**Remembering the Past; Looking to the Future**
(Micah 4:1-5; Revelation 21-22)
From a series entitled: “One Nation Under...”
May 29th, 2016 (Memorial Day Weekend)

**Something to think about:**

As God’s people we’ve always had hope. No matter the present circumstances that lead us to believe otherwise, or the frustrations that have brought us worries and anxieties upon which our nerves are shot; we have hope.

As we think and reflect on this hope that we have today, we look at a character in the Old Testament by the name of Micah who was a prophet of God.

In the days of Micah, things seemed very dire. Micah was alive during the existence of both the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom of Israel. He spoke truth into the situation of the moral failure of the northern kingdom as he slowly watched them succumb to degradation of justice and perverted leadership that weakened them so much that they were overcome as a nation by the Assyrian kingdom. And, he would watch as the southern kingdom followed suit. He died just a century before the southern kingdom fell to the Babylonians, a kingdom who would sack Jerusalem and the Temple – the most holy place of worship for the Jewish people.

However, in spite of the tragedy that he witnessed that had come as a result of the sheer immorality saturating the country he had come to love, he gives testimony to the hope he has in the future...

**Micah 4:1-5 (NLT)**

1. **In the last days, the mountain of the LORD’s house will be the highest of all— the most important place on earth. It will be raised above the other hills, and people from all over the world will stream there to worship.**

2. **People from many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of Jacob’s God. There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.” For the LORD’s teaching will go out from Zion; his word will go out from Jerusalem.**

3. **The LORD will mediate between peoples and will settle disputes between strong nations far away. They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will no longer fight against nation, nor train for war anymore.**

Micah’s vision of the future is not unlike John’s vision in the book of Revelation where both men envision a time when God will be the perfect and just Ruler of heaven and earth; a place and a time when there will be no sorrow or pain or war or death; a time when there will be peace and prosperity and abundance, and no fear.

So, what are we to take away from this today? How can we glean anything of worth from such an ancient dream and vision of the future?

Well, there is coming a day in the future when...

1. **God will be the ultimate ruler and judge over all people.**

   *Micah 4:2-3a (NLT), 2 People from many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of Jacob’s God. There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.” For the LORD’s teaching will go out from Zion; his word will go out from Jerusalem.*

2. **God’s Kingdom will be the reality.**

   *Revelation 21:1-2 (NLT), 1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. 2 And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

3. **There will be real, lasting, eternal peace.**

   *Micah 4:3b-4 (NLT), 3b...They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will no longer fight against nation, nor train for war anymore.*

   *Everyone will live in peace and prosperity, enjoying their own grapevines and fig trees, for there will be nothing to fear.*

**Something to take home:**

Though we live in the greatest nation in the world, there is coming a day when everything we see will be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and what God has in store for eternity will make the greatest nation on earth seem like a mere shadow of perfection and reality.

You see, we should work to make God’s Kingdom a reality on earth as it is in heaven, but we should forward to the day when that reality will be revealed in all its fullness. And, our hope? Our hope is not in those things that will eventually fade and pass away, but in rather in things eternal.

**Read: Revelation 21-22**
North Main Exists to...

"Develop completely committed followers of Christ who:

Know Christ intimately,
Grow in Christ continually, and,
Go for Christ daily;

Through:
Core Families,
Community Partnerships, and
Global Connections.

LESSON 3:
“REMEMBERING THE PAST, LOOKING TO THE FUTURE?”
(MICAH 4:1-5; REVELATION 21-22)
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KICK STARTERS:

- Since Memorial Day is about remembering those who have fought and died defending America’s freedom, thoughts come to mind?
- Remembering the past can be difficult, but it can also help us learn. What can we learn about the future from our past?
- Is there hope for the future? Explain...

SCRIPTURE:

Micah 4:1-5 (NLT)

1 In the last days, the mountain of the LORD’s house will be the highest of all—the most important place on earth. It will be raised above the other hills, and people from all over the world will stream there to worship. 2 People from many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of Jacob’s God. There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.” For the LORD’s teaching will go out from Zion; his word will go out from Jerusalem. 3 The LORD will mediate between peoples and will settle disputes between strong nations far away. They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will no longer fight against nation, nor train for war anymore. 4 Everyone will live in peace and prosperity, enjoying their own grapevines and fig trees, for there will be nothing to fear. The LORD of Heaven’s Armies has made this promise! 5 Though the nations around us follow their idols, we will follow the LORD our God forever and ever.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. After reading the passage for today’s discussion, what are you thoughts on Micah’s hope for the future?

2. A thorough reading of Scripture shows us that there is a future beyond this broken and fallen world. It is a wonderful future for those who believe in God through Jesus, and a disparaging one for those who don’t. What are your thoughts on life beyond this world?

3. In God’s Kingdom (Heaven), God will be the Ruler. What do you think that God’s leadership/kingship will be like?

4. Read Matthew 6:9-13 (focus on verse 10). In the “Lord’s Prayer” Jesus taught His disciples to pray for God’s Kingdom to come on earth as it is in Heaven. What do you think he meant?

5. When you think about Heaven, what comes to mind? Is it more “fairy-tale” like, or do you consider the reality of Heaven as being greater than the reality of what we experience on earth? Explain...

6. Read Isaiah 9:6-7. What do you think about an existence without war or rumors of war; a place of peace and rest without the threat of evil and sin?


SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

⇒ How can we live with the hope of a future in Heaven in the here and now? How can God’s Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven?
⇒ What part do followers of Jesus have in being Kingdom representatives in the world we live?
⇒ How are you representing the Kingdom of God in your daily living and pointing others to the reality of a glorious future in Christ?