Introduction

Objective. Isaiah 2:1-5 and Micah 4:1-5 are nearly identical in their content, structure, vocabulary, and form, in spite of a few dissimilarities. This fosters a natural interest into these two texts as to their origin and choice of placement. It will be our aim in this study to conduct a textual and exegetical comparison of these passages in order to address these very natural interests. In New Testament studies, researchers often face the task of examining very similar texts that have close, if not exact, lexical, grammatical, verbal and structural parallels. This happens often in the synoptic gospels, and such recapitulations arouse questions that are sought to be answered with the tools of textual criticism, source criticism, form criticism, and redaction criticism. Though all need not apply to our text, the presuppositions of these tools that reasonably carry into the present “source” study on Isaiah 2 and Micah 5 are: the interdependence of the texts based upon wording and order, the shorter reading tends to be the original, and the relative lack of complexity, or less complexity of the original either grammatically or literarily. These guiding principles will help us in our assessment as we seek to demonstrate the Isaianic originality of these passages in this comparative exegesis.

Historical Context. The prophet Isaiah lived and ministered to Judah circa 740 to 680 BCE, during the reigns of four kings of Judah according to Isaiah 1:1: Uzziah (790-739 BCE), Jotham (739-735 BCE), Ahaz (735-715 BCE), and Hezekiah (715-687 BCE). The finds that have been mined in the area of synoptic research have often been inconclusive at best, although many have huddled around the Two-source/Oxford hypothesis. Cf. Scot McKnight, Interpreting the Synoptic Gospels (GNTE; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), p.33ff. The same can be said for studies that have been undertaken in Old Testament “synoptic” studies, although modern archaeology has played a key factor. Cf. Duane Garrett, Rethinking Genesis: The Sources and Authorship of the First Book of the Pentateuch (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991). This is not to say that these efforts have been fruitless, but, perhaps, just overcomplicated.

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3 Francis I. Anderson and David Noel Freedman list every possibility in regards to authorship and influence: 1. Isaiah and Micah composed them independently, 2. An early prophecy was taken over by and used by each independently, 3. Micah composed and Isaiah borrowed, 4. Isaiah composed and Micah borrowed, 5. Micah borrowed it and it was revised in Isaiah, 6. Isaiah borrowed it and it was revised in Micah, and 7. An independent oracle was added in to both books independently (Micah [AB; New York: Doubleday, 2000], p.414).

4 This presupposes the unity of the prophecy as originating from one Isaiah. Many scholars within the last 150 years have postulated that there may be an alleged “deutero-Isaiah”, or even a “trito-Isaiah. The three primary arguments that are offered in defense of a multi-Isaiah authorship view are the difference in literary style in 40-66, the geographical background and language of 40-66 seems to indicate that the writer was from Palestine and thus post-
Jotham (739-731 BCE), Ahaz (731-715 BCE), and Hezekiah (715-686 BCE). Micah also lived and ministered to Judah during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah according to Micah 1:1. Judah’s history during these time began very prosperously under the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham. However, the wealth produced hardness of heart and the acquisition of foreign gods so that the prosperity of the nation diminished under the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah. Ahaz became king when he was twenty years old (2 Kgs.16:2) and he walked in the evil ways of his father, even causing his son to be sacrificed to Molech (2 Kgs.16:3) and setting up more high places for idol worship (2 Kgs.16:4). At this time, Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, decided to make war against Judah (2 Kgs.16:5). Syria and Israel then proceeded to invade Judah and conquer them. The Syrian-Israeli alliance set Philistia and Edom free from the grasp of Judah and they also went up against Judah. In desperation and unfaithfulness to Yahweh, Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria telling him that Ahaz would be his subject if he would deliver Judah from Syria and Israel and offering him gold and silver from the house of the Lord (2 Kgs.16:7-8). Tiglath-Pileser responded quickly to the offer by going up to Damascus and taking Syria and Israel captive (2 Kgs.16:9). Yet the Assyrians were not exilic, and that the theological content of 40-66 comes from a different understanding. Although these are speculative arguments in nature, they are good points that need to be addressed. First, Isaiah should not be understood as a book per se, but rather as a compilation of prophecies from Isaiah the prophet, son of Amoz (1:1). This explains the diversity of poetry, narrative, and prophetic judgment. Such diversity is also found in Jeremiah and Zechariah. Second, Chapters 40-66 were probably written during the reign of Manasseh, under whom Judah was so far from God that their captivity is assumed in the prophecy. Third, a close look at 1-39 and 40-66 doesn’t show any significant change in theological language or themes. As a matter of fact, the unifying theme of the whole prophecy is the salvation of the coming Messiah. This generally follows F. Delitzsch, *The Prophecies of Isaiah* (COT Vol.7; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996, series first published from 1866-91), p.384-90, Roland K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), p.764-95, E.J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes* (NICOT; Vol.2, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p.17, Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), p.319-20 J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), p.25-33, and John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p.3-6.

looking out for the well-being of Judah, but were concerned only with the spread of their own power and dominion over the nations. So after they defeated Syria and Israel, they kept Judah as a nation but had ultimate political control over them, establishing a Suzerain-Vassal covenantal relationship (“your servant and son” implies this in 2 Kgs.16:7).6

When Ahaz died, Hezekiah his son became king and brought about a spiritual purification in Judah. He tore down the high places of pagan worship, he cleansed the temple, and he re-established worship to Yahweh. As he did so, the Lord prospered him by allowing him to subdue the Philistines and rebel against the hand of the Assyrians. As a result of Judah’s worship of Yahweh and subsequent rebellion, the Assyrians encamped around Jerusalem to make war against it (2 Chron.32:1-2). Hezekiah cut off the water supply that flowed out of the city, he fortified the walls, and he made weapons and shields in abundance (2 Chron.32:3-5). In spite of the blasphemy and scoffing of the Assyrians, Hezekiah trusted Yahweh to deliver Jerusalem and He killed the 185,000 soldiers encamped around the city while they were sleeping and Sennacherib king of Assyria went back to Nineveh and was killed by his own sons (Isa.37:37-38). Although Hezekiah experienced such great deliverance, he did grow weak in his faith. Later, he became friendly with the Babylonians, thinking that he could have a powerful ally. He invited some representatives from Babylon to see his kingdom and showed them all the wealth that was in his house so that they might have been impressed with his power and riches.

God sent Isaiah to him after this to tell him of the Lord’s displeasure with his unfaithfulness and the future captivity that awaits Judah at the hands of the Babylonians (39:1-9).

It is uncertain at what point during the history of these kings that Isa.2:1-5 or Mic.4:1-5 were prophesied and it seems to be indiscernible without further archaeological or literary

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evidence. This is also complicated by the thematic and theological structuring of each book. It
does seem reasonable to suppose, however, that Isaiah was a more prominent prophet, whereas
Micah was more obscure. This is evidenced, first, by the mammoth size of Isaiah’s prophecy
and his relationship with the kings of Judah (2 Kgs.19:1-7,20-32; Isa.37:1-35), and second, by
Micah’s hometown and background as a farmer from a farm town (Moresheth-gath; Mic.1:1,14).
These points play a factor in our question of original authorship: prominence precedes obscurity.

**Boundaries and Coherence.** Isaiah 2:1-5 distinguishes itself from its preceding context
with the restatement of a “title”: “The word which Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw...” (.Highlight]). This marks a transition as though the first chapter were decidedly the
“prologue” of the prophecy.7 There is continuity, however, with the 1:1-31 and 2:6ff. as both
speak of the unfaithfulness of Israel and the judgment they will face. The function of 2:1-5 is to
focus on the eschatological picture to set straight, or exhort the present picture. Vs.5 connects
directly to the matters spoken of in vs.1-4, as the verbal connections can hardly be missed (comp.
Highlight and Highlight in vs.3 to Highlight in vs.5). Vs.6 picks up on
this giving further cause (Highlight) for the exhortation by drawing out the fact that they are not walking
in the light of the Lord and referring back to the eschatological image (“in that day,” Highlight,
vs.11, 20, and “a day,” Highlight, vs.12).

Although Micah 4:1-5 lacks an introductory title as is found in 3:5, it does mark itself off
with the use of Highlight in vs.1, breaking the string of imperfects in 3:12. The previous context
builds a fledgling picture of judgment that will come upon Israel, specifically the prophets in
3:5ff., but this is put on hold at 4:1. The eschatological perspective (Highlight)

7“Ch. 2-5 may have existed in this form into the general collection, so as to mark the transition from the prologue to
the body of the book” (Delitzsch, *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, p.73).
annunciates the grace to come in contrast to the judgment that had just been prophesied (comp. “plowed as a field,” and “the mountain of the temple will become as the high places of the forest,” in 3:12 to “the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest mountain,” in 4:1 and “they shall beat their swords to plowshares,” in 4:3). Vs.5 closes the pericope begun in 4:1 by contrasting the nations and Israel in the present using twice as it draws from in 4:2. The subsequent material in 4:6ff. elaborates on the eschatological portrait (םייח המנה) maintaining the present contrast that exists between Israel and the nations (4:11-13). Also, the fact that both Isa.2:1-5 and Mic.4:1-5 share essentially the same passages bears witness to these verses being a whole unit.

**Isaiah 2:1-5 Translation.**

The word which Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it will come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord will be firmly established as the highest of the mountains and lifted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it. And many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob that He may teach us His ways and that we might walk in His paths.” For from Zion Law will go forth and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem and He will judge between many nations and decide for many peoples, and they will beat their swords to plowshares and their spears to pruning hooks. Nation will not
lift sword against nation and they will not learn war anymore. Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

**Micah 4:1-5 Translation.** And it will come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord will be firmly established as the highest of the mountains and shall be lifted above the hills, and peoples will flow over it and many nations will say, “Come, let us go up the mountain of the Lord and the house of the God of Jacob that He might teach us His ways and that we might walk in His paths”. For from Zion Law will go forth and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem and He will judge between many peoples and decide for many strong nations afar off, and they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift\(^{19}\) sword against nation and they will not learn war anymore. And each man will dwell under his vine and under his fig tree and there will be no more fear, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. Although all the peoples walk each man in the name of his god, we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.

**Comparative Exegesis**

This second “title” or “heading” recapitulates some of the elements that are found in the first “title” (1:1), maintaining אֱלֹהִים יִשְׂרָאֵל (“Israel, son of Amoz”), בְּיוֹם אָזַן (“which he saw”) and שֶׁבֶר יֶשֶׂר אֱלֹיוֹת (“concerning Judah and Jerusalem”). One glaring difference, though, is the change from נָבֵג (“vision;” 1:1) to נִקְרָא (“the word”).\(^{20}\) Certainly the terms are interchangeable in prophetic literature, but the use of נִקְרָא in this context is probably intended to set up the נִקְרָא הָרְאוֹת (“word of the Lord”) which will go out from Zion in the eschaton (2:3). That this word is “concerning Judah and Jerusalem” (パーֵרִים יְרוֹמֵהוּ) obviously specifies that this prophecy is directed to the southern kingdom of Israel and its holy city. Micah completely lacks any orien ter or introductory heading for 4:1-5. The fact that Isa.2:1 says this prophecy is what “Isaiah saw” (לְאָזֶן) in view of this lacking item lends good support to Micah’s borrowing of these verses from Isaiah.

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\(^{19}\) This is singular in 8HevXII and LXX, but plural in MT.

\(^{20}\) “‘Word’ signifies ‘message’ or ‘truth’ and saw signifies ‘perceived by divine revelation’. Thus Isaiah repeats his conviction that revelation prompted his message and inspiration prompted his words” (Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, p.53).
At this juncture, Micah begins to coincide with Isaiah as both begin to orient their vision toward the future (“in the latter days,” בְּרָאָשׁיָּרָהָם) and provides the setting for this predictive discourse.\textsuperscript{21} בְּרָאָשׁיָּרָהָם is a phrase that is used throughout the Hebrew Bible to refer to the times when God’s promises are fulfilled toward His people which apply at the present only in shadow (cf.Gen.49:1ff; Num.24:14; Deut.31:29; Jer.23:30; 30:24; 48:47; 49:39; Ez.38:16; Dan.10:14; Hos.3:5).\textsuperscript{22} Sometimes this can refer to universal blessing (Hos.3:5) and other times it can refer to universal judgment (Jer.30:24). Here it clearly launches into a vision of blessing. The universal blessing to the nations is rooted in God’s promise to Abraham (Gen.12:1ff; 15:1ff; 17:1ff; 22:16ff). This passage “expresses poetically the ‘Abrahamic’ status of Israel (Gen.12:3; 22:18) as the elect of God, chosen as the means of universal blessing”.\textsuperscript{23} The “mountain of the house of the Lord” (אֲדֹנָי) will be “firmly established” (לָבָן) as the “head” or “highest of the mountains” (בְּרָאָשׁיָּרָהָם) and “exalted” or “lifted up above the hills” (מָכַסְתוֹ). It is unlikely that this refers to the geographical elevation, but rather it speaks of

\textsuperscript{21} See Duane Garrett’s three levels of predictive discourse in \textit{A Modern Grammar for Biblical Hebrew} (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002), p.324
\textsuperscript{22} Delitzsch asserts that this phrase “is always used in the eschatological sense” (p.74). C.F. Keil comments that “it always denotes the Messianic era when used by the prophets (see at Hos.3:5)” (“Micah,” in \textit{The Minor Prophets} by C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch [COT Vol.10; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996, series first published from 1866-91], p.309). Barker concurs that “in contexts like this one, it usually appears to have in view the Messianic age” ("Micah," p.83).
\textsuperscript{23} Motyer, p.52. So Barker, p.84. “Theologically, the vision restates and applies to the Zion the promise that Abram will be so blessed that all peoples will receive the same blessing (Gen.12:1-3). Reasserting this worldwide vision near the beginning of Isaiah (it will recur at the end, in ch.66) reminds readers of the context in which Judah lives its life of privilege and responsibility and in which all of the prophesy operates, including declarations of calamity for individual nations and for nations as a whole (chs. 10; 13-27)” (John Goldingay, \textit{Isaiah} [NIBC; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001], p.43). The Abrahamic covenant was God’s solution to the judgment at the tower of Babel. Our passage “looks forward to the day when the enmity that separated the nations at Babel (Gen.11) will be put aside and all peoples of the world will worship the one true God” (J.D.W. Watts, \textit{Isaiah 1-33} [WBC; Waco, TX: Word, 1984], p.37). So Delitzsch, p.75.
the preeminence of the mountain as God himself will be “exalted” or preeminent above all gods and nations (cf. Isa. 2:12; 6:1; 57:15). The concept of “mountain” (הר) conjures up Sinai imagery, especially associated with being “ready” or “firmly established” (готов) considering Israel was admonished to be “prepared” (готов) to approach the Mt. Sinai (Ex. 16:5; 19:11,15; 34:2, see also 23:20). As was mentioned above, the exaltation of the mountain here is in stark contrast to Mic. 3:12 where it destruction is pronounced on it. Micah diverges from Isaiah both in the positioning of חם and the insertion of והוה. The placement of והוה after הרים points subtly to a superior concern for poetics in Micah as it makes for a better synonymous parallelism with חם. Also, the addition of והוה between והוה והנה brings emphasis and more balance to the line.

The emphasis of Isa.2:2 and Mic.4:1 respectively lies squarely on the phrase, “and all the peoples/nations (גוים) shall flow to it (והנה) since “the peoples/nations” receive consistent attention in the subsequent verses (Isa.2:3,4; Mic.4:2,3,5).

24 So Waltke, “Micah,” p.678. The word גבעה (“hill”) often refers to the pagan “high places” where altars were set up to gods (1 Kgs.14:23; 2 Kgs.16:4; 17:10; 2 Chr.28:4). “Zion has become Everest. Instead of the river flowing out of the temple, downwards to the land, as in the vision of Ezekiel, the rivers of the nations flow up to Jerusalem; natural laws of gravity are overcome by the magnetic hill of Jerusalem. Geographical reality is rearranged by biblical eschatology. Moreover, if Ezekiel magnifies Eden, Isaiah reverses Babel” (Stephen G. Dempster, Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible [NSBT; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003], p.173-74).

25 In his song, Moses sings, “You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain (הר), the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established (הר)” (Ex.15:17 ESV). Otto Kaiser notes the Canaanite background of the “mountain of God” concept (Isaiah 1-12 [OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983], p.53).

26 “[A]t the beginning of chap.4 , using a catchword link with “mountain of the house” in 3:12, the focus is shifted from announced immediate destruction to the future rebuilding of the temple, built on the “mountain of the house of the Lord. The contrast is total” (James Limburg, “Swords to Plowshares: Text and Contexts” in Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition, ed. by Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans [Vol.1.; SVT 70; Leiden: Brill, 1997], p.284). The idea of “hook-words” (words that anticipate further integrative discourse) in discourse analysis has been popularized by George Guthrie in his work, The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis (SNT 73; Leiden: Brill, 1994).


28 ibid
The word "will flow" invokes river imagery as the root הַרערוֹ ("will flow") is identical to the noun הָרֶה ("river"). The first context in which we see a river flowing out or to a mountain/temple is in the garden of Eden (Gen.2:10,13,14; Eze.28:13-14 refers to the garden of Eden as "the holy mountain מִשׁכַּה להריו לָיָה)"). Thus, we are prompted to consider this vision as that of a new humanity in a new Eden (or Sinai), going into it, as opposed to being exiled from it (Gen.3:22-24).  

This is echoed strongly in Eze.47:1-23 and elaborated on in Rev.22:1-2 in the identification of the New Heavens and Earth. For Isaiah, then, 2:1-5 is prelude to 65:17ff. The substitution of רַּעְיָא with רַעְיָא warrants no real attention, since לו can be used terminatively or as a direct object and be synonymous with אָלִי. Likewise, the interchange of לִי and והוימ bodes little consequence except as it relates to the attachment of כֹּל ("all") to והוים. Francis Anderson and David Noel Freedman note the building up of "a universalistic climax" by Micah when Isaiah begins with this universalism. The build up for Micah, again, evidences the poetical care that exceeds Isaiah.

The pericope unfolds further by amplifying the phrase, "and all the nations/peoples will flow to it," by letting us overhear the pilgrim conversation: "many nations (כאים) peoples (גוים), 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord...".

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29 So Motyer, p.53
30 "The prophet saw the new Jerusalem of the last days on this side, and the new Jerusalem of the new earth on the other (Rev.21:10), blended as it were together, and did not distinguish one from the other" (Delitzsch, p.75).
32 "His series-people, many nations, many peoples, powerful nations unto (the remote) distance-builds up to a universalistic climax. (This accumulation of increasingly strong expressions is a further argument for the authenticity of the concluding phrase 'ad-rāhōq.) By contrast, Isaiah strikes the universalistic note from the outset, using kol. This loses suspense achieved..." (Micah, p.419).
This resembles the psalms of ascent that Israel would sing as they approach the temple mount (Ps.120-135). The metaphor of height is sustained here as the people will say, “let us go up” (‘היה), in keeping with the actual temple which was located on a mount (cf.Mic.3:12). From this language, the motif of “eschatological pilgrimage of the nations” takes its post (cf.Zech.14:16-19), as they will join Israel in their pilgrimage feasts. The only other occurrence of ‘היה in the Hebrew Bible is in reference to Mount Zion in Zech.8:3, where the universal blessings of the eschaton are prophesied and God’s people are brought back to Jerusalem (Zech.8:8). The rest of the context reveals the purpose is it be instructed (see below), not to “remember” *per se* as in the feasts (Lev.23:1ff.). The only real textual difference in this portion of the verse is the י conjoined to ‘אב in Micah’s account, which, again, balances better the synonymous parallelism with ‘אב.

The quote of the peoples of the nations continues with the purpose or goal of their “ascent:” “and He will teach us his ways (׳י אתי) that we might walk in his paths (׳לכה אתי). The quote ends after י conjoined to ‘אתי as the reason is stated (׳ל) in the third person why the nations are eager to come is that “Torah will go forth from Zion (׳ל תארח תואר) and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (׳ל תארח תואר).” This is a crucial segment in this

33 Waltke, “Micah,” p.679: “Micah now allows his audience to overhear the conversation of the converted nations as they encourage one another to make the pilgrimage to Mount Zion”.
34 Waltke suggests that י has its technical sense of making pilgrimage to Jerusalem” citing Ps.122:4, Jer.31:6, and Zech.14:17 (“Micah,” p.680).
35 So Waltke, “Micah,” p.680 and Barker, p.84
36 This is viewed as causal contra Waltke, “Micah,” p.680, who sees it as emphatic.
pericope because here we have the grounds for all that takes place in the vision. Instead of the ḥתָרָה (‘instruction’) going forth from Sinai like the Israel experienced in the wilderness (Ex.19:1ff.), what seems to be a “new” ḥתָרָה will go forth from Zion. Just as the Israelites were delivered and journeyed to Mount Sinai to receive ḥתָרָה from the Lord, so also, the newly delivered nations with journey to Mount Zion to receive ḥתָרָה from the Lord. Thus, we imagine a new exodus, by a new people of God, under a new covenant. This is observed and broadened by the author of Hebrews, who contrasts the shakable Sinai with the unshakable Zion from above (12:18-28). There is virtually no difference in the texts of Micah and Isaiah except for a vowel in פֶּרֶנֶה (Isaiah) and פֶּרֶנֶה (Micah).

Isaiah 2:4a

Micah 4:3a

The result of the nations newfound learning and walking in the ways of the Lord is the establishment of peace. Both שָׁמֵם בֵּין הָגוֹמִים/לְעָמוֹד בִּכְשָׁם רַבִּים (“and he will judge between nations/many peoples”) and וּחְפִיצָה לְעָמוֹד בִּכְשָׁם לְנוֹהָג בִּכְשָׁם עֹּרְבִּים (“and decide for many peoples/strong nations from afar”) are in synonymous parallelism (comp. the synonyms נוֹהָג/לְעָמוֹד and שָׁמֵם/חֲפִיצָה). God “judging” and “deciding” between the nations is directly correlative to the Torah going out from Zion. The nations will be judged according to his Torah.

Generally speaking, the biblical-theological portrayal of God as “Judge” is negative for the

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38 So Limburg, p.282
39 A supporting point that leads us to believe that it is a “new” Torah is the following context. In the Torah given at Sinai, Israel was specifically instructed to go to war under certain circumstances (e.g. Num.33:51ff.). But as a result of the Torah given from Zion, “they will not learn anymore war” (Isa.2:4; Mic.4:3).
40 So Kaiser, Isaiah 1-12, p.27 and Barker, p.84
41 So Waltke, “Micah,” p.680
42 ibid, p.678
nations (cf. Ex.5:21; Ps.110:6; Jer.25:31; Eze.35:11; Joel 3:2; Rom.2:3; Heb.13:4). Our text depicts God as one to be giving the nations peace amongst themselves. From a slightly modified perspective later in Isaiah, God declares that one way or another, “every knee will bow and every tongue will confess” to him (Isa.45:23). Our verse expresses the positive, willing submissive side of this eschatological reality. Micah’s conflation of “strong nations from afar off” (עִנְיָנֵי אֲנָדָמִים) emphasizes the strength and scope of God’s future reign, and contributes to his expanding description of the nations.

The Lord’s judging between the nations bears the results of peace among them. The theme of peace extends into the poetical metaphor first used by Joel. He gives a battle cry for the nations: “Proclaim this among the nations: Consecrate for war; stir up the mighty men. Let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords (חרב לבוה), and your pruning hooks into spears (חרב לשמירה)” (Joel 3:9-10). Their battle, though, would inevitably lead to their defeat and judgment (3:12ff.). Isaiah and Micah turn this metaphor on its head in order to express a completed picture, namely, that nations will be both blessed and cursed. “Sword and spear together represent the entire military arsenal” and both “plowshares” (חרב) and “pruning hooks” (שְׁמירה) serve as synecdoches for whole of the disarmament process. The word חֶבְרָה (“plowshare”) probably should be rendered “hoe” as a

43 “Their coming transcends nationalism: they acknowledge the God of a single nation, the God of Jacob, as the God of all nations” (Motyer, p.54).
44 So Barker, p.85
45 “The Isaiah/Micah version, then, would not be coining a memorable phrase—but reversing a well-known slogan, thereby giving the saying more punch” (Limburg, p.288).
46 Waltke, “Micah,” p.681, and Barker, p.85
later tradition it was a “plowshare” because “in the course of time, it replaced the hoe”. With the exception of a vowel change (מַחְץ/הֶרֶבּ), these two lines of synthetic parallelism are identical.

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לא תחרך נא אל נמי כאן אלא יבלוך עזר מלך מחות.
לני קראו נא אל נמי כאן אלא יבלוך עזר מלך מחות.
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Isaiah 2:4c

Micah 4:3c

This piece of the poem continues the description of peace by contrasting what the nations will do with what they will no longer do: “nation will no longer lift up sword against nation (כְּוֹדֶשׁ נָא אֶל נְאִירָה נְאִירָה) and they will not learn way anymore (רְבֵּנוֹת שֵּׁר מַלְכֶּה). This affirms that “swords” (כְּוֹדֶשׁ) are changed so dramatically that they will not be used as weapons for war, and that the nations will be so changed by being taught (רְבֵּנוֹת) the Torah that they will not be learning (כְּוֹדֶשׁ) about war any longer. Again, these synonymous parallel lines are identical save for a vowel (כְּוֹדֶשׁ/כְּוֹדֶשׁ).

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ֹיֶשֶׁב אֵין חַטָּה בּוֹשֵׁל חַטָּה חַטָּה וּמִי מַחְץ חָפֵר חָפֵר חָפֵר בּוֹשֵׁל.
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Micah 4:4

Micah extends the motif with another metaphor: “And each man will dwell under his vine and under his fig tree (לֶשֶׁב אֵין חַטָּה בּוֹשֵׁל חַטָּה חַטָּה) and there will be no more fear (אֱלֶזָר אֱלֶזָר אֱלֶזָר אֱלֶזָר שלחא), for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken (כָּרֵי יְהוָה אֶבֶן אֲבֵטַח יְהוָה). “Each man under his vine and fig tree” is lifted word for word from 1 Kgs.5:5 MT (אֱלֶזָר אֱלֶזָר אֱלֶזָר אֱלֶזָר) and is also used in Zech.3:10.

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47 Waltke, “Micah,” p.681
48 Motyer, p.54. “Yahweh’s act of destruction (Ps.46:9) becomes an act of recycling undertaken by the warriors themselves” (Goldingay, p.43)
49 So Waltke, “Micah,” p.681
1 Kings 5:5 MT speaks of Judah and Israel living “in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of Solomon” (1 Kgs.4:25 ESV). Such a “quote” hints at the Messianic overtones of our eschatological picture (as was noted above in fn.22; see Mic.5:2). It seems the imagery of farming tools and vegetation would have been germane to Micah’s background as a farmer (see above). To complete the picture of peace in his account, the efforts that previously were exerted for war will be exerted to prosperity for all. “All people enjoy the fruit of their own labor in security.” That they will no longer fear echoes God’s promise to Israel before they entered Canaan (Lev.26:6), implying the formation of a new Israel and new exodus/conquest. The phrase “for the mouth of Lord of hosts has spoken” brings closure to the effects of “the word of the Lord” going out from Zion (Mic.4:2) and guarantees that it will take place. The title “Lord of hosts” means literally “Lord of armies” and was probably used here as proof that God can ensure peace since he controls both the armies of earth and of heaven.

bat yikhelet lela noladah baavor yah: Isaiah 2:5
ci cele-mimim lela yesh alalot, etzavot nele mes-harefot adholot leulamenu: Micah 4:5

51 “Indeed, v.4 signals the overall concern with peace and YHWH’s authority by including the statement, ‘and each shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree and no one shall frighten (him), because the mouth of YHWH Seboath has spoken’. Such a portrayal appears to presuppose the idyllic picture of peace for Israel in Solomon’s time as presented in 1 Kgs.5:5, although the present text goes several steps further in emphasizing that no one will frighten anyone else, either among the nations or within Israel, because the nations themselves will voluntarily submit to YHWH’s sovereignty” (Marvin A. Sweeney, “Micah’s Debate with Isaiah,” Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 93 [2001]: 116).
52 Waltke, “Micah,” p.682
53 ibid
54 See Koehler and Baumgartner, HALOT, p.994-96
Isaiah and Micah go in different directions to conclude the pericope. Isaiah went the way of exhortation to Israel: “House of Jacob (לבנָה יִשְׂרָאֵל) come and let us walk (לבנָה יִשְׂרָאֵל) in the light of the Lord (בָּאָרָה יִשְׂרָאֵל).” The exhortation is framed by the nations’ pilgrimage psalm/exhortation (Isa.2:3). The term “house of Jacob” (בית יִשְׂרָאֵל) is prominent in Isaiah (2:6; 10:20; 14:1; 29:22; 46:3; 48:1) and seems to play on “house of the God of Jacob” (בָּאָרָה יִשְׂרָאֵל). “Come (לבנָה) and let us walk (לבנָה יִשְׂרָאֵל)” is a synapse of the entire psalm as it begins with “come (לבנָה) and let us go up” and concludes with “and we will walk (לבנָה יִשְׂרָאֵל) in His paths”. The implicit grounds, then, for Israel to walk in the light of the Lord is the eschatological vision of the nations walking in his paths. Also, the word בָּאָרָה (“in the light”) sounds similar to the first part of the word בָּאָרָה יִשְׂרָאֵל (“in his paths”) used in 2:3. Micah, on the other hand, went the way of a declarative/resolution psalm to close the oracle. This “psalm” contrasts the present condition of the Gentiles, that “although all the peoples walk (כל העמים ילכו בּוֹלֶג לְשָׁמֶשׁ) each in the name of his god (אלוהיהם),” with the present calling of the nation of Israel to “walk in the name of the Lord our God forever (לְשָׁמֶשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּאָרָה יִשְׂרָאֵל)”. So the hold out for Micah of referring to “all the nations” (כל הערומים) pays off to emphasize that they are becoming more like the nations than nations are of Israel. Thus, there is a need to align themselves according to the vision of the future or they might not be part of it. Although again, Micah extends beyond Isaiah’s oracle, both focus on the element of “walking” in the “light/name” of the Lord which is what weaves the poem together. Isaiah picks up and runs with its exhortation.

56 So Sweeney, “Micah’s Debate with Isaiah,” p.117. “In the meantime faith in the fulfillment of the vision means faithful enactment of it in their life. For them the תּוֹרָה of YHWH is already there, and as this unfinished history goes on they can and will walk as those whose identity is created by the election of God” (Mays, Micah [OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976], p.99).
because of Israel’s present unfaithfulness (“for You have abandoned your people;” 2:6), and Micah continues to paint the eschatological picture (“in that day;” 4:6).

**Conclusion**

Although it is impossible to know for certain who borrowed this passage from whom, the aforementioned presuppositions lead us to believe, tentatively, that it was Micah who borrowed from Isaiah. First, with the amount of identical sentences and word order, it almost goes without saying that there is interdependence. Obviously God could have independently inspired both prophets, but that does not mean that He did. From what we know of the writing and collecting of Scripture, it seems highly likely that one used the other. Second, Isaiah is shorter than Micah, and so we tend to support Isaiah as the original author. Lastly, depending on what school of Hebrew poetry one belongs to, there seem to be subtle changes made by Micah that would make us think the poetry to be slightly better. This is a difficult assertion to make, but following other researchers, it seems to be generally accepted. Therefore, it seems that Micah might have fine-tuned some elements for literary purposes. Two other factors that may also support our tentative conclusion is that Isaiah was more prominent and prolific than Micah and the heading Isa.2:1 which says it was a “word which Isaiah saw”. But, again we will never be certain.

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### Semantic Structure of Isaiah 2:1-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>The word which Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:2a</td>
<td>And it will come to pass in the latter days that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:2b</td>
<td>the mountain of the house of the Lord will be firmly established as the highest of the mountains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:2c</td>
<td>and lifted up above the hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:2d</td>
<td>and all nations shall flow to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:3a</td>
<td>And many peoples will come and say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:3b</td>
<td>Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:3c</td>
<td>to the house of the God of Jacob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:3d</td>
<td>that He may teach us His ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:3e</td>
<td>and we may walk in His paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:3f</td>
<td>For the Law will go out from Zion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:3g</td>
<td>and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:4a</td>
<td>and He will judge between many nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:4b</td>
<td>and decide for many peoples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:4c</td>
<td>and they will beat their swords to plowshares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:4d</td>
<td>and their spears to pruning hooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:4e</td>
<td>Nation will not lift sword against nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:4f</td>
<td>and they will not learn war anymore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:5</td>
<td>Come, house of Jacob and let us walk in the light of the Lord</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4:1a And it will come to pass in the latter days
4:1b that the mountain of the Lord will be firmly
established as the highest of the mountains
4:1c and it shall be lifted above the hills
4:1d and peoples will flow over it
4:2a and many nations will say
4:2b Come, let us go up the mountain of the Lord
4:2c and the house of the God of Jacob
4:2d and He will teach us His ways
4:2e that we will walk in His paths
4:2f For from Zion the Law will go forth
4:2g and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem
4:3a and He will judge between many peoples
4:3b and decide for many strong nations afar off
4:3c and they will beat their swords into plowshares
4:3d and their spears into pruning hooks
4:3e Nation will not longer lift up sword against nation
4:3f and they will not learn war anymore
4:4a And each man will dwell under his vine
4:4b and under his fig tree
4:4c and there will be no more fear
4:4d for the Lord of hosts has spoken
4:5a Although all the peoples walk each man in the name
of his god
4:5b we will walk in the name of the Lord our God
forever and ever
Bibliography


