



## Sermon, Sunday November 6, 2022 “As for Me, I Look to the Lord”

**SCRIPTURE: Micah 7:7-20** <sup>7</sup>But as for me, I will look to the LORD, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. <sup>8</sup>Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me. <sup>9</sup>I must bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he takes my side and executes judgment for me. He will bring me out to the light; I shall see his vindication. <sup>10</sup>Then my enemy will see, and shame will cover her who said to me, “Where is the LORD your God?” My eyes will see her downfall now she will be trodden down like the mire of the streets. <sup>11</sup>A day for the building of your walls! In that day the boundary shall be far extended. <sup>12</sup>In that day they will come to you from Assyria to Egypt, and from Egypt to the River, from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain. <sup>13</sup>But the earth will be desolate because of its inhabitants, for the fruit of their doings. <sup>14</sup>Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock that belongs to you, which lives alone in a forest in the midst of a garden land; let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old. <sup>15</sup>As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, show us marvelous things. <sup>16</sup>The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hands on their mouths; their ears shall be deaf; <sup>17</sup>they shall lick dust like a snake, like the crawling things of the earth; they shall come trembling out of their fortresses; they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God, and they shall stand in fear of you. <sup>18</sup>Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of your possession? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in showing clemency. <sup>19</sup>He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. <sup>20</sup>You will show faithfulness to Jacob and unswerving loyalty to Abraham, as you have sworn to our ancestors from the days of old.

### Introduction: Despair and Hope

The past week has been painful for me. On Saturday, October 29th, there was a tragic crushing accident of people trying to enjoy a Halloween festival in a popular nightlife area in South Korea's capital city, Seoul. At least 154 people died in this accident. Most of the victims were in their 20s and there were more women than men. Twenty-six of the dead were non-Korean nationals.

This accident was caused by a lack of awareness for public safety. This accident should not have happened; it was something that could have been prevented. That is why I felt angry with the South Korea government and feel sorry for the young people who died suddenly at a young age.

Like the accidents mentioned above, in the world we live in, wars, gun accidents, natural disasters, famines, and disasters caused by people's insensitivity to safety, etc., continue to take place today, taking people's lives. Whenever I hear news of such an accident, I think desperately of human efforts to make the world better. But, in fact, the world doesn't seem to be getting any better than it was in the past, but rather, it seems to be going in the opposite direction.

Dear brothers and sisters! Can we see hope in this despair? My answer is “Yes”.



Today's text was comforting to me, who was in a painful heart. Today's text, Micah chapter 7 begins with deep despair, but it ends with hope. The first half of Micah chapter 7 describes the corruption of the Israeli community. The fall of the Israeli community was caused by the fall of the individual. The book of Micah shows how individual sin, driven by greed and selfishness, can lead to despair in the community. (Micah 7:1-6)

However, the prophet Micah does not remain in despair. In despair, he sees hope. The foundation of the prophet Micah's hope is a Lord who saves us from our sins and hears our prayers. (Micah 7:7)

In fact, we go out in faith toward the Lord when we are thoroughly aware of our limitations. So, despair, ironically, is the starting point that drives us toward the Lord.

As Christians, we often fall into despair because we are fragile human beings. But Christians are people who can see hope even during despair because of the grace and power of the Lord. I hope that the words of Micah today will give us great comfort and hope. So, how could the prophet Micah find hope in despair?

## **Body: True Repentance and Right Understanding of the Lord**

### **1. True repentance is necessary.**

For our faith to be established correctly, we must first have a correct understanding of the Lord, the object of our faith. But for us to properly look to the Lord and know who He is, we must have holiness and humility in our hearts. If our hearts are proud, we cannot know the Lord properly.

So, to properly know the Lord, we need repentance to leave the place of pride and move to a place of holiness and humility. We must be able to repent and mourn not only for individual sins but also for the evils of the community.

**So, Micah 7:9 says: "I must bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he takes my side and executes judgment for me. He will bring me out to the light; I shall see his vindication."**

The confession **"I have sinned against Him"** in this verse is an expression of repentance for sin. When we thoroughly repent of our individual and community sins, we are renewed before the Lord.

Repentance before the Lord is not just words, but actions (responsibility) for words are essential. We must repent of not loving the Lord and not loving our neighbors. And we must be able to humbly seek the will of the Lord. In today's text, the Lord forgives and exalts the Israelites who repented and returned to Him.

Also, when we truly repent before the Lord, we can see the Lord properly. The Prophet Micah, who was in despair, could see the Lord properly after true repentance.

So, who was the Lord in the eyes of the prophet Micah?

### **2. A correct understanding of the Lord is necessary.**

When we see the Lord with the eyes of faith after true repentance, we come to realize that the Lord rewards those who earnestly seek Him. And we realize that He is the ruler of our lives.

When we come to know clearly who the Lord is, He will replace the fear within us with His abundant love. And the faith within us becomes the power to change our lives and the world.

**Micah 7:14 says, "Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock that belongs to you, which lives alone in the midst of a garden land; let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old."**



This verse is Micah's prayer. Just as the Lord fed Elijah with crows in the Kerith Ravine, like the way that He set the fire on the altar of Mount Carmel to reveal to the world who the true God is, this is a pray for the history of salvation to be recreated.

God answers Micah's prayer as follows. **“As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, show us marvelous things.” (Micah 7:15)** This verse is a promise to reveal again to the world the power of the Lord, which he showed the people of Israel and the world at the time of the Exodus.

The Lord exalts the people who repent and return in the fear of the Lord. On the contrary, the Lord humbles those who are proud of Him. The power of the world seems strong to us, but in the end, it is nothing in the sight of the Lord.

The world did not think that the “Gospel” that began with Jesus and the twelves disciples could change the world. But the gospel is the power to change the world. The gospel is the power to change the world, though it may seem feeble.

### **Conclusion: From Despair to Confidence**

Now let's summarize today's sermon. Mature faith begins with a right understanding of the Lord. Who is our Lord? He is the One who forgives our sins and shows mercy. So, there is no sin that cannot be forgiven before the Lord. So, we must repent clearly before the Lord.

Also, the Lord is the one who keeps the covenants He made with us. And the Lord is the only one who has saved us, sinners who are doomed to death.

There is hope only in the gospel. Therefore, what we in despair need to seek is not the worldly means, but the grace of the Lord. May the grace of the Lord guide me and your lives from despair to hope every day.

