

certainty that this prediction will be fulfilled, he adds at the end of verse four: "*for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.*" Here is no mere hope of the writer, but a declaration of that which God has promised. We shall now look at some of the characteristics of this predicted kingdom.

AN EARTHLY KINGDOM

The Bible makes it clear that the kingdom promised in Micah 3:12-4:4, Isaiah 2:1-4, and Isaiah 11:1-9 is not a picture of heaven, but of something that will occur on this earth.

Micah 3:12 speaks of the desolation that will come upon Jerusalem. "*Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as high places of the forest.*" The wonderful prediction of future glory that begins in the next two verses uses identical terms in speaking of what is coming. The very places that would then be plowed as a field would eventually be exalted.

Micah 4:3 and Isaiah 2:4 include the words "*they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks.*" Neither swords nor pruninghooks are natural in a picture of heaven. The prophecy is definitely one of a future situation on this earth.

Isaiah 11:9 says that "*the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*" If space permitted, evidence might be heaped up from passage after passage in the Old Testament to show that the kingdom that is promised to the people of God is to be established on this earth.

A TIME OF EXTERNAL PEACE AND SAFETY

The Old Testament makes it clear that the promised kingdom is to be a time of external peace and safety. Micah 4, Isaiah 11, and many other passages plainly indicate that it is not merely something in the subjective sphere. We read in Micah 4:4 that "*they shall sit every man under his vine and under fig tree; and none shall make them afraid.*" The promise is not that a man shall be enabled to go through great calamity with a peaceful heart. That promise God indeed gives to His people for times of tribulation, but this promise is entirely different. It describes a