

“Who is a God like unto Thee?”

Micah 7:18-20

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

June 12, 2022 p.m.

Introduction: We come tonight to our last look in our brief study of the Book of Micah. Our attention is directed to the last 3 verses of chapter 7. For the orthodox Jews, these 3 verses are added to the end of the Book of Jonah to be read in the synagogue on the afternoon of the Day of Atonement (partly because of the abrupt ending to Jonah’s prophecy, closing with a question). We noted last week that the Book of Micah is divided into 3 sections, each beginning with the word: *“Hear.”* These sections can be outlined: “the prophecy of retribution (1-3); the promise of restoration (4-5); & the plea for repentance (6-7)” (Phillips). This final section centers on the coming Kingdom for Israel. As Micah concludes his prophecy he emphasizes the character of God & the covenant with God. Here we see the illustrations of God’s forgiveness & the indications of God’s faithfulness. Verse 18 begins with a “play” on Micah’s name, *“Who is a God like unto Thee.”* Micah’s name means, “Who is like God (Jehovah)?”

I. The **character** of God (:18-19) > the **illustrations** of God’s **forgiveness**

A. God’s forgiveness described:

1. He pardons sin – *“that pardoneth iniquity”*
2. He forgives transgressions – *“passeth by the transgressions...”*
3. He delights in showing mercy – *“delighteth in mercy”*
4. He shows compassion – *“will have compassion”*
5. He deals finally with sin – *“subdue our iniquities...cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”*

B. God’s forgiveness demonstrated (taken from MacArthur):

1. Psalm 103:12 – He removes our sins as far as the East is from the West.
2. Isaiah 1:18 – He completely cleanses us from the stain of our sins.
3. Isaiah 38:17 – He throws our sins behind His back.
4. Jeremiah 31:34 – He remembers our sins no more (no longer held against us).
5. Micah 7:19 – He treads our sins underfoot.
6. Micah 7:19 – He casts our sins into the depths of the sea.

II. The **covenant** with God (:20) > the **indications** of God’s **faithfulness**

A. God’s truthfulness (*“truth”*) to Jacob:

1. The covenant reaffirmed with Isaac – Genesis 26:24.
2. The covenant reaffirmed with Jacob – Genesis 28:13-14.

B. God’s lovingkindness (*“mercy”*) to Abraham:

1. God’s mercy is shown to Abraham – Genesis 12:2-3 & 15:1-21.
2. God’s mercy is shown to the *“fathers from the days of old.”*

Summary: “In spite of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God, the Lord intends to fulfill His unconditional promises in the Abrahamic Covenant made with Abraham & confirmed with Isaac & Jacob. When enacted in conjunction with the Davidic Covenant, Israel will again be restored as a people & a nation to the land originally promised to Abraham. Jesus Christ, the ultimate descendant of David, will rule from Jerusalem over the world as King of Kings & Lord of Lords (Rev. 17:14; 19:16)” (MacArthur).

Conclusion: It has been suggested that these last 3 verses of Micah contain much “distilled theology.” There is a reflection of the words of God to Moses in Exodus 34:5-7, “...*The LORD, The LORD God, merciful & gracious, longsuffering, & abundant in goodness & truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity & transgression & sin, & that by no means clear the guilty...*” Wiersbe suggests, “The better we know the character of God, the more we can trust Him for the future. The better we know the promises & covenants of God, the more peace we will have in our hearts, when things fall apart. When Micah wrote this confession of his faith, the future seemed hopeless; yet he had hope because he knew God & fully trusted Him.”

Consider again with me the use of this passage by orthodox Jews. “Once a year on the afternoon of New Year, the orthodox Jew goes to a running stream or river & symbolically empties his pockets of his sins into the water, while he recites verses 18-20. The service is called ‘Tashlich’ after the Hebrew word meaning ‘thou wilt cast’.” (Feinberg). How sad for them to go through this ritual yearly. But we who have experienced the grace of God know that the work of Christ on the cross of Calvary as He bore our sins in His own body. Because He bore our sins & penalty for sins, we have the assurance that those sins are “Gone, gone, gone, gone, yes my sins are gone...” This teaches us that “with the removal of sin’s guilt comes the power to live for God so that sin will no longer rule. He buries our sins in the depth of the sea & forgets them. Who indeed is a God like to Jehovah!” (Neal).

How about you tonight? Has the Lord forgiven your sins? If so, can you claim the promises of God, trusting in His faithfulness? Consider the challenge & comfort from promises such as Isaiah 26:3 & Proverbs 3:5-6.

I close with the words of Warren Wiersbe, “No matter how dark the day, the light of God’s promises is still shining. No matter how confusing & frightening our circumstances, the character of God remains the same. You have every reason to trust Him!”