

The Books of Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah

Lesson 9: Who Is a God Like You? Hope in the Darkness -- Micah 7:1-20

Some chapters of the Bible begin in a place we know all too well: the bottom. Micah chapter 7 opens with a man surveying his society and finding almost nothing left to hope in. “Woe is me!” he cries. The godly have perished from the land; no one is upright. Friends cannot be trusted, neighbors set traps, and even within a household a son treats his father with contempt. If you have ever looked around at the brokenness of the world, or of people close to you, and felt your heart sink, Micah has been there.

But watch what the prophet does in the dark. He does not surrender to despair, and he does not pretend things are fine. He makes a decision, and it is one of the great turning points in all the prophets: “But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.” When everything around him is collapsing, he fixes his eyes on the one thing that cannot collapse. Hope, for Micah, is not denial of the darkness. It is a deliberate look upward in the middle of it.

And from that upward look, the chapter slowly fills with light. Micah tells his enemy not to gloat, “when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me.” He trusts that God will plead his cause and bring him into the light. He looks forward to a day when walls are rebuilt and people come streaming home from every direction. The God who seemed silent has not forgotten His people.

Then the book ends on a note so beautiful it has been sung and prayed for thousands of years: “Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression?... He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.” The very name Micah means “who is like the Lord?”, and the book closes by answering its own question. There is no God like ours, because there is no other God who delights in mercy and hurls our sins into the deep. This final picture of forgiveness finds its fullness in Christ, in whom God has pardoned us completely. This lesson is about finding hope in the darkness by looking to the God who forgives.

Group Discussion: Micah looked at a deeply broken society and chose to say, “But as for me, I will look to the Lord.” When the world or the people around you seem to be falling apart, what helps you turn your eyes to God rather than sink into despair or cynicism?

Personal Reflection: Micah ends with wonder at a God who casts our sins “into the depths of the sea.” Is there a sin or failure from your past that you struggle to believe God has truly forgiven? What would it mean to take Micah’s words to heart about it?

Read Micah 7:1-20

Study Questions

1. Micah surveys his society and laments, “The godly has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among mankind” (7:1–2), describing the breakdown of trust even within families (7:5–6). What does it mean to face the reality of human sin and brokenness honestly, without either denying it or being swallowed by despair?
2. Living in a culture where trust had broken down, Micah refused to become cynical or hopeless. Where are you tempted toward cynicism or despair about people or about the world, and how might God be calling you to a hope that is honest but not bitter?
3. In the middle of the darkness Micah declares, “But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me” (7:7). What does it look like, practically, to deliberately fix our eyes on God when everything around us is shaking?
4. Micah resolves to wait for God: “I will wait for the God of my salvation.” Waiting on God is one of the hardest disciplines of faith. Where is God currently calling you to wait on Him, and how can you wait with hope rather than mere resignation?
5. Micah tells his enemy, “Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me” (7:8). What does this confidence reveal about the difference between a believer’s falls and a final defeat, and how does God bring light into our darkness?

6. Micah is willing to bear God's discipline, trusting that God will "plead my cause" and "bring me out to the light" (7:9). When you are under hardship or correction, how can you respond with humble trust that God is ultimately for you and working toward your good?
7. Micah looks ahead to a day of restoration, when walls are rebuilt and people come to God from every direction, from Assyria to Egypt and from sea to sea (7:11–12). How does this ingathering from all nations point forward to the gospel going to all the world, rather than to a merely national, political restoration?
8. Even while waiting for restoration, Micah keeps walking with God in the present. How do you hold together honest hope for what God will yet do with faithful obedience in the messy, unfinished present?
9. The book ends in wonder: "Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression... You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea" (7:18–19), fulfilling God's faithfulness to Abraham (7:20). How is this pardoning mercy fully revealed in the forgiveness we have in Christ, and how is the promise to Abraham fulfilled in Christ and His church (Galatians 3:16, 26–29) rather than in a future earthly, political restoration of national Israel?
10. Look back over the whole chapter, and the whole book of Micah. Name one specific way Jesus is using this final word of pardoning mercy to give you hope in your own darkness and to deepen your wonder at the God who forgives.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Psalm 103:8–12, as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions; Isaiah 1:18, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Galatians 3:16, 26–29, the promise to Abraham fulfilled in Christ and in those who are his; 1 John 1:9, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive; Romans 8:31–39, if God is for us, who can be against us.

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