

3. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

4. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.

The context of this passage clearly indicates that it is a description of something that is to happen upon this earth. The previous chapter declared God's wrath against the people of Israel who had departed from following His truth, and His determination to punish them. The last verse of chapter 3 presented a terrible prediction of disaster: "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest" (Micah 3:12).

Note the mention of three geographical terms indicating Jerusalem and two of its parts. One of these ^{is} ~~is~~ ^{the} ~~is~~ Zion, the part of Jerusalem where David had his palace; the other is the hill upon which Solomon had built his temple, as a house of God, here designated as "the mountain of the house." The verse predicted that Jerusalem, and in particular these two parts of the city, would be made desolate like a high place in a forest, a heap of ruins, plowed like a field, no longer a great capital. This was fulfilled a little more than a century after Micah's time, when the king of Babylon besieged Jerusalem for three years, conquered it, carried away many of its people into captivity, and reduced it to a pile of rubble. Visible evidence of a portion of the fulfillment of this prophecy has still been apparent in recent years, since it has been discovered that Zion, the part of Jerusalem that contained David's palace, was being plowed as a field even as late as the early part of this century, having been outside the walls that were built around Jerusalem in the Middle Ages.