

MIKAH.

The Prophetic Office of Mikah was from about 750 to 710 B.C.

1 **T**HE Message of the EVER-LIVING that came to Mikah, the Morasthite, in the times of Jotham, Ahaz, and Ezekiah, Kings of Judah. He saw this about Shomeron and Jerusalem.

The Appeal to the Nations to Repent.

Come listen all Peoples!
Let Earth and her products attend.

2

The MIGHTY LORD comes against you,
The LORD starts from His Holy Abode!
For look! The LORD comes from His Home,
Descends, and proceeds on the heights of the earth!
And beneath Him the hills are dissolved,
And the plains are like wax before fire,
As water poured down from a steep!

3

4

All this is for Jacob's revolt,
And Israel's house that has sinned.
"What is Jacob's sin?" Shomeron.—
"And what Judah's revolt?" Jerusalem!
So I make Shomeron a field full of ruins;
And weeds will spread over her farm,
And uncover the stones laid beneath!
And her Idols shall all be destroyed,
And her whoredoms be burnt in the fire,
And her Statues be flung out to rot;—
For by them she gained prostitute's hire,
So in hiring whores they will go!

5

6

7

Yet for this I will mourn and lament,
I will wander all naked and stripped,
I will mournfully wail like the Jackals,
And moan like the Daughters of Woe,
For her sores that can never be cured,
But have gone, and gave Judah disease!
O! My People, at Jerusalem's Gates,
Tell not of your sorrow to Gath,
Weep not in the House of the Dust,
Nor say I have rolled on the ground.

8

9

10

Pass on, pampered Lady, alone,
Stripped bare, and exposed to your shame!—
Your crowd of Companions come not
To the sorrowful house of restraint.
From you they have taken the home!
Why looks the Lady of Sorrows for joy?—
When sorrow comes down from the LORD,
To Jerusalem's Gates?

11

12

- 13 Yoke the swift steeds to the chariot,
O! lady residing in Lakish!—
You caused the first loss to Bath-Zion,
For in you were found Israel's sins.
- 14 Send divorce to the ladies of Gath,—
Those fair girls deceived Israel's Kings!
- 15 But yet I will bring you a Master,
Proud Lady, to govern you right.—
- 16 Shave, and shear, for the children you loved!
Like the bald eagle, make yourself bald,
For from you they are carried away!¹

A Denunciation of Swindlers.

- 2 Woe to the planners of mischief!
Who work out their sin from their beds,
And effect it when daylight appears,
Because they have power in their hand!
- 2 Who covet for fields,—and then steal!
And houses and seize them by force;
Who plunder a man and his house,
And defraud a man of his estate!
- 3 "Therefore," thus says the LORD,
"I plan for this family grief,
From which you cannot keep your necks,
Nor march along haughtily by!—
For now is the period for grief.
- 4 "Then a verse will be raised on yourselves,
With a wailing and piteous sigh;—
'We are spoiled,' they will say, 'we are spoiled—
The lot of our People is changed;—
Why has He departed from us?
And torn us away from our fields?'
- 5 So for you there is none casts the line,
To decide for the troop of the LORD."

THE CROWD.

- 6 "Stop drivelling, you driveller, spout not.
Cease to drivel to us of these things;—
Can you never abandon reproofs?"

THE PROPHET.

- 7 Is it said in the Household of Jacob,
That the LORD'S Spirit has been restrained?
Are not these things produced by Himself?
But would not my words do you good,
If you followed them right as you ought?
- 8 But my people now rise to assail,
They strip off the cloak with the coat,
Turn to fight with the peaceable walker;
Cast my people's wives from their sweet homes;
And dishonour their children for ever!
- 10 Arise and be gone! For this is not your Home!
For defilement corrupts, and corrupting destroys!
- 11 If a man in the spirit of falsehood and lies
Comes and patters to you of your wine and debauch,
For this People, he is the right Preacher!

¹ NOTE.—Ch. I, verses 10 to 16. My version reads many supposed names of cities of the old translators, as noun-adjectives

poetically describing the sorrows of Israel under the title of the "Lady of Sorrows"—"Zethbeth Marosh."—F. F.

Restoration promised.

I will gather the whole of you, Jacob!— 12
 Will join Israel's fragments in one,—
 Will collect as the sheep are in Bozrah,
 As a flock in its fold make the murmur of men!
 The Opener shall go up before them, 13
 Unloose, and they pass thro' the Gate,
 They shall pass with their Leader before them;
 And the LORD at their head!

The Practices of Villains denounced.

I cry, Listen, now, Chiefs of Jacob!— 3
 And you, rulers of Israel's House,—
 Why have you no knowledge or judgment?—
 Hating the Good, but in love with the Bad, 2
 You tear their skin from them, and flesh from their bones!
 You devour the flesh of my People!—
 Stripping their skin, and then crushing their bones;— 3
 And chop up as they do for the pot;
 And like flesh to be mixed in a stew!
 When such cry to the LORD, He will never reply,— 4
 But then hide His presence from them,
 When their wickedness comes on themselves.

The Doom of Impostors.

Thus says the LORD to the Preachers, 5
 Who swindle my People by gnashing their teeth,
 And cry "Peace!"—
 And make ready to fight those who fill not their mouths!
 But you shall have night, and be sightless,— 6
 Have darkness,—but never divine!
 And the sun shall go down on such Prophets,
 And blackness spread over their day!
 And the Seers be ashamed;
 The Diviners shall blush; 7
 And all of them cover their lips;—
 For they have no message from GOD.
 But I am full of the spirit and power of the LORD, 8
 And judgment and strength to tell Jacob his sin,
 And to Israel tell of his crimes!
 Chiefs of Jacob's House! listen to this; 9
 And the Guides who hate Justice, in Israel's Home,—
 The oppressors of all who do right!
 Who build Zion with blood, and Jerusalem vice, 10
 Whose Judges decree for a bribe!
 Whose Priests only teach for their pay! 11
 Whose Prophets for money divine!
 Yet who lean on Jehovah, and say,—
 "The LORD! is He not in our midst?—
 No suffering can come upon us!"
 Yet Zion, for you, will be ploughed like a field!
 And Jerusalem turned like the clods, 12
 And the Hill of THIS HOUSE be knoll in a wood!

In spite of its Apostacy, the Church of God is promised Change of Mind
and Restoration.

- 4 But it shall be, at the End of the Times,
This Hill of the House of the LORD
Shall be fixed as the Chief of the Hills,
And higher shall be than the heights
And to it all Peoples shall flow !
- 2 Many Nations advance and exclaim,
" Let us go to the Hill of the LORD,
To the Temple where Jacob's GOD dwells,
And learn of His way, and pursue"—
For from Zion the law shall proceed,
And the LORD from Jerusalem speak,
- 3 And govern among many Peoples,
And decree to Fierce Nations afar,
To beat out their swords into ploughshares,
And their spears into scythes,
Nor Nation raise sword against Nation,
Nor ever more learn to make war !
- 4 Then each shall rest under his vine,
And under his fig without fear,—
As the mouth of the LORD has decreed.
- 5 For then all the Peoples will walk,
Each one in the power of its GOD ;
And we also shall walk in the power of the LORD,
For ever and ever with our GOD !

The Divine Government Promised.

- 6 " At that time," says the Lord, " I will gather the maimed,
And cherish the mourner I grieved,
7 And make the disabled a Princedom,
And the banished a powerful Nation !
And the LORD reign with them on Mount Zion,
From then, and for ever and ever !
- 8 And you, Tower of the Flock,—
You fair Maiden of Zion !—
Produce your adornments, and come forth the Queen,
The Princess of Kingdoms, Jerusalem's daughter !
- 9 Then wherefore so bitterly wail ?
Have you no king ? Has your counsellor failed ?
That you writhe as in child-bearing pain ?
- 10 Rush and writhe, Zion's daughter, in child-bearing woes,
You must now leave the City and dwell in the field,
And go onward to Babel—until I release,—
Where the LORD will redeem from the hand of your foe !
- 11 Though now many Nations assembled, assail,
Who shout, " Ravish !—And let our eyes see it in Zion !"—
- 12 But they know not the plans of the LORD,
And cannot perceive His intents
Till He heaps them like sheaves in a barn !—
- 13 Arise, Daughter of Zion ! and thrash !
For I make your horn iron,
And I make your hoof steel,—
To break many Peoples to pieces,
And their splinters give up to the LORD,
And their dust to the Prince of the Earth !
- 14 Now you can rob me,—
You child of a robber !—
When besieging around me,—
You can strike Israel's Prince with a rod on the cheek !

The Prince from Bethlem.

But you, pretty Bethlem, tho' small in the thousands of Judah, 5
 From you comes to Me the Great Ruler of Israel!—
 Who brought you, long ago, in old times from the East ;
 So He fixes the time for the birth of her child, 2
 And He will restore with the Children of Israel
 The rest of His brothers !
 He shall stand and control in the strength of the LORD, 3
 In the power of the Name of JEHOVAH his GOD,
 And they rest, when tired, at the bounds of the earth.

He will bring us deliverance from Ashur, 4
 And will come to our land, and will walk on our Hills,
 And appoint Seven Shepherds above us,
 And eight who will Organize Men, 5
 And break with the sword Ashur's land,
 And the gates of the land of Nimrod ;—
 And will rescue from Ashur those brought from our country,
 And whom he took out from our bounds.

But the fragments of Jacob shall be in Great Nations, 6
 Like dew from the LORD, and like rain on the grass,
 Not contrived by man's mind.
 Thus the fragments of Jacob shall be to the Heathen,— 7
 In the midst of Great Peoples,—
 A lion with cows in a forest,—
 A Tiger to sheepfolds,—
 Who passes to ravage and tear,
 And without an escape !
 Raise your hands on your tyrants, 8
 And strike at your foes !

" But at that time," says the LORD, 9
 " I will cut off your chariot drivers, 10
 And cut off the town of your land,
 And throw down your fortifications,
 And cut witchcrafts off from your hands, 11
 And you shall have no more diviners ;—
 And cut from you Statues and Idols, 12
 And you shall no more serve the work of your hands !
 But abolish your shrines from your midst,— 13
 When I have destroyed your assailants ;
 And execute Justice in anger and wrath 14
 On the Heathen who never would hear !"

The Plea of the Lord.

Hear, now, what the LORD has required ; 6
 " Arise ! plead to the Mountains,
 Let the hills hear your voice !"
 Hear ! Mountains, the plea of the LORD ! 2
 And you firm foundations of earth,
 For JEHOVAH will plead with His people,—
 And with Israel He will discuss !

" My People ! What did I to you ? 3
 How wearied you ? Answer to Me !
 For I brought you from Mitzer's land out,— 4
 From that House of Bondage I freed !
 And Moses I sent as your Leader,
 With Aaron and Miriam with him.—
 My People remember the question 5

Of Balak, the Moabite King,
And how Balam-ben-Baor answered,
At the Wood of Acacias and Gilgal,—
And thus learn how good the LORD is.

BALAK.

6 "With what shall I come to the LORD?
How bow before GOD the MOST HIGH?
Shall I approach Him with burnt-offerings?
With calves, and the sons of a year?
7 Please the Lord with a thousand of rams?
With ten thousand of rivers of oil?
Or give my First-born for my fault?
The fruit of myself for the sin of my soul?

BALAM.

8 "He has shown you, frail man, what is right;—
And what does the LORD seek from you?—
To administer Justice aright,
Love mercy, walk humbly with GOD!"

A Warning to the Wicked.

9 In the City the Lord's voice is heard;
And Wisdom will reverence His power,¹
And obey Him Who fixes the rule.

10 "Are the treasures of sin in the house of the bad?
And is the short measure still there?—
11 Will I pardon the falsified scale?
On the bag full of weights that deceive?—
12 When the rich are stuffed full of oppression,
And her populace speakers of lies,
Who deceive with their tongue and their mouth?

13 "So I have inflicted disease,
And will waste you because of your sins!
14 You shall eat, but shall never be fed,
But feel emptiness still in your breast!
You shall fly but shall never escape;—
What escapes I will give to the sword!
15 You shall sow, but you never shall reap,—
Dress the olive, but not use its oil,
And ferment, but not drink of the wine!

16 "For you keep to the Statutes of Gomri,
And all practices Ahab's House did,
And walk by the plans they contrived.—
I therefore will make you a ruin,
And your populace bring to contempt,
And you bear My people's reproach!"

Mikah Bemoans his Solitude in the Midst of the Wicked.

7 Woe to me! for the harvest is done,
The vintage all gone, there are no grapes to eat!
Nor ripe fig,—the desire of my life!
2 The gentle have wasted from earth!
And the upright has ceased among men!

¹ NOTE.—Ch. 6, v. 9. "His power." The Hebrew idiom is "Your (or thy) Name," but I render the phrase into our own English equivalent, "power," as in some other places I also do.—F. F.

And they are all plotting to murder,—
 Each hunts for his friend with a net!
 Both hands are stretched out after crime,—
 The Prince and the Judge ask a bribe;— 3
 And the great tells the wish of his life,—
 And thus are they woven together!—
 The best is a thorn and the straightest a briar! 4

Look out for the day when your punishment comes,—
 Even now you are deeply perplexed!
 Trust not to a Friend! Rely not on a guide! 5
 From the wife of your breast shut the doors of your mouth!
 For the son will dishonour his father, 6
 From her mother the daughter rebels,
 And the bride from her mother-in-law,
 And the foes of a man are the men of his house!

For myself I will watch for the LORD,— 7
 I will wait for my Salvation's GOD,—
 For my GOD will still listen to me.
 So let not my foeman rejoice, 8
 For if I fall down I shall rise,
 For my darkness the LORD turns to light.

I will fear the correction of GOD, 9
 Because I have sinned against Him,
 Until He examines my plea,
 And does justice and brings me the light,—
 I will await, till I feel He acquits,—
 My opponents will see, and be covered with shame,— 10
 Those who taunt me with, "Where is JEHOVAH, your GOD?"

The Restoration of Israel Promised.

I see her now as she is,—
 Trodden down like the dirt of the streets!
 But a day comes to rebuild your walls,— 11
 On the day the decree is revoked!
 To you they will come on that day, 12
 From the district of Ashur and cities of Mitzer;—
 From the Border of Mitzer as far as the River;¹
 And from Sea to the Sea, and from Mountain to Hill!—
 Though the land has been wasted of people, 13
 The result of their crimes!

The Prophet's Prayer and the Lord's Reply.

THE PROPHET.

"Guide Your race by Your staff, the flock You possess, 14
 Who lie lost in the forest of Carmel,
 Who in olden times pastured in Gilad and Bashan!"

THE LORD.

"I will show to you wonderful things, 15
 As when I brought from the country of Mitzer!—
 The Heathen shall see them and blush! 16
 All their Heroes lay hand on their mouth!—
 And their ears shall be strained.
 They shall lick up the dust like a snake!
 Like earth worms crawl out from their holes, 17
 In dread of the LIVING, your GOD,—
 And in terror of You!"

¹ NOTE.—Ch. 7, v. 12 "The River"—the Euphrates.

THE PROPHET.

- 18 “ What GOD would forgive sin like You?
Pardon faults that have broke His estate,
Not retaining His anger for ever;—
For He feels it delight to be kind!”
- 19 He returns and has mercy on us,
Who will our frailties subdue,
And cast all our faults to the depths of the sea!
- 20 Giving truly to Jacob the promise to Abraham,
As He swore to our fathers, in days long ago!

END OF THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET MIKAH.