

July 26, 2015



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Being imperfect emphasizes our dependence on God's mercy

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:
Thank You, Father, for Your new and never-failing mercies. Forgive me for the times I deny You and fail others, and teach me to run to You for Your overflowing compassion.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
22 Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

(Lam 3:22-23 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", Sep 14, 2013)

Series: GOD DEMANDS JUSTICE

UNIT: Advocates of Justice for All

NEXT WEEK

A Redeemer in Zion
(Isaiah 59:15-21)

God's Matchless Mercy Micah 7:14-20

Aim and Application 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 Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

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.

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!" 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.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

The Minor Prophets, while warning Israel and Judah repeatedly, always included reassurance that the day was coming when God would restore them to the glorious position they had once had with Him. It has now been many centuries since these messages were originally delivered, but the promises given to Israel still hold and will be fulfilled. In this week's text, Micah looked into the distant future of God's people. The context is the millennial reign of Christ following the tribulation period. We are living in very troublesome times in a culture that appears to be getting more and more wicked. The principles God gave Israel for the reception of His blessings are spelled out in the Pentateuch, and while we do not live by the Mosaic Law today, many of the principles still apply. God warned Israel that if they were disobedient, they would suffer certain consequences. On the other hand, if they were obedient, they would experience certain blessings. This basic premise still holds for us. Throughout history, one nation after another has risen and disappeared. We should not think that just because America was founded on Christian principles, God will continue to shower His blessings upon her. The words of Micah are indeed applicable today.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

MERCIFUL SHEPHERD (MICAH 7:14-15)

Shepherd who feeds (14)

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

A shepherd who feeds Jesus' sheep (John 21:15-18)

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

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

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

Shepherd who performs wonders (15)

Wonders that revealed His glory (John 2:11)

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

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

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

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

MERCIFUL PROTECTOR (MICAH 7:16-17)

Protector from enemies (16)

Protection from enemies by taking refuge in God (Ps 5:11)

Protection from enemies by providing safety eternally (Ps 12:7)

Protection from enemies because God never forsakes His faithful ones (Ps 37:28)

Protection from enemies because God loves those who acknowledge His name (Ps 91:14)

Protector who is feared (17)

Feared because of God's favor toward His people (Ps 102:15)

Feared through God answering His people's prayers (1 Kings 8:42-43)

Feared because of inflicted punishment (Ezek 25:10-11)

Feared because of God showing the holiness of His Name (Ezek 36:23)

MERCIFUL COMPASSION (MICAH 7:18-19)

Compassionate mercy (18)

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

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

Compassionate mercy through Jesus (Heb 2:17)

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

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

Compassionate forgiveness (19)

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

Compassionate forgiveness through covenants (Matt 26:28)

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

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

MERCIFUL PROMISES (MICAH 7:20)

Promises of truth (20)

Promises of truth because truth sets us free (John 8:31-32)

Promises of truth because God is the God of truth (Ps 31:5)

Promises of truth because God is faithful (2 Tim 2:13)

Promises of truth because God cannot lie (Titus 1:2)

Promises of truth through God's confirmation and oath (Heb 6:17-18)

Promises of covenants (20)

Promises of covenants because God's covenants never fail (Ps 89:28)

Promises of covenants because God will never violate His covenants (Ps 89:34)

Promises of covenants because God remembers His covenants (Ps 105:8)

Promises of covenants through redemption (Ps 111:9)