God's Matchless Mercy
Micah 7:14-20
SS Lesson for 07/26/2015

Devotional Scripture: Ps 136

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Introduction

Overview and Key Verse of the Lesson

The lesson describes God's Matchless Mercy. The study's aim is to review and understand God's message of hope for His people. The study's application is to praise and give thanksgivings to God for His faithful promises of protection and deliverance.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Key Verse: Micah 7:18

Who is a God like You, Pardonning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy.

Commentary from The Bible Knowledge Commentary

Is the speaker in Micah 7:14 God or Micah? Probably the prophet is addressing God. Because of God’s promise in 2:12 and 5:4, Micah asked the Lord to restore and provide for His people as a shepherd cares for his flock. The staff would be a rod (šēbet) of blessing, not of judgment as in 6:9. Micah prayed that God’s people (His inheritance; cf. 7:18; Deut. 4:20), then isolated like sheep in a forest, would enjoy prosperity and peace as they had in Bashan and Gilead (cf. Jer. 50:19) in former times (in days long ago; cf. Micah 7:20). Those two areas east of the Jordan River (see the map “Israel and Surrounding Nations in the Days of the Prophets,” between Song and Isa.) were fertile grazing grounds for sheep and cattle. In 734 b.c. these areas were overrun by Tiglath-Pileser III, king of Assyria (745-727).

In response to the prophet’s request (v. 14) the Lord told the nation through Micah that a time would come when He would again be known as a miraculous God. When Israel came out of Egypt, God did wonders (cf. Ex. 3:20; 15:11; Judges 6:13; Ps. 78:12-16) on her behalf, releasing her from Egypt, enabling her to cross the Red Sea on dry ground, and providing for her in the desert. Once again the nation will have a great “exodus” from its places of habitation and God will miraculously move the Israelites into their land. This will occur when the Messiah returns and sets up His millennial rule. When God miraculously regathers Israel the nations will see it and be ashamed (cf. 3:7; 7:10) for His power will be greater than theirs. Overwhelmed, they will be speechless and will refuse to hear about Israel’s victories. In humiliation they will lick the dust like snakes (cf. Ps. 72:9; Isa. 49:23), and like animals coming out of their hiding places (dens) they will surrender to the Lord and will be fearful of Israel. These facts must have greatly encouraged the righteous remnant in Micah’s day.

The author concluded his book by reminding himself and his readers about the goodness and uniqueness of their God (cf. Ex. 34:6-7a). Micah’s final words of praise show that he had great faith in God’s eventual out-working of His plans for His covenant people. Today orthodox Jews read these verses in their synagogues on the Day of Atonement, after they read the Book of Jonah. The rhetorical question, Who is a God like You? (cf. Ex. 15:11; Pss. 35:10; 71:19; 77:13; 89:6; 113:5) may be a word-play on Micah’s name which means, “Who is like Yahweh?” The obvious answer is that no one is like the Lord. The remainder of Micah 7:18-20 describes what He is like. God’s acts on behalf of His people prove that He is completely trustworthy and merciful. Micah affirmed six things about God: (1) He pardons the sin and transgression (cf. 1:5; 3:8; 6:7) of the remnant (cf. 2:12; 4:7; 5:7-8) of His inheritance (cf. 7:14). (2) He does not stay angry forever (cf. Ps. 103:9) and (3) He likes to show mercy (ḥesed; cf. Micah 7:20). What encouragement these truths would have been for the godly remnant living in Israel’s corrupt society. Confident that (4) the Lord will again have compassion (rehem, “tender, heartfelt concern”; cf. Pss. 102:13; 103:4, 13; 116:5; 119:156; Hosea 14:3; Zech. 10:6) on Israel, Micah knew that (5) God would deal with her sins by, figuratively speaking, treading them underfoot (subduing them as if they were enemies) and hurling them into... the sea (thus completely forgiving them). Three Old Testament words for sin are used in Micah 7:18-19: sin(s), transgression, and iniquities. Micah knew God would do these
things because (6) He is true (faithful) to Jacob and shows mercy (hesed; cf. v. 18) to Abraham. God cannot lie; He is true to His Word and loyal to His commitments and His oath. Therefore Micah was trusting in God’s promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:2-3; 15:18-21), which were confirmed to Jacob (Gen. 28:13-14), that He will bless their descendants. Israel’s peace and prosperity will be realized when the Messiah-King reigns. Christ will exercise justice over His and Israel’s opponents and He will extend grace to His own. This promise gave Micah confidence in his dark days and is also a source of comfort to believers today.

Lesson Introduction and Background
From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

During the summer of 2012, a Hall of Fame broadcaster for a major league baseball team helped raise $50,000 for the team’s Community Fund. A well-known actor, becoming aware of this, then pledged to match that gift personally. Part of the fund’s function is to provide opportunities to children with disabilities and to underwrite expenses for inner-city baseball teams. Fans applauded the actor for his generous match. Generous giving can indeed inspire equally generous, matching giving on a human level. But attempting to match what God has given us is an exercise in futility. The blessings of God, those of the cross and empty tomb of Jesus, can in no way be matched. Paul’s declaration “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15) points right to the idea of matchless. The Old Testament prophets did not have the advantage of seeing the work of Christ as an accomplished fact of history. Nevertheless, they understood the matchless concept regarding God’s blessings.

Today’s lesson concludes our unit of studies from the Old Testament prophet Micah. The seventh and final chapter of his book, from which today’s text comes, presents an interesting mix of prayers and promises from that prophet. The part of this chapter that comes just before today’s lesson text begins on a very distressing note. Micah cried “What misery is mine!” as he seemed overwhelmed by the conditions of the world around him (Micah 7:1). He expressed his frustration in verse 2: “The 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.” The evildoers had become so skilled in their wrongdoing that figuratively they had become ambidextrous, willing and able to use “both hands” in carrying out their evil designs (Micah 7:3). The societal breakdown was so bad that one could not trust even a friend or family member, and one had to use words with caution (7:5, 6). Much later, Jesus used the words of Micah 7:6 to describe how loyalty to him would result in alienation from family members (Matthew 10:35, 36). In the second part of Micah 7, the prophet addressed his (and Israel’s) enemy: those nations that had wreaked havoc among God’s people and destroyed their cities. Someday the tables would be turned (7:7-12)! This leads us into the prayer of today’s text.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Merciful Shepherd (Micah 7:14-15)

14 Shepherd Your people with Your staff, The flock of Your heritage, Who dwell solitarily in a woodland, In the midst of Carmel; Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, As in days of old.
15 "As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders."

Shepherd who feeds (14)

A Shepherd who feeds until we want no more (Ps 23:1)

23 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
A shepherd who feeds Jesus' sheep (John 21:15-18)

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." 16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." 17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

A Shepherd who feeds the bread of angels (Ps 78:25)

25 Men ate the bread of angels; he sent them all the food they could eat.

A Shepherd who feeds those who fear Him (Ps 111:5)

5 He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.

A Shepherd who feeds so that those who partake will never hunger again (John 6:32-41)

32 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread." 35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. 36 But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. 38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. 40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." 41 At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."

Shepherd who performs wonders (15)

Wonders that revealed His glory (John 2:11)

11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Wonders that results in people believing in Jesus' Name (John 2:23)

23 Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name.

Wonders that made people follow Jesus (John 6:2)

2 and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick.

Wonders that should result in praise and worship of God (Luke 19:37)

37 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

Wonders that should strengthen our faith (John 10:37-38)

37 Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. 38 But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."
Merciful Protector (Micah 7:16-17)

16 The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; They shall put their hand over their mouth; Their ears shall be deaf.
17 They shall lick the dust like a serpent; They shall crawl from their holes like snakes of the earth. They shall be afraid of the Lord our God, And shall fear because of You.

Protector from enemies (16)

Protection from enemies by taking refuge in God (Ps 5:11)
11 But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you.

Protection from enemies by providing safety eternally (Ps 12:7)
7 O Lord, you will keep us safe and protect us from such people forever.

Protection from enemies because God never forsakes His faithful ones (Ps 37:28)
28 For the Lord loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. They will be protected forever, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off;

Protection from enemies because God loves those who acknowledge His name (Ps 91:14)
14 "Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.

Protector who is feared (17)

Feared because of God's favor toward His people (Ps 102:15)
15 The nations will fear the name of the Lord, all the kings of the earth will revere your glory.

Feared through God answering His people's prayers (1 Kings 8:42-43)
42 for men will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm — when he comes and prays toward this temple, 43 then hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name.

Feared because of inflicted punishment (Ezek 25:10-11)
10 I will give Moab along with the Ammonites to the people of the East as a possession, so that the Ammonites will not be remembered among the nations; 11 and I will inflict punishment on Moab. Then they will know that I am the Lord."

Feared because of God showing the holiness of His Name (Ezek 36:23)
23 I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Sovereign Lord, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes.

Merciful Compassion (Micah 7:18-19)

18 Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy.
19 He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea.

**Compassionate mercy (18)**

*Compassionate mercy because of God's unfailing love (Ps 51:1)*

51 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

*Compassionate mercy through God restraining His anger (Ps 78:36-38)*

36 But then they would flatter him with their mouths, lying to him with their tongues; 37 their hearts were not loyal to him, they were not faithful to his covenant. 38 Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath.

*Compassionate mercy through Jesus (Heb 2:17)*

17 For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

*Compassionate mercy through God's abounding love and faithfulness (Ps 86:15)*

15 But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

*Compassionate mercy because God is full of compassion and mercy (James 5:11)*

11 As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

**Compassionate forgiveness (19)**

*Compassionate forgiveness that allows God to not keep a record of sins (Ps 130:3-4)*

3 If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? 4 But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.

*Compassionate forgiveness through covenants (Matt 26:28)*

28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

*Compassionate forgiveness through Jesus' intercession (Acts 5:31)*

31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

*Compassionate forgiveness through redemption (Col 1:13-14)*

13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**Merciful Promises (Micah 7:20)**

20 You will give truth to Jacob And mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old.
Promises of truth (20)

Promises of truth because God is the God of truth (Ps 31:5)
5 Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O Lord, the God of truth.

Promises of truth because God is perfect (Deut 32:4)
4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

Promises of truth because God is faithful (2 Tim 2:13)
13 if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

Promises of truth because God cannot lie (Titus 1:2)
2 a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,

Promises of truth through God's confirmation and oath (Heb 6:17-18)
17 Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. 18 God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.

Promises of covenants (20)

Promises of covenants because God's covenants never fail (Ps 89:28)
28 I will maintain my love to him forever, and my covenant with him will never fail.

Promises of covenants because God will never violate His covenants (Ps 89:34)
34 I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered.

Promises of covenants because God remembers His covenants (Ps 105:8)
8 He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations,

Promises of covenants through redemption (Ps 111:9)
9 He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever — holy and awesome is his name.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from David Guzik

A. Gods people humbly confess their sin.

1. (1-4) An honest confession of their sinful state.

Woe is me! For I am like those who gather summer fruits, like those who glean vintage grapes; there is no cluster to eat of the first-ripe fruit which my soul desires. The faithful man has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; every man hunts his brother with a net. That they may successfully do evil with both hands; the prince asks for gifts, the judge seeks a bribe, and the great man utters his evil desire; so they scheme together. The best of them is like a brier; the most upright is
sharper than a thorn hedge; the day of your watchman and your punishment comes; now shall be their perplexity.

a. Woe is me! On behalf of the sinful nation, the Prophet Micah now confesses the sin of Gods people. First, he recognizes that their sin has left them impoverished (there is no cluster to eat of the first-ripe fruit which my soul desires). Then he describes some of their specific sins and their general character, revealing their deeply ingrained sin against others.

b. The day of your watchman and your punishment comes; now shall be their perplexity: When the sinner is immersed in sin and feeling successful, they feel like there is no price to pay for their sin. Nevertheless, there will come the day of your watchman and your punishment. The confident self-confidence of the sinner will be turned to perplexity.

2. (5-7) Crumbling relationships among Gods people.

Do not trust in a friend; do not put your confidence in a companion; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom. For son dishonors father, daughter rises against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a mans enemies are the men of his own household. Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.

a. Do not trust in a friend: Because of their rampant sin and selfishness, personal relationships have crumbled among Gods people. One cannot trust in a friend or put confidence in a companion, and even blood relatives are at war with each other.

b. Therefore I will look to the LORD . . . my God will hear me: In this sin-immersed culture, there are few people to give confidence or compassion - so one can only look to the LORD.

   i. This is a bad thing, because people should be honorable and trustworthy enough so that we can find confidence and compassion from them. Nevertheless, God can use this as a good thing, because it forces people to put their trust in the only One who can never let them down - the God of my salvation.

3. (8-10) The humble state of Gods people.

Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case and executes justice for me. He will bring me forth to the light; I will see His righteousness. Then she who is my enemy will see, and shame will cover her who said to me, Where is the LORD your God? My eyes will see her; now she will be trampled down like mud in the streets.

a. Do not rejoice over me, my enemy: Micah speaks for those brought low by personal sin and the sin of the community. In their humble place, he warns their enemies to not rejoice over their condition because when I fall, I will arise and when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me. You see me brought low now, but you should know that it isn't for long. God will lift me up.

b. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him: Speaking for the sinful people, Micah manfully takes responsibility for their sin. The idea is, I know that I have sinned, and so I will accept my correction. Micah knows that Gods people will stay in their low place until He pleads my case and executes justice for me. They are totally abandoned unto Gods care.

   i. Herein is discovered the difference between remorse and penitence. In remorse a man is sorry for himself; he mourns over his sin because it has brought suffering to him. In penitence he is grieved by the wrong sin has done to God; he yields his personal suffering in the confidence that by it God is setting him free from his sin. (Morgan)

c. He will bring me forth to the light; I will see His righteousness: At the same time, there is complete confidence in the salvation of God and their vindication before their enemies. This shows that Gods people know their sinful state, but they also know the greatness of Gods redemption.

B. Gods comfort and pardon to His people.

1. (11-13) The restored city of the people of God.
In the day when your walls are to be built, in that day the decree shall go far and wide. In that day they shall come to you from Assyria and the fortified cities, from the fortress to the River, from sea to sea, and mountain to mountain. Yet the land shall be desolate because of those who dwell in it, and for the fruit of their deeds.

   a. **In the day when your walls are to be built, in that day the decree shall go far and wide:** When the time comes for Israel's restoration, God will send a call out far and wide to gather and restore His people.

   b. **Yet the land shall be desolate because of those who dwell in it:** When God gathers Israel for restoration, they will come to a desolate land, ruined because of the judgment of God on the sin of His people.

2. (14-15) God cares for His people as in days of old.

   **Shepherd Your people with Your staff, the flock of Your heritage, who dwell solitarily in a woodland, in the midst of Carmel; let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in days of old. As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders.**

   a. **Shepherd Your people with Your staff:** After God's people are brought back to the place they belong, they are lovingly cared for by the LORD Himself. The LORD shepherds them, and feeds them.

   b. **As in the days of old:** There was a time when God's people enjoyed this kind of close relationship with Him. Now, that previous relationship will be restored, and He will show them wonders. The wonders come out of the close relationship with the Shepherd.

3. (16-17) The nations are brought low before restored Israel.

   The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall put their hand over their mouth; their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; they shall crawl from their holes like snakes of the earth. They shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of You.

   a. **The nations shall see and be ashamed:** When Israel is restored to the land and enjoys a restored relationship with the LORD, then those who opposed God's people will see how wrong they were to fight against them.

   b. **They shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of You:** Seeing the greatness of God's restoration will make the nations respect the LORD in a way they didn't before. They will see the power and love of God in action.

4. (18-20) The glorious mercy and pardon of God.

   Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will give truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, which You have sworn to our fathers from days of old.

   a. **Who is a God like You:** In light of the glorious restoration of the Lord, Israel Micah glorifies the God of such great forgiveness (pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage). Micah sees that God's forgiveness is so great, that it can't even be compared to what often passes for forgiveness among men.

   i. Boyce on **Who is a God like You:** It is a theme verse and appropriately ends the book. For it is a play on Micah's name. Micah means Who is like Yahweh?

   b. **Because He delights in mercy:** Why does God have such great mercy and forgiveness to His people? The reasons are in *Him*, not in His people. It is simply because He delights in mercy.

   i. If God delights in mercy, then why are some men lost? Because God doesn't delight in mercy so as to shame His justice. God opens His hand of mercy to all who will receive it, but those who will not receive His mercy can blame only themselves.

   ii. If God delights in mercy, then why is He not always merciful? Because there comes time when the guilty must be punished. God's judgments are in themselves expressions of mercy, because they are like the cutting away of cancer. The surgery hurts, but must take place or the whole body will die.
iii. If God delights in mercy, then why is there an unpardonable sin? We should be grateful that there is only one unpardonable sin - the sin of rejecting His mercy.

iv. If God delights in mercy, then why do I feel that He can't have mercy on me? In such cases, we should trust God and not our feelings. Whatever despair may whisper or doubt may suggest, one text of Scripture is worth fifty fears and doubts, or fifty thousand either. All objections to the delight of God in mercy are but illusions of your brain, or delusions of your heart. (Spurgeon)

v. If God is this merciful to those who sin against Him, do we have any justification for not showing mercy to those who sin against us? To all of you I would say - take care, as you expect the mercy of God, to deal it out to others. Never say, I won't forgive, for you seal your own condemnation when you do, and if you forgive not your brother his trespasses neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. You have chosen your own destruction when you shut the door against your child, or against your neighbor, and say, I will treasure up that enmity as long as I live. I tell you, sirs, your offerings at God's altar are an abomination to him until you have forgiven every one of your fellows his trespasses. (Spurgeon)

c. He will again have compassion on us: Gods people once knew His compassion, but they resisted and rejected it. Now they can know it again, confident that He will again have compassion on us.

i. His compassion is shown in that the LORD will subdue our iniquities. He loves us as sinners, but loves us too much to leave us there. His compassion saves us from our sin.

ii. His compassion is shown in that the LORD will cast all our sins in to the depths of the sea. God will not hold on to our sin, but forgive us instead. This means there is no probation with God's forgiveness. He doesn't forgive our sins just to leave them around to hang over our head. In His compassion, He does away with our sins, casting them to the depths of the sea - and then He puts a No Fishing sign there!

iii. His compassion is shown in that the LORD will give truth to Jacob. God's people not only need the His mercy, they need His truth and He is compassionate enough to give His truth as He gives mercy and pardon.

d. Which you have sworn to our fathers from days of old: In concluding His prophecy, Micah sees God's future work as a continuation of His past work to the fathers of Israel. Micah knew that the same love, compassion, and mercy He showed to their fathers was available to them - if they received it in faith.

(Adapted from URL: http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/guz/view.cgi?bk=32&ch=7)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

A few days after the attacks of 9/11, Max Lucado prepared a prayer to offer encouragement and perspective at a time of great distress throughout the U.S. He entitled the prayer, “Do It Again, Lord!” The following is an excerpt:

And so we come to you. We don’t ask you for help; we beg you for it. We don’t request it; we implore it. We know what you can do. We’ve read the accounts. We’ve pondered the stories and now we plead, “Do it again, Lord. Do it again.”

Remember Joseph? You rescued him from the pit. You can do the same for us. Do it again, Lord.

Remember the Hebrews in Egypt? You protected their children from the angel of death. We have children too, Lord. Do it again.


The women at the tomb? You resurrected their hope. The doubts of Thomas? You took them away. Do it again, Lord. Do it again.

You changed Daniel from a captive into a king’s counselor. You took Peter the fisherman and made him Peter an apostle. Because of you, David went from leading sheep to leading armies. Do it again, Lord, for we need counselors today, Lord. We need leaders. Do it again, dear Lord.
While Micah did not utter such a specific prayer in his book, today’s text reveals the Lord’s promise that declares in essence, “I will do it again!” The prophet spoke clearly of coming judgment on both Israel and Judah. But judgment was a comma, not a period; that is, the judgment was to signify a pause, not an end. God was not finished with his people; the mighty arm that had done great works in the past had not weakened. The God who had the ability to destroy oppressors of the body by drowning them in the sea also has the ability to “hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:19). And that is the good news that the church bears witness to today: the mercy (v. 18) and compassion (v. 19) that have been demonstrated mightily in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. God is not only willing and able to do it again, he has already done so.

**Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator**

1. The humble seeking of God's blessing should characterize every believer (Mic. 7:14)
2. God always rewards repentance and humility (vs. 15)
3. We should fear nothing in this world, for everything will one day submit in fear to our sovereign God (vss. 16-17)
4. There is no greater testimony to the uniqueness and power of God than His forgiveness (vs. 18)
5. We who are forgiven have no reason to despair (vs. 19)
6. We should remain faithful to God, for He is faithful to all His promises (vs. 20)