

# HOPE FOUND

## MICAH 7:1-20

(Prepared by Gene Thompson using Lifeway's Explore the Bible materials.)

1. What is your favorite song about the grace of God? (Amazing Grace; Grace Greater than Our Sin; Your Grace is Enough; Wonderful Grace of Jesus; etc.)
2. Why did you choose that song?

Today's study deals with how God gives us hope that He will rescue us from our deepest distress, because of our sin, simply because of His unfathomable grace.

One area most of us falter in is waiting. Micah prophesied approximately 700 years before the Messiah was born. Micah recognized that waiting is difficult, but he was confident that there was hope in the Lord.

Context: Last week we studied about the coming Messiah in Micah chapter 5. Chapters 6-7 is Micah's final message. It begins with the imagery of a lawsuit brought by God against His people. The charges are read, witnesses were called to testify, evidence was presented, a defense was given, and a guilty verdict was announced. It is fitting that the mountains, hills, and foundations of the earth are called to bear witness to the Lord's case. They were called upon to be a witness to the covenant God initially made with Israel in Deut. 4:26.

One of the most well-known passages in the Old Testament is found in Micah 6:8. (**Read that passage.**) The truth of that passage is just as relevant today as it was 2700 years ago. We are called to "Act justly;" "Love faithfulness;" and "Walk humbly with God."

We will discover today how God revealed His compassion, forgiveness, and faithfulness to His people back then and it is offered to us today!

### REALITY DEFINED! Read Micah 7:1-4

The word translated "How sad for me!" is only found here and in Job 10:15. Micah was describing his feelings of alienation, isolation, and discouragement.

1. Why was Micah so dejected? (In Lev. 26:5 God had promised that if they remained faithful to His covenant with them their crops would abound and there would be abundant food. But Micah was looking for grapes and figs but found none.)

This was evidence the people had not been faithful to God.

2. What was Micah's complaint in verse 2? (He almost sounds like Elijah here, "I'm the only one left to serve God.")

From Micah's point of view the "godly people had vanished."

3. How good were they at committing evil acts? (They set ambushes, they were just as good at doing evil with either hand, they were ambidextrous. By setting their nets they almost made it impossible for the poor and needy to escape their greed and injustice.)

Jeremiah 4:22 agrees with Micah. He says, "They are skilled in doing evil; they know not how to do good."

4. How would you compare people today to this passage? (People today are skilled at doing evil: they know how to find illegal drugs; how to get around the abortion laws; how to cheat on their taxes; how to rip people off in their business; how to hide their obscene texts or pornographic websites; how to cover up their affairs; how to post ugly comments online anonymously; how to cheat at politics; etc.)
5. What are some ways people don't know how to do good today? (They don't know how to pray; intercede for others; read or study the Bible; don't know the plan of salvation or how to lead someone to the Lord; how to resist temptation; how to be godly parents and balance discipline and love; how to be selfless in marriage; etc.)

6. How urgent was the message? (**Read verse 4!**)

### Read Micah 7:5-6

7. According to Micah, who can you trust? (No one, not even your closest friend or your spouse.)

Jesus quoted from this passage in Matt. 10:35-36.

## **It is a sad, sad situation when family members can't get along with each other.**

Micah declared his intention of waiting on God, trusting Him for salvation. He expressed hope as he considered the day in which God would deliver those who remained faithful to Him.

### **SALVATION DISCOVERED! Read Micah 7:7-10**

This is a major transition statement that marks a shift in the passage. All that bad in 1-6, he says, "But as for me. I will watch expectantly for the LORD." He trusts that God is going to do something, even in this time of distress. Verse 7 is a powerful verse filled with hope. He expresses his hope in three ways:

- "I will watch expectantly for the Lord."
  - "I will wait for the God of my salvation."
  - And finally, he says in faith: "My God will hear me."
1. In verses 8-10 what does Micah tell his enemies? (I'm being disciplined now but when my Deliverer comes, I will experience His salvation and you will be trampled in the streets like mud.)
  2. How is waiting on the Lord an expression of faith? (When we decide to take things in our own hands, we are saying we trust in ourselves. Patiently waiting for the Lord is not understood by the world because they do not understand faith is the evidence of things not seen. If you can see it, you don't need faith.)

Micah turned from complaint to confidence. He refused to succumb to despair. The prophet was able to look past the coming destruction in the immediate future to a day of hope when God would deliver His people. Notice the Lord doesn't provide light, He is the Light! The remnant acknowledged their sin and that they must face "the LORD'S fury" for their own sin.

Micah had confident assurance that God would champion their cause. He would come to their rescue, establishing justice, and bringing them into the light.

God invests in our lives and wellbeing. The idea of waiting on God involves trust. We wait for those things we trust. Waiting and faith go hand in hand. God's timing is always perfect, He is never late!

### **Summary of Micah 7:11-17**

Micah speaks to Jerusalem that though she had been attacked and destroyed, she will be rebuilt. The boundaries will be extended, and people will come from the world over (Vs 11-12). The Lord will Shepherd His people who live in a forest in a garden land (V14). God will show them marvelous things (V 15). When God brought Israel out of Egypt the other nations heard about it and had a healthy fear of Israel because of it. He says these marvelous things will be more of a shock to the nations than it was when they came out of Egypt. They will tremble at the thought of you, and the steadfast love of God (17).

### **FORGIVENESS CELEBRATED! Read Micah 7:18-20**

1. "Who is a God like You?" (None! Who pardons iniquity; passes over the rebellious; does not retain His anger forever; delights in unchanging love; will again have compassion on us; will tread our iniquities underfoot; cast our sins away; etc.)

**The word for love here is Chesed. This is one of the richest Hebrew words in all the Old Testament. It is so rich in meaning that it is hard to translate it with just one English word. Various Bible translations use different words, trying to capture its meaning. It wraps up love, grace, mercy, lovingkindness, unending love, etc.**

2. In these verses what four different words did Micah use for sin? (Iniquity; rebellion; sins; and iniquities.)
3. What four different words did he use for forgiveness? (Removing; passing over; compassion; and vanquish.)
4. In verse 19 Micah says, "You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea." What was he trying to communicate by using this figure of speech? (Our sins will be cast away never to return or be

remembered again. Once our sins have been confessed, repented of and forgiven God doesn't hold them over our head—they are forever forgotten!

5. What is the deepest part of the ocean? (The Mariana Trench in the western Pacific Ocean is almost seven miles deep. Only two people have ever been to the bottom—they think. If you could remove Mount Everest and place it in the bottom of the Mariana Trench, there would still be over a mile to the surface of the ocean.)

**In Psalm 103:12 David says, “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”**

Humans have a hard time forgetting transgressions against us, but God has no problem forgiving AND forgetting. His righteousness and holiness were satisfied at the cross when Jesus was broken, and His blood spilled out for our sin!

6. How should a believer respond to God's forgiveness? (God is compassionate. He wants to do good, not harm, to His children. God keeps His promises. We should respond with loving obedience!)
7. How can we stand firm in our faith in the middle of difficult circumstances? (Stay in His Word, pray and stay connected to God's people.)

## **CHALLENGE!**

Hope is found in God's promised salvation to those who trust Him. As the old hymn says: “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus' name.”

Like the Apostle Paul taught in Romans 5 “where sin abounds, grace more than abounds”—literally, “SUPER abounds”!

“In a cultural climate like our own, the Old

Testament prophet Micah confronted God's people, offering a prescription for living life well during a crooked generation. God's voice speaks just as loudly to New Testament believers today as it did to the Old Testament saints long ago: What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)” —Charles Swindoll.