

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
4-11-18

Micah Chapter 7

Israel Misery - Verses 1-7

¹What misery is mine! I am like one who gathers summer fruit at the gleaning of the vineyard; there is no cluster of grapes to eat, none of the early figs that I crave. ²The faithful have been swept from the land; not one upright person remains. Everyone lies in wait to shed blood; they hunt each other with nets. ³Both hands are skilled in doing evil; the ruler demands gifts, the judge accepts bribes, the powerful dictate what they desire—they all conspire together. ⁴The best of them is like a brier, the most upright worse than a thorn hedge. The day God visits you has come, the day your watchmen sound the alarm. Now is the time of your confusion. ⁵Do not trust a neighbor; put no confidence in a friend. Even with the woman who lies in your embrace guard the words of your lips. ⁶For a son dishonors his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man's enemies are the members of his own household. ⁷But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.

7:1 This chapter begins in gloom (7:1-6) and ends in hope (7:8-20). Micah watched as society rotted around him. Rulers demanded gifts; judges accepted bribes; corruption was universal. But God promised to lead the people out of the darkness of sin and into his light. Then the people would praise him for his faithfulness. God alone is perfectly faithful.

7:1-4 Micah could not find an upright, honest person anywhere in the land. Even today, uprightness (fairness, honesty, and integrity) is difficult to find. Society rationalizes sin, and even believers sometimes compromise Christian principles in order to do what they want. It is easy to convince ourselves that we deserve a few breaks, especially when "everyone else" is doing it. But the standards for honesty come from God, not society. We are to be honest because God is truth, and we are to be like him.

7:5-6 Sin had affected the government leaders and society in general. Deceit and dishonesty had even ruined the family, the core of society. As a result, the only way left to purify the people was God's judgment. This would draw the nation back to God and restore them from the inside out.

Israel Will Rise - Verses 8-13

⁸ Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light. ⁹ Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the LORD's wrath, until he pleads my case and upholds my cause. He will bring me out into the light; I will see his righteousness. ¹⁰ Then my enemy will see it and will be covered with shame, she who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?" My eyes will see her downfall; even now she will be trampled underfoot like mire in the streets. ¹¹ The day for building your walls will come, the day for extending your boundaries. ¹² In that day people will come to you from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, even from Egypt to the Euphrates and from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain. ¹³ The earth will become desolate because of its inhabitants, as the result of their deeds.

7:7-10 Micah showed great faith in God both personally (7:7) and on Israel's behalf (7:8-10) as he proclaimed that (1) he would wait upon God, because God hears and saves when help is needed; (2) God would bring his people through when times were tough; (3) Israel must be patient in punishment because God would bring them out of the darkness; and (4) their enemies would be punished. We, too, can have a relationship with God that can allow us to have confidence like Micah's. It doesn't take unusual talent; it simply takes faith in God and a willingness to act on that faith.

7:9 Micah understood that if the people would be patient and obedient while they were being punished, God would forgive them and show his goodness again (Lamentations 3:39-41). Punishment does not mean rejection. The people were being punished in order to bring them back to God, not to send them away from him. When you face trials because of your sin, do not be angry with God or afraid that he has rejected you. Instead, turn away from your sin, turn to God, and continue to be patient and obedient.

Prayer and Praise - Verses 14-20

¹⁴ Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, which lives by itself in a forest, in fertile pasturelands. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in days long ago. ¹⁵ "As in the days when you came out of Egypt, I will show them my wonders." ¹⁶ Nations will see and be ashamed, deprived of all their power. They will put their hands over their mouths and their ears will

become deaf. ¹⁷ They will lick dust like a snake, like creatures that crawl on the ground. They will come trembling out of their dens; they will turn in fear to the LORD our God and will be afraid of you. ¹⁸ Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. ¹⁹ You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. ²⁰ You will be faithful to Jacob, and show love to Abraham, as you pledged on oath to our ancestors in days long ago.

7:14 Bashan and Gilead were fertile areas east of the Jordan River, previously the territory of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

7:18 God delights in showing his unfailing love and mercy! He does not forgive grudgingly but is glad when we repent, and he offers forgiveness to all who come back to him. Today you can confess your sins and receive his loving forgiveness. Don't be too proud to accept God's free offer.

7:20 In an age when religion was making little difference in people's lives, Micah said that God expected his people to do what was just and right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with him (6:8). He requires the same of Christians today. In a world that is unjust, we must act justly and do what is right. In a world of tough breaks, we must be merciful. In a world of pride and self-sufficiency, we must walk humbly with God. Only when we live according to God's way will we begin to affect our homes, our society, and our world.