground; but by John Hyrcanus; and the account of the destruction of it by him, as given by Josephus {w}, exactly answers to this prophecy, and, to Ho 1**3:**16; where its desolation is also predicted; he says that Hyrcanus, having besieged it a year, took it; and, not content with this only, he utterly destroyed it, making brooks to run through it; and by digging it up, so that it fell into holes and caverns, insomuch that there were no signs nor traces of the city left. It was indeed afterwards rebuilt by Gabinius the Roman proconsul of Syria, and restored by Augustus Caesar to Herod, who adorned and fortified it, and called it by the name of Sebaste, in honour of Augustus {x}; though Benjamin of Tudela pretends that Ahab's palace might be discerned there in his time, or the place known where it was, which is not likely; excepting this, his account is probable.

"From Luz (he says {y}) is one day's journey to Sebaste, which is Samaria; and still there may be perceived there the palace of Ahab king of Israel; and it is a fortified city on a very high hill, and in it are fountains; and is a land of brooks of water, and gardens, orchards, vineyards, and olive yards;"

but, since his time, it is become more ruinous. Mr. Maundrell, who some years ago was upon the spot, gives a fuller account of it;

"this great city (he says {z}) is now wholly converted into gardens; and all the tokens that remain, to testify that there has ever been such a place, are only on the north side, a large square piazza, encompassed with pillars; and, on the east, some poor remains of a great church, said to be built by the Empress Helena, over the place where St. John Baptist was both imprisoned and beheaded."

So say others {a},

"the remains of Sebaste, or the ancient Samaria, though long ago laid in ruinous heaps, and a great part of it turned into ploughed land and garden ground, do still retain some monuments of its ancient grandeur, and of those noble edifices in it, with which King Herod caused it to be adorned;"

and then mention the large square piazza on the north, and the church on the east. It was twelve miles from Dothaim, and as many from Merran, and four from Atharoth, according to Eusebius {b}; and was, as Josephus {c} says, a day's journey from Jerusalem. Sichem, called by the Turks Naplus, is now the metropolis of the country of Samaria; Samaria, or Sebaste, being utterly destroyed, as says Petrus a Valle {d}, a traveller in those parts.

{t} Mrk yejml hdvh yel "in acervum agri, in plantationem, [vel] plantationes vinae", Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Cocceius; as Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Burkius. {u} Paschale Chronicon, p. 181. apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 980. {w} Antiqu. l. 13. c. 10. sect. 3. {x} Ibid. l. 14. c. 5. sect. 3. &. l. 15. c. 7. sect. 3. & c. 8. sect. 5. {y} Itinerarium, p. 38. {z} Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 59. Ed. 7. {a} Universal History, vol.

2. p. 439. {b} In voc. Dothaim, &c. {c} Antiqu. l. 15. c. 8. sect. 5. {d} Epist. 14. Morino apud Antiqu. Eccles. Oriental. p. 166.

[[@Micah **1:**7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Micah **1:**7]]. ***And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces***,.... By the Assyrian army, for the sake of the gold and silver of which they were, made, or with which they were adorned, as was usually done by conquerors to the gods of the nations they conquered; these were the calf of Samaria, and other idols; and not only those in the city of Samaria, but in all the other cities of Israel which fell into the hands of the Assyrian monarch; see Isa 1**0:**11;

and all the hires thereof shall be burnt with fire; this the Targum also interprets of idols; such as escaped the plunder of the soldiers should be burnt with fire: Kimchi, by "hires", understands the beautiful garments, and other ornaments, with which they adorned their idols, which were gifts unto them; and they committing spiritual adultery with them, these are compared to the hire of a harlot: or it may design their fine houses, and the furniture of them, all their substance and riches, which they looked upon as obtained by entering into alliances with idolatrous nations, and as the hire and reward of their idolatry; all these should be consumed by fire when the city was taken:

and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate; such as were not broke to pieces, nor burnt, should be thrown down, and trampled upon, and made no account of, or carried away with other spoil. The Targum interprets it of the houses or temples of their idols, which should be demolished. By this and the preceding clause it appears, that, besides the golden calf, there were other idols worshipped in Samaria. In the times of Ahab was the image of Baal, with others, for which he built an altar and a temple in Samaria, and a grove, 1Ki 1**6:**31; and at the time it was taken by Shalmaneser there were idols in it, as appears from Isa 1**0:**10; and there were still more after a colony of the Babylonians and others were introduced into it; the names of which were Succothbenoth, Nergal, Ashima, Nibhaz, Tartak, Adrammelech, and Anammelech. The first of these is thought, by Selden {e} to be Venus; and the two last, both by him and Braunius {f}, to be the same with Moloch, having the signification of a king in them, as that word signifies, and children being burnt unto them: they are all difficult to be understood. The account the Jews {g} give of them is, that "Succothbenoth" were images of a hen and chickens; "Nergal", a cock; "Ashima", a goat without hair; "Nibhaz", or "Nibchan", as sometimes read, a dog; and "Tartak", an ass; "Adrammelech", a mule, or a peacock; and "Anammelech", a horse, or a pheasant. And it was not unusual for some of these creatures to be worshipped by the Heathens, as a cock by the Syrians, and others; a goat by the Mendesians; and the dog Anubis, perhaps the same with Nibhaz, by the Egyptians {h}. And though the inhabitants of Samaria might be better instructed, after Manasseh and other Jews came to reside among them in later times, still they retained idolatrous practices; and, even in the times of our Lord, they were ignorant of the true object of religious worship, **Joh 4:22**; and they are charged by the Jewish writers {i} with worshipping the image of a dove on Mount Gerizim, and also such strange gods, the teraphim, which Jacob hid under the oak at Sichem; however, let their idols be what they will they worshipped, they are now utterly destroyed, according to this prophecy;

for she gathered [it] of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot; as all the riches of Samaria and its inhabitants were gathered together as the reward of their idolatry, as they imagined, so they should return to idolaters, the Assyrians; to Nineveh, called the well favoured harlot, **Na 3:4**; the metropolis of the Assyrian empire; and to the

house or temple of those that worshipped idols, as the Targum; with which they should adorn their idols, or use them in idolatrous worship: or the sense in general is, that as their riches were ill gotten, as the hire of a harlot, and which never prospers, so theirs should come to nothing; as it came, so it should go: according to our proverb, "lightly come, lightly go". The allusion seems to be to harlots prostituting themselves in the temples of idols, which was common among the Heathens, as at Comana and Corinth, as Strabo {k} relates; and particularly among the Babylonians and Assyrians, which may be here referred to: for Herodotus {l} says, it was a law with the Babylonians that every woman of that country should once in her life sit in the temple of Venus, and lie with a strange man: here women used to sit with a crown upon their heads: nor might they return home until some stranger threw money into their laps, and took them out of the temple, and lay with them; and he that cast it must say, I implore the goddess Mylitta for thee; the name by which the Assyrians call Venus; nor was it lawful to reject the price or the money, be it what it would, for it was converted to holy uses, and Strabo {m} affirms much the same. So the Phoenician women used to prostitute themselves in the temples of their idols, and dedicate there the hire of their bodies to their gods, thinking thereby to appease their deities, and obtain good things for themselves {n}.

{e} **Deuteronomy** Dis Syris Syntagm. 2. c. 7. p. 309. {f} Selecta Sacra, l. 4. c. 8. sect. 117. p. 465. {g} T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 63. 2. Vid. etiam T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 42. 3, 4. {h} Vid. Godwin's Moses and Aaron, l. 4. c. 7. {i} Maimon. in Misn. Beracot, c. 8. sect. 11. & Bartenora in ib. c. 7. sect. 1. & in Nidda, c. 4. sect. 1. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 15. 2. {k} Geograph. l. 12. p. 385. {l} Clio, sive l. 1. c. 199. {m} Ibid. l. 16. p. 513. {n} Athanasius contra Gentes, p. 21.

[[@Micah **1:**8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Micah **1:**8]]. ***Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked***,.... To his shut, putting off his upper garment; the rough one, such as the prophets used to wear; which he did as the greater sign of his mourning: sometimes, in such cases, they rent their garments; at other times they stripped themselves of them, and walked naked, as Isaiah did, Isa 2**0:**3; he went about like a madman, one disturbed in his mind, bereft of his senses, because of the desolation coming upon Israel; and without his clothes, as such persons often do: so the word rendered "stripped" signifies, as the Jewish commentators observe. This lamentation, and with these circumstances, the prophet made in his own person, to show the reality and certainty of their ruin, and to represent to them the desolate condition they would be in, destitute of all good things, and to them with it; as well as to express the sympathy of his heart, and thereby to assure them that it was not out of ill will to them, or a spirit of revenge, that he delivered such a message: or this he did in the person of all the people, showing what they would do, and that this would be their case shortly. So the Targum,

"for this they shall wail and howl, and go naked among the spoilers;"

I will make a wailing like the dragons; as in their fight with elephants, at which time they make a hideous noise {n}; and whose hissings have been very terrible to large bodies of men. Aelianus {o} speaks of a dragon in India, which, when it perceived Alexander's army near at hand, gave such a prodigious hiss and blast, that it greatly frightened and disturbed the whole army: and he relates {p} of another, that was in a valley near Mount Pellenaeus, in the isle of Chios, whose hissing was very terrible to the inhabitants of that place; and Bochart {q} conjectures that this their hissing is here referred to; and who observes of the whale, that it

has its name from a word in the Hebrew tongue, which signifies to lament; and which word is here used, and is frequently used of large fishes, as whales, sea calves, dolphins, &c. which make a great noise and bellowing, as the sea calf; particularly the balaena, which is one kind of a whale, and makes such a large and continued noise, as to be heard at the distance of two miles, as Rondeletius {r} says; and dolphins are said to make a moan and groaning like human creatures, as Pliny {s} and Solinus {t} report: and Peter Gillius relates, from his own experience, that lodging one night in a vessel, in which many dolphins were taken, there were such weeping and mourning, that he could not sleep for them; he thought they deplored their condition with mourning, lamentation, and a large flow of tears, as men do, and therefore could not help pitying their case; and, while the fisherman was asleep, took that which was next him, that seemed to mourn most, and cast it into the sea; but this was of no avail, for the rest increased their mourning more and more, and seemed plainly to desire the like deliverance; so that all the night he was in the midst of the most bitter moaning: wherefore Bochart, who quotes these instances, elsewhere {u} thinks that the prophet compares his mourning with the mourning of these creatures, rather than with the hissing of dragons. Some {w} think crocodiles are here meant; and of them it is reported {x}, that when they have eaten the body of a creature, which they do first, and come to the head, they weep over it with tears; hence the proverb of crocodiles tears, for hypocritical ones; but it cannot well be thought, surely, that the prophet would compare his mourning to that of such a creature. The learned Pocock thinks it more reasonable that the "jackals" are meant, called by the Arabians "ebn awi", rather than dragons; a creature of a size between a fox and a wolf, or a dog and a fox, which makes a dreadful howling in the night; by which travellers, unacquainted with it, would think a company of women or children were howling, and goes before the lion as his provider;

and mourning as the owls; or "daughters of the owl" {y}; which is a night bird, and makes a very frightful noise, especially the screech owl. The Targum interprets it of the ostrich {z}; and it may be meant either of the mourning it makes when its young are about to be taken away, and it exposes itself to danger on their account, and perishes in the attempt. Aelianus {a} reports that they are taken by sharp iron spikes fixed about their nest, when they are returning to their young, after having been in quest of food for them; and, though they see the shining iron, yet such is their vehement desire after their young, that they spread their wings like sails, and with great swiftness and noise rush into the nest, where they are transfixed with the spikes, and die: and not only Vatablus observes, that these creatures have a very mournful voice; but Bochart {b} has shown, from the Arabic writers, that they frequently cry and howl; and from John de Laet, who affirms that those in the parts about Brazil cry so loud as to be heard half a mile; and indeed they have their name from crying and howling. The Targum renders it by a word which signifies pleasant; and so Onkelos on

Le 1**1:**16, by an antiphrasis, because its voice is so very unpleasant. Or, since the words may be rendered, "the daughters of the ostrich" {c}, it may be understood of the mourning of its young, when left by her, when they make a hideous noise and miserable moan, as some observe {d}.

{n} Aelian. de Animal. l. 6. c. 22. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 11. {o} Ib. l. 15. c. 21. {p} Ib. l. 16. c. 39. {q} Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 3. c. 14. col. 437. {r} Apud Bochart. ib. par. 1. l. 1. c. 7. col. 47. {s} Nat. Hist. l. 9. c. 9. {t} Polyhistor. c. 22. {u} Ut supra, (Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 3. c. 14.) col. 48. {w} Ludolphus apud Burkium in loc. {x} Vid. Frantzii Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 1. c. 26. sect. 2. {y} hney twnbk "ut filiae ululae", Piscator, Burkius; "instar filiarum. ululae", Cocceius. So Montanus. {z} So the Vulgate Latin, Munster, Pagninus, Drusius, Bochartus, and others. {a} **Deuteronomy** Animal. l. 14. c. 7. {b} Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 2. c. 14. col. c. 228.

{c} "Filiarum struthionis", Pagninus; "juvenes struthiones", Tigurine version. {d} Vid. Frantz. Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 2. c. 2. p. 339, 342.

[[@Micah **1:**9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Micah **1:**9]]. ***For her wound [is] incurable***,.... Or her "stroke [is] desperate" {e}. The ruin of Samaria, and the ten tribes, was inevitable; the decree being gone forth, and they hardened in their sins, and continuing in their impenitence; and their destruction was irrevocable; they were not to be restored again, nor are they to this day; nor will be till the time comes that all Israel shall be saved: or "she is grievously sick of her wounds"; just ready to die, upon the brink of ruin, and no hope of saving her; this is the cause and reason of the above lamentation of the prophet: and what increased his grief and sorrow the more was,

for it is come unto Judah; the calamity has reached the land of Judah; it stopped not with Israel or the ten tribes, but spread itself into the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; for the Assyrian army, having taken Samaria, and carried Israel captive, in a short time, about seven or eight years, invaded Judea, and took the fenced cities of Judah in Hezekiah's time, in which Micah prophesied;

he is come unto the gate of my people, [even] to Jerusalem; Sennacherib, king of Assyria, having taken the fenced cities, came up to the very gates of Jerusalem, and besieged it, where the courts of judicature were kept, and the people resorted to, to have justice done them; and Micah, being of the tribe of Judah, calls them his people, and was the more affected with their distress.

{e} hytwkm hvwna "desperata est plaga ejus", V. L. "plagae ejus", Montanus, Drusius.

[[@Micah **1:**10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Micah **1:**10]]. ***Declare ye [it] not at Gath***,.... A city of the Philistines, put for all the rest: the phrase is borrowed from **2Sa 1:20**; where the reason is given, and holds good here as there; and the sense is, not that the destruction of Israel, or the invasion of Judea, or the besieging of Jerusalem, could be hid from the Philistines; but that it was a thing desirable, was it possible, since it would be matter of rejoicing to them, and that would be an aggravation of the distress of Israel and Judah:

weep ye not at all; that is, before the Philistines, or such like enemies, lest they should laugh and scoff at you; though they had reason to weep, and did and ought to weep in secret; yet, as much as in them lay, it would be right to forbear it openly, because of the insults and reproach of the enemy. The learned Reland {f} suspects that it should be read, "weep not in Acco": which was another city in Palestine, to the north from the enemy, as Gath was to the south; and observes, that there is a like play on words {g} in the words, as in the places after mentioned. Acco is the same with Ptolemais, Ac 2**1:**7;

See Gill on "Ac 2**1:**7". It had this name from Ptolemy Lagus king of Egypt, who enlarged it, and called it after his own name; but Mr, Maundrell {h} observes,

"now, since it hath been in the possession of the Turks, it has, according to the example of many other cities in Turkey, cast off its Greek, and recovered some semblance of its old Hebrew name again, being called Acca, or Acra. As to its situation (he says) it enjoys all possible advantages, both of sea and land; on its north and east sides it is compassed with a

spacious and fertile plain; on the west it is washed by the Mediterranean sea; and on the south by a large bay, extending from the city as far as Mount Carmel;"

in the house of Aphrah roll thyself in the dust; as mourners used to do, sit in the dust, or cover their heads with it, or wallow in it; this is allowed to be done privately, in houses or in towns distinct from the Philistines, as Aphrah or Ophrah was, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, Jos 1**8:**23; called here "Aphrah", to make it better agree with "Aphar", dust, to which the allusion is: and it may be rendered, "in the house of dust roll thyself in the dust"; having respect to the condition houses would be in at this time, mere heaps of dust and rubbish, so that they would find enough easily to roll themselves in. Here is a double reading; the "Keri", or marginal reading, which the Masora directs to, and we follow, is, "roll thyself": but the "Cetib", or writing, is, "I have rolled myself" {i}; and so are the words of the prophet, who before says he wailed and howled, and went stripped and naked; here he says, as a further token of his sorrow, that he rolled himself in dust, and as an example for Israel to do the like. This place was a village in the times of Jerom {k} and was called Effrem; it was five miles from Bethel to the east.

{f} Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. p. 534, 535. {g} wkbt la wkb. {h} Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 54. {i} yvlpth "volutavi me", **Deuteronomy** Dieu. {k} **Deuteronomy** locis Hebr. fol. 88. H.

[[@Micah **1:**11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Micah **1:**11]]. ***Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir***,.... A village, according to Eusebius {l}, between Eleutheropolis and Ashkelon; perhaps the same with Sephoron; it is mentioned among the cities of Judah, in the Greek version of Jos 1**5:**48. Calmet {m} conjectures the prophet intends the city of Sephoris or Sephora in Galilee. Hillerus {n}: takes it to be the same with Parah, mentioned with Ophrah, in Jos 1**8:**23; so called from its ornament, neatness, beauty, and elegance, as both words signify, to which the prophet alludes: now everyone of the inhabitants of this place are called upon to prepare to go into captivity to Babylon; which would certainly be their case, though they dwelled in fine buildings, neat houses, and streets well paved. In the margin it is, "thou that dwellest fairly" {o}; which some understand of Samaria; others of Judea; and particularly Jerusalem, beautifully situated, yet should go into captivity:

having thy shame naked; their city dismantled, their houses plundered, and they stripped of their garments, and the shame of their nakedness discovered; which must be the more distressing to beautiful persons, that have dressed neatly, and lived in handsome well built houses, and elegantly furnished, and now all the reverse;

the inhabitant of Zaanan came not forth in the mourning of Bethezel; or house of Azel, where the posterity of Azel, of the tribe of Benjamin, dwelt. Hillerus {p} suspects it to be the same with Mozah, Jos 1**8:**26; so called from Moza, the great grandfather of Azel, **1Ch 8:37**. Capellus takes it to be the same with Azal in Zec 1**4:**5. This place being taken and plundered by the enemy occasioned great mourning among the inhabitants: and it seems to have been taken first, before Zaanan; perhaps the same with Zenan, Jos 1**5:**37; and is here read "Sennan" by Aquila; the inhabitants of which did not "come forth", in which there is an allusion to its name {q}, either to help them in their distress, or to condole them; they being in fear of the enemy themselves, and in arms in their own defence, expecting it would be their turn next, and that they should share the same fate with them. Some think that under the name of Bethezel is meant Bethel; and of Zaanan, Zion; and that the sense is, that when Bethel, Samaria, and the ten tribes, were in distress, they of Zion and Judea did not come to give

them any relief; and when they were carried captive did not mourn with them, were not affected with their case, nor troubled themselves about them;

he shall receive of him his standing: either the enemy, as R. Joseph Kimchi, shall receive of the inhabitants of Zaanan his standing; that is, he shall make them dearly pay for stopping him, for making him stand and stay so long before their city before he could take it; for all his loss of time, men, and money, in besieging it; by demolishing their city, plundering their houses, and carrying them captive; who remained he put to death by the sword. Aben Ezra interprets the word "receive" of doctrine or learning, as in **Proverbs 4:2**; and renders it, "he shall learn"; either Bethezel, or rather Zaanan, shall learn, by the case of Bethezel, and other neighbouring places, what would be his own case, whether he should stand or fall.

{l} Ad vocem safeir. {m} Dictionary, in the word "Saphir". {n} Onomast. Sacr. p. 925. {o} rypv tbvy "habitans pulchre", Montanus; "habiatrix elegantis loci", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. {p} Ibid. p. 516, 951. {q} Nnau from auy. Vid. V. L. vers.

[[@Micah **1:**12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Micah **1:**12]]. ***For the inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good***,.... Or, "though [they] waited for good" {r}; expected to have it, yet the reverse befell them: or "verily [they were] grieved for good" {s}; for the good things they had lost, or were likely to lose; and which they had no more hope of, when they saw Jerusalem in distress. Grotius thinks, by transposition of letters, Ramoth is intended by Maroth, or the many Ramahs which were in Judah and Benjamin; but Hillerus {t} is of opinion that Jarmuth is meant, a city of Judah, Jos 1**5:**35; the word Maroth signifies "bitterness"; see **Ru 1:20**; and, according to others, "rough places"; and may design the inhabitants of such places that were in great bitterness and trouble because of the invasion of the enemy, who before that had promised themselves good things, and lived in the expectation of them:

but evil came down from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem; meaning the Assyrian army under Sennacherib, which came into the land of Judea by the order, direction, and providence of God, like an overflowing flood; which spread itself over the land, and reached to the very gates of Jerusalem, which was besieged by it, and threatened with destruction: or "because evil came down", &c. that is, "because" of that, the inhabitants of Maroth grieved, or were in pain, as a woman in travail.

{r} yk "quamvis". {s} bwjl hlx yk "certe doluit propter bonum", Vatablus; "siquidem doluit", Pagninus, Montanus; "quia doluit propter bonum", Burkius. {t} Onomast. p. 87, 951.

[[@Micah **1:**13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Micah **1:**13]]. ***O thou inhabitant of Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast***,.... Horses, camels, dromedaries, or mules. Some {u} render the word swift horse or horses, post horses; others dromedaries {w}; and some mules {x} the two latter seem more especially to be meant, either dromedaries, as the word is translated in **1Ki 4:28**; which is a very swift creature: Isidore says {y} the dromedary is one sort of camels, of a lesser stature, yet swifter, from whence it has its name, and is used to go more than a hundred miles a day; this is thought to be what the Jews {z} call a flying camel; which the gloss says is a sort of camels that are as swift in running as a bird that flies; they are lighter made than a camel, and go at a much greater rate; whereas a camel goes at the rate of thirty miles a day, the dromedary will perform a journey of one hundred and twenty miles in a day; they make use of them in the Indies for going post, and expresses frequently perform a journey of eight

hundred miles upon them in the space of a week {a}: this may serve the better to illustrate **Jer 2:23**; and improve the note there: but whether these were used in chariots I do not find; only Bochart {b} takes notice of a kind of camel, that has, like the dromedary, two humps on its back, which the Arabians call "bochet", and put to chariots: or else mules are meant, for by comparing the above text in **1Ki 4:28** with **2Ch 9:24**, it looks as if "mules" were there intended; and so the word here used is rendered in **Es 8:10**; and by their being there said to be used for posts to ride on expresses, it up pears to be a swift creature. Aelianus {c} makes mention of mules in India of a red colour, very famous for running; and mules were used in the Olympic games, and many riders of them got the victory; and that these were used in chariots, there is no doubt to be made of it: Homer {d} speaks of mules drawing a four wheeled chariot; so Pausanias {e} of mules yoked together, and drawing a chariot, instead of horses; and the Septuagint version of Isa 6**6:**20; instead of "in litters and on mules", renders it, "in litters" or carriages "of mules": but, be they one or the other that are here meant, they were creatures well known, and being swift were used in chariots, to which they were bound and fastened in order to draw them, and which we call "putting to"; this the inhabitants of Lachish {f} are bid to do, in order to make their escape, and flee as fast as they could from the enemy, advancing to besiege them; as they were besieged by the army of Sennacherib, before he came to Jerusalem,

2Ch 3**2:**1. Or these words may be spoken in an ironical and sarcastic way, that whereas they had abounded in horses and chariots, and frequently rode about their streets in them, now let them make use of them, and get away if they could; and may suggest, that, instead of riding in these, they should be obliged to walk on foot into captivity. Lachish was a city in the tribe of Judah, in the times of Jerom {g}; it was a village seven miles from Eleutheropolis, as you go to Daroma or the south;

she [is] the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion; lying upon the borders of the ten tribes, as Lachish did, it was the first of the cities of Judah that gave into the idolatry of Jeroboam, the worshipping of the calves; and from thence it spread itself to Zion and Jerusalem; and, being a ringleader in this sin, should be punished for it: though some think this refers to their conspiracy with the citizens of Jerusalem against King Amaziah, and the murder of him in this place, now punished for it, 2Ki 1**4:**18;

for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee; not only their idolatry, but all other sins, with which it abounded; it was a very wicked place, and therefore no wonder it was given up to destruction. The Targum is,

"for the transgressors of Israel were found in thee."

{u} vkrl "ad equos velocissimos", Pagninus; "equo veloci", Montanus; "angariis sc. equis", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. {w} "Dromadibus", Vatablus. So Elias. {x} "Mulis", so some in Piscator; "ad mulum celerem", Burkius. {y} Origin. l. 12. c. 1. p. 102. {z} T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 5. 1. {a} See Harris's Voyages and Travels, vol. 1. p. 469. {b} Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 4. col. 87. {c} **Deuteronomy** Animal. l. 16. c. 9. {d} Iliad. 24. l. 324. {e} Eliac. prior, sive l. 5. p. 302. So Suetonius in Vit. Jul. Caesar. c. 31. "mulis ad vehiculum junctis". {f} There is a likeness in sound between vykl and vkr. {g} **Deuteronomy** locis Hebr. fol. 92. M.

[[@Micah **1:**14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Micah **1:**14]]. ***Therefore shalt thou give presents to Moreshethgath***,.... Since Lachish was the cause of leading Judah into idolatry, and was a city so very wicked; therefore it should be reduced to such distress as to send messengers with

presents to the Philistines at Moreshethgath, a place near to Gath of the Philistines, and may include that and other cities of theirs, to come and help them against the Assyrians:

the houses of Achzib [shall be] a lie to the kings of Israel; a city of Judah, Jos 1**5:**44; or of Asher, Jos 1**9:**29; the same with Chezib,

Genesis 3**8:**5; and called Ecdippa by Josephus {h}, Pliny {i}, and Ptolemy {k}. The Jewish writers commonly call it Cezib, of which they {l} say many things about that, and the land unto it, being subject to tithes, the laws of the seventh year, and the like. Maimonides and Bartenora say {m} it is the name of a place which divided between the land of Israel, which they possessed who came out of Babylon, and that land which they enjoyed who came out of Egypt; but the Jews are not agreed about the situation of it. One of their writers {n} places it to the northeast of the land of Israel; but another {o} observes, and proves from one that resided in those parts some time, and diligently inquired into and made his observation on places, that Cezib, and also Aco and Amana, frequently mentioned with it, were all on the western sea of the land of Israel, that is, the Mediterranean sea; in which he was right, without all doubt: the place is now called Zib by contraction, of which Mr. Maundrell {p} gives this account;

"having travelled about one hour in the plain of Acra, we passed by an old town called Zib, situate on an ascent close by the seaside; this may probably be the old Achzib, mentioned Jos 1**9:**29; called afterwards Ecdippa; for St. Jerom {q} places Achzib nine miles distant from Ptolemais (or Aco), towards Tyre, to which account we found the situation of Zib exactly agreeing."

Now the houses or families that dwelt in this place, or the idols' temples there, as some, and the idolatry exercised therein, should be a lie unto, or disappoint the expectations of, the kings of Israel; which, according to Kimchi, is put for Judah, who placed confidence in them, and had dependence on them: there is an elegant play on words between Achzib and a "lie" {r}. The Targum is,

"thou shall send gifts to the heirs of Gath; the houses of Achzib shall be delivered to the people, because of the sins of the kings of Israel, who worshipped idols in them."

{h} Antiqu. l. 5. c. 1. sect. 22. **Deuteronomy** Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 13. sect. 4. {i} Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 19. {k} Geograph, l. 5. c. 15. {l} T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 36. 2. T. Bab. Gittin, foi. 7. 2. Misn. Demai, c. 1. sect. 3. {m} In Misn. Demai, c. 1. sect. 3. {n} Bartenora in Misn. Sheviith, c. 6. 1. & Challa, c. 4. sect. 8. {o} Yom Tob in Sheviith, c. 6. 1. e Caphtor Uperah, c. 11. {p} Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 33. Ed. 7. {q} **Deuteronomy** locis Hebr. fol. 88. I. {r} byzka & bzka.

[[@Micah **1:**15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Micah **1:**15]]. ***Yet will I bring an heir unto thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah***,.... Another city in the tribe of Judah, mentioned with Achzib in

Jos 1**5:**44; and by many thought to be the birth place of this prophet; and, if so, his faithfulness may be observed in declaring the whole counsel of God, though against his own fire place; and this must be an aggravation of the sin of the inhabitants of it, that they had such a prophet that arose from them, and they regarded him not. There is a beautiful allusion in the word "heir" to Mareshah {s}, which signifies an "inheritance"; and here were an "heir" or heirs for it, as the Targum; not the Persians, as some in Aben Ezra, and in an Agadah mentioned by Jarchi, who descended from Elam the firstborn of Shem; and so had a right of

inheritance, as those interpreters suppose; but the king of Assyria, who should invade the land, and seize upon this place among others, and possess it, as if it was his by right of inheritance, having obtained it by conquest: and this being by the permission and according to the will of God, he is said to be brought by him to it. Capellus thinks, on the contrary, that Hezekiah and his posterity are meant:

he shall come unto Adullam the glory of Israel; another city in the tribe of Judah, a royal one, Jos 1**5:**35; said by Jerom to be in his time no small village, and to be about ten miles from Eleutheropolis; called the "glory of Israel", having been a royal city in Joshua's time, Jos 1**2:**15; and a fenced city in the times of Rehoboam,

2Ch 1**1:**7; and Eusebius says it was a large town; and Jerom says it was not a small one in his time; though some think Jerusalem is meant, the metropolis of the nation, Israel being put for Judah, as in **Mic 1:14**; and to be read, "he [that is the enemy and heir] shall come to Adullam, yea, to the glory of Israel" {t}; even to Jerusalem, the most glorious city in all the tribes; though others are of opinion that this is the character of the enemy or heir that should come thither, called so by way of contradiction, as coming to the reproach and disgrace of Israel; or, ironically, whom Israel before gloried in, when they had recourse to him for help. The margin of our Bible reads, "the glory of Israel shall come to Adullam"; that is, the great men, the princes and heads of the people, shall flee to the cave of Adullam {u}, to hide them from the enemy, where David was hid from Saul; see

1Sa 2**2:**1. Burkius {w}, a very late commentator, takes Adullam for an appellative, and with Hillerus {x} renders it, "the perpetuity of the yoke"; and the whole thus, "at the perpetuity of the yoke, the glory of Israel shall come"; that is, when all things shall seem to tend to this, that the yoke once laid on Israel by the Gentiles shall become perpetual, without any hope of deliverance, then shall come the Deliverer, that is, Jesus, the Glory of Israel; and, adds he, God forbid we should think of any other subject here; and so he interprets the "heir" in the preceding clause of the Messiah; and which is a sense far from being despicable.

{s} vryh & hvrm. {t} So Piscator, Juuius, Drusius. {u} "Ad Adullam veniet gloria Israelis", Cocceius. {w} He published Annotations on the twelve minor Prophets at Heilbronn, 1753, which he calls a Gnomon, written in imitation of Bengelius's Gnomon of the New Testament, whose son-in-law it seems he is, and by whom his work is prefaced. {x} Onomast. Sacr. p. 739.

[[@Micah **1:**16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:Micah **1:**16]]. ***Make thee bald, and poll thee for thy delicate children***,.... Which is said, either with respect to Mareshah, or to Adullam, or to the whole land, as Kimchi observes; rather to the latter; and that either to Israel, or to Judah, or both; the prophecy in general being concerning them both, **Mic 1:1**; making baldness, whether by plucking off the hair, or by shaving it, was used in token of mourning, **Job 1:20**; and so it is designed to express it here: the inhabitants of the land are called to lamentation and weeping for their children taken from them, whom they dearly loved, and brought up in a delicate manner. The Targum is,

"pluck off thy hair, and cast it upon the children of thy delight;"

and Sanctius observes; that it was a custom with the Gentiles to cut off their hair, and cast it into the graves of their kindred and friends at their interment, to which be thinks the prophet alludes:

enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; when it moults, and cast off all its feathers, as it does in old age, and so renews its youth; to which the allusion seems to be in **Psalm** 10**3:**5; or every year, as birds of prey usually do at the beginning of the spring. The Jewish writers {y} say this happens to it every ten years; when, finding its feathers heavy and unfit for flying, it makes a tour to the sun with all its force it can, to get as near it as possible; and, having heated its plumage excessively, it casts itself into the sea for cooling, and then its feathers fall off, and new ones succeed; and this it does until it is a hundred years old; and to its then state of baldness, while it is moulting, is the allusion here; unless it can be thought any respect is had to that kind of eagle which is called the bald one. In Virginia {z} there are three sorts of eagles; one is the grey eagle, about the size of a kite; another the black eagle, resembling those in England; and a third the bald eagle, so called because the upper part of the neck and head are covered with a sort of white down: but the former sort of baldness seems to be intended, which is at certain stated times, and not what always is, and is only partial; for it denotes such an universal baldness to be made, as to take in all the parts of the body where any hair grows; as expressive of the general devastation that should be made, which would be the cause of this great mourning:

for they are gone into captivity from thee; that is, the delicate children of Israel and Judah, and so were as dead unto them, or worse: this was accomplished in Israel or the ten tribes, partly by Tiglathpileser, and more completely by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria,

2Ki 1**5:**29; and in Judah or the two tribes, when Sennacherib came and took their fenced cities; and doubtless some of the inhabitants and their children were carried captive by him, though not Jerusalem; and therefore cannot be addressed here, as some do interpret the words, unless the prophecy is to be extended to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

{y} Saadiah Gaon apud Kimchi & Ben Melech in Psal. ciii. 5. & lsa. xl. 31. {z} See Harris's Voyages and Travels, vol. 2. p. 229. Lowthorp's Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 3. p. 589.

[[@Micah 2]]

Chapter 2

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH 2

In this chapter complaint is made of the sins of the people of Israel, and they are threatened with punishment for them. The sins they are charged with are covetousness, oppression, and injustice, which were premeditated, and done deliberately, **Mic 2:1**; therefore the Lord devised evil against them, they should not escape; and which would bring down their pride, and cause them to take up a lamentation, because they should not enjoy the portion of land that belonged to them, **Mic 2:3**; they are further charged with opposing the prophets of the Lord, the folly and wickedness of which is exposed, **Mic 2:6**; and with great inhumanity and barbarity, even to women and children, **Mic 2:8**; and therefore are ordered to expect and prepare for a removal out of their land, **Mic 2:10**; and the rather, since they gave encouragement and heed to false prophets, and delighted in them, **Mic 2:11**; and the chapter is concluded with words of comfort to the remnant among them, and with precious promises of the Messiah, and the blessings of grace by him, **Mic 2:12**.

[[@Micah **2:**1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Micah **2:**1]]. ***Woe to them that devise iniquity***,.... Any kind of iniquity; idolatry, or worshipping of idols, for the word is used sometimes for an idol; or the sin of uncleanness, on which the thoughts too often dwell in the night season; or coveting of neighbours' goods, and oppressing the poor; sins which are instanced in **Mic 2:2**; and every thing that is vain, foolish, and wicked, and in the issue brings trouble and distress: now a woe is denounced against such that think on such things, and please themselves with them in their imaginations, and contrive ways and means to commit them:

and work evil upon their beds; when, the senses being less engaged, the thoughts are more free; but should not be employed about evil; but either in meditating on the divine goodness, and praising the Lord for his mercies; or in examining a man's heart, state, and case, and mourning over his sins, and applying to God for the remission of them; but, instead of this, the persons here threatened are said to "work evil on their beds", when they should be asleep and at rest, or engaged in the above things; that is, they plot and contrive how to accomplish the evil they meditate; they determine upon doing it, and are as sure of effecting it as if it was actually done; and do act it over in their own minds, as if it was real; see **Psalm** 3**6:**4;

when the morning is light, they practise it; they wish and wait for the morning light, and as soon as it appears they rise; and, instead of blessing God for the mercies of the night, and going about their lawful business, they endeavour to put in practice with all rigour and diligence, and as expeditiously as they can, what they have projected and schemed in the night season;

because it is in the power of their hand; to commit it; and they have no principle of goodness in them, nor fear of God before them, to restrain them from it: or, "because their hand is unto power" {b}; it is stretched out, and made use of in the commission of sin to the utmost of their power, without any regard to God or man. The Vulgate Latin version is, "because their hand is against God"; their hearts are enmity to God, and therefore they oppose him with both their hands, and care not what iniquity they commit; they are rebels against him, and will not be subject to him. The Septuagint and Arabic versions are, "because they lift not up their hands to God"; they do not pray to him, and therefore are bold and daring to perpetrate the grossest iniquity, which a praying man dared not do; but the Syriac version is the reverse, "they do lift up their hands to God"; make a show of religion and devotion, when their hearts and their hands are deeply engaged in, sinning; which shows their impudence and hypocrisy; but the passages in

Genesis 3**1:**29 favour and confirm our version, and the sense of it; so the Targum.

{b} Mdy lal vy yk "quia est ad potentiam manus ipsorum", Calvin.

[[@Micah **2:**2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Micah **2:**2]]. ***And they covet fields, and take [them] by violence***,.... The fields of their poor neighbours, which lie near them, and convenient for them; they wish they were theirs, and they contrive ways and means to get them into their possession; and if they cannot get them by fair means, if they cannot persuade them to sell them, or at their price, they will either use some crafty method to get them from them, or they will take them away by force and violence; as Ahab got Naboth's vineyard from him:

and houses, and take [them] away; they covet the houses of their neighbours also, and take the same course to get them out of their hands, and add them to their own estates:

so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage; not only dispossess him of his house to dwell in, but of his paternal inheritance, what he received from his ancestors, and should have transmitted to his posterity, being unalienable; and so distressed a man and his family for the present, and his posterity after him. The Vulgate Latin version is, "they calumniate a man and his house"; which seems to be designed to make it agree with the story of Ahab,

1Ki 2**1:**13.

[[@Micah **2:**3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Micah **2:**3]]. ***Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold, against this family do I devise an evil***,.... Because of those evils of covetousness, oppression, and injustice, secretly devised, and deliberately committed, the Lord, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, declares, and would have it observed, that he had devised an evil of punishment against the whole nation of Israel, the ten tribes particularly, among whom these sins greatly prevailed; even an invasion of their land by the Assyrians, and the carrying of them captive from it into foreign parts:

from which ye shall not remove your necks; that is, they should not be able to deliver themselves from it; they would not be able to stop the enemy in his progress, having entered their land; nor oblige him to break up the siege of their city, before which he would sit, and there continue till he had taken it; and being carried captive by him, they would never be able to free themselves from the yoke of bondage put upon them, and under which they remain unto this day. The allusion is to beasts slipping their necks out of the collar or yoke put upon them: these sons of Belial had broke off the yoke of God's commandments, and now he will, put another yoke upon them, they shall never be able to cast off until the time of the restitution of all things, when all Israel shall be saved:

neither shall ye go haughtily; as they now did, in an erect posture, with necks stretched out, and heads lifted up high, and looking upon others with scorn and contempt; but hereafter it should be otherwise, their heads would hang down, their countenances be dejected, and their backs bowed with the burdens upon them:

for this time [is] evil; very calamitous, afflictive, and distressing; and so not a time for pride and haughtiness, but for dejection and humiliation; see **Eph 5:16**.

[[@Micah **2:**4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Micah **2:**4]]. ***In that day shall [one] take up a parable against you***,.... Making use of your name, as a byword, a proverb, a taunt, and a jeer; mocking at your calamities and miseries: or, "concerning you" {c}; take up and deliver out a narrative of your troubles, in figurative and parabolical expressions; which Kimchi thinks is to be understood of a false prophet, finding his prophecies and promises come to nothing; or rather a stranger, a bystander, a spectator of their miseries, an insulting enemy, mimicking and representing them; or one of themselves, in the name of the rest:

and lament with a doleful lamentation; or, "lament a lamentation of lamentation" {d}: a very grievous one; or, "a lamentation that is", or "shall be", or "is done" {e}; a real one, and which will continue:

[and] say, we be utterly spoiled; our persons, families, and friends; our estates, fields, and vineyards; our towns and cities, and even our whole land, all laid waste, spoiled, and plundered:

he hath changed the portion of my people; the land of Israel, which was the portion of the people of it, given unto them as their portion by the Lord; but now he, or the enemy the Assyrian, or God by him, had changed the possessors of it; had taken it away from Israel, and given it to others:

how hath he removed [it] from me! the land that was my portion, and the portion of my people; how comes it to pass that he hath taken away that which was my property, and given it to another! how strange is this! how suddenly was it done! and by what means!

turning away, he hath divided our fields; either God, turning away from his people, because of their sins, divided their fields among their enemies; "instead of restoring" **{f}**, as some read it, he did so; or the enemy the Assyrian, turning away after he had conquered the land, and about to return to his own country, divided it among his soldiers: or, "to the perverse", or "rebellious one **{g}**, he divideth our fields"; that is, the Lord divides them to the wicked, perverse, and blaspheming king of Assyria; so the word is used of one that goes on frowardly, and backslides, Isa 5**7:**17.

{c} Mkyle "super vos", Pagninus, Montanus; "de vobis", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "super vobis", Cocceius. **{d}** hyhn hyn hhnw "et lamentabitur lamentum lamenti", Montanus. **{e}** hyhn "factum est", **Deuteronomy** Dieu; "ejulatu vero", Cocceius; "actum est", Burkius. **{f}** bbwvl "pro reddendo", Castalio. **{g}** bbwv "aversus, refractarius", Drusius; "ingrato et rebelli", **Deuteronomy** Dieu.

[[@Micah **2:**5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Micah **2:**5]]. ***Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot***,.... This confirms what was before delivered in a parabolical way, and as a lamentation; and is spoken either to the false prophet, as Kimchi; who should not be, nor have any posterity to inherit by lot the land of Israel; or to those oppressors that took away houses and fields from others, these should have no part nor lot in the land any more; or rather to the whole, people of Israel, who should no more inherit their land after their captivity, as they have not to this day. The allusion is to the distribution of the land by lot, and the dividing of it by a cord or line, as in Joshua's time; but now there should be no land in the possession of Israelites to be divided among them; nor any people to divide it to, being scattered up and down in the world, and so no need of any person to be employed in such service; nor any sanhedrim or court of judicature to apply unto for a just and equal division and distribution, who perhaps may be meant in the next clause:

in the congregation of the Lord; unless this is to be understood of the body of the people, who were formerly called the congregation of the Lord, **Deuteronomy** 2**3:**1; though now they had forfeited this character, and are only called so ironically, as some think. Aben Ezra interprets it, when the Lord returns the captivity of his people; and so Kimchi, who applies it to the false prophet, as before observed, who at this time should have no part nor lot in the land.

[[@Micah **2:**6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Micah **2:**6]]. ***Prophesy ye not, [say they to them that] prophesy***,.... Or "drop not" **{h}**; such terrible words, such menacing things; let them not flow

from your lips with such profusion and abundance; cease from speaking in the name of the Lord, if we can hear nothing else but sharp reproofs, and severe judgments: or the first word respects the true prophets of the Lord, and forbids their prophesying; and, according to others, the next should be rendered, "let them prophesy", or "drop" {i}; that is, the false prophets, that prophesy smooth things; and so the sense is, let the one prophesy, but not the other:

they shall not prophesy to them; these are the words of the Lord, in answer to the other, that since they did not like his prophets, their should no more be sent to, them, nor should drop or distil the rain of doctrine upon them; but, as a judgment upon them, should be deprived of them: or, "they shall not prophesy according to these" {k}; as the false prophets do, not such things as they; or the whole may be rendered thus, "prophesy not", or, "if they prophesy, let them not prophesy as these" {l}; such things as these; namely,

[that] shame shall not overtake them; that is, as the false prophets, who said that shame and confusion should not come upon the people of Israel, or the wrath denounced against them, but they should enjoy great peace and prosperity: but the first sense seems best, and the meaning of this clause to be, that the true prophets of the Lord should not prophesy any more to this people, since they did not choose they should: "that shame might not come upon them"; that the prophets might not be treated by them in a shameful and ignominious manner: or, as others, "shame shall not depart from them" {m}; though they think to escape it by forbidding the prophets prophesying terrible things to come, yet confusion will be their portion at last.

{h} wpyjt la "ne stilletis", Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Burkius, Junius & Tremellius; "ne stillatote", Piscator. {i} Nwpyjy "stallent isti", Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius; "stillanto", Piscator. {k} hlal "secundum istos", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. {l} "Ne vaticinemini, aut si vaticinentur ne talia vaticinentur", Castalio. {m} twmlk goy al "non recedent ignominiae", **Deuteronomy** Dieu; "non retroageretur summa ignominia", Cocceius; "non recederet ignominia magna", Burkius.

[[@Micah **2:**7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Micah **2:**7]]. ***O [thou that art] named the house of Jacob***,.... Called after that great and good man, and reckoned the people of God, and have the character of being religious persons; but, alas! have but a name, and not the thing, and are the degenerate offspring of that famous patriarch:

is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? or "shortened" {n}; the Spirit of the Lord in his prophets, is it to be limited and restrained according to the will of men? or, if these prophets are forbid to prophesy, and they are silenced, is not the residue of the Spirit with the Lord? cannot he raise up others to prophesy in his name? or is the Spirit of the Lord confined, as a spirit of prophesy, only to foretell good things, and not evil? may it not threaten with, punishment for sin, as well as promise peace and prosperity?, and is it to be reckoned narrow and strait, because it now does not? the fault is not in that, but in you, who make it necessary, by your conduct, that not good, but evil things, should be predicted of you:

[are] these his doings? either Jacob's doings, such things as Jacob did? did he ever forbid the prophets of the Lord from prophesying? or did he do such things as required such menaces and threatenings as now delivered by the prophets? or are these becoming such persons as go by his name? or are such works as are done by you pleasing to God? were they, no such terrible messages would be sent by his prophets: or are these the Lord's doings? are

judgments the works he is continually doing and taking delight in? are they not his acts, his strange acts? did you behave otherwise than you do, you would hear nothing of this kind:

do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly? that walks in a right way, and according to the rule of the divine word, in the uprightness and integrity of his heart, aiming at the honour and glory of God in all his ways? to such a man the words of the Lord by his prophets speak good things, promise him good things here and hereafter, and do him good, exhilarate his spirits, cheer, refresh, and comfort his soul.

{n} ruqh "abbreviatus est", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Cocceius; "decurtatus esset", Piscator.

[[@Micah **2:**8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Micah **2:**8]]. ***Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy***,.... Or "yesterday" {o}; meaning a very little while before this prophecy, the people of Israel, those of the ten tribes, who were the people of God by profession, rose up as an enemy, not only to God and true religion, worshipping idols; but rather to their brethren, those of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; as they did in the times of Pekah king of Israel, who slew a hundred and twenty thousand of them in one day,

2Ch 2**8:**6; and which is here mentioned as a reason why the Spirit of the Lord in his prophets threatened them with evil, and did not promise them good things:

ye pull off the robe with the garment; the upper and nether garment, and so stripped them naked: or, "they stripped the robe from off the garment", as some {p}; they took the upper garment or cloak from them, and left them only the under garment:

for them that pass by securely, as men averse from war: who were travelling from place to place about their proper business, and thought themselves very safe; were peaceable men themselves, and suspected no harm from others: or, "returning from war" {q}; such who escaped in the battle, and fled for their lives; and when they imagined they, were safe, and out of danger, fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped them of their garments. Gussetius {r} interprets it of such who were returning to the battle, and yet so used.

{o} lwmta "heri", Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Burkius. {p} hmlv lwmm "a veste togam spoliatis", Noldius; "a veste pallium exuitis", Burkius. {q} hmxlm ybwv "revertentibus a bello", Piscator; "redeunt a bello", Cocceius; "et revertuntur a bello", **Deuteronomy** Dieu; "uti essetis reversi ex bello", Burkius. {r} "Redeuntes in bellum", Comment. Ebr. p. 836.

[[@Micah **2:**9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Micah **2:**9]]. ***The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses***,.... Not content to slay their husbands, they took their wives or widows captive, dispossessed them of their habitations, where they had lived delightfully with their husbands and children; so we find that, at the time before referred to, the people of Israel carried captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, and brought them to Samaria, 2Ch 2**8:**8. Some understand this of divorce, which those men were the cause of, either by committing adultery with them, which was a just reason for their husband's divorcing them; or by frequenting their houses, which caused suspicion and jealousy:

from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever; that which God would have had glory from, and they would have given it to him on account of; as their being brought up in a religious way; their liberties, both civil and religious; their paternal estates and inheritances, and the enjoyment of their own land; and especially the worship of God in the temple, of which they were deprived by being carried away from their own country: or it may be understood of the glory that accrues to God by honourable marriage, and the bed undefiled; and the dishonour cast upon him by the contrary, as well as upon children, who may be suspected to be illegitimate.

[[@Micah **2:**10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Micah **2:**10]]. ***Arise ye, and depart***,.... That is, out the land; do not think of a continuance in it, but expect a removal from it; prepare for captivity and exile; look for it every moment, to hear it said to you, arise, and be gone from hence; for, since you have drove others out of their inheritances and possessions, this shall be your case:

for this [is] not [your] rest; the land in which the ten tribes then dwelt, and which was given to their fathers for an inheritance, and for a resting place, and had been so for ages past, now would be no more so, because of their sins and transgressions; they must not expect to abide here long, and enjoy rest and ease; but to be turned out, and deprived of all the blessings of it, and be carried into a foreign country, where, instead of rest and case, they should be in slavery and bondage:

because it is polluted, it shall destroy [you], even with a sore destruction; because the land that was given them to dwell in was defiled by their manifold iniquities, particularly adulteries, before hinted at: all sin is of a defiling nature; it defiled the bodies and souls of these men; defiled the estates they were possessed of, and the land on which they dwelt, and their fellow inhabitants of it; therefore utter destruction, even a sore and grievous one, should come upon them, by which their land should be laid waste, and they consumed off of it: or; "it shall corrupt [you], even with a grievous corruption" {s}; or you being corrupt upon it, it shall spew you out as a corrupt thing, as it did the Canaanites, the ancient inhabitants of it; when you will appear to be as you are, extremely corrupt: or, "it shall be in pain, [even] with sore pains" {t}; such as those of a woman in travail, not being able to bear them any longer, but ease itself of them, through the judgments of God upon them. This may be applied to the present state and condition of the people of God in this world, which is not their rest; there remains one for them in another world, but they are not yet come to it; for while here they are in trouble, through indwelling sin, the temptations of Satan, divine desertions, and various fears that attend them, so that they have little rest; besides, this is a warfare state, and they are engaged with many enemies; and at best are but travellers passing through this world to their Father's house: this is also their working time, and they are attended with a variety of afflictions within and without; and since there are so many corruptions and pollutions in the world, through lust, which make it that it can be no resting place for a good man; it becomes them not to take up their rest here, but seek after it elsewhere; and to live in an expectation of being called out of it, and to be in a readiness to depart when the Lord shall call for them.

{s} urmn lbxw lbxt "in corrumpet et corruptione acri", Moutanus; "et quidem corruptione vehementissima", Cocceius. {t} So Aben Ezra and Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. lbx.

[[@Micah **2:**11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Micah **2:**11]]. ***If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie***,.... Who pretends to be a prophet, and a spiritual man, and to be under the

inspiration and influence of the Spirit of God, but utters nothing but lies and falsehoods; or who is actuated by a spirit of falsehood and lying; or, as in the margin, "walks with the wind, and lies falsely" {u}; is full of wind and vanity; "after the wind" {w}; and follows the dictates of his vain mind, and coins lies, and speaks false things:

[saying], I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; or "drop [a word] unto thee" {x}; that there will be good times, and nothing but good eating and drinking; and that men need not fear such dismal things befalling them as the prophets of the Lord spoke of; but may be cheerful and merry, and drink wine and strong drink, and not be afraid of their evil tidings: or, for wine and strong drink {y}, so Kimchi; and the meaning is, that if they would give him a cup of wine, or a draught of strong drink, he would prophesy good things to them; the reverse of what is before said, as that they should continue in their land, and not depart from it; that this should be their rest, and they should remain therein, and not be destroyed in it, or cast out of it:

he shall even be the prophet of this people; a "dropper" {z} to them; see **Mic 2:6**; such an one shall be acceptable to them; they will caress him, and prefer him to the true prophets of the Lord; which is mentioned to show the temper of the people, and how easily they were imposed upon, and their disrespect to the prophets of the Lord, as in **Mic 2:6**; to which subject the prophet here returns, as Kimchi observes.

{u} bzk rqvw xwr Klwh "qui ambulat cum vento et falsitate mentiatur", Piscator; "ambulantem cum vento et fasitate mendacem", Cocceius. {w} So Hillerus in Burkius. {x} Kl Pyja "stillabo tibi", Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Burkius. {y} Nyyl "pro vino", Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius. {z} Pyjm "stillator", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius.

[[@Micah **2:**12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Micah **2:**12]]. ***I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee***,.... These words are either the words of the false prophet continued, that prophesied of wine and strong drink, as Aben Ezra; promising great plenty and prosperity, and that the remnant of the ten tribes carried captive by Tiglathpileser should be returned, and they should all live together in safety and plenty, and rejoice because of their numbers: or else they are a denunciation of threatenings and judgments, as Kimchi; that the Israelites should be gathered indeed together, but as sheep for the slaughter, even those that remained, not as yet carried captive; these should be shut up, and closely besieged in their cities, and make a noise, and cry for fear of their enemies, and because of the great number of them: or rather they are a comfortable promise of the gathering of the people of Israel in the times of the Messiah, in the last days the Gospel dispensation, even all of Jacob, all the then posterity of Israel; for then "all Israel shall be saved", **Romans** 1**1:**26; and this is introduced, though abruptly, as often such promises are, for the comfort of the Lord's people, amidst sorrowful and sad tidings brought to the people in general: I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; the remnant according to the election of grace, whom the Lord will reserve for himself, those that are left of them in the latter day; these shall be gathered effectually by the grace of God unto Jesus, the true Messiah, they shall now seek after; and into his church, to join themselves to his people, embracing his Gospel, and submitting to his ordinances; when there shall be "one fold" for Jews and Gentiles, and "one Shepherd" over them, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Joh 1**0:**16;

I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah; a place famous for flocks and pastures; signifying that they should be took care of by the great and good Shepherd, have a good fold, and good pastures provided for them, where they should feed comfortably together, in great unity and affection:

as the flock in the midst of their fold; lying down safely, and resting quietly; see Eze 3**4:**13;

they shall make great noise by reason [of the multitude] of men: a joyful noise, because of their own numbers being increased with men like a flock, and so numerous, that the place will be too strait for them; and because of the number of good and faithful shepherds under Christ, to feed and protect them, even pastors after God's own heart, given them to feed them with knowledge and understanding, **Jer 3:15**.

[[@Micah **2:**13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Micah **2:**13]]. ***The breaker up is come up before them***,.... Not the enemy, either the Assyrian or Chaldean army, or any part thereof, going up before the rest, breaking down the walls of the city, either of Samaria or Jerusalem, so making way for entrance therein; nor Zedekiah, as Joseph Kimchi, who made his escape through the wall broken down; nor the Maccabees, who were instruments of great salvation and deliverance to the Jews after the captivity, and before the coming of Christ. Kimchi makes mention of an exposition, which interprets "the breaker" of Elijah, that was to come before the Messiah; "and their king", in the latter part of the text, of the branch the son of David; that is, the Messiah; which sense Mr. Pocock thinks may be admitted of, provided by Elijah we understand John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who is the true Elijah that was to come; who broke, prepared, and cleared the way for Christ by his doctrine and baptism see **Lu 1:16**; but it is best to interpret "the breaker" of Christ himself; and so I find it explained {a} by the Jews also, to whom this and all the rest of the characters in the text agree; and who may be so called with respect to his incarnation, being the firstborn that opened the womb, and broke forth into the world in a very extraordinary manner; his birth being of a virgin, who was so both before and after the birth; thus Pharez had his name, which is from the same root, and is of a similar sound with Phorez here, from his breaking forth before his brother, unawares, and contrary to expectation, **Genesis** 3**8:**29; this agrees with Christ, with respect to his death, when he broke through and vanquished all enemies, sin, Satan, the world, and death; broke through all the troops of hell, and spoiled principalities and powers; and through all difficulties that lay in the way of the salvation of his people; he broke down the middle wall of partition, the ceremonial law which was between Jew and Gentile; and broke off the yoke of sin, Satan, and the law, under which they were, and set them at liberty; and at his resurrection he broke asunder the cords of death, as Samson did his withs as a thread of tow; and at his ascension he broke his way through the regions of the air, and legions of devils there, leading captivity captive, and entered into heaven; and was "pandens iter", as the Vulgate Latin version here renders it, "opening the way" for his people into it; by the ministry of the word, he broke his way into the Gentile world, conquering and to conquer, which was mighty, through God, for the pulling down of strong holds, and reducing multitudes to his obedience; at the conversion of every sinner he breaks open the everlasting doors of their hearts, and enters in; he breaks their rocky hearts in pieces, and then binds up what he has broken; and in the latter day he will break in pieces all his enemies as a potter's vessel; yea, he will break in pieces and consume all the kingdoms of the earth, which will become like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors: and now he is ascended, or "gone up" to heaven to his Father there, and "before them" his sheep, his people, said to be assembled, gathered and put together; he is ascended as the forerunner of them, to receive

gifts for them, and bestow them on them, and to prepare heaven for them, and to make intercession on their behalf; and, as sure as he is gone up, so sure shall they also follow:

they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it; not either the Assyrians or Chaldeans; nor the people that fled with Zedekiah; but the sheep of Christ following him their Shepherd; who, in the strength of Christ, and the power of his grace, break out of their prison houses; and break off the yokes and fetters in which they have been detained, and all allegiance to former lords; and break through their enemies, and become more than conquerors through him that has loved them; and "pass through [him] the gate"; the strait gate, and narrow way, that leads to the Father, and to the enjoyment of all the blessings of grace; and into the sheepfold, the church, and the privileges of it; and even into heaven itself, eternal life and happiness: and by which also they "go out", for he is a door of escape unto them out of the hands of all their enemies, and from wrath to come; and he is a door of hope of all good things unto them, and which leads to green pastures, and by which they go in and out, and find pasture:

and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them; not the king of Assyria or Babylon, before their respective armies, the Lord God himself being in a providential way at the head of them, and succeeding them; nor Hoshea or Zedekiah, going before their people into captivity, the Lord having forsaken them; but the King Messiah, who is King of Zion, King of saints, that goes before his people as a king before his subjects, and as a shepherd before his flock; and who is the true Jehovah, the Lord our righteousness, who is at the head, and is the Head of his church; the Captain of their salvation, that is at the head of his armies, his chosen and faithful ones, they following and marching after him, Re 1**7:**14.

{a} In Mattanot Cehunah in Bereshit Rabba, parash. 85. fol. 75. 2. Vid. Galatia. Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 3. c. 30.

[[@Micah 3]]

Chapter 3

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH 3

In this chapter the prophet reproves and threatens both princes and prophets, first separately, and then conjunctly; first the heads and princes of the people, civil magistrates, for their ignorance of justice, and hatred of good, and love of evil, and for their oppression and cruelty; and they are threatened with distress when they should cry unto the Lord, and should not be heard by him, **Mic 3:1**; next the prophets are taken to task, for their voraciousness, avarice, and false prophesying; and are threatened with darkness, with want of vision, and of an answer from the Lord, and with shame and confusion, **Mic 3:5**; and the prophet being full of the Spirit and power of God, to declare the sins and transgressions of Jacob and Israel, **Mic 3:8**, very freely declaims against princes, priests, and prophets, all together; who, though guilty of very notorious crimes, yet were in great security, and promised themselves impunity, **Mic 3:9**; wherefore the city and temple of Jerusalem are threatened with an utter desolation, **Mic 3:12**.

[[@Micah **3:**1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Micah **3:**1]]. ***And I said, hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel***,.... This seems to be a new sermon or discourse,

delivered at another time and to another people than the preceding for, as that chiefly concerns the ten tribes, this the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and was spoken to them in the times of Hezekiah, as appears from Jer 2**6:**18; for though Jacob and Israel generally design the ten tribes, yet here the other two, as is manifest from the above cited place, and also from **Mic 3:9**; and not only heads of families, but such as were the highest posts under the government, the sanhedrim of the nation, judges, rulers, and nobles, are here addressed; and who had a great share in national guilt, being ringleaders in sin, who ought to have set good examples to others; and these are not to be spared because of their grandeur and dignity, but to faithfully reproved for their vices, and which they should diligently attend unto; though they are to be addressed in a respectful and honourable manner, and be entreated to hearken to the word of the Lord by his prophet; all which was carefully observed by Micah; and it was with pleasure he could reflect upon his plain, faithful, and affectionate reproof of those great men:

[is it] not for you to know judgment? what is just and right to be done by men, and what sentence is to be passed in courts of judicature, in cases brought before them and not only to know, in a speculative way, what is equitable, but to practise it themselves, and see that it is done by others; and when they duly considered this, they would be able to see and own that what the prophet from the Lord would now charge them with, or denounce upon them, was according to truth and justice.

[[@Micah **3:**2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Micah **3:**2]]. ***Who hate the good, and love the evil***,.... Instead of knowing and doing what was just and right; or, directly contrary to their light and knowledge, and the duty of their office, they hated that which is good, which is agreeable to the law, nature, and will of God, and loved that which is evil, which is contrary thereunto; or they hated to do good, and loved to do evil, as the Targum; as men do who are averse to good, and prone to evil; or they hated a good man, as Aben Ezra, and loved the evil man; not only delighted in committing sin themselves, but took pleasure in those that did it; and could not endure the company and conversation of holy and good men:

who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones: like wild beasts that tear off skin and flesh from the bones, and then devour them; or like cruel shepherds, that, not content to fleece their flocks, skin them, and take their flesh also, and feed themselves, and not the flock; or like butchers, that first take off the skin off a beast, and then cut up its flesh. The design of the expressions is to show what rigour, cruelty, and oppressions, these rulers exercised on the people and by their heavy taxes and levies, and exorbitant penalties and fines, pillaged and plundered them of all they had in the world, and left them quite bare, as bones stripped of their skin and flesh. So the Targum,

"seizing on their substance by violence, and their precious mammon they take away."

[[@Micah **3:**3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Micah **3:**3]]. ***Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skins from off them***,.... Like cannibals, flay them alive, and then eat their flesh: this signifies, as before, devouring their substance, only expressed in terms which still more set forth their savageness, inhumanity, barbarity, and cruelty. So the Targum,

"who spoil the substance of my people, and their precious mammon they take from them;"

and what aggravated their guilt was, that they were the Lord's people by profession and religion they so used; whom he had committed to their care to rule over, protect, and defend:

and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron: did with them as cooks do, who not only cut flesh off the bones, and into slices, but break the bones themselves, to get out the marrow, and chop them small, that they may have all the virtue that is in them, to make their soup and broth the richer; by which is signified, that these wicked and avaricious rulers took every method to squeeze the people, and get all their wealth and riches into their hands, that they might have in a more riotous and luxurious manner.

[[@Micah **3:**4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Micah **3:**4]]. ***Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them***,.... When all the above evils threatened them in the preceding chapters shall come upon them; when the enemy shall invade their hind, besiege their cities, and take them, and they, their families and substance, just ready to fall into their hands, they shall cry unto the Lord; or pray unto him, as the Targum, in the time of their distress; but he will not hear their prayer, so as to answer it according to their desire; that is, he will not save them from imminent danger, but deliver them up, them, and all that belong unto them, into the hands of such that shall use them as they have done others:

he will even hide his face from them at that time; turn his back upon them, and a deaf ear to them, and show them no favour, nor grant them any help and protection:

as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings; he will punish them according to the law of retaliation; as when the poor cried unto them, when they were stripping them of their substance, and they would not hearken to them, so now, when they cry unto the Lord in their distress, he will not hearken to them; and as they turned their backs, and hid their faces from those that were afflicted by them, and would show them no favour, so will the Lord deal with them; and as they exercised the utmost cruelty and barbarity that could be done, they will now be given up into the hands of cruel and merciless men, that will use them in like manner: or, "because they have done ill in their doings" {b} to the poor, whose cause God will defend and vindicate.

{b} rvak any' wn "eo quod", Sept. "quia", Drusius; "pro eo quod", Grotius.

[[@Micah **3:**5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Micah **3:**5]]. ***Thus saith the Lord, concerning the prophets that make my people err***,.... The false prophets, as the Targum; and as the description given of them shows; who, instead of directing the people in the right way, as by their office and characters as prophets they should have done, they led them into mistakes about matters of religion and civil government, and out of the way of their duty to God and men, and exposed them to great danger and distress; and this was the more aggravating, as they were the Lord's people by name and profession, whom they caused to err from his ways and worship, which brought his displeasure upon them:

that bite with their teeth, and cry, peace; prophesy smooth things, promise all kind of prosperity and plenty, and bite their lips, and keep in those distresses and calamities which they could not but see coming upon the people; or, while they are prophesying good things, they gnash their teeth against the prophets of the Lord, and bitterly inveigh against them for threatening with war, destruction, and captivity; or, by flattering the people with their lips,

they bite them, devour their substance, and are the cause of their hurt and ruin; or rather, so long as the people fed them well, and they had a sufficiency to bite and live upon, they foretold happy days unto them, So the Targum,

"he that feeds them with a feast of flesh, they prophesy peace to him;"

which sense is confirmed by what follows,

and he that putteth not into their mouth, they even declare war against him; who do not give them what they ask, or do not feed them according to their desire, do not keep a good table for them, and cram and pamper them, but neglect them, and do not provide well for them; these they threaten with one calamity or another that shall befall them; and endeavour to set their neighbours against them, and even the government itself, and do them all the mischief they can by defamation and slander.

[[@Micah **3:**6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Micah **3:**6]]. ***Therefore night [shall be] unto you, that ye shall not have a vision***,.... Not that those outward gifts and illuminations, and that prophetic light they had, or seemed to have should be taken away from them, and it should be quite a night with them; because these men were never sent of God, or received any message from him, or had any prophetic talents at all, and therefore could not be taken away from them, and they be benighted in this sense; though, it is true, such might be the circumstances they would be brought into, that it should appear to the people that they are the dark persons they were, that they have no vision, nor never had any; but rather the sense is, that such dark providences and dreadful calamities should come upon the people in general, and upon those prophets in particular, often signified by "night" in Scripture, that they would not have the face to pretend any more that they had any vision from God of good times and things. It may be rendered, "therefore night [shall be] unto you because of vision" {c}; calamity should come upon them because of their false and pretended visions of peace and prosperity they deluded the people with:

and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; such darkness of affliction should be upon them, that they would not offer to deliver out any divination or prediction of good things coming upon them; or such darkness and distress would be their portion "because of divination" {d}, on account of their lying divinations they had imposed upon the people:

and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them; their time of prosperity will be over, and they shall be no more in favour with the people, or courted and feasted by them; but shall be had in the utmost contempt and abhorrence. The Targum of the whole is,

"therefore ye shall blush at prophesying, and be ashamed of teaching; and tribulation as darkness shall cover the false prophets, and the time shall be darkened upon them."

{c} Nwzxm "propter visionem", Munster, Piscator. {d} Mwoqm "propter divinationem", Munster; "propter divinare, i. e. divinationem", Vatablus; "prae visione----prae divinatione", Burkius.

[[@Micah **3:**7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Micah **3:**7]]. ***Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded***,.... When the events of things will make it most clearly appear to all that

their visions, divinations, and prophecies, are false; they will not be able to lift up their heads, or show their faces, but shame and confusion will cover them:

yea, they shall all cover their lips; stop their mouths, hold their tongues, and be entirely and totally silenced; they will not pretend to utter any other vision or prophecy; nor be able to say one word in defence of themselves, and of what they have before prophesied; every thing in providence being contrary to what they had said, and agreeable to the words of the true prophets; or they shall cover their lips as mourners; as the Targum adds, by way of explanation; see Eze 2**4:**17. It is said {e} there were two gates in Solomon's temple; one called the gate of the bridegrooms, the other the gate of mourners; to those that entered the latter, if their lip was covered, it was said, he that dwells in this house comfort thee; and so the lips of the false prophets being covered may signify that they were now sorry for what they had done, at least because of the calamities on them and the people; though the former sense seems best:

for [there is] no answer of God; not that they shall be ashamed and silenced because they shall now have no answer of God, for they never had any, which this would imply; but that it shall now be most plain and clear to all that the Lord never spoke by them, and they never had any answer from him; all their visions, divinations, and prophecies, were of, themselves, and not of him; what they delivered was not the word of the Lord, but their own; and this now being discovered and manifest to everyone, wilt put them to utter silence and shame. The Targum is,

"for there is not in them a spirit of prophecy from the Lord."

{e} R. Jacob, Sepher Musar, c. 9. apud Drusii Proverb. class. 2. l. 21. sect. 194.

[[@Micah **3:**8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Micah **3:**8]]. ***But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord***,.... Or, "full of power, even, the Spirit of the Lord", as Gussetius {f}, by way of contrast, and as explaining what is meant by power; for so the Spirit is sometimes called from his gifts and graces, which are powerful in men; see Lu 2**4:**47. These are the words of Micah concerning himself, in opposition to the false prophets, who are destitute of the Spirit of God; men of mean sordid dispositions, that had nothing but sinister and selfish ends in view, and not in the least qualified for the office and character they bore; whereas he could say of himself, with truth, that he was possessed of sufficient abilities for such an employment; and which he had, not of himself, but from the Spirit of God, who gives gifts to men, and divides them to each as he will; so that this was no vaunt and vain boast, or a piece of arrogance and ostentation in the prophet; since he only opposes himself to the false prophets, and ascribes his endowments and qualifications, not to himself, but to the Spirit of God; he had, though they had not, answers from the Lord, visions and prophecies from him, with a commission and abilities from him to execute the office of a prophet, being under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, and full of him and his gifts:

and of judgment, and of might; or of the judgment of truth, as the Targum; being able to discern truth and error, between what comes from the Spirit of God, and what from a lying spirit, or a spirit of divination and falsehood; what is proper to, be spoken, when the right time, and to whom; and having courage and greatness of mind, fearing no man's person or face, but bold

to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin; freely and openly to set it before them in a true light, with all aggravating circumstances, and reprove them for the same; and threaten them with the judgments of God in case they, repented not; see Isa 5**8:**1; and as a proof of all this, says what follows:

{f} Ebr. Comment. p. 468.

[[@Micah **3:**9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Micah **3:**9]]. ***Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel***,.... As an instance of his boldness, courage, and impartiality, he begins with the principal men of the land, and charges them with sins, and reproves for them, and denounces judgments on account of them; See Gill on "Mic **3:**1";

that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity; a sad character of princes, rulers, and judges, who not only ought to know but to love judgment, justice, and equity, and do them; even take delight and pleasure in the distribution of them to everyone, and in every cause that came before them; but, instead of this, hated to do that which was right and just; and perverted all the rules and laws of justice and equity, clearing the guilty, and condemning the innocent.

[[@Micah **3:**10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Micah **3:**10]]. ***They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.*** Or, "O thou that buildest up" {g}, &c. or "everyone of them that buildeth up" {h}, &c. for the word is in the singular number; but, be fire words rendered either of these ways, they respect the heads and princes of the people; who either repaired the temple on Zion, or ornamented the king's palace, or built themselves fine stately houses in Jerusalem, or large streets there, by money they took of murderers to save them, as Kimchi; or by money got by rapine and oppression, by spoiling the poor of their goods and their livelihood, for them and their families, which was all one as shedding innocent blood; and by money obtained by bribes, for the perversion of justice, and such like illegal proceedings, truly called iniquity. The Targum is,

"who build their houses in Zion with bloodshed, and Jerusalem with deceits."

{g} hnwb "aedificans", Montanus, Munster, Burkius. {h} "Quisque eorum aedificat", Vatablus, Piscator, Drusius.

[[@Micah **3:**11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Micah **3:**11]]. ***The heads thereof judge for reward***,.... That is, the heads or principal men of Zion and Jerusalem; the kings, or sanhedrim, according to Kimchi; but as this prophecy was delivered in the times of Hezekiah,

Jer 2**6:**18, be who was so good a king must be excepted from this charge; perhaps it was delivered in the beginning of his reign, before a reformation was made, and might be the occasion of it: the former reign was a very wicked one; and very likely the public officers, judges, and civil magistrates, were as yet continued, and who went on in the same course of injustice, giving the cause not on the right side, but to them that gave them most money, or bribed highest, contrary to the law of God, **Deuteronomy** 1**6:**19;

and the priests thereof teach for hire; for though they had a sufficient and honourable maintenance provided by the law of God for them, yet, not content with this, they took a price

of the people for teaching them; and that not such things as were agreeable to the will of God declared in his word, which they ought to have done freely; but such doctrines as were most pleasing to carnal men, and indulged them in their lusts, presumption, and vain confidence:

and the prophets thereof divine for money; tell men what should befall them; what good things they should be possessed of; what plenty and prosperity they should enjoy; and this they did according to the sum of money given them, more or less. This must be understood of the false prophets:

yet will they lean upon the Lord; on his are, providence, and protection, as if they were filled to these things, and might securely rely and depend upon them; though by their sins and transgressions they had forfeited all the bent fits and privileges thereof. To lean by faith upon the Lord; or in his Word, as the Targum; and to trust in his promises, in his power, and faithfulness, and goodness; when this springs from an honest and upright heart, and is attended with the fruits of righteousness and holiness, it is well pleasing to God, and highly regarded by him, and such may, depend upon his blessing and protection; but to talk of faith in him, and reliance upon him, when the whole course of the conversation is wicked, this is abominable in the sight of God, and displeasing to him:

and say, [is] not the Lord among us? trusting to this, that the temple of the Lord was among them, and that the temple of God were they; that the most holy place was there, where were the symbols of the divine Presence, the ark, cherubim, and mercy seat; and so concluding from hence their safety and security; putting their confidence in outward places and things, in external worship, sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies, when they neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice, truth, and mercy: and so

none evil can come upon us: as pestilence, famine, sword, and captivity, the prophets of the Lord had threatened them with.

[[@Micah **3:**12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Micah **3:**12]]. ***Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed [as] a field***,.... That is, for your sins, as the Targum; for the bloodshed, injustice, and avarice of the princes, priests, and prophets; not that the common people were free from crimes; but these are particularly mentioned, as being ringleaders into sin, and who ought to have set better examples; as also to take off their vain confidence in themselves, who thought that Zion and Jerusalem would be built up and established by them, and preserved for their sakes; as well as to show the prophet's boldness and intrepidity in his rebukes and menaces of them: now this was prophesied of in the days of Hezekiah, before the invasion of Judea and siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib; it was deferred upon the repentance and reformation of the people; and was fulfilled in part at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, when the city was reduced to a heap of rubbish; and more fully when it was destroyed by the Romans, and ploughed up by Terentius, or Turnus Rufus, as the Jews say; so that there was not a house or building left upon it, but it became utterly desolate and uninhabited, especially in the reign of Adrian:

and Jerusalem shall become heaps; not only the city of David, built on Mount Zion, should be demolished, but the other part of the city called Jerusalem should be thrown down, and its walls and houses lie in heaps, like heaps of stones in the midst of a ploughed field:

and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest; Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built; hence called here, by the Targum, the mountain of the house of the

sanctuary; the temple upon it should be destroyed, and not one, tone left upon another; and the place on which it stood be covered with grass and trees, with briers and thorns, as a forest is, all which have been exactly fulfilled. The Jews say {i} of Turnus Rufus before mentioned, that he both ploughed up the city of Jerusalem, and the temple, the ground on which they stood; and Jerom {k} affirms the temple was ploughed up by Titus Annius Ruffus; which, as it literally fulfilled this prophecy, denotes the utter destruction of them; for, as it was usual with the ancients to mark out with a plough the ground on which a city was designed to be built; so they drew one over the spot where any had stood, which was become desolate, and to signify that the city was no more to be rebuilt and inhabited: thus Seneca {l}, Horace {m}, and other writers, express the utter destruction of a city by such phrases.

{i} T. Hieros. Taaniot. fol. 69. 2. Juchasin, fol. 36. 2. & Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 28. 1. {k} Comment. in Zech. viii. 19. {l} "Aratrum vetustis urbibus inducere", Seneca de Clementia, l. 1. c. 26. {m} "------Imprimeretque muris Hostile aratrum exercitus insolens". Hor. Carmin. l. 1. Ode 36.

[[@Micah 4]]

Chapter 4

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH 4

This chapter contains some gracious promises concerning the glory and happiness of the church of Christ in the last days; as of its stability, exaltation, and increase, and of the spread of the Gospel from it, **Mic 4:1**; and of the peace and security of it, and constant profession and exercise of religion in it, **Mic 4:3**; and of the deliverance of it from affliction and distress, and the ample and everlasting kingdom of Christ in it, **Mic 4:6**; and then follow some prophecies more particularly respecting the Jews; as that, though they should be in distress, and be carried captive into Babylon, they should be delivered from thence, **Mic 4:9**; and, though many people should be gathered against them, yet should not be able to prevail over them, but their attempts would issue in their own destruction, **Mic 4:11**.

[[@Micah **4:**1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Micah **4:**1]]. ***But in the last days it shall come to pass, [that] the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains***,.... It appears by the adversative but, with which these words are introduced, that they have a dependence upon and a connection with the last of the preceding chapter; signifying, that though "the mountain of the house", on which the temple stood, should become desolate, yet "the mountain of the house of the Lord", which is not literally the same, but what that was typical of, the church of Christ, should be greatly exalted and enlarged; and which, according to this prophecy, would be "in the last days": that is, as Kimchi rightly interprets it, the days of the Messiah; and it should be observed, that all this will be in the last of his days, or of the Gospel dispensation: the first of these days were the days of Christ in the flesh, the times of his ministry, and of John the Baptist his forerunner, and of his disciples; and were indeed the last days of the Jewish world, or of their civil and church state; and when also it must be allowed the mountain of the Lord's house, or the temple literally taken, became glorious by the presence of Christ in it, by his doctrine and miracles there, and by the effusion of the Spirit on his disciples in that place, and the ministration of the Gospel; but then all this was before the destruction of the second temple; whereas this prophecy follows that, and is opposed to it, and supposes it; besides, in those times there was not such

an exaltation and stability of the church of Christ; nor such a flow of nations to it; nor such a settled and universal peace and security as here promised: this prophecy therefore respects times yet to come, as Aben Ezra observes; the last of the days of the Messiah, or the last times of the Gospel dispensation, when the reign of antichrist will be at an end; he will be destroyed, and the kingdom of Christ set up, established, and enlarged in the world. The Prophet Isaiah predicts the same things, and much in the same words, **Isa 2:2**; these two prophets were contemporary, and might converse together, and communicate to each other what they had received from the Lord upon this subject; but it is needless to inquire which might have them from the other, since they were both holy men of God, and moved by his Spirit, and were inspired by the same Spirit, with the same things, and to speak the same language; yet there is a diversity in words, though an agreement in sentiment nor does it appear a clear case that they borrowed, much less that they stole, their words from one other, as the false prophets did; for they do not always use the same words to convey the same idea; and there are some words which Isaiah has that Micah has not and there are others that Micah uses that Isaiah has not; though in the whole there is a most beautiful harmony of sense in their diversity of expression. By "the mountain of the house of the Lord" is not meant the temple built on Mount Moriah, where the divine Majesty resided; where were the symbols of his presence, the ark and mercy seat, and where he was worshipped, which has been destroyed long ago, and will never be rebuilt more; for a third temple hereafter to be built at Jerusalem is a mere fiction of the Jews; nor indeed is any material building here intended, and still less any such building to be erected in such an absurd sense, literally taken, as if mountain was piled on mountain, and hill on hill, to raise it higher; but, mystically and spiritually, it designs the church of God, called so because it is built by him, and built for a habitation for him; where he will, at the time here referred to, more manifestly dwell in a spiritual manner; and by whom, and by which spiritual and gracious presence of his, it will be made very beautiful and glorious: and it is signified by a "mountain", to denote its visibility, immovableness, and perpetuity; and is said to be "established in the top of the mountains", with respect to the kingdoms of this world, and especially antichristian churches, which, because of their eminence, and largeness, and national establishment, may seem like mountains; but, in the latter day, the true church of Christ, which now may seem like a mole hill to them, will be above them, and will be in a settled state and condition, and not be fluctuating, and tossed to and fro, and removing here and there, as now; but be fixed and stable, and continue so until the second and personal coming of Christ:

and it shall be exalted above the hills: by "hills" may be meant petty kingdoms, inferior to greater monarchies; or religious states, not of Christ's constitution; and the "exaltation" of the church above them denotes her power over them, to enjoy the one, and crush the other: it may respect the glory of the church, both as to things temporal and spiritual; for now will the kingdoms under the whole heaven be given to the saints of the most High; civil government will come into their hands, the kings and princes of the earth being now members of Gospel churches; so that the church will be in a glorious and exalted state, having riches, power, and authority, a large extent everywhere, and a multitude of members, and those of the highest class and rank, as well as of the meaner and lower sort; and all of them possessed largely of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and enjoying the Gospel and Gospel ordinances in their power and purity:

and the people shall flow unto it: in great abundance, in large numbers, in company like the flowing streams of a river; and may denote not only their numbers, but their swiftness and readiness to join themselves with the church of God, to hear the word, and partake of the ordinances, and of all the privileges of the house of the Lord. It may be rendered, "they shall look unto it", as the word is translated in

Psalm 34**:**6; and so the Targum here,

"and the kingdoms shall look (or turn their faces) to serve upon it;"

and this sense is preferred by many learned Jewish writers {n}; and the meaning may be, that multitudes, seeing the glory of the church, and the many desirable things in it, shall look to it with a look of love and affection, and with a wishful look, greatly desiring to be admitted into it. In **Isa 2:2**; it is said, "and all nations shall flow unto it": not the people of the Jews only, now converted; or a single and, on only, or some out of that; but all the nations of the world, at least great numbers out of all, by far the greatest in them; such an increase will there be of the churches in the latter day.

{n} R. Saadiah, Abu Walid, R. Tanchuma apud Pocock in loc.

[[@Micah **4:**2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Micah **4:**2]]. ***And many nations shall come, and say, come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob***,.... In **Isa 2:3**; it is, "many people", &c. the sense is the same;

See Gill on Isa **2:**3;

and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; the teacher is the King Messiah, as Kimchi observes; the great Prophet of his people, the teacher sent from God; and will in the last days teach men by his Spirit and word, in a very plentiful manner, and with great success:

for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; these, according to Kimchi, are the words of the prophet, and not of the people, that encourage one another to go up to the house of the Lord; but the sense is much the same; for they contain a reason why the people of different nations would encourage one another to go to the house of the Lord, that they might learn his ways, and walk in his statutes, because here the word of the Lord is preached; the word which comes from God, and is concerning him, his love and grace to men; the word of peace and righteousness, of life and salvation, by Jesus Christ: and each of the doctrines of grace intended by the "law" or "doctrine" of the Lord; the doctrines of God's everlasting love, of election in Christ, and redemption by him; of justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and satisfaction by his atonement; as well as of regeneration by the Spirit of God, and of perseverance in grace: in these, and others, now shall all the Lord's people be taught more clearly, distinctly, and comfortably; all shall know him, from the least to the greatest; and not only their light and knowledge, under such a teacher and such will be very great, but their practice will be answerable to it; as they will be instructed in all the ways of the Lord, and in the methods of his grace, so they will walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;

See Gill on "Isa **2:**3".

[[@Micah **4:**3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Micah **4:**3]]. ***And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off***,.... That are in the most distant parts of the world; not only the isles afar off, but the remotest parts of the continent, the American nations found out since. In **Isa 2:4**, it is, "and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people"; that is, the King Messiah, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech. Some render it, "it shall judge",

&c. and interpret it either of the Church, the mountain of the Lord's house; or of the word and doctrine of the Lord; or of the Lord in the church, by the ministry of the word, The phrase, "afar off", is not in **Isa 2:4**; which the Targum interprets "for ever", and the "strong nations" of strong kings; signifying that the kingdom of Christ should not only be to the ends or the earth, but should endure for ever, unto distant time, even till it shall be no more; as well as shall reach to distant lands, as to situation, and to the Gentiles afar off, as to state and condition; see **Eph 2:14**;

and they shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation,

neither shall they learn war any more; which as yet has never been fulfilled; but will be the case when Christ's kingdom appears in its glory, and the kingdoms of this world become his, and all the enemies of the church are destroyed; See Gill on "Isa **2:**4". These words are by the Jews {o} applied to the days of the Messiah.

{o} T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 63. 1.

[[@Micah **4:**4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Micah **4:**4]]. ***But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree***,.... A proverbial phrase, expressive of the greatest tranquillity, security, and enjoyment of property; see **1Ki 4:25**; when persons need not keep within their walled towns and cities, and lack themselves up in their houses, but may sit down in their gardens, fields, and vineyards, and enjoy the fruit thereof; as the Targum interprets it,

"under the fruit of his vine, and under, the fruit of his fig tree."

It was usual for persons in the eastern countries to sit under vines and fig trees to read, meditate, pray, or converse together, where they grow very large, as were their vines; and even with us they are frequently raised and carried over supporters, so as to be sat under; and of fig trees, we frequently read in Jewish writings of their being very large, and of their going up to them, and praying on the top of them; and of sitting under them, and studying in the law there. So one of the Rabbins says {p}, he went up into his mustard tree, as one goes up to the top of a fig tree; and it is said {q}, he that prays on the top of an olive tree, or on the top of a fig tree must come down, and pray below; and again {r}, R. Jacob and his companions were fasting, studying in the law, under a certain fig tree; and sometimes they speak of all these together, of sitting under olives, and under vines, and under fig trees, and studying in the words of the law {s}; see **Joh 1:48**. This is to be understood, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi explain it, of all men; not of the Israelites only, but of all nations, since there will be no more war any where; hence it follows:

and none shall make [them] afraid; the enemies of God's people will be no more, neither Turk nor pope, eastern or western antichrist, beast or, false prophet; wherefore, in those days of the Messiah, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, even all the spiritual Israel of God, Jews and Gentiles; there shall be none to hurt in the holy mountain of the Lord, or any violence and oppression, wasting and destruction, anywhere; see Jer 2**3:**5;

for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken [it]; who speaks nothing but truth, and who is able and faithful to perform what he has spoken; and therefore all this may be depended on.

{p} T. Hieros. Peah, c. 7. fol. 20. 2. {q} T. Hieros. Beracot, c. 2. fol. 5. 1. {r} Ib. col. 3. {s} Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 16. 4.

[[@Micah **4:**5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Micah **4:**5]]. ***For all people will walk everyone in the name of his god***,.... Till those times come before described; when many nations and people shall flock to the church, and there shall be such general peace and tranquillity as here promised; till then the nations of the earth shall retain their former religion, and the profession of it, with constancy, till they are otherwise instructed, as Aben Ezra; or till the Messiah shall turn them into the right way, as Kimchi; till that time comes, the Pagans will worship their idols, and continue in the idolatry of their ancestors; the Papists will retain their image worship, and hold to their lord god the pope, as they call him; the Mahometans will cleave to their prophet, and walk according to the rules he has left them to observe. Jarchi's note is,

"they shall go to destruction because of their idolatry;"

with which he says the Targum agrees, which is,

"all nations shall go according to the idols they have worshipped;"

or, as the king of Spain's Bible,

"they shall be guilty or condemned because they have worshipped idols:"

and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever; both in the mean while, and when those happy times shall come, and so through all generations as long as the world stands. This is the language of those that know the Lord, believe in him, and sincerely serve him; who determine in the strength of divine grace to continue in their profession of faith of him, in his worship and service, in his ways, truths, and ordinances, whatever others, do; and indeed are the more animated to it, when they observe how constant and steadfast idolaters, Pagans, Papists, and Mahometans, are in their false worship, both in the profession and practice of it. The Targum is,

"we will trust in the Word of the Lord our God for ever and ever;"

in Christ the essential Word; and so the phrase is expressive of faith, and a profession of faith in him; and of constant attendance upon his word and ordinances.

[[@Micah **4:**6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Micah **4:**6]]. ***In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth***,.... The Jews or Israelites so described; not from the halting of Jacob their father, as Abarbinel thinks; nor because of their halting between two opinions, worshipping both the true God and idols, as in the times of Elijah; for this will not suit with the Jews in their present state; but because they were like lame and maimed sheep, to which the allusion is; or because they were guilty of sins, which are sometimes expressed by halting, Jer 2**0:**10. The word signifies such that go sideways, and not uprightly; and fitly describes such who deviate from the ways of God, and walk not according to the divine word: now "in that day" or time before referred to, the last days of the Gospel dispensation, the Lord will convert the Jews; or "heal" these lame and maimed ones, so Jarchi interprets the word; or will gather them by his Spirit and grace to the Messiah, and assemble them into his church, and among his people, and bring them into the sheepfold, under the care of the one Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ:

and I will gather her that is driven out; out of the land of Israel, and scattered among the nations of the world; even driven out by the Lord himself, because of their transgressions against him; see

Jer 1**6:**15;

and her that I have afflicted; with various calamities, with famine and sword, with captivity and poverty; the Targum adds,

"for the sins of my people;"

the Israelites for their idolatry, and the Jews for the rejection of the Messiah, and other sins.

[[@Micah **4:**7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Micah **4:**7]]. ***And I will make her that halted a remnant***,.... That is, make a reserve of her, and not utterly cut her off for her halting or sinning; that there may be a seed, a posterity descending from her, that shall serve the Lord, and appear to be a remnant according to the election of grace; which will be the persons called and gathered in the latter day:

and her that was cast afar off a strong nation; Kimchi thinks this refers to the ten tribes that were carried far off into Media and other parts, 2Ki 1**7:**6; who shall now be a mighty and numerous people; and especially shall be strong in a spiritual sense in the Lord, and in the power of his might, in Christ and his grace, and in the faith of him; see Isa 6**0:**22;

and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever; that is, Christ, who is Jehovah our righteousness, shall reign over the converted Jews and Israelites in the church of God, often signified by Mount Zion; where they shall be assembled, and shall acknowledge him as their King, and be subject to his word and ordinances, and never more depart from him; nor will his government over them ever cease more, **Lu 1:32**. This shows that this prophecy refers not to the that times of the Gospel; for then the Jews would not have him to reign over them; but to times yet to come, the last days of the Gospel dispensation.

[[@Micah **4:**8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Micah **4:**8]]. ***And thou, O tower of the flock***,.... The words "Migdal Eder" are left by some untranslated, and think that place to be intended so called, which was near to Bethlehem, **Genesis** 3**5:**19; and perhaps is the same which Jerom {t} calls the tower of Ader, about a mile from Bethlehem: this is supposed to be the place where the shepherds were watching over their flocks at the time of Christ's birth, the tidings of which were first brought to them here; and the Jewish {u} doctors speak of it as near Jerusalem, and as a place of pasture; for they say, that cattle between Jerusalem and Migdal Eder, and in an equal space to every wind; the males were used for burnt offerings, and the females for peace offerings; and this place is thought to be referred to in the latter clause of this verse: others think that Bethlehem itself is meant, to which the dominion came; but rather, as in the next chapter, the ruler came out of that; others think that the gate in Jerusalem called the sheep gate is meant, **Ne 3:32**; and the tower at it, through which Christ is supposed to pass when he entered into Jerusalem as King, amidst the Hosannahs of the people; others take it to be the same with the tower of David, and put for Jerusalem itself, whither the tribes were gathered together three times a year, like sheep in a fold, so Kimchi and Ben Melech; here others interpret it spiritually of the church of Christ; but though that is sometimes spoken of as a strong city, and a fortified place, yet is never called a tower, or a strong hold; which phrases,

when figuratively used, are always spoken of a divine person; see **Psalm** 1**8:**2; and here of the Messiah; and so the Targum interprets it,

"O Christ of Israel:"

the church indeed is the "flock": the people of God are often compared to sheep for their harmlessness and innocence, and the church to a flock of them, which is Christ's flock he feeds like a shepherd; the flock of slaughter, a little one, consisting of persons separated from the world, and under his peculiar care; and he is the tower of this flock, in allusion to a shepherd's cottage, called a tower, as a cottage in a vineyard is in **Isa 5:2**; where the shepherds watch, and into which they bring the sick and lame, and take care of them; Christ is a high tower, where his people are safe out of the reach of their enemies; and a strong one, being the mighty God and mighty Saviour, who has all power and strength to defend his church and people, and may be well called their tower: and

the strong hold of the daughter of Zion; "the daughter of Zion" is the church, particularly the church of the converted Jews; Christ is the strong hold of it, into which, as prisoners of hope, they will be directed to turn, **Zec 9:12**; a strong refuge he is to flee unto from the avenger of blood, the justice of God; from the curses of the law; from the storm of divine wrath; from the temptations of Satan, and from the persecutions of men; a strong hold is he to dwell in, and where the saints dwell safely, pleasantly, at ease and peace, and very comfortably, and in great plenty; a strong hold for shelter from every enemy:

unto thee shall it come; not the kingdom, as follows, which our version leads to, and is the sense of Aben Ezra; for there is a considerable accent on the word "come", which makes a large stop; and that it refers, as Jarchi observes, to "her that halteth", &c. "it" or "she" that halteth shall come, being assembled and gathered, or converted by the grace of God unto the Messiah; as to her, or their tower and strong hold, where all blessings of grace, and the supplies of it, and all salvation and safety, are to be had and enjoyed. The promise respects the Jews coming to Christ upon their conversion, even such who have been the halt, the maimed, the lame, and the blind:

even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem; or rather, "and the first dominion shall come, the kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem": meaning, not the first notice of the Messiah's kingdom, given by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, to the Jews, in the first times of the Gospel; or the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom first to them; but rather he who has the first or principal dominion, and to whom the kingdom belongs, he shall come to the daughter of Zion, as in **Zec 9:9**; though it rather respects here his coming to them at the time of their conversion, when they shall come to him, **Romans** 1**1:**26; and when the first, chief, and principal kingdom in the world, and which is preferable to all others, will come unto, and be placed among them, as in **Mic 4:7**; and when it shall be, as some interpret it, as at the beginning, in the days of David and Solomon, and much more abundantly.

{t} **Deuteronomy** locis Hebr. fol. 89. E. **{u}** T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 63. 1. T. Ban. Kiddushin, fol. 55. 1. Misn. Shekalim, c. 7. sect. 4.

[[@Micah **4:**9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Micah **4:**9]]. ***Now why dost thou cry out aloud***?.... Or "cry a cry" **{**w**}**; a vehement one, or set up a most lamentable cry, as if no help or hope were to be had, but as in the most desperate condition: here the prophet represents the Jews as if they

were already in captivity, and in the utmost distress, and as they certainly would be; and yet had no reason to despair of deliverance and salvation, since the Messiah would certainly come to them, and his kingdom would be set up among them, The word used has sometimes the notion of friendship and association; hence the Targum renders it,

"now why art thou joined to the people?"

and so Jarchi,

"thou hast no need to seek friends and lovers, the kings of Egypt and Assyria, for help."

And which sense of the word as approved by Gussetius {x}.

[Is there] no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished? he it so that they were; as was the case when Zedekiah was taken and carried captive, and his princes, nobles, and counsellors killed; yet God, their King and Counsellor, was with them, to keep and preserve them, counsel, instruct, and comfort them, and at last to deliver and save them; and the King Messiah would be raised up, and sent unto them in due time, who is the Wonderful Counsellor Isaiah had prophesied of:

for pangs have taken thee as a worn an in travail; which is often expressive of great sufferings and sorrows; and yet, as the pangs of a woman in travail do not continue always, but have an end, so would theirs, and therefore there was no reason for despair; and as, when she brings forth her issue, her sorrow is turned into joy, this would be their case.

{w} er yeyrt hml "quid vociferabis vociferationem", Pagninus, Montanus. So Vatablus, Drusius. {x} Ebr. Comment. p. 789.

[[@Micah **4:**10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Micah **4:**10]]. ***Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion***,

like a woman in travail,.... Bear thy troubles and calamities, sufferings and sorrows, patiently, and expect deliverance from them, as a woman in such circumstances does: or, as some render it in the future, "thou shalt be in pain", &c. {y}; and so is a prediction of their distress and captivity, which is expressed in plainer terms in the following clauses:

for now shalt thou go forth out of the city; the city of Jerusalem; either by flight, in a private and secret manner, as Zedekiah and his princes, and part of his army did; or by force, being taken and led out by the enemy:

and thou shalt dwell in the field; being turned out of their houses, they were obliged to lodge in the fields, while they were collected together, and in a body marched as captives to Babylon; and while on the road lay in the open fields, and not in houses, who had been used to dwell in a city, and in their panelled houses; but now even their city itself was ploughed like a field, as before predicted:

and thou shalt go [even] to Babylon; to the city of Babylon, as their king did, and many of them also; and others of them into various parts of that kingdom: this is a clear prophecy of the Babylonish captivity, which came to pass upwards of a hundred years after this:

there shalt thou be delivered; after seventy years captivity, by the hand of Cyrus; who taking the city of Babylon, and making himself master of the whole empire, delivered the Jews from their bondage, and gave them liberty to return to their own land:

there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies; the Chaldeans: and this was typical of the deliverance and redemption of all the Lord's people from the hand of all their spiritual enemies; from Satan and the world, law, death, and hell; by the blood of the great Redeemer, and near kinsman of his people, the Lord Jesus Christ.

{y} ylwx "dolebis ac suspirabis", so some in Vatablus.

[[@Micah **4:**11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Micah **4:**11]]. ***Now also many nations are gathered against thee***,.... Which is to be understood, not of Sennacherib's army invading Judea, and besieging Jerusalem, in Hezekiah's time; for that was not threshed, as the phrase is afterwards used, or destroyed by the daughter of Zion, but by an angel from heaven: nor of the Babylonians or Chaldeans, since they succeeded in their attempt, and were the conquerors, and not conquered: rather this respects the times of the Maccabees, as the series of prophecy and history agreeing together shows; in which times many of the neighbouring nations of the Jews gave them a great deal of trouble, and especially Antiochus king of Syria; and many and mighty armies sent by him. The Jews, as Kimchi, Aben Ezra, and Abarbinel {z}, interpret this of the armies of Gog and Magog, in the times of their vainly expected Messiah. Some Christian interpreters, with much more probability, understand this passage of the first times of the Gospel, and the opposition made to that and the Christian church, which yet in the issue prevailed; and perhaps it may have reference to the last times, and receive its full accomplishment in the battle at Armageddon,

Re 1**6:**14;

that say, let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion; either defiled with sin; so the Targum,

"that say, when will she sin, and our eye shall behold the fall of Zion?"

as the effect of her sin: or, as others, "let her play the hypocrite" {a}; and be condemned as such: or rather, be defiled with slaughter and bloodshed, that they might be delighted with so pleasing a sight, and their eyes might feed with pleasure on an object so agreeable to their wishes.

{z} Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 62. 1. {a} Pnxt "hypocrita fuit", Tigurine version; velut hypocrita damnatur", Tarnovius; "hypocrisi contaminabitur, Cocceius.

[[@Micah **4:**12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Micah **4:**12]]. ***But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel***,.... Which are very different from theirs: the thoughts and designs of the enemies of Zion, in the times of the Maccabees, were, to destroy utterly the people of God, and root them out of the earth, and abolish their religion and worship; but the intentions of God were to defeat them, and bring them to ruin: the views of the kings of the earth, being stirred up by unclean spirits to the battle of Almighty God, will be to extirpate the interest and kingdom of Christ; but the end of the Lord, in suffering them to be gathered together, will be utterly and totally to destroy them; and the counsel of the

Lord, that shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart, to all generations. Men know their own designs, but they do not know the designs of the Lord; they intend the ruin of others, but God intends to bring about theirs; and his intentions are never frustrated, but theirs are;

for he shall gather them as sheaves into the floor; as, when the harvest is ripe, it is cut down, and bound up in sheaves, and brought home, and these are laid in order upon the floor to be threshed; so, when the nations of the earth are fully ripe for ruin, God will put, or order to be put; in the sickle, and cut them down, and bind them in bundles, and lay them on his threshingfloor of wrath and vengeance, and utterly destroy them contrary to their views and expectations.

[[@Micah **4:**13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Micah **4:**13]]. ***Arise, and thresh, O daughter of Zion***,.... The nations gathered against her, and now laid together on the floor as sheaves to be threshed. Here the people of God are aroused, and called out of a low and weak estate, and are animated and encouraged to exert themselves, and fall upon their enemies, and destroy them; alluding to the threshing of grain on the floor, the metaphor being here carried on from **Mic 4:12**. The Targum is,

"arise, and kill, O congregation of Zion;"

for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; signifying that the Lord would give them strength sufficient to such work, and such power their enemies should not be able to resist and overcome; and that they should into their hands, and be crushed, trod, and trampled on by them, and utterly subdued. The allusion is to oxen that have horns and hoofs; and it suggests that they should be as strong as they; have horns like them, that is, power to push down their enemies and hoofs to trample upon them: or as these creatures have a horny substance on their feet, or hoofs, which are strong, and fit for the purposes of treading out corn, for which they were used in the eastern countries, drawing after them iron wheels, or planks stuck with flints; so horses and oxen that have strong feet, and hard hoofs, are said to have feet of brass {b}; thus the Lord's people should have such courage, force, and power, as not only to withstand their enemies, but to obtain a conquest over them The Targum is,

"I will make the people in them strong as iron, and their remnant firm as brass;"

which was true of, and accomplished in, Judas Maccabeus and his brethren; and will be more clearly fulfilled in the Christian kings and princes in the latter day, when engaged with the antichristian states;

and thou shalt beat in pieces many people; as the Maccabees did subdue many people and nations, as all Palestine, Moab, Idumea, Samaria, and Iturea, as Josephus {c} relates; and as the Christian princes will beat in pieces, and utterly destroy, all the antichristian kings of the earth, their states and kingdoms, and bring them into subjection to them:

and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth; that is, to Christ, who in the last day will appear to be King and Lord of the whole earth; and all the riches of the antichristian nations, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, will be devolved to, and employed in, his interest and service; see

Re 2**1:**24; these are the words of God the Father, with respect to his Son Jesus Christ; who will now have a dominion, glory, and kingdom given him, by the ancient of days, that so all

people, nations, and languages, shall serve him, **Da 7:14**; of which there might be some type and shadow in the times of the Maccabees.

{b} calkopod' ippw "aeripedes equos", Homer. Iliad. 8. v. 41. {c} Antiqu. l. 13. c. 15. sect. 4.

[[@Micah 5]]

Chapter 5

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH 5

This chapter begins with a prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem, **Mic 5:1**; and then follows another concerning the place of the Messiah's birth, **Mic 5:2**; and of the case of the Jews, either before or after it, **Mic 5:3**; and of Christ's office as a shepherd, and of his grandeur in the world, **Mic 5:4**; and of his being a peacemaker, and protector of his people from their enemies, **Mic 5:5**; and of his people, the great increase of them, and their usefulness, and also of their courage, strength, and prowess, **Mic 5:7**; likewise that the Lord will remove from them their vain confidence, and all occasion of it, and whatsoever illicit arts and practices were found among them; and all idolatry, and the instruments of it, **Mic 5:10**; and the chapter is concluded with a threatening of vengeance to the Heathens, **Mic 5:15**.

[[@Micah **5:**1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Micah **5:**1]]. ***Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops***,.... Not Jerusalem, full of people, called to draw out their forces, and fall upon the enemy besieging them, whether Chaldeans or Romans; but rather the Babylonians, whose armies were large, and their troops numerous; who are called upon by the people of God, encouraged by the foregoing prophecies, as well as by what follows, to come forth with all their forces, and muster up all their armies, and exert all the power and strength they had, thus suiting them; being assured, by the above promises, that in the issue they should prevail over all their enemies: unless the Romans should be intended, to whom this character of "daughter of troops" well agrees, of whose legions all have heard; and since the Babylonish attempt on Jerusalem, and the carrying the Jews captive into Babylon, are before predicted, with their deliverance from it, and what they should do in the times of the Maccabees; a prophecy of the Romans, or a representation of them, a gathering their troops and legions together to besiege Jerusalem, very naturally comes in here;

he hath laid siege against us; either Nebuchadnezzar, and the Chaldean army; or Vespasian with the Romans: this, according to the prophetic style, is spoken of as if actually done, because of the certainty of it;

they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek; that is, either they, the besiegers, the king of Babylon and his army, when they shall have taken Jerusalem, besieged by them, shall use Zedekiah the king of Judah, and judge of Israel, and his princes and nobles, very ill, signified by this phrase; yea, in a very cruel and barbarous manner; first slaying his sons and his princes before his eyes, then putting his eyes out, binding him in chains, and carrying him to Babylon, and there laying him in a prison, Jer 5**2:**10; or else they, the besieged, would use the Messiah, the King, Judge, and Ruler in Israel, in such a spiteful and scandalous manner; and so the Messiah was to be used by them, who according to prophecy gave his cheek to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame

and spitting; and so Jesus, the true Messiah, was smitten, both with rods, and with the palms of men's hands, and buffeted and spit upon,

Isa 5**0:**6; and this is mentioned as a reason why Jerusalem would be encompassed with the Roman armies, and besieged by their troops and legions, and become desolate, even for their rejection and ill usage of the Messiah. Aben Ezra says, it is right in my eyes that the judge of Israel is the Messiah, or Zerubbabel; not the latter, who never was so used, but the former.

[[@Micah **5:**2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Micah **5:**2]]. ***But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah***,.... But though Jerusalem should be besieged and taken, and the land of Judea laid waste, yet, before all this should be, the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem, of which this is a prophecy, as is evident from **Mt 2:4**; the place is called by both the names it went by, to point it out the more distinctly, and with the greater certainty, **Genesis** 3**5:**19; the former signifies "the house of bread", and a proper place for Christ to be born in, who is the bread of life; and it has the name of the latter from its fruitfulness, being a place of pasture, and as we find it was at the time of our Lord's birth; for near it shepherds were then watching over their flocks; and it is here added, to distinguish it from another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulun, Jos 1**9:**15; from which tribe the Messiah was not to come, but from the tribe of Judah; and in which this Bethlehem was, and therefore called, by Matthew, Bethlehem in the land of Judah; as it appears this was, from **Ru 1:1**; and from the Septuagint version of Jos 1**5:**60, where, as Jerom observes, it was added by the Greek interpreters, or erased out of the Hebrew text by the wickedness of the Jews: the former seems most correct;

[though] thou be little among the thousands of Judah; this supplement of ours is according to Kimchi's reading and sense of the words; which, in some measure, accounts for the difference between the prophet and the Evangelist Matthew, by whom this place is said to be "not the least", **Mt 2:6**, as it might, and yet be little; besides, it might be little at one time, in Micah's time, yet not little at another time; in Matthew's; it might be little with respect to some circumstances, as to pompous buildings, and number of inhabitants, and yet not little on account of its being the birth place of great men, as Jesse, David, and especially the Messiah: or the words may be rendered with an interrogation, "art thou little?" &c. {d}; thou art not: or thus, it is a "little [thing] to be among the thousands of Judah" {e}; a greater honour shall be put upon thee, by being the place of the Messiah's birth. Moreover, Mr, Pocock has shown out of R. Tanchum, both in his commentary on this place, and elsewhere {f}, that the word ryeu signifies both "little" and "great", or of great note and esteem. The tribes of Israel were divided into tens, hundreds, and thousands, over which there was a head or prince; hence, in Matthew, these are called "the princes of Judah", **Mt 2:6**;

[yet] out of thee shall he come forth unto me [that is] to be ruler in Israel; not Hezekiah, who very probably was now born at the time of this prophecy; nor was he born at Bethlehem, nor a ruler in Israel, only king of Judah: nor Zerubbabel, who was born in Babylon, as his name shows, was governor of Judah, but not of Israel; nor can it be said of him, or any mere man, what is said in the next clause: but the Messiah is intended, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi confess, and other Jewish writers. The Targum is,

"out of thee shall come forth before me the Messiah, that he may exercise dominion over Israel."

Jarchi's note is,

"out of thee shall come forth unto me Messiah, the son of David;"

and so he says, "the stone which the builders refused", &c. **Psalm** 11**8:**22; plainly suggesting that that passage also belongs to the Messiah, as it certainly does. Kimchi's paraphrase is,

"although thou art little among the thousands of Judah, of thee shall come forth unto me a Judge, to be ruler in Israel, and this is the King Messiah."

And Abarbinel {g}, mentioning those words in **Mic 4:13**; "arise, and thresh, O daughter of Zion", observes,

"this speaks concerning the business of the King Messiah, who shall reign over them, and shall be the Prince of their army; and it is plain that he shall be of the house of David: and it is said, "O thou, Bethlehem Ephratah", which was a small city, in the midst of the cities of Judah; and "although thou art little in the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall come forth unto me" a man, a ruler in Israel, "whose goings forth are from the days of old"; the meaning is, the goings forth of the family of that ruler are from the days of old; that is, from the seed of David, and a rod from the stem of Jesse, who was of Bethlehem Judah."

So Abendana {h}, a more modern Jew, paraphrases the words thus,

"out of thee shall come forth unto me a Judge, that is to be ruler in Israel, and this is the King Messiah; for because he is to be of the seed of David, from Bethlehem he will be."

To which may be added R. Isaac {i}, who, having cited this passage, observes, and, he, the ruler in Israel, is the King Messiah, who shall come forth from the seed of David the king; who was of Bethlehem Judah, as in 1Sa 1**7:**12. Wherefore Lyra, having quoted Jarchi, and given his sense of the passage, remarks, hence it is plain that some Catholics, explaining this Scripture of King Hezekiah, "judaize" more than the Hebrews. Though some of them object the application of it to Jesus, who they say ruled not over Israel, but Israel over him, and put him to death; which it is true they did; but God exalted him to be a Prince, as well as a Saviour, unto Israel, notwithstanding that, and declared him to be Lord and Christ; besides, previous to his death, and in the land of Israel, he gave abundant proof of his power and rule over universal nature, earth, air, and sea; over angels, good and bad; and over men and beasts: all creatures obeyed him; though indeed his kingdom is not of this world, but of a spiritual nature, and is over the spiritual Israel of God; and there is a time coming when he will be King over all the earth. Now out of Bethlehem was the King Messiah, the ruler in Israel, to come forth; that is, here he was to be born, as the phrase signifies; see **Genesis** 1**0:**14; and here our Jesus, the true Messiah, was born, as appears from **Mt 2:8**; and this is not only certain from the evangelic history, but the Jews themselves acknowledge it. One of their chronologers {k} affirms that Jesus the Nazarene was born at Bethlehem Judah, a parsa and a half from Jerusalem; that is, about six miles from it, which was the distance between them: and even the author of a blasphemous book {l}, pretending to give the life of Jesus, owns that Bethlehem Judah was the place of his nativity: and it is clear not only that the Jews in the times of Jesus expected the Messiah to come from hence, even both the chief priests and scribes of the people, who, in answer to Herod's question about the place of the Messiah's birth, direct him to this, according to Micah's prophecy, **Mt 2:4**; and the common people, who thought to have confronted the Messiahship of Jesus with it, **Joh 7:41**; but others also, at other times. The tower of Edar being a place near to Bethlehem Ephratah, **Genesis** 3**5:**19; Jonathan ben Uzziel, in his Targum of **Genesis** 3**5:**19, says of the tower of Edar, this is the place from whence the King Messiah shall be revealed in the end of days; nay, some of them say he is born already, and was born at Bethlehem. An Arabian, they say {m}, told a Jew,

"the King Messiah is born; he replied to him, what is his name? he answered, Menachem (the Comforter) is his name; he asked him, what is his father's name? he replied, Hezekiah; he said to him, from whence is he? he answered, from the palace of the king of Bethlehem Judah."

This same story is told elsewhere {n}, with some little variation, thus, that the Arabian should say to the Jew,

"the Redeemer of the Jews is both; he said to him, what is his name? he replied, Menachem is his name; and what is his father's name? he answered, Hezekiah; and where do they dwell? (he and his father;) he replied, in Birath Arba, in Bethlehem Judah."

These things show their sense of this prophecy, and the convictions of their minds as to the births of the Messiah, and the place of it. The words "unto me" are thought by some to be redundant and superfluous; but contain in them the glory and Gospel of the text, whether considered as the words of God the Father; and then the sense is, that Christ was to come forth in this place in human nature, or become incarnate, agreeably to the purpose which God purposed in himself; to the covenant made with him, before the world was; to an order he had given him as Mediator, and to his promise concerning him; and he came forth to him, and answered to all these; as well as this was in order to do his will and work, by fulfilling the law; preaching the Gospel; doing miracles; performing the work of redemption and salvation; by becoming a sacrifice for sin, and suffering death; and likewise it was for the glorifying of all the divine perfections: or whether as the words of the prophet, in the name of the church and people of God, to and for whom he was born, or became incarnate; he came forth unto them, to be their Mediator in general; to be the Redeemer and Saviour of them in particular; to execute each of his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; and to answer and fill up all relations he stands in to them, of Father, Brother, Head, and Husband;

whose goings forth [have been] of old, from everlasting; which is said of him, not because his extraction was from David, who lived many ages before him; for admitting he was "in [him], in his loins", as to his human nature, so long ago, yet his "goings forth" were not from thence: nor because he was prophesied of and promised very early, as he was from the beginning of the world; but neither a prophecy nor promise of him can be called his "going forth"; which was only foretold and spoken of, but not in actual being; nor because it was decreed from eternity that he should come forth from Bethlehem, or be born there in time; for this is saying no more than what might be said of everyone that was to be born in Bethlehem, and was born there: nor is this to be understood of his manifestations or appearances in a human form to the patriarchs, in the several ages of time; since to these, as to other of the above things, the phrase "from everlasting" cannot be ascribed: but either of his going forth in a way of grace towards his people, in acts of love to them, delighting in those sons of men before the world was; in applying to his Father on their account, asking them of him, and betrothing them to himself; in becoming their surety, entering into a covenant with his Father for them, and being the head of election to them, receiving all blessings and promises of grace for them: or else of his eternal generation and sonship, as commonly interpreted; who the only begotten of the Father, of the same nature with him, and a distinct person from him; the eternal Word that went forth from him, and was with him from eternity, and is truly God. The phrases are expressive of the eternity of his divine nature and person; Jarchi compares them with **Psalm** 72:17; "before the sun was, his name was Jinnon"; that is, the Son, the Son of God; so as the former part of the text sets forth his human birth, this his divine generation; which, cause of the excellency and ineffableness of it, is expressed in the plural number, "goings forth". So Eliezer {o}, along with the above mentioned passage in the Psalms,

produces this to prove the name of the Messiah before the world was, whose "goings forth [were] from everlasting", when as yet the world was not created.

{d} hdwhy yplab twyhl ryeu "parvulane es?" Drusius; "parvane sis?" Grotius; "parva es?" Cocceius. {e} "Parum est ut sis inter chiliarchas Judae", Osiander, Grotius; "vile, ignominiosum est, esse inter millia Judae", **Deuteronomy** Dieu. {f} Not. Misn. in Port. Mosis, p. 17, 18. {g} Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 62. col. 2. {h} Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc. {i} Chizzuk Emuuah, par. 1. p. 279. {k} R. David Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 14. 2. {l} Toldos Jesu, p. 7. Ed. Wagenseil. {m} T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 1. {n} Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1. {o} Pirke Eliezer, c. 3. fol. 2. 2.

[[@Micah **5:**3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Micah **5:**3]]. ***Therefore will he give them up***,.... Or "notwithstanding", as this particle signifies; see **Ho 2:14**; though all this shall be, yet, previous to the birth of this person, the Lord would give up the Jews to trouble and distress, and into the hands of their enemies; and the time from this prophet to the birth of Christ was a time for the most part of great trouble to, the Jews; not only was their country invaded and their city besieged by Sennacherib in Hezekiah's time, but, some years after that, they were wholly carried captive into Babylon: and when they returned it was troublesome times with them; they met with many enemies that disturbed them while they were rebuilding the city and temple; and after that they endured much tribulation, in the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, or of the Maccabees; nor were they long in any quiet, nor in any settled state, unto the coming of the Messiah. Or else this is to be understood of what should be after his coming; for though Jesus was born at Bethlehem, according to this plain prophecy, and had all the characters of the Messiah in him, yet the Jews rejected him, and would not have him to reign over them: wherefore he, the Messiah, as Japhet interprets it, gave them up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, and into the hands of their enemies the Romans; by whom they were destroyed or carried captive, and dispersed among the nations; in which condition they still remain, and will, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; so long will Jerusalem be trodden under foot, or the Jews be given up to their will, according to

Lu 2**1:**24; or, as here expressed,

until the time [that] she which travaileth hath brought forth: that is, according to the first sense until the Virgin Mary travailed in birth with the Messiah, and brought forth him her firstborn, **Mt 1:25**; or according to the latter, until Zion, or, the church of God, travailed in prayer, in the ministry of the word, and brought forth many children to Christ, both among Jews and Gentiles; and the sense is, that the Jews shall be given up to distress and trouble, till the time of their conversion, see Isa 6**6:**7; The Jews have a tradition in their Talmud, that

"the son of David would not come until the kingdom spreads itself over the whole world for nine months; as it is said, "therefore will he give them up until the time that she that travaileth hath brought" forth; which is the time of a woman's going with child."

This both Jarchi and Kimchi take notice of. In one place {p} it is called the kingdom of Aram or Syria; and in another {q} a blank is left for Edom, that is, Rome; for by the kingdom is meant the Roman empire, and which did extend all over the world before the coming of the Messiah Jesus, as appears from **Lu 2:1**; as well as from all profane history;

then the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel; that is, the brethren of the Messiah, as Kimchi and Abendana interpret it; who should return with the children of Israel, as both they and Jarchi explain it; to which the Targum agrees. Kimchi's note is,

""the remnant of his brethren"; they are the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which remained when the ten tribes were carried captive; and the surnames, his brethren, relate to the Messiah."

So Abendana {r},

"and "the remnant his brethren"; they are the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, they shall return with the children of Israel, who are the ten tribes; as if he should say, these and these shall return to their land, and King Messiah shall reign over them; and the surnames, his brethren, respect the Messiah."

And to the same purpose R. Isaac {s},

"the remnant of the brethren of the Messiah, who are the children of Judah and Benjamin, that are left and remain of the calamities and persecutions of the captivities, shall return to their own land, together with the children of Israel, who are the ten tribes."

Meaning either the remnant, according to the election of grace, among the Gentiles; who with those among the Jews should be converted to Christ in the first times of the Gospel, those immediately following the birth of Christ; the Gospel being preached both to the Jews and Gentiles, and some of both were called and converted, and whom Christ owned as his brethren, and were not ashamed of; see Mt 1**2:**49 **Heb 2:11**; or the Lord's chosen people, and brethren of Christ, those of, he two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and those of the ten tribes of Israel; who shall join and coalesce together in seeking the Messiah, embracing and professing him, and appointing him the one Head over them, when they will turn to the Lord, and all Israel shall be saved; see Jer 5**0:**4.

{p} T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1. {q} T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. {r} Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc. {s} Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 281.

[[@Micah **5:**4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Micah **5:**4]]. ***And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord***,.... The ruler in Israel, before described and prophesied of; the Messiah, as Kimchi himself interprets it, and other Jewish writers. Kimchi's note is,

"after the affliction, the King Messiah shall stand and feed Israel in the strength of the Lord;"

and so R. Isaac {t} paraphrases the words exactly in the same way: wherefore, as another learned Jew {u} observes, these expressions evince that the ruler here spoken of can be no other than the Messiah; not Zerubbabel, who never attained to this height and happiness. He is both King and Shepherd, and to each of these the act of feeding is ascribed. The same word, in the Greek language, signifies both to rule and to feed and is used by Matthew, **Mt 2:6**; and kings are often compared to shepherds. Christ feeds his people, his brethren, his flock, his sheep, and lambs all truly converted ones; and this takes in the whole office of a shepherd, and the care he has of his flock; he takes an exact account of them, goes before them, and leads them out into good pastures; sets under shepherds over them; protects them from, all their enemies; looks after what is lost or driven away; heals the sick, strengthens the weak, binds up the broken, and watches over his flock continually: he feeds them with,

himself, the bread of life, with his flesh and blood, which are meat and drink indeed; with the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel; and which are found to be spiritual, savoury, strengthening, satisfying, and soul nourishing food: and he "stands" and does this, being raised from the dead, and possessed of all power in heaven and in earth; which designs not the position of his body, but the ministration of his office, and his alacrity and readiness to perform it, and his constancy in it: and all this "in the strength of the Lord"; in his own strength, as a divine Person, which is the same with the strength of Jehovah; and in the power and strength that is dispensed to him as Mediator; and with his Gospel, the rod of his strength, and in such manner as to defend his flock from all that would devour them:

in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; Jehovah the Father is the God of Christ, as is Mediator; and his name is in him, even the majesty of it; for, as a divine Person, he has the same nature and perfections with him; and as man, exalted at his right hand, has a name above every name in this world, or that to come; and it is by authority from him, in his office capacity, that he rules and feeds his people, having all judgment committed to him:

and they shall abide; that is, his people, his flock, his sheep fed and ruled by him; these shall continue and persevere under his care and keeping; in him, in whom they are chosen and preserved; in his love, from which they can never be separated; in his hands, out of which none can pluck them; in his church, where they shall ever remain; and so may be considered as a promise of the perseverance of the saints in faith and holiness to the end: or, "they shall sit" {w}; quietly and securely, being freed from persecution, with which the Christians were at, ended in the first three centuries: this began to be accomplished in the times of Constantius Chlorus, who helped the Christians in the times of Dioclesian, and with whom the persecutions ended, and peace and prosperity followed:

for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth; as, he was in the times of Constantine, and will be again. Christ is great in himself, in, his person and offices; and will appear to be so unto all men, even unto the ends of the earth, when his Gospel shall be preached and spread, everywhere; when his kingdom shall be enlarged, and be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; even then shall he appear to be a great King over all the earth, and, the great Shepherd of the sheep, the man, Jehovah's fellow; and to have such a flock, and so large, as never any had; when there will be one fold, and one shepherd; for this prophecy respects the latter day glory. Kimchi's gloss is,

"the name of the Messiah shall be magnified, after the judgment of the wicked."

{t} Ibid. (Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 281.) {u} Tanchuma apud Pocock in loc. {w} wbvy "sedebunt", Tigurine version, Vatablus, Drusius; "considebunt", Cocceius; so R. Isaac, "they shall sit safely in his time", as is said above, ch. iv. 4. "they shall sit every man", &c. Chizzuk Emunah, ut supra. (par. 1. p. 281.)

[[@Micah **5:**5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Micah **5:**5]]. ***And this [man] shall be the peace***,.... The word man is not in the text, only this; and refers to the person before spoken of, who was to be born in Bethlehem, to be the ruler in Israel, that should stand and feed his people, and should be great to the ends of the earth; and is no other than the Messiah, as Kimchi, and other Jewish writers, own, Kimchi's note is,

"this peace respects the Messiah; for he shall be the cause or author of peace; as it is said, "he shall speak peace unto the Heathen", **Zec 9:10**;"

and R. Isaac {x} expresses his sense of the words in much the same language; and it is an observation the Jews sometimes make, and which they give as a sign of the Messiah's coming,

"when you see a Persian horse bound in the land of Israel, look for the feet of the Messiah;"

which is the sense of **Mic 5:5**; "this shall be the peace, when the Assyrian comes into our land" {y}, &c. so Jesus the true Messiah is called "our peace", **Eph 2:14**; and is the cause and author of peace, not only between Jew and Gentile, but between God and men; which he has made by the blood of his cross, and speaks and gives peace to men; and he is the author of peace in his churches, whose kingdom is a kingdom of peace, of which there will be an abundance in the latter day; for all which he would not be sufficient was he a mere man; though it was proper he should be a man, that he might have blood to shed, a body to offer up, and in it die to procure peace; and yet be more than a man, God also, to put virtue and efficacy into what he did and suffered to obtain it, as well as to secure and continue the peace of his people, and preserve them from all their enemies:

when the Assyrian shall come into our land; not Sennacherib king of Assyria; though by the invasion of Judea, and siege of Jerusalem, he might have lately been concerned in, and by reason of the terror which that had raised in the people; the Assyrian may be here put for any powerful enemy of the people of God in later times; or Satan, and his principalities and powers, even all the powers of darkness Christ our peacemaker engaged with, at the time he made peace by his sufferings and death; and perhaps may chiefly design the Turk, the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel, as Mr. Mede {z} thinks, that will enter into the land of Judea, in order to take it out of the hands of the Jews, who will be possessed of it upon their conversion to Christ; but he by his instruments will secure to them the possession of it, and their peace and prosperity in it:

and when he shall tread in our palaces; the palaces of our princes, and nobles, and great men, at least attempt to do it:

then shall we raise against him; the Assyrian, or whatsoever enemy is meant by him: or, "with him", that is, the Messiah, as Kimchi and others {a} interpret it. The Targum is,

"then will we appoint over us;"

which sense the above writer wonders at, as being contrary to the Hebrew text:

seven shepherds, and eight principal men; that is, many, as the phrase is used in **Ecclesiastes** 1**1:**2; to which passage Aben Ezra and Kimchi refer us; these are, as the last mentioned writer and others say {b}, the princes of the Messiah; and, according to the ancient {c} Jewish Rabbins, the seven shepherds are particularly these, David in the midst, Adam, Seth, Methuselah, on his right hand (Kimchi has it, Seth, Enoch, and Methuselah), and Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, on his left hand; and the eight principal men are, Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zedekiah (in Kimchi and Rabbot it is Hezekiah), Elijah, and the Messiah; but, as Aben Ezra, not fifteen persons are designed, at most but eight, according to this form of speech in **Proverbs** 3**0:**15; &c. Calmet {d} takes those seven or eight shepherds to he the seven princes confederate with Darius the son of Hystaspes, who killed Smerdis the Magian, who had possessed himself of the empire of the Persians, after the death of Cambyses; but Smerdis was not an Assyrian, nor is the kingdom of Persia here meant, but the land of Judea; and the prophecy respects the times of the Messiah, who should appear there, and where would be raised up men to support his interest: and if conjecture may be allowed, as this may

be understood of the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel, the princes of the Messiah, who were raised up, at the prayer and request of the church, to oppose Satan and his emissaries, in the first times of the Gospel; by these may be meant the writers of the New Testament, the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Apostles Peter, James, and Jude, which make the seven shepherds; and if you add to these the Apostle Paul, they will make eight principal men; or rather I should think the seven angels are pointed at, that shall pour out the last plagues on the antichristian states; to which, if another angel is added, that will proclaim the fall of Babylon, the same number will be made up; see Re 1**6:**1; and who will assist the Jews against the Turks, when they shall attempt to dispossess them of their land, they shall again inherit.

{x} Ut supra. (Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 281.) {y} Echa Rabbati, fol. 48. 3. {z} Works, l. 4. Ep. 41. p. 796. {a} Vid. Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 282. {b} Ibid. {c} T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 2. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 26. 3. {d} Dictionary, in the word "Shepherds".

[[@Micah **5:**6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Micah **5:**6]]. ***And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword***,.... Or "feed {e} upon it" with the sword, destroy the inhabitants of it; either spiritually subdue the nations of the world to the obedience of Christ, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; the preaching of the Gospel, the ministry of the apostles, and others, in the Gentile world; see **2 Corinthians** 1**0:**3; or literally, meaning that the angels of the vials, the Christian princes, shall destroy the Ottoman empire with the sword:

and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof; the same with Babylon, the empire of which was first set up by Nimrod, the beginning of whose kingdom was Babel, **Genesis** 1**0:**11; the same with Nebrodas, a name of Bacchus, which is no other than Barchus the son of Chus, as Nimrod was the son of Cush, and Bacchus was a mighty hunter, as he was; all which Bochart {f} has observed: now his country was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar, that is, the land of Babylon, as the Targum of Onkelos and Jerusalem in **Genesis** 1**0:**10, render it; though some think Nimrod extended his dominions into Assyria; and translate {g} **Mic 5:11** "out of that land, he" (that is, Nimrod) "went forth into Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah"; and the Targum of Jonathan is very express for it, which paraphrases the words thus,

"out of that land went forth Nimrod, and he reigned in Assyria, because he would not be in the counsel of the generation of the division, and he left these four cities; and the Lord gave him a place (or Assyria), and he built four other cities, Nineveh, &c."

hence some {h} have thought that the land of Assyria and the land of Nimrod here design one and the same country; but Ashur, in the text in Genesis, seems rather to be the name of a man than of a place, even of the son of Shem so called, from whom the country of Assyria had its name; whereas, if had been so soon in the hands of Nimrod, and so many cities had been built by him in it, it would rather have been called by his name than Ashur's; and it seems most reasonable to conclude that the cities of Nineveh, &c. were built by the latter, and not the former; and the two countries of Assyria and Nimrod, or Babylon, are very plainly in this text distinguished from one another; though they might at the time of this prophecy be united under Esarhaddon, who was both king of Assyria and Babylon; and at this present time they are both in the hands of the Turks, and in all probability will be until this prophecy is fulfilled in the destruction of them by the Christian princes: the same thing is meant as before; and the word rendered "in the entrances thereof" may as well be translated "with its sword" {i}; or, as

the margin of our Bibles, "with her own naked swords"; so Kimchi and Aben Ezra interpret it:

thus shall he deliver [us] from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders; that is, the King Messiah shall work this deliverance, as Kimchi and others {k} explain it; Christ delivered his people from all their spiritual enemies when he made peace for them; and he will deliver them in the latter day from both Pope and Turk, when he will destroy the man of sin by the breath of his mouth, and dry up the river Euphrates, and cast both beast and false prophet into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; though all that is said in this verse and **Mic 5:5** may have had its accomplishment already, at least in part, in the Saracens and their empire, which begun in the year 623, and who prevailed very much in Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Persia, Egypt, and Africa, and even penetrated into Spain and France, in all which places were Christian churches; and so may be called "our land", as the churches therein "our palaces", which these people entered into, trod upon, profaned, or destroyed; and the seven or eight principal men raised against them may be the Christian princes that fought with them, and drove them back, and destroyed their land; such as Hugh the great, brother to Philip king of France; Robert earl of Flanders; Robert earl of Normandy, brother to William the Conqueror, king of England; Stephen earl of Blois; Raymund earl of Tholouse; Godfrey duke of Lorrain, and his brothers Baldwin and Eustachius, and others. These beginning at Nice, where once a famous Christian council was held, and driving the army of Solyman from thence, in the space off our years subdued many provinces of Asia, Lycaonia, Cilicia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Comagena; and at length having put to flight the Turks, and ejected the Saracens, took Jerusalem, and made Godfrey of Bullein king of it {l}. Some {m} have interpreted it of the emperor of Germany, and the seven electors in the empire (for formerly they were no more), happily and with success carrying on a war against the Turks, Tartars, and Saracens, when they broke into Europe; but the former sense seems better; and it is best of all to understand the prophecy of the destruction of the Turk or Ottoman empire in the latter day by the Christian princes.

{e} werw "et depascent", Montanus, Drusius; "pascent", Piscator, Grotius, Cocceius. {f} Phaleg. l. 1. c. 2. col. 12. {g} Vatablus, Junius and Tremellius, Bochart, Cocceius, and others. {h} Bochart, Phaleg. l. 4. c. 12. c. 229. Bedford's Chronology, p. 773. {i} hyxtpb "gladiis suis", Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Tigurine version; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 31. 2. {k} R. Isaac, ib. p. 283. Abarbinel, &c. {l} Vid. Witsii Exercitat. 8. de Assyriis in Miscel. Sacr. tom. 2. p. 218, 219, 220. {m} Vid. Gurtler. Voc. Typic. Prophetic. Explicat. p. 18.

[[@Micah **5:**7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Micah **5:**7]]. ***And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people***,.... The Jews, who will be converted in the latter day, the remnant of them according to the election of grace, as well as all true Israelites, whether Jews or Gentiles, the Lord's chosen and peculiar people; who, though but a small number in comparison of others, and mean and contemptible in the eyes of men, are such as God has made a reserve of for himself; and these, though not of the world, yet are in the world, and will be in the several parts of it, but a distinct people from it, and of no account in it; nevertheless will be visible in it, and wonderfully preserved in the midst of it: and will be

as a dew from the Lord; both with respect to themselves, being like to dew for the generation of it, which is from above, from heaven, and of God, as their regeneration is; and which secretly and silently falls as the grace of God in regeneration does; and for the number of the drops of it, which are not to be reckoned; and so numerous are the people of God, at least

they will be in the latter day, when Christ shall again have the dew of his youth; or such a number of converts, as will be like the drops of the morning dew; as also for the favour, grace, and blessings of God upon them, which are as the dew; and which he himself is as that unto them, so that they themselves are as dew from him, being indulged with his favour; which, as the dew is entirely free, very softening, cooling, and refreshing, as well as fructifying; and having the dews of his grace, or the blessings of it, falling upon them in plenty; see Ho 1**4:**5; and with respect to others, among whom they are, and to whom they are as the dew, by their speech, their doctrine, the word ministered by then**}**, which distils like the dew, **Deuteronomy** 3**2:**26; and by their good works, which are profitable unto men; and by their soft and gentle behaviour towards them; and by reason of the many outward blessings they enjoy through them, as Laban did for the sake of Jacob, and Potiphar on the account of Josiah:

as the showers upon the grass; which revive, refresh it, and cause it to grow and flourish; or they are like grass, on which the showers fall, and grow up as such in great numbers, and with great verdure and fruitfulness, **Psalm** 7**2:**16;

that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men; which seems to be connected with the dew, though it agrees with both dew and rain, which stay not for men's desires or deserts, but descend according to the will of God: and as this regards the people of God, either with respect to themselves; it shows that as they are, as the dew, or as showers and clouds full of rain, either of grace or doctrine compared thereunto; they are not of themselves so, or of men, but of God; and that their dependence is not upon the creature, but upon the Lord for support and supply:, and with respect to others, to whom they are beneficial by their doctrine and works; that it is all from the Lord, and owing to his goodness, which makes them a blessing round about unasked and undeserved; see Eze 3**4:**26. It may have respect to plenty of Gospel ministers, whose doctrine is as the dew; and which, being attended with the power and Spirit of God, waits not for anything in man, but operates at once secretly and powerfully.

[[@Micah **5:**8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Micah **5:**8]]. ***And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people***,.... The same persons are meant here as before; who are compared to dew and showers of rain, because numerous; and full of blessings in themselves, and useful and beneficial to others: and here are said to be

as a lion among the beasts of the forest; strong, mighty, powerful, and courageous, and superior to their enemies, as the lion is strongest among beasts, and keeps all others in awe of him. Some refer this to the times of the Maccabees; when Judas and his brethren behaved with great fortitude and courage, and were victorious, and prevailed over the armies of Antiochus, and others; but it seems rather to belong to the latter day, when the Jews shall be superior to their enemies the Turks, who would disturb them in the possession of their land: and shall be a terror to them,

as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; signifying that their enemies shall be no more to them, and no more able to oppose them, than a flock of sheep are to a young lion, or they to resist him The design of the metaphor is; not to signify the harmlessness and innocence of their enemies, but their weakness, and the strength and courage of them;

who, if he go through; the flock: on whatsoever he seizes,

both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver; brings it to the ground at once, tramples upon it, and tears it in pieces as its prey; and none in the flock, or to whom it belongs, can deliver out of his hand. This will be the case when the Jews shall turn to the Lord, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah shall be at the head of them; though some interpret this of the first times of the Gospel, and take it to be fulfilled in the apostles and first ministers of the word, who were Jews; and who were valiant defenders of truth, and conquerors over the devil and the world, and were the instruments of bringing many into subjection to Christ; but it seems best to apply it to the last times, and not to the converted Jews only, though in the first place; but to all the, spiritual Israel of God, the whole Christian church, which will then be in such happy circumstances.

[[@Micah **5:**9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Micah **5:**9]]. ***Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries***,.... O remnant of Jacob or Israel, as the Targum; the church of God; now will be the time that it shall prevail over all the antichristian states; now will the Christian princes pour out the vials of God's wrath upon them; and they shall feel the strength and weight of their hand; which will fall heavy upon them, even to their utter destruction: or thine hand, O Messiah, the ruler in Israel, the man the peace that shall deliver from the Assyrian; and who will be at the head of his church and people, the remnant of Jacob, and destroy their enemies with the sword that proceeds out of his mouth:

and all thine enemies shall be cut off; all the enemies of Christ and his church; all the kings of the earth that shall gather against them, the beast and false prophet, with all their followers; see

Re 1**9:**19.

[[@Micah **5:**10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Micah **5:**10]]. ***And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord***,.... When the above things shall be accomplished, even in the Gospel day, made so by the rising of the sun of righteousness; the Gospel dispensation, the latter part of it:

that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots; which some take to be an apostrophe to literal Babylon, and to be fulfilled when Cyrus took possession of it; but rather it respects mystical Babylon, and the destruction of that by Christ; but it is best of all to interpret it of the church of Christ, all whose carnal confidences and dependences shall be cut off, and shall trust alone in Christ for salvation; particularly the Jews now converted, who have been used to put their trust in the flesh, and in such things as are here mentioned; but now shall be made to see the folly and vanity of such things, and shall renounce and disclaim them; see Ho 1**4:**3; or the sense is, there shall be no more war; horses and chariots shall be no more used in a hostile way; but there shall be perfect peace, all enemies being destroyed, which agrees with **Mic 2:3 Zec 9:10**. The Targum is,

"I will cut off the horses of the people from the midst of thee, and destroy their chariots?"

[[@Micah **5:**11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Micah **5:**11]]. ***And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds.*** The meaning is, they should not dwell in fortified cities and walled towns; they should have none of these to trust to, nor should they stand in any need of them to defend them, their enemies being subdued; and besides, the Lord would be

their strong hold and place of defence, a wall of fire round about them, but the glory in the midst of them, The phrases are expressive of the greatest tranquillity and safety, and of living in an open air, free and undisturbed; see **Zec 2:4**. The Targum is,

"I will cut off the cities of the people out of thy land, and destroy all their strong fortresses;"

these shall dwell no more there, and be no more offensive and troublesome.

[[@Micah **5:**12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Micah **5:**12]]. ***And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand***,.... Such as were formerly practised among the Jews, though forbidden them, and in mystical Babylon, or the antichristian church, whose sorceries are mentioned, **Re 9:21**; but nothing of this kind will be found in the Christian church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, in the latter day; all unlawful arts, cheating and juggling in religious matters, will cease, and be no more:

and thou shalt have no [more] soothsayers; or diviners, that cast a mist over people's eyes, and deceived them with false appearances of things; that pretended to know times and seasons, when it was or was not a good day to go abroad, or to make merchandise; that judged by the clouds, and by the position of the heavens, what would come to pass hereafter; and though such sort of men were formerly indulged, connived at, and caressed among the Jews, they should be so no more; nor should they apply to such persons for advice and counsel; nor would they need it, nor should they use it; see **Deuteronomy** 1**8:**10.

[[@Micah **5:**13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Micah **5:**13]]. ***Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee***,.... The former were such as were made of wood or stone; the latter statues, such as were molten or cast, and made of gold, silver, or brass; Such as the Jews sometimes worshipped, and are now found in the apostate church of Rome; but will have no place in the Christian churches, or those so called, in the latter day. The Jews indeed have had no idols or idolatrous worship among them since the Babylonish captivity; and the prophet here speaks, not of what would be found among them, and removed at their conversion; but of what was in his time, or had been, or would be again, but should not be in future time, when they should turn to the Lord, and be like dew among the people; and so we are to understand some following passages. The Targum is,

"I will cut off the images of the people, and their statues:"

and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands; as not to fall down to idols and worship them, so neither to trust in carnal privileges, ceremonial rites, observances of the traditions of the elders, or any works of righteousness done by them, which they had been prone unto.

[[@Micah **5:**14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Micah **5:**14]]. ***And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee***,.... Planted for idolatrous worship, and which the Jews in the reigns of some of their kings raised, and made use of for such purposes; see

1Ki 1**5:**13; though contrary to the law of God,

Deuteronomy 1**6:**21; but now there should be nothing of this kind, all idolatry being rooted out of the world. The Targum is,

"I will root out the plantations of the people out of the midst of thee:"

so will I destroy thy cities; which some understand of cities given to idolatry; or rather it is to be understood in the same sense as in **Mic 5:11**; though by reason of that, and as something distinct from it, it is better to render the words with the Targum,

"I will destroy thine enemies {n}."

{n} So Jarchi, and Marinas in Aben Ezra, and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 102. 1.

[[@Micah **5:**15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Micah **5:**15]]. ***And I will execute vengeance in anger, and fury upon the Heathen***,.... Or "nations" {o}; not the Pagan nations only, but the Papal and Mahometan ones, even all that are enemies to Christ, and his church and people:

such as they have not heard; such terrible judgments, and dreadful expressions of divine wrath and fury, by earthquakes, hailstones, &c. as were never known or heard of in the world before; see Re 1**6:**18; or, "which have not heard" {p}; the people that have not heard and hearkened to the word of God, to the voice of Christ in the Gospel, but have turned a deaf ear to it, and despised it. So the Targum,

"who have not received the doctrine of the law;"

but it is much more agreeable to understand it of the doctrine of the Gospel disobeyed by men, and therefore justly punished; see **2Th 1:8**.

{o} Mywgh ta "gentes", Junius & Tremellius. {p} wemv al rva "quae non audierunt", Pagninus, Montanus; "quae non auscultaverint", Junius & Tremellius; "quae non obediverunt", Burkius.

[[@Micah 6]]

Chapter 6

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH 6

This chapter contains reproofs of the people of Israel for their sins, threatening them with punishment for them. The prophet is bid to tell them of the controversy the Lord had with them, which he did, **Mic 6:1**; and the Lord calls upon them to declare if they had any thing to object to his attitude towards them, **Mic 6:3**; and then puts them in mind of the favours they had received from him, in bringing them out of Egypt, and giving them such useful persons to go before them, lead and instruct them, as he had, **Mic 6:4**; and also reminds them of what passed between Balak, king of Moab, and Balaam the soothsayer; the questions of the one, and the answer of the other; whereby the designs of the former against them were frustrated, **Mic 6:5**; but since the voice of the Lord by his prophet was disregarded by them, they are called upon to hearken to the voice of his rod, **Mic 6:9**; which should be laid upon them for their fraudulent dealings, injustice, oppression, lies, and deceit, **Mic 6:10**; and therefore are threatened with sickness and desolation, and a deprivation of all good things, the fruit of their

labours, **Mic 6:13**; and that because the statutes of Omri, the works of Ahab, and their counsels, were observed by them, **Mic 6:16**.

[[@Micah **6:**1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Micah **6:**1]]. ***Hear ye now what the Lord saith***,.... Here begins a new discourse, and with an address of the prophet to the people of Israel, to hear what the Lord had to say to them by way of reproof for their sins now, as they had heard before many great and precious promises concerning the Messiah, and the happiness of the church in future time; to hear what the Lord now said to them by the prophet, and what he said to the prophet himself, as follows:

arise; O Prophet Micah, and do thine office; sit not still, nor indulge to sloth and ease; show readiness, diligence, activity, zeal, and courage in my service, and in carrying a message from me to my people:

contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice; open the cause depending between me and my people; state the case between us before the mountains and hills; and exert thyself, and lift up thy voice loudly, and with so much vehemence, that, if it was possible, the very mountains and hills might hear thee; the Lord hereby suggests that they would as soon hear as his people; thus upbraiding their stupidity, as he elsewhere does; see **Isa 1:2**. Kimchi and Ben Melech render it, to the mountains, which is much to the same sense with our version; call and summon them as witnesses in this cause; let the pleadings be made before them, and let them be judges in this matter; as they might be both for God, and against his people: the mountains and hills clothed with grass, and covered with flocks and herds; or set with all manner of fruit trees, vines, olives, and figs; or adorned with goodly cedars, oaks, and elms; were witnesses of the goodness of God unto them, and the same could testify against them; and, had they mouths to speak, could declare the abominations committed on them; how upon every high mountain and hill, and under every green tree, they had been guilty of idolatry. The Targum, and many versions {q}, render it, "with the mountains"; and the Vulgate Latin version, and others, "against the mountains" {r}; the inhabitants of Judea, that being a mountainous country, especially some parts of it. Some by "mountains" understand the great men of the land, king, princes, nobles; and, by "hills", lesser magistrates, with whom the Lord's controversy chiefly was; they not discharging their offices aright, nor setting good examples to the people. Some copies of the Targum, as the king of Spain's Bible, paraphrase it,

"judge or contend with the fathers, and let the mothers hear thy voice;"

which Kimchi thus explains, as if it was said, let the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the mothers Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, hear what their children hath rendered to the Lord; let them be, as it were, called out of their graves to hear the ill requital made to the Lord for all his goodness.

{q} Myrhh ta "cum istis montiibus", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius; "cum montibus", Montanus, Munster, Cocceius, Burkius. {r} "Adversum montes", V. L. Grotius.

[[@Micah **6:**2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Micah **6:**2]]. ***Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth***,.... These are the words of the prophet, obeying the divine command, calling upon the mountains, which are the strong parts of the earth, and the bottoms of them the foundations of it, to hear the Lord's controversy with his

people, and judge between them; or, as some think, these are the persons with whom, and against whom, the controversy was; the chief and principal men of the land, who were as pillars to the common people to support and uphold them:

for the Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel; his people Israel, who were so by choice, by covenant, by their own avouchment and profession: they had been guilty of many sins and transgressions against both tables of the law; and now the Lord had a controversy with them for them, and was determined to enter into judgment, and litigate the point with them; and dreadful it is when God brings in a charge, and pleads his own cause with sinful men; they are not able to contend with him, nor answer him for one of a thousand faults committed against him; see **Ho 4:1**.

[[@Micah **6:**3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Micah **6:**3]]. ***O my people***,.... These are the words of the Lord himself by the prophet, expressing his strong affection to the people of Israel, of which his goodness to them was a full proof, and this was an aggravation of their ingratitude to him; they were his people, whom he had chosen for himself above all people of the earth; whom he had redeemed from the house of bondage, had distinguished them by his layouts, and loaded them with his benefits, and yet they sinned against him:

what have I done unto thee? what evil things, what injuries to provoke to such usage? "what iniquity have you", or "your fathers, found in me", to treat me after this manner? have I been "a wilderness", or "a land of darkness", to you? **Jer 2:5**; have I withheld or denied you anything that was for your good? The Targum is,

"O my people, what good have I said I would do unto thee, and I have not done it?"

all that the Lord had promised he had performed; not one good thing had failed he had spoken of; how much good, and how many good things, had he done for them? nay, what good things were there he had not done for them? and what more could be done for them than what had been done? and yet they sinned against him so grossly; see **Isa 5:4**;

and wherein have I wearied thee? what heavy yoke have I put upon thee? what grievous commandments have I enjoined thee? is there anything in my service, any duty, too hard, severe, or unreasonable? are the sacrifices required burdensome? "have I caused thee to serve with an offering, and wearied thee with incense?" is there any just reason to say of these things, "what a weariness is it?" See Isa 4**3:**23;

testify against me; declare it publicly, if any good thing has been wanting, or any evil thing done: thus the Lord condescends to have the case fairly debated, and everything said that could be said in their favour, or against him: astonishing condescension and goodness!

[[@Micah **6:**4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Micah **6:**4]]. ***For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt***,.... Instead of doing them any wrong, he had done them much good; of which this is one instance, and he was able to produce more: this a notorious, plain, and full proof of his goodness to them, which could not be denied. It may be rendered, as it is by some, "surely I brought thee up" {s}, &c. this is a certain thing, well known, and cannot be disproved; it must be allowed to be a great favour and kindness to be brought up out of a superstitious, idolatrous, Heathenish people, enemies to God and true religion, and who had used them in a barbarous and cruel manner:

and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; or, "out of the house of bondage"; as the same words are rendered, Ex 2**0:**2; that is, out of hard service, in which their lives were made bitter; out of cruel bondage and slavery; which made them cry to the Lord for help and deliverance, and he heard them, and sent them a deliverer; by whose hand he redeemed them from this base and low estate in which they were, and for which they ought ever to have been thankful, and to have shown their gratitude by their cheerful and constant obedience. Some take "the house of servants" to be descriptive, not of the state of the children of Israel in Egypt, but of the character of the Egyptians themselves; who, being the posterity of Ham, were inheritors of his curse, that he should be a servant of servants; and so it is an aggravation of the blessing, that Israel were redeemed from being servants to the servants of servants. This sense is mentioned by Kimchi and Abarbinel:

and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; not to bring them the news of their deliverance out of Egypt, before they came out of it, as Kimchi; but to be their guides to conduct and direct them in all matters, civil and religious. Moses was their lawgiver, leader, and commander; Aaron was their priest to offer sacrifice for them, and to intercede on their behalf; and Miriam was a prophetess; and they were all very useful and beneficial to them; and a very great blessing it is to a people to have a good constitution, civil and ecclesiastic, and to have good magistrates, and good ministers of the word. The Targum is,

"I sent before thee three prophets, Moses to teach the tradition of the judgments, Aaron to make atonement for the people, and Miriam to instruct the women."

{s} yk "certe", Calvin, Piscator, Tarnovius; so some in Vatablus.

[[@Micah **6:**5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Micah **6:**5]]. ***O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted***,.... What a scheme he had laid; what contrivances he had formed; what consultations he had with a soothsayer or diviner he sent for to curse Israel; how he sought to get the God of Israel on his side, and to set him against them, that he might be rid of them, and they be ruined and destroyed. The Moabites were the descendants of Moab, a son of Lot, by one of his daughters; when they first set up their kingdom is not certain; nor who their kings in succession were before Balak: it appears there was a former king, whom the king of the Amorites fought with, and took away his land from him, Nu 2**1:**26; who probably was Zippor, the father of Balak, and whom he succeeded; the kingdom being recovered by him, or by this his son; however, he was on the throne when Israel was upon the borders of his kingdom, which threw him into a panic; upon which he sent messengers to a neighbouring magician next mentioned, to advise with him what to do in this his extremity; and the Jews have a tradition, that, because of the multitude of sacrifices he offered, he was worthy to have Ruth, the descendant from him; who, they say, was the daughter of Eglon, the grandson of Balak, king of Moab {s}:

and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him; this man is called a soothsayer, Jos 1**3:**22; The Jews say he was first a prophet; and so the Apostle Peter calls him, **2 Peter 2:16**; and afterwards became a diviner {t}: they differ very much about him, who he was, and from whom he descended. Beor his father is sometimes said to be the son of Laban {u}; and, at other times, Balaam himself is said to be Laban the Syrian {w}, whose soul they suppose transmigrated into Balaam, as it afterwards did into Nabal, according to them. Some {x} take him to be the same with Elihu, who interposed in the dispute between Job and his friends; and others say that he was one of the eunuchs, counsellors, and magicians of Pharaoh, both when Moses was a child, and when he wrought his miracles in Egypt; and that Jannes and Jambres,

of whom the Apostle Paul makes mention, **2 Timothy 3:8**; were his two sons {y}: he was an inhabitant of Pethor, which was situated on the river Euphrates, thought by Junius to be the Pacoria of Ptolemy: he seems to have been a Mesopotamian, though some say a Midianite; but, whether one or the other, he did not live at any great distance from the king of Moab: he was slain by the sword the children of Israel, in the times of Joshua,

Jos 1**3:**22; and, as the Jews say {z} he was, when he was but thirty three or thirty four years of age; they observing upon it, that bloody and deceitful men do not live out, half their days; but this does not seem so well to agree with other things they say of him; however, this soothsayer and sorcerer Balak sent for to curse Israel; whose heart and tongue, though a wicked man, and would fain have done according to Balak's wish and desire, were so overruled by the power of God, that instead of cursing Israel he was obliged to bless them, and to prophesy of their future happiness and prosperity, and of the Messiah, that should spring from them; see history of all this in

Nu 2**2:**1;

from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord; here something must be supplied to make sense of the words; either, "remember what good things I did for you {a}, from Shittim to Gilgal"; the former was the place where the children of Israel committed whoredom and idolatry, and was on the other side Jordan; and the latter was the place they came to when they had passed over Jordan, where the covenant of circumcision was renewed, and the first passover kept; now they are called upon to remember the goodness of God unto them from one place to another, and what were done between them; how that at Shittim, though they provoked the Lord to anger, yet he did not cut them all off, but spared a number of them, to enter and possess the land of Canaan; and though Moses died by the way, yet be raised up Joshua to go before them, and in a miraculous manner led them through the river Jordan, and brought them to Gilgal--favours ever to he had in remembrance. So the Targum,

"were not great things done for you in the plain of Shittim unto the house of Gilgal, that the righteousness of the Lord might be known?"

both his justice in punishing offenders at Shittim, and his bounty and kindness, as well as his truth and faithfulness, in sparing others; bestowing his favours on them, and bringing them into the promised land: or it may be supplied thus, as by some, "remember what Balak consulted {b} from Shittim to Gilgal"; that is, with Balaam, and what answer and advice he gave him; which was to send beautiful women among the Israelites, and so tempt them to adultery, and by that means to idolatry; and which scheme and consultation took place at Shittim, by means of which several thousands were slain; and the device was to have continued the temptation even to Gilgal, which, had it not been prevented, in all likelihood would have issued in the destruction of that people; and therefore they had reason to know, own, and acknowledge the goodness and faithfulness of God unto them: or rather, taking the phrase "from Shittim to Gilgal" to be a proverbial one {c}, of going from place to place, it may have respect to Balak's having Balaam from place to place, to take a view of the people, and curse them; or how he might set the God of Israel against them, and gain him over to him; and then the sense is this,

"remember how Balak consulted Balaam from place to place, and what answers he returned him; all which was done, that "he (Balak) might know the righteousness of the Lord";"

and so the Syriac version renders it, and it will bear to be so rendered: the thing which Balak chiefly consulted was, how he should get the God of Israel on his side; as it was usual with Heathen princes, when at war, to attempt to get the gods of their enemies from them, and on their side; and inquires of Balaam how this was to be effected; what righteousness it was the Lord required; what duties of religion to be performed; what rites or sacrifices were acceptable to him; and the sum of his questions on this head, and Balaam's answer to them, are contained in the following verses.

{s} T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 105. 2. {t} Ib. fol. 106. 1. {u} Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 7. 1. {w} Targum Jon. in Numb. xxii. 5. Targum in 1 Chron. i. 44. Vid. Burkium ib. {x} Hieron. Quaeat. Hebr. in Genesim, fol. 69. D. {y} Dibre Hayamim Shel Moseh, fol. 4. 2. & 6. 2. Targum Jon. in Exod. ix. 21. Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 90. 1. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. {z} T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 2. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 7. 2. {a} "Recordare qualia bona exhibuerim tibi", Munster; "memento eorum quae gesta sunt", Vatablus; "quae contigerint tibi", Calvin; "memento eorum quae fecerim", Grotius; "recordare quid evenerit tibi", Piscator. {b} "Memento quid cogifaverit contra te Balac, et quid responderit ei Balaam a Settim", &c. Ribera; so Menochius, Tirinus. {c} See Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity, p. 290.

[[@Micah **6:**6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Micah **6:**6]]. ***Wherewith shall I come before the Lord***,.... These are not the words of the people of Israel God had a controversy with, and now made sensible of their sin, and humbled for it; and willing to appease the Lord, and make it up with him at any rate; for there are such things proposed by them as do by no means suit with persons of such a character, nay, even suppose them to be hypocritical; and much less are they what were put into their mouths by the prophet to say, as some suggest; but they are the words of Balak king of Moab, which, and what follow, are questions he put to Balaam, who had told him that he could do nothing without the Lord, nor anything contrary to his word: now he asks what he must do to get the good will of this Lord; in what manner, and with what he must appear before him, serve and worship him, as the Targum; that so he might have an interest in him, and get him to speak a word to Balaam in his favour, and against Israel; see

Nu 2**2:**8;

[and] bow myself before the high God? the most high God, the God of gods, whose Shechinah or Majesty is in the high heavens, as the Targum: his meaning is, with what he should come, or bring with him, when he paid his homage and obeisance to him, by bowing his body or his knee before him; being willing to do it in the most acceptable manner he could:

shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? such as he had been used to offer on the high places of Baal to that deity. Sacrifices of this kind prevailed among the Heathens, which they had received by tradition from the times of Adam and Noah; see

Nu 2**2:**41.

[[@Micah **6:**7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Micah **6:**7]]. ***Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams***,.... If single burnt offerings of bullocks and heifers will not do, will rams, and thousands of them, be acceptable to him? if they will, they are at his service, even as many as he pleases; such creatures, as well as oxen, were offered by Balak, Nu 2**3:**1;

[or] with ten thousands of rivers of oil? for meat offerings, as Jarchi, in which oil was used: this is a hyperbolical expression, as Kimchi rightly observes; suggesting that he was willing to be at any expenses, even the most extravagant, if he could but gain his point, and get the God of Israel on his side. Some render it, "ten thousands of fat valleys" {d}; abounding with corn, and wine, and oil; the produce of which, had he so many, he could freely part with, could he but obtain his end; see **Job 20:**17;

shall I give my firstborn [for] my transgression, the fruit of my body [for] the sin of my soul? his Son, his firstborn, his own flesh and blood, to make atonement for his sins and transgressions; this betrays the person speaking. The people of Israel, though they were sometimes guilty of this horrid, unnatural, and abominable sin, in the height of their degeneracy and apostasy, as to sacrifice their children to Moloch; yet when convinced of their sins, and humbling themselves before God for them, even though but in a hypocritical way, could never be so weak and foolish, so impious and audacious, as to propose that to God, which they knew was so contrary to his will, and so abominable in his sight, Le 1**8:**21; but this comes well enough from a Heathen prince, with whom it was the, height of his devotion and religion, and the greatest sacrifice he thought he could offer up to God; for there is a climax, a gradation in the words from lesser things to greater; and this is the greatest of all, and what was done among the Heathens,

2Ki 1**7:**31; and was afterwards done by a king of Moab, **2Ki 3:26**.

{d} Nmv ylxn twbbrb "in decem millibus vallium pinguium", Munster.

[[@Micah **6:**8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Micah **6:**8]]. ***He hath showed me, O man, what [is] good***,.... This is not the answer of the prophet to the body of the people, or to any and every one of the people of Israel; but of Balaam to Balak, a single man, that consulted with him, and put questions to him; particularly what he should do to please the Lord, and what righteousness he required of him, that would be acceptable to him; and though he was a king, he was but a man, and he would have him know it that he was no more, and as such addresses him; and especially when he is informing him of his duty to God; which lay not in such things as he had proposed, but in doing that which was good, and avoiding that which was evil, in a moral sense: and this the Lord had shown him by the light of nature; which is no other than the work of the law of God written in the hearts of the Heathens, by which they are directed to do the good commanded in the law, and to shun the evil forbidden by it; see **Romans 2:14**;

and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly; or "judgment" {e}; to exercise public judgment and justice, as a king, among his subjects; to do private and personal justice between man and man; to hurt no man's person, property, and character; to give to everyone their due, and do as he would desire to be done by; which as it is agreeable to the law of God, so to the light of nature, and what is shown, required, and taught by it:

and to love mercy; not only to show mercy to miserable objects, to persons in distress; to relieve the poor and indigent; to clothe the naked, and feed the hungry; but to delight in such exercises; and which a king especially should do, whose throne is established by mercy, and who is able, and should be munificent; and some Heathen princes, by their liberality, have gained the name of benefactors, "Euergetes", as one of the Ptolemies did; see Lu 2**2:**25; such advice Daniel gave to Nebuchadnezzar, a Heathen prince, as agreeable to the light of nature; see **Da 4:27**;

and to walk humbly with thy God? his Creator and Benefactor, from whom he had his being, and all the blessings of life, and was dependent upon him; and therefore, as a creature, should behave with humility towards his Creator, acknowledging his distance from him, and the obligations he lay under to him; and even though a king, yet his God and Creator was above him, King of kings, and Lord of lords, to whom he owed his crown, sceptre, and kingdom, and was accountable to him for all his administrations: and this "walking humbly" is opposed to "walking in pride", which kings are apt to do; but God can humble them, and bring them low, as Heathen kings have been obliged to own; see **Da 2:21**.

{e} jpvm "judicium", V. L. Munster; "jus", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[[@Micah **6:**9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Micah **6:**9]]. ***The Lord's voice crieth unto the city***,.... The Lord having bid his prophet call to the mountains and hills to hear his voice, and the prophet having obeyed his will, and the Lord having by him addressed his people Israel, and expostulated with them about their ingratitude, observing to them many instances of his goodness; here informs them, that this voice of his, whether in his prophet, or in his judgments, was directed to the city, either Samaria or Jerusalem, or both, and even to all the cities of Israel and Judah, the singular being put for the plural; that is, to the inhabitants of them. Cities being populous, and where persons of the highest rank and figure, as well as of the best sense, dwell, and generally very wicked, though favoured with greater advantages; all which are reasons why the voice of the Lord, in his word and providences, particularly cries to them to repent of their sins, and reform from them, as might be expected from such persons; and so doing would set a good example to those who live in the country. Some render it, "the Lord's voice crieth to awake" {f}; or to "stir up"; it calls upon men asleep to awake out of sleep; to arouse from their carnal security; to attend to their sins, their danger, and their duty; to repent of their sins, and so avoid the danger they were in through them, and perform their duty they had such a voice as this, see in **Eph 5:14**; this reading of the words is mentioned by Kimchi;

and [the man of] wisdom shall see thy name; not the mere natural man, or who is possessed only of natural wisdom, though he may have ever so great a share of it; for as he sees not the things of the Spirit of God, the things of the Gospel, so neither the name and perfections of God in his judgments on the earth; much less the man that is wise to do evil, full of wicked subtlety, and makes a jest of everything religious and serious; nor such as are wise in their own opinion, or have only a superficial share of wisdom; but such who have a share of solid and substantial wisdom, a man of "substance", as the word {g} sometimes signifies; see **Proverbs 8:21**; such who have true wisdom in the hidden part, that which comes from above, and is pure and peaceable, and makes men wise to salvation; such men see and discern the power and providence of God in all the judgments that are in the earth; his attributes and perfections; his severity on some, and goodness to others; his sparing grace and mercy, and his special lovingkindness, and even all his perfections, for he is known to such by the judgments he executeth; see **Psalm 9:16**; and such, "fear" his "name" also, as some render the words {h}; they not only fear the Lord and his goodness, but have an awful sense of his judgments, and tremble at them. Some read the words, "thy name sees that which is" {i}; so the margin of our Bibles; that is, the Lord seeth that which is done in the city, though ever so secret and private, and therefore his voice cries to it;

hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it; these are the words of the man of wisdom, as Kimchi observes; who, seeing the name and perfections of God in his judgments on the earth,

upon others, and exhorts them to hear the voice rod, of the rod of correction and affliction, the rod of judgment and vengeance, as held in the hand of God, and shook over a city or nation; which has a voice in if to men, reproving them for their sins; commanding them to return from them; calling them to repentance and humiliation; teaching and instructing them in their duty; and giving cautions and warnings to others, lest the like should befall them; and this is the voice that is to be attended to: audit should be considered, that there is no affliction, calamity, or judgment, but is appointed by the Lord, the kind and nature, measure and duration, of it; what its end, issue, and use; and he that has appointed it is all wise and all knowing, unchangeable and invariable, all powerful, and able to put his purposes and decrees into execution; nor can they be frustrated. The Targum of the whole is,

"with the voice the prophets of the Lord Cry to the city; and teachers fear the name (of the Lord); hear, O king and rulers, and the rest of the people of the land."

{f} ryel "ad suscitandum", Vatablus; "ad expergefaciendum", Calvin; "ad excitandum", Drusius. So Joseph Kimchi. {g} hyvwt "vir constans", Pagninus; "vir essentilae", Gualtherus apud Tarnovium. {h} Kmv hary "timebit nomen tuum", Pagninus, Montanus. So the Targum. {i} "Nam quod res est, videt nomen tuum", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

[[@Micah **6:**10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Micah **6:**10]]. ***Are there yet the treasures of wickedness the house of the wicked***?.... There are; they continue there. This is the voice of the Lord by the prophet, and the language of the rod of correction to be heard, exposing the sins of the people, for which the Lord had a controversy with them; particularly their mammon of unrighteousness, the vast wealth, riches, and treasures, collected together by very wicked and unlawful ways and means; and which, instead of restoring them to the persons they had defrauded of them, they retained them in their houses, notwithstanding the reproofs of the prophets, and the corrections of the Almighty. Some render it, "is there not fire?" &c. {k}; that is, in the house of the wicked, because of the treasures of wickedness, that which consumes them; but Gussetius {l} interprets it of fornications and adulteries. Others render it, "is there yet a man?" &c. {m}; an honourable man, as Aben Ezra, who continues in his iniquity, after the Lord's voice cries to the city; but Abendana interprets it of the prophet himself, continuing to reprove the wicked for their treasures of wickedness, and their other sins;

and the scant measure [that is] abominable? or "the ephah of leanness provoking to wrath" {n}; that is, a deficient measure, less than it should be; the "ephah" was a dry measure, and it was made small, as in **Am 8:5**; and held less than it should; and this brought leanness and poverty upon those to whom they sold by it, as well as ruin upon themselves in the issue; for such practices as they were abominable and detestable to God; they stirred up his wrath, and brought destruction on those that used them. The Targum is,

"false measures that bring a curse."

{k} vah dwe mh pur, Sept. "adhuc ignis", V. L. So Joseph Kimchi. {l} Ebr. Comment. p. 352. {m} "Adhuc num vir domo", Montanus; "adhuc suntne viro domus improbi", some in Drusius. So R. Sol. Urbin, fol. 37. 2. {n} hmwez Nrzr tpyaw "et ephah macilentiae indignatio a Deo proventura", Tarnovius; "detestatus Domino", Pagninus; "et ephah maciei abominatione digna", Burkius.

[[@Micah **6:**11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Micah **6:**11]]. ***Shall I count [them] pure with the wicked balances***,.... These are the words either of the prophet, or rather of God, signifying that he could not, and would not, allow, countenance, and approve of persons that used false scales or balances; or justify and reckon them just, as they would be thought to be, but condemn them, and pronounce them very wicked men, and deserving of punishment here and hereafter:

and with the bag of deceitful weights? or "stones" {o}; which were used in weighing goods, and which were deceitful, when a heavier was used in buying, and a lighter in selling. So the Targum,

"and with the bag, in which are weights greater and lesser;"

condemned in **Deuteronomy** 2**5:**13.

{o} hmrm ynba "lapidum doli", Piscator; "lapidum fraudis", Montanus.

[[@Micah **6:**12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Micah **6:**12]]. ***For the rich men thereof are full of violence***,.... That is, the rich men of the city, to whom the voice of the Lord cried, **Mic 6:9**. Jerusalem or Samaria, or any or all the cities of Israel and Judah; the rich men of these cities, who had enough of the world, and were under no temptation to do an ill thing, to get money; and yet their hands and their houses, and their treasuries, as the Targum, were full of goods gotten by violent measures, by the oppression of the poor and needy:

and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies; the rest of the inhabitants, who were not so rich as others, and who had it not in the power of their hands to oppress as others had; yet used deceitful and fraudulent methods to cheat their neighbours in buying and selling; and, to do this, did not stick to tell downright deliberate lies:

and their tongue [is] deceitful in their mouth; say one thing, and mean another; deceive their neighbours with their tongues in trade and commerce; averting things for truth they know to be false.

[[@Micah **6:**13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Micah **6:**13]]. ***Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee***,.... With the rod to be heard, **Mic 6:9**; by sending among them some of his sore judgments, as famine, pestilence, the sword of the enemy, internal wars, and the like; which should cause their kingdom, and state, and families, to decline and waste away, as a sickly and diseased body. So the Targum,

"and I brought upon thee illness and a stroke."

The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, "and I began to smite thee"; as by Hazael, king of Syria, and Tiglathpileser, king of Assyria, who had carried part of them captive;

in making [thee] desolate because of thy sins; went on, not only to make them sick, and bring them into a declining state, but into utter desolation; as by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, who carried Israel captive; and by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who led Judah captive, because of their sins of idolatry, injustice, and oppression, with others that abounded among them.

[[@Micah **6:**14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Micah **6:**14]]. ***Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied***,.... Either not having enough to eat, for the refreshing and satisfying of nature; or else a blessing being withheld from food, though eaten, and so not nourishing; or a voracious and insatiable appetite being given as a curse; the first sense seems best:

and thy casting down [shall be] in the midst of thee; meaning they should be humbled and brought down, either by civil discords and wars among themselves, or through the enemy being suffered to come into the midst of their country, and make havoc there; which would be as a sickness and disease in their bowels. So the Targum,

"thou shalt have an illness in thy bowels."

The Syriac version is,

"a dysentery shall be in thine intestines;"

a secret judgment wasting and destroying them;

and thou shall take hold, but shall not deliver; and [that] which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword; the sense is, that they should take hold of their wives and children, and endeavour to save them from the sword of the enemy, and being carried captive: or should "remove" them {p}, as the word is sometimes used, in order to secure them from them; or should "overtake" {q}; the enemy, carrying them captive; but should not be able by either of these methods to save them from being destroyed, or carried away by them; and even such as they should preserve or rescue for a while, yet these should be given up to the sword of the enemy, the same or another. Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret this of their women conceiving, and not bringing forth; and, if they should, yet what they brought forth should be slain by the sword {r}. But the Targum and Jarchi incline to the former sense.

{p} gotw "et amovebis", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius; "summovebis", Drusius, so Ben Melech; "et removebis", Burkius. {q} "Assequeris", Syr. {r} R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 35. 2.

[[@Micah **6:**15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Micah **6:**15]]. ***Thou shall sow, but thou shalt not reap***,.... Either that which is sown shall not spring up, but rot in the earth; or if it does spring up, and come to maturity, yet, before that, they should be removed into captivity, or slain by the sword, and their enemies should reap the increase of their land, their wheat and their grain:

thou shall tread the olives; in the olive press, to get out the oil:

but thou shalt not anoint with oil; as at feasts for refreshment, and at baths for health, this becoming another's property; or, it being a time of distress and mourning, would not be used, it being chiefly at festivals, and occasions of joy, that oil was used:

and sweet wine; that is, shalt tread the grapes in the winepress, to get out the sweet or new wine:

but shalt not drink wine; for, before it is fit to drink, the enemy would have it in his possession; see Le 2**6:**16; these are the punishments or corrections of the rod they are threatened with for their sins.

[[@Micah **6:**16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:Micah **6:**16]]. ***For the statutes of Omri are kept***,.... Who of a captain of the army was made king of Israel, and proved a wicked prince; he built Samaria, and set up idolatrous worship there, after the example of Jeroboam, in whose ways he walked, and, as it seems, established the same by laws and edicts; and which were everyone of them observed by the Israelites, in the times of the prophet, though at the distance of many years from the first making of them, which aggravated their sin; nor would it be any excuse of them that what they practised was enjoined by royal authority, since it was contrary to the command of God; for the breach of which, and their observance of the statutes of such a wicked prince, they are threatened with the judgments of God; see 1Ki 1**6:**16;

and all the works of the house of Ahab; who was the son of Omri, and introduced the worship of Baal, and added to the idolatry of the calves, which he and his family practised; and the same works were now done by the people of Israel:

and ye walk in their counsels; as they advised and directed the people to do in their days:

that I should make thee a desolation; the city of Samaria, the metropolis of Israel, or the whole land, which was made a desolation by Shalmaneser, an instrument in the hand of God; and this was not the intention and design of their walking in the counsels and after the example of their idolatrous kings, but the consequence and event of so doing:

and the inhabitants thereof an hissing; either of Samaria, or of all the land, who should become the scorn and derision of men, when brought to ruin for their sins:

therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people; that which was threatened in the law to the people of God, when disobedient to him; or shameful punishment for profaning the name and character of the people of God they bore; or for reproaching and ill using the poor among the people of God; and so it is directed to the rich men before spoken of, and signifies the shame and ignominy they should bear, by being carried captive into a foreign land for their sins.

[[@Micah 7]]

Chapter 7

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH 7

This chapter begins with a lamentation of the prophet, in the name of the church and people of God, concerning the general depravity and corruption of the times in which he lived, **Mic 7:1**; then declares what he was determined to do for his relief in such circumstances, **Mic 7:7**; comforts himself and the church with a good hope and firm belief of its being otherwise and better with them, to the shame and confusion of their enemies that now rejoiced, though without just reason for it, **Mic 7:8**; with promises of deliverance, after a desolation of the land for some time, **Mic 7:11**; and with the answer returned to the prayers of the prophet, **Mic 7:14**; which would issue in the astonishment of the world, and their subjection to the church

of God, **Mic 7:16**; and the chapter is concluded with admiration at the pardoning grace and mercy of God, and his faithfulness to his promises, **Mic 7:18**.

[[@Micah **7:**1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:Micah **7:**1]]. ***Woe is me***!.... Alas for me unhappy man that I am, to live in such an age, and among such a people, as I do! this the prophet says in his own name, or in the name of the church and people of God in his time; so Isaiah, who was contemporary with him, **Isa 6:5**; see also

Psalm 12**0:**5;

for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage; when there are only an apple or a pear or two, or such sort of fruit, and such a quantity of it left on the top of the tree, or on the outermost branches of it, after the rest are gathered in; or a few single grapes here and there, after the vintage is over; signifying either that he was like Elijah left alone, or however that the number of good men were very few; or that there were very few gathered in by his ministry, converted, taught, and instructed by it; or those that had the name of good men were but very indifferent, and not like those who were in times past; but were as refuse fruit left on trees, and dropped from thence when rotten, and when gathered up were good for little, and like single grapes, small and withered, and of no value; see Isa 1**7:**6;

[there is] no cluster to eat; no large number or society of good men to converse with, only here and there a single person; and none that have an abundance of grace and goodness in them, and a large experience of spiritual and divine things; few that attend the ministry of the word; they do not come in clusters, in crowds; and fewer still that receive any advantage by it;

my soul desired the first ripe fruit; the company and conversation of such good men as lived in former times; who had the firstfruits of the Spirit, and arrived to a maturity of grace, and a lively exercise of it; and who were, in the age of the prophet, as scarce and rare as first ripe fruits, and as desirable as such were to a thirsty traveller; see **Ho 9:10**. The Targum is,

"the prophet said, woe unto me, because I am as when good men fail, in a time in which merciful men perish from the earth; behold, as the summer fruits, as the gleanings after the vintage, there is no man in whom there are good works; my soul desires good men."

[[@Micah **7:**2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:Micah **7:**2]]. ***The good [man] is perished out of the earth***,.... Here the prophet expresses in plain words what he had before delivered in figurative terms. The "good" or "godly" man, as in **Psalm** 1**2:**1; is one that has received the grace of God, and blessings of grace from him, and lives a godly life and conversation; who has the good work of grace begun in him and is found in the performance of good works, and does his duty both to God and man from godly principles; and particularly is kind and merciful to the poor and needy, and those in distress. The complaint is, that there were few, or scarce any, of this character in the earth, in the land of Israel, where there used to be great numbers of them, but now they were all dead and gone; for this is to be understood, not of the perishing of their graces or comforts, much less of their perishing in their sins, or perishing eternally, but of their corporeal death:

and [there is] none upright among men; that are upright in heart and life; that have right spirits renewed in them, are Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile; and walk uprightly, according to the rule of the divine word, truly honest, faithful men; very few such were to be found, scarce any; see **Psalm** 1**2:**1;

they all lie in wait for blood; for the substance, wealth, and riches of men, which is as their blood and life; is their livelihood, that on which they live; this they wait for an opportunity to get from them, and, when it offers, greedily seize it; and stick not even to shed blood, and take away life, for the sake of gain:

they hunt every man his brother with a net; as men lay nets for fish, and fowl, and beasts, and hunt them till they have got them into them; so these men laid snares, not for strangers only, but for their own brethren, to entangle them in, and cheat and defraud them of their substance; and this they would do, even to the destruction of them, as some {s} render it; for the word also signifies "anathema", destruction, as well as a "net". So the Targum.

"betray or deliver his brother to destruction."

{s} Mrx "ad necem", Tigurine version; "anathema, caedes", Drusius; "ad occasuinem", ibid.

[[@Micah **7:**3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:Micah **7:**3]]. ***That they may do evil with both hands earnestly***,.... Or "well" {t}, strenuously, diligently, to the utmost of their power, labouring at it with all their might and main; as wicked men generally are more industrious, and exert themselves more to do evil than good men do to do good; and even weary themselves to commit iniquity: or, "instead of doing good", as Marinus in Aben Ezra, take a great deal of pains to do evil; work with both hands at it, instead of doing good. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, "they prepare their hands for evil"; the Syriac version is, "their hands are read? to evil, and they do not do good"; with which agrees the Targum,

"they do evil with their hands, and do not do good."

Some make the sense to depend on what goes before and follows; "to do evil, both hands" are open and ready, and they hurt with them; "but to do, good the prince asketh, and the judge for a reward" {u}; forward enough to do evil, but very backward to do any good office;

the prince asketh, and the judge [asketh] for a reward; and, if they do it, must be bribed, and have a reward for it, even persons of such high character; but this sense is not favoured by, the accents; besides, by what follows, it seems as if the "prince", by whom may be meant the king upon the throne, and the "judge" he that sits upon the bench under him, sought for bribes to do an ill thing; to give a cause wrong against a poor man, and in favour of a rich man that will bribe high:

and the great [man] he uttereth his mischievous desire; the depravity, corruption, and perverseness of his soul; who is either some great man at court, that, being encouraged by the example of the prince and judge, openly and publicly requires a bribe also to do an ill thing; and without any shame or blushing promises to do it on that consideration; or a counsellor at the bar, who openly declares that he will speak in such a cause, though a bad one, and defend it, and not doubt of carrying it; or else this is some rich wicked man, that seeks to oppress his poor neighbour, and, being favoured by the prince and judge he has bribed, does without fear or shame speak out the wickedness of his heart, and what an ill design he has against his neighbour, whose mischief, hurt, and ruin, he seeks:

so they wrap it up together; or, "twist it together" {w}; as cords are, which thereby become strong; slid so these three work up this mischievous business, and strengthen and establish it; and such a threefold cord of wickedness is not easily broken or unravelled: or, "they perplex it" {x}; as thick branches of trees are implicated and wrapped together; so these agree to puzzle and perplex a cause, that they may have some show of carrying it with justice and truth. So the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "they trouble it"; confound the matter, and make it dark, dubious, and difficult. The Targum is, "they corrupt it"; or deprave it; put an ill sense on things, and make a wrong construction of them.

{t} byjyhl "bene", Drusius. {u} So Grotius. {w} hwtbey "contorquent", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius; "contorquere solent", Burkius; "contortuplicant", Junius, Grotius; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 38. 2. {x} "A radice tbe quae intricare significat, atque confusum reddere, atque perplexum", Sanctius,

[[@Micah **7:**4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:Micah **7:**4]]. ***The best of them [is] as a brier***,.... Good for nothing but for burning, very hurtful and mischievous, pricking and scratching those that have to do with them:

the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge; which, if a man lays hold on to get over, or attempts to pass through, his hands will be pricked, his face scratched, and his clothes tore off his back; so the best of these princes, judges, and great inch, who put on a show of goodness, and pretended to do justice, yet fetched blood, and got money out of everyone they were concerned with, and did them injury in one respect or another; or the best and most upright of the people of the land in general, that made the greatest pretensions to religion and virtue, yet in their dealings were sharp, and biting, and tricking; and took every fraudulent method to cheat, and overreach, and hurt men in their property:

the day of thy watchmen; either which the true prophets of the Lord, sometimes called watchmen, foretold should come, but were discredited and despised, will now most assuredly come; and it will be found to be true what they said should come to pass: or the day of the false prophets, as Kimchi and Ben Melech; either which they predicted as a good day, and now it should be seen whether it would be so or not; or the day of their punishment, for their false prophecies and deception of the people:

[and] thy visitation cometh; the time that God would punish the people in general for their iniquities, as! well as their false prophets, princes, judges, and great men; who also may be designed by watchmen:

now shall be their perplexity: the prince, the judge, and the great man, in just retaliation for their perplexing the cause of the poor; or of all the people, who would be surrounded and entangled with calamities and distresses, and not know which way to turn themselves, or how to get out of them.

[[@Micah **7:**5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:Micah **7:**5]]. ***Trust ye not in a friend***,.... This is not said to lessen the value of friendship; or to discourage the cultivation of it with agreeable persons; or to dissuade from a confidence in a real friend; or in the least to weaken it, and damp the pleasure of true friendship, which is one of the great blessings of life; but to set forth the sad degeneracy of the then present age, that men, who pretended to be friends, were so universally false and faithless, that there was no dependence to be had on them:

put ye not confidence in a guide; in political matters, in civil affairs, as civil magistrates, judges, counsellors; or in domestic matters. The Targum renders it, in one near akin. Kimchi interprets it of an elder brother; and Aben Ezra of a husband, who is to his wife the guide of her youth; and in religious matters as prophets, priests who were false and deceitful. It may design a very intimate friend, a familiar acquaintance, who might of all men be thought to be confided in; of whom the word is used, **Psalm** 5**5:**13;

keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom; from a wife, and much more from a concubine or harlot. The Targum is,

"from the wife of thy covenant keep the words of thy mouth;"

divulge not the thoughts of thine heart, or disclose the secrets of it, to one so near; take care of speaking treason against the prince, or ill of a neighbour; it may be got out of such an one, and who may be so base as to betray it: or utter not anything whatever that is secret, the divulging of which may be detrimental; for, in such an age as this was, one in so near a relation might be wicked enough to discover it; see **Ecclesiastes** 1**0:**20.

[[@Micah **7:**6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:Micah **7:**6]]. ***For the son dishonoureth the father***,.... Speaks contemptibly of him; behaves rudely towards him; shows him no respect and reverence; exposes his failings, and makes him the object of his banter and ridicule; who ought to have honoured, reverenced, and obeyed him, being the instrument of his being, by whom he was brought up, fed, clothed, and provided for; base ingratitude!

the daughter riseth up against her mother; by whom she has been used in the most tender and affectionate manner; this being still more unnatural, if possible, as being done by the female sex, usually more soft and pliable; but here, losing her natural affection, and forgetting both her relation and sex, replies to her mother, giving ill language; opposes and disobeys her, chides, wrangles, and scolds, and strives and litigates with her, as the Targum: or rises up as a witness against her, to her detriment, if not to the taking away of her life:

the daughter in law against her mother in law; this is not so much to be wondered at as, the former instances, which serve to encourage and embolden those that are in such a relation to speak pertly and saucily; to reproach and make, light of mothers in law, as the Targum; or slight and abuse them:

a man's enemies [are] the men of his own house; his sons and his servants, who should honour his person, defend his property, and promote his interest; but, instead of that, do everything that is injurious to him. These words are referred to by Christ, and used by him to describe the times in which he lived, Mt 1**0:**35; and the prophet may be thought to have an eye to the same, while he is settling forth the badness of his own times; and the Jews seem to think be had a regard to them, since they say {y}, that, when the Messiah comes, "the son shall dishonour his father", &c. plainly having this passage in view; and the; whole agrees with the times of Christ, in which there were few good men; it was a wicked age, an adulterous generation of men, he lived among; great corruption there was in princes, priests, and people; in the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and in all ranks and degrees of men; and he that ate bread with Christ, even Judas, lifted up his heel against him. The times in which Micah the prophet here speaks of seem to he the times of Ahaz, who was a wicked prince; and the former part of Hezekiah's reign, before a reformation was started, or at least brought

about, in whose reigns he prophesied; though some have thought he here predicts the sad times in the reign of Manasseh, which is not so probable.

{y} Misn. Sotah, c. 9. sect. 15.

[[@Micah **7:**7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:Micah **7:**7]]. ***Therefore I will look unto the Lord***,.... Here the prophet, in the name of the church and people of God, declares what he would do in such circumstances, since there was no dependence on men of any rank, in any relation or connection with each other; he resolved to look alone to the Lord, and put his trust in him; look up to the Lord in prayer, use an humble freedom with him, place a holy confidence in him, expect all good things from him, and wait for them; look to Christ in the exercise of faith, which is, in New Testament language, a looking to Jesus; and the Targum interprets this clause of the Word of the Lord, the essential Word, who is to be looked unto, and believed in, as the Son of God, who is the true God, and eternal life; as the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world; as the Mediator between God and men: as in all his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; as the Lord our righteousness, and as the only Saviour and Redeemer of men; and that for all things; when in darkness, for light; when weak, for strength; when sick, for healing; when hungry, for food; when disconsolate, for comfort; in short, for all supplies of grace here, and for eternal glory and happiness hereafter; and though he is in heaven, and not to be seen with our bodily eyes, yet he is held forth in the word of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; and is to be seen there with an eye of faith:

I will wait for the God of my salvation; who is the author both of temporal, and of spiritual, and eternal salvation; for the light of his countenance, when he hides himself; for the performance of promises he has made; for answers of prayer put up to him; for discoveries of pardoning grace, having sinned against him; for help and assistance in all times of need; for the salvation of the Lord, for an application of it, for the joys and comforts of it; and for Christ the Saviour, his coming in the flesh, which all the prophets and Old Testament saints were looking and waiting for: and who, doubtless, was upon the mind and in the view of the prophet when he uttered these words,

my God will hear me; this is the language of faith, both to say that God was his God, and that he would hear and answer him; the former is the ground of the latter; God has an ear to hear when his people cry; and sooner or later it appears that he does hear, by giving an answer of peace unto them, which issues in their salvation they have been praying, looking, and waiting for. The Targum is,

"my God will receive my prayer."

[[@Micah **7:**8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:Micah **7:**8]]. ***Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy***,.... These are the words of the prophet in the name of the church, continued in an apostrophe or address to his and their enemy; by whom may be meant, literally, the Chaldeans or Edomites, or both, who rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem, and the calamities the people of the Jews were brought into at it; see **Psalm** 13**7:**7; spiritually, Satan the great enemy of mankind, and especially of the church and people of God, to whom it is a pleasure to draw them into any sin or snare, and to do them any hurt and mischief; and also the Inert of the world, who hate and persecute the saints; and watch for their haltings, and rejoice at their falls into sin, and at any calamity and affliction that may attend them, though there is no just reason for it;

since this will not always be the case of the saints, they will be in a better situation, and in more comfortable circumstances; and it will be the turn of their enemies to be afflicted, punished, and tormented:

when I fall, I shall arise; or, "though I fall" {z}, or "have fallen"; into outward afflictions and distresses, which come not by chance, but by divine appointment; or into the temptations of Satan, and by them, which sometimes is suffered for wise and purposes; or into sin, which even a good man, a truly righteous man, is frequently left unto; but then he does not fall from real goodness, from true grace, nor from his justifying righteousness, which is everlasting, and connected with eternal life: he may fall from a lively exercise of grace, from steadfastness in the faith, and a profession of it; but not from the principle of grace, nor a state of grace; or from the love and favour of God: he may fall, but not totally or finally, or so as to perish everlastingly; nor is he utterly cast down, the Lord upholds him, and raises him up again; he rises, as the church here believes she should, out of his present state and condition, into a more comfortable one; not in his own strength, but in the strength of the Lord, under a sense of sin, by the exercise of true repentance for it, and by faith in Christ, and in a view of pardoning grace and mercy; see **Psalm** 37**:**24;

when I sit in darkness; or "though" {a}. The Targum is,

"as it were in darkness;"

not in a state of unregeneracy, which is a state of total darkness, but in affliction and distress; for, as light often signifies prosperity, so darkness adversity, any afflictive dispensation of Providence; and especially when this attended with desertion, or the hidings of God's face; it is to be, not without any light of grace in the heart, or without the light of the word, or means of grace; but to be without the light of God's countenance; which is very uncomfortable, and makes dark providences darker still; see Isa 5**0:**10; yet, notwithstanding all this,

the Lord [shall be] a light unto me; by delivering out of affliction; by lifting up the light of his countenance; by causing Christ the sun of righteousness to arise; by sending his Spirit to illuminate, refresh, and comfort; by his word, which is a lamp to the feet, a light to the path, a light shining in a dark place; see **Psalm** 27**:**1. This passage is applied by the Jews {b} to the days of the Messiah.

{z} ytlpn yk "quamvis cecidi", Drusius, Burkius. {a} bva yk "quamvis sedero", Drusius; "quamvis sedeam", Burkius. {b} Debarim Rabba, parash. 11. fol. 245. 3.

[[@Micah **7:**9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:Micah **7:**9]]. ***I will bear the indignation of the Lord***,.... The Targum prefaces these words with

"Jerusalem saith;"

and they are the words of the prophet, in the name of Jerusalem or the church, resolving in the strength of divine grace to bear the present affliction, which had at least some appearance of divine indignation in it; not against the persons of God's people, who are always the objects of his love, and towards whom there is no fury in him; but against their sins, which are displeasing and abominable to him; and this is not in a vindictive way, for such indignation they could never bear; nor can any creature stand before it, or bear up under it; and, besides, Christ has bore the wrath and indignation of God in this sense for them but it here means the displicency and indignation of God in fatherly chastisements, consistent with

the strongest love and affection for them; and to bear this is to be humble under the mighty hand of God, quietly to submit to it, and patiently to endure the affliction, without murmuring and repining, till the Lord pleases to remove it. The reason follows,

because I have sinned against him; the best of men sin; sin is the cause and reason of all affliction and distress, whether temporal or spiritual. The consideration of this tends to make and keep good men humble, and quietly submit to the chastising rod of their heavenly father, which they see it is right and proper should be used; and as knowing that they are chastised and afflicted less than their iniquities deserve; and that it is all for their good; a sense of sin stops their mouths, that they have nothing to say against God. The word

ajx here used sometimes signifies the offering an expiatory sacrifice for sin to God; and Gussetius {c} thinks this is the meaning of it here; and observes, that with the oblation of a contrite heart, and works of charity, the satisfaction of Christ is to be pleaded, and in our way to be offered up to God the Judge, through faith flying to it; whereby the mind is disposed to bear correction patiently, in hope that favour will quickly shine forth in help and deliverance:

until he plead cause, and execute judgment for me; Christ the mighty Redeemer, and powerful and prevalent Mediator, not only pleads the cause of his people with God his Father, and obtains all blessings of grace for them; but he also pleads their cause against their enemies, an ungodly people that strive with them, persecute and distress them; and will in his own time do them justice, and execute vengeance, his righteous judgments, on those that hate them, and rise up against them, as he will on all the antichristian party:

he will bring me forth to the light; like a person taken out of prison, or out of a dungeon, to behold and enjoy the light of the sun and day. The sense is, that he will openly espouse the cause of his church, and give her honour and glory publicly before men; bring forth her righteousness as the light, and her judgment as the noon day; and make her innocence appear as clear as the day, and bring her at last to the light of glory; see **Psalm** 3**7:**6;

[and] I shall behold his righteousness: the equity of his proceedings with his people, in chastising and afflicting them, that they are all right and good; his justice in punishing their enemies, and executing judgment on them; his goodness and beneficence to the saints, all his ways being mercy and truth; his faithfulness in the fulfilment of his promises; and the righteousness of Christ, which justifies them before God, renders them acceptable to him, will answer for them in a time to come, and introduce them into his everlasting kingdom and glory.

{c} Ebr. Comment. p. 923.

[[@Micah **7:**10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:Micah **7:**10]]. ***Then [she that is] mine enemy shall see [it]***,.... The Chaldeans and Edomites shall see people of the Jews rising out of their calamities, brought out of the darkness of their captivity in Babylon, and enjoying the light of peace and prosperity in their own land. Some editions of the Targum, and Jarchi and Kimchi, have, in their glosses on this verse and **Mic 7:9**, Rome, of whom they interpret this enemy, as Mr. Pocock observes; and so R. Elias {d} says the Targum is, "then shall Rome see"; by which they mean the Christians, in opposition to the Jews; otherwise it would not be amiss to interpret it of Rome Papal, or antichrist, in opposition to the church of God; seeing the antichristian party will see witnesses of Christ, slain for his sake, rise again, and ascend to heaven, or be brought into a glorious and comfortable state; see Re 1**1:**12; and may be

applied to any age of the church, and to any particular saints raised out of a state of darkness and affliction into a prosperous one, in the sight of their enemies, and in spite of them, to their great mortification; see **Psalm** 2**3:**4;

and shame shall cover her which said unto me, where is the Lord thy God? as the Heathens; the Chaldeans, did to the Jews, **Psalm** 11**5:**2; and which must be very cutting to them, as it was to David, **Psalm** 4**2:**10; when they flouting and jeering said, where is thy God thou boastedst of, and didst put thy trust and confidence in, that he would deliver and save thee? what is become of him, and of thy confidence in him? The Targum is,

"where art thou that art redeemed by the Word of the Lord thy God?"

but when they shall see that the Lord God has returned unto them, and wrought salvation for them, they will be ashamed of their flouts and jeers; and by reason of their sad disappointment, add the change of things for the worse to them, who now will be brought into calamity and distress themselves:

mine eyes shall behold her; the enemy: their fall, as the Targum; being in a most despicable and ruinous condition, under the vengeance of the Almighty; and that with pleasure and satisfaction, not from a private spirit of revenge, but because of the glory of divine justice, which will be displayed in their righteous destruction; see **Psalm** 5**8:**10;

now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets; that is, entirely conquered, and utterly destroyed; reduced to, the utmost meanness, and had in the greatest contempt: this was fulfilled when Babylon was taken by the Medea and Persians; and when the Edomites were conquered and brought into subjection to the Jews by the Maccabees; and will be the case of all the enemies of Christ and his church, of all the antichristian states, one day.

{d} In Tishbi, p. 227.

[[@Micah **7:**11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:Micah **7:**11]]. ***[In] the day that thy walls are to be built***,.... These words are not spoken to the enemy, as some think; either the Chaldeans, the walls of whose city, Babylon, being demolished by the Persians, it would be a long day or time before they were rebuilt and when their power of sending their decrees abroad among the nations would be far off: or to the enemy that should think to build up their walls with the spoils of Israel, in the time of Gog and Magog, and when their decree determined over the nations and Israel would also be far off; but they are the words of the prophet to the church and people of God, comforting them with observing, that there would be a day when the walls of Jerusalem, and the temple, which would lie in ruins during their captivity, would be rebuilt; and which was fulfilled in the times of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah; and so the Targum,

"that time the congregation of Israel shall be built;"

and which had a further accomplishment, in a spiritual sense, in the first times of the Gospel, when the church of Christ was built up, and established in the world and will still have a greater completion in the latter day, when the tabernacle of David, or church of Christ, shall be raised that is fallen, and its breaches closed, and ruins repaired, **Am 9:11**;

[in] that day shall the decree be far removed; which, as it literally respects Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of that after seventy years captivity, may signify either the decree of God concerning that captivity, which would then cease, according to the time fixed by it; or the

cruel laws and edicts of the Babylonians, which should no more bind and press the Jews, and be as a heavy yoke upon them; those statutes, which were not good, that were given them. So the Targum,

"at that time the decrees of the nations shall cease;"

or the decree of Artaxerxes, forbidding and hindering the rebuilding of the city: but if the phrase "far removed" signifies its being divulged and spread far abroad, as it is interpreted by some; then it may refer to the decree of Cyrus for rebuilding the city and temple; and which was revived and confirmed by Darius Hystaspis, and by Darius Longimanus, and which was published everywhere; and by means of which the Jews from all parts were encouraged to come up to their own land, and proselytes with them; and which sense suits well with what follows: and as this, in a spiritual sense, may have regard to the church of Christ in Gospel times, it may signify the removal of human laws, traditions, rites, and ceremonies, respecting religious things, among the Gentiles, and their giving way to those of God and Christ; or the promulgation of the Gospel in all parts, called a decree, **Psalm 2:6**; because a revelation of the decrees of God, respecting the salvation of men, and to which it owes its efficacy; by means of which many would be brought to the church, and the kingdom of Christ be enlarged, and spread everywhere, as follows:

[[@Micah **7:**12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:Micah **7:**12]]. ***[In] that day [also] he shall come even to thee***,.... Which words also are not directed to the enemy, as some interpret them; as to Chaldea or Babylon; and the sense be, that Cyrus should come thither, and take it; or any more remote enemy of the Jews in the latter day, to whom the day of the Lord should come, or his decree of vengeance or judgment upon them, or any enemy to waste and destroy them; but they are a continued address to Jerusalem or the church, signifying that "he", the people of the Jews, the body of them, with the proselyted Gentiles, should come from all parts to Jerusalem to rebuild it upon the decree of Cyrus; and that multitudes of all, or at least many nations, should flock to the church of Christ, upon the publication of the Gospel:

from Assyria: where many of the Jews, and even of the ten tribes, were, whither they were carried captive:

and [from] the fortified cities; in Assyria, and other countries, where the Jews might be placed, either as prisoners, or to do servile work, as repairing the fortifications; or for the defence of the country, from which they were to be and were released upon Cyrus taking of Babylon; and was a type of the redemption by Christ from greater bondage. It may be rendered the cities of Egypt, as Kimchi observes, here and in 2Ki 1**9:**24; and so Ben Melech: it is interpreted by some Matzor, being the same with Mitzraim, which is the name for Egypt; and the sense would be more easy, as well as the words run more smoothly, thus, "shall come from Assyria even to the cities of Egypt": and then it follows,

and from the fortress even to the river; or from Egypt, to the river Euphrates, which was one of the boundaries of the land of Israel:

and from sea to sea; from the Persian sea to the Mediterranean sea, or from the Red sea thither, and from the several maritime parts where they inhabited:

and [from] mountain to mountain; from Mount Taurus to Carmel, or Lebanon, or Hor; or from the several mountains to which they had fled to, safety, and where they had dwelt. It may respect the extent of the church and kingdom of Christ in the latter day, enlarged by the

numerous conversions of Jews and Gentiles in all parts of the world. The Jews shall be gathered from all places where they are, and join themselves to the church of Christ; and these several places, particularly Assyria, Egypt and the islands of the sea from whence they shall be brought, are mentioned in other prophecies; see Isa 1**1:**11; though this may respect, not barely the conversion and gathering of them to Christ and his church, but of the Gentiles also in those several countries, thus; they "shall come from Assyria, and the fortified cities"; that is, from the Turkish empire; the land of Assyria, and its fortified cities, being in the possession of the Turks, and in whose dominions many Jews at this day reside; and not only they, but multitudes in the Ottoman empire, shall be converted in the latter day, and become members of Christian churches; signified by the flocks of Kedar, and the rams of Nebaioth, that shall be gathered to the church, and minister there, Isa 6**0:**7; and they shall come "from the fortress even to the river"; from everyone of the fortified cities before mentioned to the river Euphrates, which will be dried up to make way for the kings or kingdoms of the east, for their conversion to Christ, and embracing his Gospel; even the large kingdoms of Persia, Tartary, China, &c. Re 1**6:**12; or "from Egypt to the river Euphrates"; and so signifies the same as before, Egypt being part of the Turkish dominions; or else the Roman jurisdiction, spiritually called Egypt, may be meant,

Re 1**1:**8; and in several Popish countries are many Jews, who will be called from thence; as well as many of the Papists themselves shall be called out of mystical Babylon, and embrace the true religion of Christ: "and from sea to sea"; this is a well known description of the amplitude of Christ's church and kingdom in Gospel times, especially in the latter day; see **Psalm** 7**2:**8; or, as it may be rendered, "the sea from the sea" **{e}**; that is, the inhabitants of the sea, or of the islands of it, shall come from thence to the church, see Isa 1**1:**11; these are the same with the abundance of the sea, that shall be converted to Christ, and join his people in the latter day, as in our isle and others, Isa 4**0:**5; "and [from] mountain to mountain"; or rather, "and mountain shall come to the mountain" **{f}**; that is, the inhabitants of the mountain, or of Rome, that is situated on seven mountains, of mystical Babylon, the great mountain; these shall be called from hence to Mount Zion, the church of the living God, where Christ with the 144,000 will be; and which shall then be established on the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it, Re 1**4:**1. The Targum is,

"at that time the captives shall be gathered from Assyria, and the strong cities, and from Churmini (or Armenia), the great and the fortified cities, even unto Euphrates, and the western sea, and the mountains of the mountain."

{e} Mym Myw "et mare a mari", Montanus, Burkius. **{f}** rhh rhw "et mons [veniet] ad montem", Cocceius, Burkius.

[[@Micah **7:**13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:Micah **7:**13]]. ***Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate***,.... Not the land of Chaldea, as some; or the land of the nations, as Jarchi and Kimchi; but the land of Israel. That part of it, which was possessed by the ten tribes, was made desolate by Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and that which was inhabited by the two tribes, by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and this desolation was to be, "notwithstanding" the above prophecies, and prior to the fulfilment of them. So some render the words, as in the margin of our Bibles "after the land hath been desolate" **{g}**; and it is observed, partly to prevent wicked men promising themselves impunity from the above prophecies; and partly to prevent despair in good men, when such a desolation should be made. And then again it was made desolate by the Romans, previous to the spread and establishment of the church of

Christ, by the success of the Gospel in the Gentile world, in the first times of it; and by the conversion of the Jews, and bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, in, he last times of it;

because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings: because of the sins of the inhabitants of the land of Israel: the desolation made by the kings of Assyria and Babylon was for the idolatry of Israel and Judah, and other sins; and the desolation made by the Romans for the Jews rejection of the Messiah.

{g} hmmvl Urah htyhw "postquam fuerit haec terra desolationi", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius, Drusius.

[[@Micah **7:**14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:Micah **7:**14]]. ***Feed thy people with thy rod***,.... These are either the words of God the Father to Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, calling upon him to do his office as such; to feed the people he had given him, the sheep of his hand, the flock of his pasture, by his Spirit, and with his word and ordinances; see Zec 1**1:**5; or of Christ to his ministers, his undershepherds, to feed his sheep and his lambs, the people committed to their care and charge, with wholesome words, with sound and good doctrine, by faithfully preaching the Gospel, and administering the ordinances to them: or rather the words of the prophet, a prayer of his to God or Christ, to take care of the people of God in their desolate state, in captivity; to guide and lead them, protect and defend them, by his power and providence, as a shepherd directs, leads, governs, and preserves his flock with his pastoral crook or rod; or, as before, to feed the church of God as a shepherd does his flock, lead them into good pastures, and secure them from all their enemies: and this, being a prayer of faith, may be considered as a prophecy or prediction of what would be; and so some render the words, "thou shalt feed thy people", &c. {h}. The Targum is,

"feed thy people with thy word, the people of thine inheritance, in the age which is to be renewed;"

in the new world, the world to come; plainly referring to the times of the Messiah;

the flock of thine heritage; who are like to sheep for their harmlessness and innocence, and to a flock of them, being associated together, and folded in the church; and though but a little flock, yet the lot, the portion, the inheritance of Christ; all which is a strong reason for his feeding, keeping, and preserving them, being committed to his care and charge for that purpose:

which dwell solitary [in] the wood; dwell alone in the world, which is like a wood and a wilderness; separated from the men of the world; distinguished by the grace of God, chosen and called out from among them, and different from them both in principle and practice: this may have respect to the Jews, in their dispersion, living separate from and unmixed with the nations of the world; or rather to their dwelling in safety and security under the protection of the great Shepherd, the Messiah, David their Prince, when they shall be returned to their own land in the latter day:

in the midst of Carmel; or of a fruitful field, as Carmel was; enjoying all happiness and prosperity, temporal and spiritual:

let them feed [in] Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old; places in the land of Israel famous for rich and fat pastures; and so express the great plenty of good things wished for, and which will be enjoyed by the Jews when converted to Christ, and replaced in their own

land; and are an emblem of those spiritual good things, and of those rich and green pastures of the word and ordinances, which the great Shepherd is desired to lead, and does lead, his people into; see **Psalm 23:**1; these places are now in the hand of the Turks, and so the words may be a petition for their conversion, as well as for the Jews, that this country may no more be inhabited by Heathens, but by the Israel of God, as Gulichius {i} very well observes.

{h} her "pasces", so some in Vatablus. {i} Apud Burkium in loc.

[[@Micah **7:**15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:Micah **7:**15]]. ***According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt***,.... This is an answer of the Lord to the prayer of the prophet, assuring him, and the church he represents, and on whose account he applies, that there would be as great a deliverance wrought for them, and as wonderful things done, as when Israel was brought out of the land of Egypt, which was effected with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm, and was attended with amazing events; as the plagues in Egypt; the passage of the Israelites through the Red see, and the destruction of the Egyptians in it:

will I show unto him marvellous [things]; that is, unto the people of the Lord, the flock of his heritage, the solitary and peculiar people, fed and preserved by him: as the deliverance out of Egypt; was the Lord's work, so the deliverance from Babylon; as the one was the work of his power upon the heart of Pharaoh to let the people go, so the other as great an act of his power working upon the mind of Cyrus, stirring him up to let the captives go free, without price or reward; yea, to furnish them with necessaries by the way, and to rebuild their city and temple: and as Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red sea, so the kingdom of Babylon was swallowed up by the Medes and Persians; yea, in some respects the latter deliverance exceeded the former, and erased the remembrance of it; see Jer 1**6:**14; and that redemption by Christ, which both these were typical of, was greater and more marvellous than either, being a deliverance from, and an abolition and destruction of sin, Satan, the law, hell, and death, and attended with things the most wonderful and surprising; as the birth of Christ of a virgin; the miracles done by him in life, and at death; the doctrines of the Gospel preached by him and his apostles, and the amazing success of them, especially in the Gentile world, being testified and confirmed by signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. This passage, both by ancient and modern Jews {k}, is applied to the times of the Messiah. So in an ancient {l} book of theirs, speaking of the times of the Messiah, they say,

"from that day all the signs and wonders, and mighty works, which the Lord did in Egypt, he will do for Israel, as it is said, "according to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt", &c."

It is also said, by a modern writer {m} of theirs,

"because of the miracles and wonders which shall be in the days of the Messiah, such as the gathering of the captives, the resurrection of the dead, and the destruction of Gog and Magog, besides other miracles and wonders, the end of the redemption is called the end of wonders in Da 1**2:**6; and this is that which God has promised by his prophets, particularly Micah, **Mic 7:15**; "according to the days", &c. and from what follows, with the rest of the verses to the end of the book, it is manifest that these promises are not yet fulfilled, but will be fulfilled in the days of the Messiah."

From whence it appears, that it was the sense of the ancient Jews, as well as some modern ones, that miracles would be wrought in the days of the Messiah; though some of them reject them, and look not for them; particularly Maimonides {n} says,

"let it not enter into thine heart that the King Messiah hath need to do signs and wonders; as that he shall renew things in the world, or raise the dead, and the like; these are things which fools speak of; the thing is not so."

But however, certain it is, the ancient Jews expected miracles to be done by the Messiah; hence some, in the times of Jesus, said, "when Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" **Joh 7:31**; and accordingly the miracles Jesus did were full proofs of his being the Messiah, and were wrought for that purpose, and owned as such; wherefore the above Jew, though he is right in the application of this passage to the times of the Messiah, yet is wrong in saying these promises are not yet fulfilled, since they have had a full accomplishment in the Messiah Jesus; nor is another to be looked for, or such miracles to be hereafter wrought.

{k} Zohar in Gen. fol. 16. 1. 2. & in Exod. fol. 4. 2. & in Deut. 99. 2. & 118. 3. Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. c. 32. p. 277. {l} Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 2. Vid. ib. in Gen. fol. 16. 1. 2. & in Numb. fol. 99. 2. & in Deut. 118. 3. {m} R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. c. 32. p. 277. {n} Hilchot Melachim, c. 11. sect. 3.

[[@Micah **7:**16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:Micah **7:**16]]. ***The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might***,.... The Chaldeans or Babylonians, when they shall see the wonderful things done by the Lord in the deliverance of his people out of their hands, shall be ashamed of their own power and might, in which they trusted, and of which they boasted; but now shall be baffled and defeated, and not able to stop the progress of the arms of Cyrus, or detain the Jews any longer their captives; or they shall be confounded at the power and strength the Jews will have to repossess their land, rebuild their city and temple, under the encouragement and protection of the king of Persia; and as this may refer to a further accomplishment in Gospel times, it may respect the confusion the Gentile world would be in at the mighty power and spread of the Gospel, in the conversion of such multitudes by it, and in the abolition of the Pagan religion. Kimchi interprets this of the nations that shall be gathered together with Gog and Magog against Jerusalem in the latter day; see

Eze 3**8:**15;

they shall lay [their] hand upon [their] mouth: be silent, and boast no more of themselves; nor blaspheme God and his word; nor insult his people; nor oppose his Gospel, or open their mouths any more against his truths and his ordinances:

their ears shall be deaf; hearing so much of the praises of God, of the success of his interest, and of the happiness of his peopled dinned in their ears, they will be stunned with it, and scarce know what they hear; become deaf with the continual noise of it, which will be disagreeable to them; and will choose to hear no more, and therefore through envy and grief will stop their ears at what is told them.

[[@Micah **7:**17]]Ver. [[17 >> Bible:Micah **7:**17]]. ***They shall lick the dust like a serpent***,.... Whose food is the dust of the earth, according to the curse pronounced on it, **Genesis 3:14**;

and which is either its, natural food it chooses to live on, as some serpents however are said {o} to do; or, going upon its belly, it cannot but take in a good deal of the dust of the earth along with its food; and hereby is signified the low, mean, abject, and cursed estate and condition of the seed of the serpent, wicked and ungodly men, the enemies of Christ and his people; who wilt be forced to yield subjection to him and his church, and will pretend the most profound respect for them, and the highest veneration of them. The allusion seems to be to the manner of the eastern nations, who, in complimenting their kings and great men, bowed so low to the ground with their faces, as to take up with their mouths the very dust of it. Particularly it is said of the Persians, that they first kiss the pavement on which the king treads, before they speak unto him, as Quistorpius on the place relates; and Valerius Maximus {p} says, that when Darius Hystaspis was declared king by the neighing of his horse, the rest of the six candidates alighted from their horses, and prostrated their bodies to the ground, as is the manner of the Persians, and saluted him king; and Herodotus {q} observes the same, custom among the Persians; and to this custom the poet Martial {r} refers; and Drusius says it is a custom in Asia to this day, that, when any go into the presence of a king, they kiss the ground, which is a token of the great veneration they have for him. The phrase is used of the enemies of the, Messiah, and of the converted Jews and Gentiles at the latter day, and is expressive of their great submission to them; see **Psalm 72:9**;

they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth; who put out their heads and draw them in again upon the least notice or approach of danger; or like serpents, as Jarchi and Kimchi, which lurk in holes, and creep out of them oft their bellies, or any other creeping things. The word {s} here used signifies a tremulous and tumultuous motion, like the wriggling of a worm out of the earth; or the hurry of ants, when their nests are kicked or thrown up: this is expressive of the confusion and perturbation of the enemies of the Lord and his people; of the Babylonians, who were obliged in a hurry to leave their palaces, as the Targum and Aben Ezra interpret their holes, and their fortresses and towers, and deliver them to the Medes and Persians; and of Gog and Magog, and the antichristian states, who will be obliged to abandon their places of abode, and creep out of sight, and be reduced to the lowest and meanest condition;

they shall be afraid of the Lord our God: because of the glory of his majesty, the greatness of his power, and for fear of his judgments:

and shall fear because of thee; O God, or Israel, as Kimchi; the church of God, whom they despised and reproached before; but now shall be seized with a panic, and live in the utmost dread of, because of the power and glory of God in the midst of them, and lest they should fall a sacrifice to them.

{o} Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 1. c. 44. col. 27. {p} L. 7. c. 3. sect. 2. {q} Polymnia, sive l. 7. c. 12. {r} "Et turpes humilesque, supplicesque, Pictorum sola basiate regum". Epigram. l. 10. Ep. 71. {s} wzgry "contremiscent", Munster, Tigurine version, Cocceius; "frement, sive tumultuabuntur", Calvin; "trepide prorepent", Burkius.

[[@Micah **7:**18]]Ver. [[18 >> Bible:Micah **7:**18]]. ***Who [is] a God like unto thee***,.... There is no God besides him, none so great, so mighty, as he; none like him for the perfections of his nature; for the works of his hands; for the blessings of his goodness, both of providence and grace; and particularly for his pardoning grace and mercy, as follows:

that pardoneth iniquity: that "lifts" it up, and "takes" it away, as the word {t} signifies; thus the Lord has taken the sins of his people off of them, and laid them on Christ, and he has bore them, and carried them away, as the antitype of the scapegoat, never to be seen and remembered any more; and whereas the guilt of sin lies sometimes as a heavy burden upon their consciences, he lifts it up, and takes it away, by sprinkling the blood of Christ upon them, and by applying his pardoning grace and mercy to them: pardon of sin is peculiar to God; none can forgive it but he against whom it is committed; forgiveness of sin is with him, promised by him in covenant, proclaimed in Christ, by him obtained and published in the Gospel:

and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? the people of God are his portion, his lot, and his inheritance; they are a remnant according to the election of grace, chosen of God, taken into his covenant, redeemed by Christ, and called by grace, and brought to repent and believe; these God forgives, even all their transgressions, sins, and iniquities of every kind; which is here expressed by another word, "passing [them] by", or "passing over [them]": sin is a transgression or passing over the law, and pardon is a passing over sin; God taking no notice of it, as if he saw it not; not imputing it to his people, or calling them to an account for it; or condemning and punishing them according to the desert of it; but hiding his face from it, and covering it:

he retaineth not his anger for ever; that which he seemed to have against his people, and appeared in some of the dispensations of his providence, is not continued and lengthened out, and especially for ever, but it disappears; he changes the course of his providence, and his conduct and behaviour to his people, and, hews them his face and favour, and manifests his forgiving love; which is a turning himself from his anger; see **Psalm** 8**5:**2;

because he delighteth [in] mercy; which is natural to him, abundant with him, and exercised according to his sovereign will and pleasure, very delightful to him; he takes pleasure in showing mercy to miserable creatures, and in those that hope in it, **Psalm** 14**7:**11; this is the spring of pardon, which streams through the blood of Christ.

{t} avn "tollens", Montanus, Tigurine version, Calvin; "aufercus", Drusius; "qui aufers", Grotius.

[[@Micah **7:**19]]Ver. [[19 >> Bible:Micah **7:**19]]. ***He will turn again***,.... From his anger, and show his face and favour; which is not inconsistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love; for anger is not opposite to love, and is only a displicency at sin, and not at the persons of his people; and, properly speaking, is not in God; is rather in appearance than in reality; when his people sin against him, he shows himself as if he was angry; he turns away from them, and withdraws his gracious presence and sensible communion from them; but when they are brought to a sense of sin, and acknowledgment of it, he returns to them, manifests his love to them again, and applies his pardoning grace, which is the thing believed would be done; it is only another expression of that, as all the rest that follow are: the prophet, or the church, dwells on this article of grace, and heaps up words to express it by, as if they could never say too much or it, or sufficiently explain it. The Targum is,

"his word shall return;"

he will have compassion upon us; the Lord is naturally compassionate; he is full of compassion, he has a heart of compassion; these are tender mercies, and never fail, and which

are exercised in a sovereign way; pardon of sin flows from hence; every manifestation or it is a display thereof: sin brings afflictions on the saints, and then the Lord pities them, and is afflicted with them; sin grieves them, and he is as it were grieved for them; it wounds them, and then, as the good and compassionate Samaritan, he pours in the oil and wine of pardoning grace, and heals them; they are, while in this state, in such circumstances often as need his compassion, and they may be assured of it, **Psalm 78:**38;

he will subdue our iniquities; which maybe understood also as a further explanation of the grace of pardon: sin is an enemy to God and his people; it is too strong and mighty for them; it reigns over them in a state of nature; they are under the power of it, and cannot get rid of it, its influence, guilt, and punishment; Christ has conquered it, made an end of it, and took it away; God tramples upon it, as a conqueror does upon the necks of his enemies; it ii subdued by him, and is under his feet; which he treats with contempt, disdains to look upon, keeps it under, so that it shall never rise again to the condemnation of his people; he overcomes the provocation of it, removes the guilt by pardon, and secures from the punishment of it: or this may be considered as the effect of pardon; as what is done in consequence of it, by the Spirit and grace of God in sanctification; when not only the deeds of the body are mortified through the Spirit, or the outward conversation reformed, but the inward power of sin is weakened; it is laid under the restraints of efficacious grace, and is kept under by it; so that it shall not and cannot have the dominion over the saints again, of which they may be confident, **Romans 6:14**;

and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea; never to be seen any more; though they are seen with the eye of omniscience, and taken notice of by the eye of providence, yet not beheld with the eye of avenging justice, that being satisfied by Christ; besides, all the sins of God's people have been removed from them to Christ, and by him carried away into the land of oblivion; so that they are no more to be seen on them, who are through his blood and righteousness without fault, spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; and, being out of sight, they are out of mind, never remembered any more, and like things cast into the sea, destroyed and lost: perhaps there may be some allusion to the Egyptians drowned in the Red sea; and what is cast into the sea, especially into the depths of it, is irrecoverable, not to be fetched up again, nor does it rise more; and so it is with the sins of God's people, forgiven for Christ's sake, even "all" of them; for they have all been bore by Christ, and are covered, blotted out, and pardoned, not one remains unforgiven; see Isa 3**8:**17. This is an apostrophe of the prophet unto God. The Targum is,

"and he will cast into the depths of the sea all the sins of Israel;"

and it may denote their being loathsome and abominable to him, and therefore here cast by him. It is very common in Jewish writings to say of anything that is useless, abominable, accursed, and utterly rejected, that it is to be east into the salt sea. For instance

"Aquila the proselyte divided an inheritance with his brother (a Gentile), and he cast the profit of it into the salt sea: three doctors there were; one said, the price of the idol he cast into the salt sea; another said, he cast the price of his part of the idol into the salt sea; and the other said, he cast the idol itself into the salt sea {u}."

Again it is said {w},

"a sin offering, whose owner is dead, goes into the salt sea."

The Heathens used sea water for the purgation and expiation of sin; hence the poet {x}, to aggravate the wickedness of a very wicked man, observes, that the ocean itself could not wash away his sins. And Cicero {y}, speaking of the law of the Romans for the punishment of parricides, which ordered that they should be sewed up alive in sacks, and cast into the river, observes the wisdom and propriety of it; they would not, says he, have them cast naked into the river, lest, when they should be carried into the sea, they should pollute that by which other things that are defiled are thought to be expiated. So Iphigenia is made to say {z} that the sea washes away all the sins of men. These are the Jewish and Heathenish notions; whether there is any allusion to them may be considered; however, certain it is, that nothing short of the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, or the sea of Christ's blood, can wash away sin; that cleanses from all sin; and happy are they whose sins are cast in thither, or are expiated and purged away thereby!

{u} T. Hieros. Demai, fol. 25. 4. {w} Ibid. Sotah, fol. 19. 1. Vid. ibid. Avoda Zara, fol. 39. 2. & Nazir, fol. 53. 1. {x} "Suscipit, O Gelli, quantum non ultima Thetis, Nec genitor lympharum abluit Oceanus". Catullus. {y} Oratio 2. pro Sexto Roscio. {z} Euripides in Tauro.

[[@Micah **7:**20]]Ver. [[20 >> Bible:Micah **7:**20]]. ***Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob***,.... That is, the promise made to Jacob, the Lord would faithfully perform and make good to his posterity, natural and spiritual, especially to those who are Israelites indeed;

[and] the mercy to Abraham; the gracious promises made to him, which sprung from mere grace and mercy; all respecting his natural and spiritual seed; and especially the promise of the coming of the Messiah, that seed of his in which all nations of the earth were to be blessed; and which is the eminent instance of the mercy and grace of God to Jews and Gentiles, that walk in the steps of Abraham; see **Lu 1:68**;

which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old; or the promises both of multiplying the seed of Abraham, and of giving them the land of Canaan, and of the Messiah springing from them, were confirmed by an oath, **Genesis** 2**2:**16. The Targum is,

"thou wilt give the truth of Jacob to his sons, as thou hast sworn to him in Bethel; the goodness of Abraham to his seed after him, as thou hast sworn to him between the pieces; thou wilt remember to us the binding of Isaac, who was bound upon the altar before thee; thou wilt do with us the good things which thou hast sworn to our fathers, from the days of old;"

which Kimchi interprets of the three fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.