The God Beyond Compare
Scripture Text: Micah 7:18–20

Introduction

What makes God so great? What makes Him so magnificent? Well, that presumes you believe that God is indeed great and magnificent. For some, He is like the parent who shows up at a party to stop all the fun. These people may think that life would be so much better without God being such a killjoy. But to others, He is not that. In fact, God is so much more than that. Praising God’s greatness, the prophet Micah asked this question, “Who is like our God?” It is an interesting question, particularly as it may be a pun on Micah’s own name, which means, “Who is like Yahweh?” – the covenant name of God that He revealed to the Israelites. In this final passage, Micah asked the question, much like his own name, “Who is like our God?” Who is like Him? Well, we have been through Micah’s prophesy for several weeks now. We have seen what God has revealed through His prophet. We have seen what God has done and promised to do to His people. We have been on somewhat of a roller coaster ride, full of ups and downs, as we have gone through this book of prophesy.

We began our look at Micah’s prophesy in chapter one, where Micah described what might be called a lawsuit against God’s people. God gave His testimony, He brought charges against His people, and He pronounced a divine sentence against them. God was going to punish His people for years of disobedience and wickedness. We learned that sin brings judgment – people reap what they sow.

In chapter two, Micah continued God’s indictment against His people, primarily focusing on those who took advantage of the poor and those who tried to suppress the truth. God had enough of Israel’s sin and blatant disregard for His law that He told them to “get out” of the land He had promised them.

But, at the end of chapter two, after sharing that depressing news, Micah gave us a glimmer of hope. He mentioned that God would one day gather His people together. He would raise up a leader for them Who would lead them to victory. Times were good again; however, as soon as we rode that spiritual high for a brief time, we took a nose-dive into misery again.

In chapter three, Micah used very graphic terms to describe the wickedness of Israel’s leaders who destroyed God’s people. Because of them, God said “Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins.” (Micah 3:12)

But, in chapter four we rode that roller coaster up again where Micah painted for us a picture of a better and brighter day. God would one day rescue His people from their enemies and the nations would flow to Him. And in the first part of chapter five, we
caught a glimpse of the future King, the Savior of mankind, Who would be born in a little
town of Bethlehem. This King would shepherd His people and they would dwell securely
in His presence. Micah concluded chapter five with a description of God’s passion for
our holiness, how God will root out those things that draw His people away from Him.
Things were good again…for a while!

And then in chapter six, Micah resumed God’s indictment against His people and
reminded us of what God requires of us all: to act justly, to love mercy and to walk
humbly with our God. Because they had not done what He required of them, God
reminded the Israelites of His judgment against them, that He would “strike [them] with a
grievous blow, making [them] desolate because of [their] sins.” (Micah 6:13)

Micah continued that bad news into chapter seven where He lamented, “Woe is me!” He
cried out for the condition of His people and the loneliness He felt. Times were bad
again; but in the middle of that chapter, he renewed our hope for a better day. The Lord
will be our Light, Who will take care of us as a shepherd takes care of his flock.

So, we have been on an emotional roller coaster through this book. We have seen the
bad times and the good times. That brings us to the final passage in the book and the
question that is before us: Who is like our God? The simple and most accurate answer
is…No one! There is no one like our God. He is beyond compare. No one and nothing is
like Him and our tour through the book of Micah proves it. Micah’s prophecy is chock-full
of God’s judgment on His people, but it is also jam-packed with God’s love and mercy.
We see both in this book. There is God’s judgment and God’s mercy. We see the God
who punishes His people for their sins is the very same Shepherd-King who faithfully
gathers, protects, and forgives them. Micah’s final hymn of praise in the book declares
God to be incomparable. No one is like Him.

I suggest three things that Micah points out to us in these last three verses of the book:

1. God is Incomparable because of His Unfailing Love (v. 18),
2. God is Incomparable because of His Redeeming Power (v. 19),
3. God is Incomparable because of His Never-ending Faithfulness (v. 20).

God is Incomparable in Unfailing Love (v. 18)

In verse eighteen, Micah extols the greatness and uniqueness of God for His unfailing
love for His people.

*Micah 7:18* Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression
for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he
delights in steadfast love.
This may be a little hard to understand in light of what we have read in this book. God’s people left Him, they rebelled against Him, they broke His law and sinned. Therefore, God was angry with them and punished them by exiling them from the land He had promised them. Where’s the love in that? When parents punish a child for some wrongdoing, the child may think that they do not love him. Mom and dad may seem like the worst people in the world, but the child forgets what brought on the punishment. Mom and dad only want to cause pain and suffering. I remember my parents told me that the punishment I was going to receive was going to hurt them more than me. I thought to myself, “Yeah, right!” I bet you are going to be hurt while my rear end is on fire. But, true parental punishment is not done out of anger. It is done out of love.

We can tolerate many things, some things more than others – traffic, a dirty house, crooked pictures on the wall, even certain mistreatment from others. There are things we will not tolerate, though – not being paid for our work, speaking harshly about our spouse, mistreating our children. Well, God cannot tolerate sin. He is a holy God and cannot stand it, and all of us sin. We all do things that are not right and displease God. But more than that, thanks to our first ancestors, we are born with a sin nature. We cannot escape it, and God cannot accept it. God is angry at it. He will execute justice on evil and wickedness, as Micah mentioned many times throughout the book.

But God shows us unfailing love. He is incomparable in His forgiving love and grace. Yes, He deals with our sin but He also extends us mercy through His Son, Jesus Christ. His love is demonstrated through His Son. One of my favorite passages is Romans 5:8:

**Romans 5:8** God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Notice, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us! God’s wrath was satisfied on the cross. The judgment we deserved was placed on God’s only begotten Son so that whosoever trusts in Him will be pardoned of their debt to God. They will be forgiven of their sin. There is no one else like Him in unfailing love.

**Incomparable in Redeeming Power (v. 19)**

God is also incomparable in the magnitude of our redemption. Forgiveness is an interesting thing. We know from Scripture that we are required to forgive one another. When someone wrongs us, we are to forgive them, and not just once but each time. But our memory is inextricably tied to our emotions and to our ability to forgive. We remember the wrong someone has done us and we do not want to forget it. We do not want to forgive it. We want justice and we want that person to pay for what he or she has done to us. Not so we God. His unfailing love is tied to His redeeming power.

**Micah 7:19** 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.
God does not just pardon our sins; He tramples them down. In the Old Testament, the sacrificial system was put in place to show the seriousness of our sin. Only by the shedding of blood will sin be forgiven (Hebrews 9:22). But that system was not complete. Each year on the Day of Atonement, the priest would make a sacrifice as payment for the people's sins. They had to do this each year – year after year. Therefore, Micah and the Israelites anticipated a day when their sin would be pardoned completely. That day was fulfilled when Jesus took on and took away the sins of the world through His sacrifice on the cross. Through Christ, our forgiveness is complete. God conquered sin. He liberated us from it and removed our guilt forever.

_**Psalm 103:12**_ As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

_**Jeremiah 31:34**_ …For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

God casts all our sin away, not just some of it, but all of it. God’s pardon to His people is complete and it is accomplished in Jesus Christ. Our redemption is beyond compare.

**Incomparable in Never-ending Faithfulness (v. 20)**

Micah concludes the book by reminding us of the faithful covenant-keeping God.

_**Micah 7:20**_ You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.

God’s character (His steadfast love and mercy) moves him to keep His word thus demonstrating His faithfulness. What God promised to our fathers of the faith, Abraham and Jacob, still stand. When God says He will do something, you can take that to the bank – He will! Is that true for us? Do we sometimes break promises? I know I have. The incredible thing is that the Israelites were not faithful to God. They broke faith with their God and committed adultery by _whoring after other gods_. But that is not just the Israelites. Lest you believe that this was something unique to the Israelites, we each have left God. We each have been unfaithful to Him. But not so with God. He is always faithful to a people. He will never leave His people or forsake His people. Even when His people left Him, God pursued them. He still pursues us in never-ending faithfulness.

**Justice and Mercy Come Together in Christ**

Throughout the book of Micah we have seen the justice of God and the mercy of God woven together. We have seen that the God Who punishes His people for their sin is the very same God who rescues them from their sin. When Micah said that there is no other god like our God, He was right! By just punishment and holiness, God dealt with our sin, but by His amazing love and grace, He rescues us, redeems us, and makes us His holy people. This is most clearly seen on the cross of Calvary. God’s justice was
displayed by placing His wrath and our guilt on His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. The innocent Lamb of God took the punishment for my sin and your sin in order to satisfy the justice of God. But at the same time, through the cross of Jesus Christ, amazing grace and love was poured out on us. Whosoever turns to Him, places their trust in Jesus Christ, will receive mercy and forgiveness. Their sins are forgiven. They are a new creation, a holy people, a chosen race, adopted into God’s family. Once they were His enemies, but now they are His children. God’s justice and mercy are found on the cross of Calvary. Who is like our God Who lays down His life for us? No one!

Conclusion

In closing, why is He beyond compare? Because, only God can solve our greatest problem – and that is sin. Micah described God’s forgiveness as removing our sin from His sight. On the cross of Calvary, He vanquished our sin like a conqueror, and cast our sins into the depths of the sea. God deals with people's sins completely. He is beyond compare in unfailing love. He is beyond compare in redeeming power. He is beyond compare in never-ending faithfulness. Anyone in covenant relationship with Him through His Son Jesus Christ may rest securely in hope, joy and peace. You can forget someone else. You can forget a particular church. But do not forget Jesus Christ, for there is no one like Him. His love, mercy, and faithfulness are beyond compare.

So, what does that mean for you? How shall you respond to this? Are you crushed by the weight of your own sin? Turn to Christ! Are you discouraged by pain and trouble in your life? Turn to Christ! Does your past haunt you, holding you back from all that God wants you to be? Have you been running away from God, searching for something to fulfill your life? Turn to Christ! The Good News is that our God is unmatched in love, mercy, and faithfulness. He desires to draw you to Him, to wipe all your sins, your failures, your hurts – not just some, but all of them – so that you can enjoy the riches of His grace and love. That joy and peace is available today. I will close this sermon and our study of the prophet Micah with these words from a hymn by Frederick W. Faber:

_There’s a wideness in God’s mercy_
_Like the wideness of the sea;
_There’s a kindness in His justice_
_Which is more than liberty._
_For the love of God is broader_
_Than the measure of man’s mind,_
_And the heart of the Eternal_
_Is most wonderfully kind._

This is good news. Thanks be to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!