

Purification of the Nation

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[0 : 00] But we are going to continue this evening our little series that we've been having recently with shorter evening services. Stephen's going to be finishing off his series, which has run in bits over the last year in the prophet Micah.

So if you'd like to turn with me now to your Bibles, to Micah in chapter 7, the last chapter of this prophet. But Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, and then Micah, just before Nahum, right at the end there, near the end of the Old Testament.

And all the way through this prophecy, there is an alternation between judgment and hope. The righteousness of God revealed, which is always a matter of great fear for human sinfulness.

But the righteousness of God also that contains great hope for those who hear his word and trust in his great covenant promise. And we see that both again in this final and climactic chapter.

So here is the prophet listening to God, listening to his promises of judgment, but also of salvation.

[1 : 20] And expressing his penitence and his faith and his trust in the Lord. Woe is me, says Micah.

For I have become as when the summer fruit has been gathered, as when the grapes have been gleaned. There is no cluster left to eat. No first-ripe fig that my soul desires.

The godly has perished from the earth. And there is no one upright among mankind. They all lie in wait for blood. Each hunts the other with a net.

Their hands are on what is evil to do it well. The prince and the judge ask for a bribe. The great man utters the evil desire of his soul.

And thus they weave it together. The best of them is like a briar. The most upright of them like a thorn hedge. The day of your watchman, of your punishment has come.

[2 : 23] Now their confusion is at hand. For no trust in a neighbor. Have no confidence in a friend. Guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your arms. The son treats the father with contempt.

The daughter rises up against her mother. The daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. The man's enemies are the men of his own house. But as for me, I will look to the Lord.

I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me. Rejoice not over me, my enemy. When I fall, I shall rise.

When I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me. I'll bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him. Until he pleads my cause and executes judgment for me.

He will bring me out to the light. And I shall look upon his vindication. Then my enemy will see. And shame will cover her who said to me, Where is the Lord your God?

[3 : 34] My eyes will look upon her. And now she will be trampled down. Like the mire of the streets. A day for the building of your walls.

In that day the boundary shall be far extended. In that day they will come to you from Assyria. From the cities of Egypt. And from Egypt to the river. From sea to sea. And from mountain to mountain.

As in the days when you came up out of the land of Egypt.

I will show them marvelous things. The nations shall see and be ashamed for all their might. They shall lay their hands on their mouths.

Their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent. Like the crawling things of the earth. And they shall come trembling out of their strongholds.

[4 : 52] They shall turn in dread to the Lord our God. And they shall be in fear of you. Who is a God like you?

Pardoning iniquity. Passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance. He does not retain his anger forever.

Because he delights in steadfast love. 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. You will show faithfulness to Jacob. And steadfast love to Abraham.

As you have sworn to our fathers. From the days of old. Amen. May God bless us.

[5 : 52] This his word. Full of promise. And full of hope. How do you respond to a setback?

I think it's safe to say that the captain of the ever-given boat has had a bit of a setback this week. I'm sure you'll all know the saga of their boat getting stuck in the Suez Canal. As a slight gust of wind blew this enormous boat slightly to the side.

And promptly stopped around 12% of the whole world's shipping in the process. It's safe to say that it's a bit of a setback has caused a fair amount of chaos. And much of the world has had their eyes glued to it.

Because you know in a time like the one we live in now. Where problems are seemingly endless and overly complicated. This simple problem of big boat gets stuck. And the solution of turn the big boat.

It's just delightfully simple. But to get through a setback you need hope. You need something to look towards. And thankfully for the ever-given boat there is some. This morning on the front page of one of the tabloids it turns out that Uri Geller.

[7 : 00] The famous psychic spoon bender himself. Has offered to lend his mind powers to moving this boat. So the tugboat is trying to slowly rotate the ever-given.

Well they can pack up and go home. Because apparently the skills required for bending a tablespoon. Are directly transferable to moving a 219 million kilogram boat.

That might not be the hope that they were looking for. So I in my non-expert opinion would humbly suggest that they look elsewhere. Now these sort of setbacks can cause panic and chaos as people react.

And they really need a steady person at the wheel. Keeping people's eyes on moving past their present struggles. Getting them where they need to go.

And Israel has just heard the mother of all setbacks. That they, their whole nation, their families and friends. The people they love. The people they live with. The people they have their dinner with. Are going to be exiled.

[8 : 04] Thrown out of the land. Taken away from their homes and their livelihoods. Because of their sin against the Lord. And Micah responds by being the steady person at the wheel.

Giving them great hope of restoration. And of this problem never happening again. Because the Lord is wonderfully merciful. And will be faithful to his people.

Micah's been preaching this message to God's people for several decades. And they have consistently ignored him. They haven't listened to the Lord's judgment on their actions. And instead they've continued in their sin against him.

That's why they're going to be thrown out of the land. But there is a very small faithful remnant. And that is who Micah is preaching this section to.

That's who he's aiming this section at. He's preaching to the few who have put their faith in the Lord. And for us to understand what's going on in this passage. We need to put ourselves in their shoes.

[9 : 08] They've just been told that Israel will be exiled. That God's chosen people will be evicted from their homes and the land that they live in. And taken away to a foreign place because the Lord will judge their sin.

And while they're waiting for that to happen. While their neighbors, they just continue to disobey the Lord in everything. They act like nothing happened. They keep stealing. They keep taking bribes.

They keep taking advantage of the poor. And they don't give a second's thought to the Lord. Can you imagine how demoralizing that would have been to live in as a Christian? How are they to live in that world?

And what does it mean for God's plan? How can he be faithful to his promises while the vast majority of his people want nothing to do with him? That's what we see in our first section where we see in verses 1 to 7, Micah remains hopeful in the present struggles.

Micah's been preaching to the people for most of his life. And he's had very little joy. Not because his message was wrong. Not because he was delivering it badly.

[10 : 14] But because the people just simply did not want to hear it. And verse 1 is Micah lamenting that fact. He's lamenting that the people have rejected the Lord.

He feels like an empty field. Where everything's already been gathered. And there's just nothing left. He feels drained. He's empty. He knows, verse 2, that there's no one who lives uprightly.

And he is rightly mourning over this. Because God's people are taking him and the privileges of belonging to him for granted. Micah looks around at the nation.

He sees their rejection of the Lord's mercy evident in their daily lives. They're not living up to their responsibilities as God's covenant people. But instead are becoming more and more like all the nations around them.

That's what the next few verses spell out for us. The widespread sinfulness of the people. In verses 2 to 4 we see the national ruin. Micah looks around at the people he lives beside.

[11 : 15] The people who are meant to embody what it means to be in covenant with the Lord. And here's what he said about the very best of them. The good eggs. Verse 4. The best of them is like a briar.

A thorny bush. The most upright of them. A thorn hedge. The best of the people is like a thorny bush.

That is good for nothing. But causing pain. For at the end of verse 2. They hunt each other. Treating each other like animals. Verse 3. They bribe.

They're corrupt. Their whole justice system is a joke. The people in authority abuse it. And they conspire with each other to make sure their evil desires are accomplished. Weaving it together carefully.

So that they can get exactly what they want. They know how to work the system. And they'll do everything they can to abuse it. And because of that, verse 4. Judgment will come.

[12 : 15] The watchman would stand at the city gates and look out at all times to see if there were any enemies approaching. It wasn't an overly exciting job. Most of the time they would have very little to watch.

But the watchman would have to spring into action as the Lord comes to town visiting them. So then is the time for the corrupt and sinful people to panic. Because the Lord is coming as judge.

And on that day, when you desperately need help, there's nowhere to run. Because in verses 5 to 6, we see the relational ruin that takes place. Israel's sin has seeped into every part of culture to the extent that you can't trust even those closest to you.

Even within your own family. Even within your own marriage. Collectively abandoning the Lord has meant that the people have effectively abandoned each other.

This is the world that the faithful remnant lived in. So how could they remain faithful in a world that is under God's judgment like that?

[13 : 22] Where everyone's just ignoring him? Well, that's what Micah explains in verse 7. As he stands in the middle of this sinful people, his faith is distinct, patient, and assured.

He is distinct in that he won't live the way the generation around him does. He won't get sucked into their way of life. He says, but as for me, I will look to the Lord.

Micah stands out as the lonely but faithful man who looks to the Lord for his help. He is patient because he will wait for the God of his salvation.

Micah knows that his people will go through a judgment. He knows that they're going to be exiled. But he will patiently wait through these times. Because he knows that the same God who's bringing judgment to the world is the one in whom salvation is found.

And Micah is assured. He says, my God will hear me. Micah's pleased for salvation. They're not going to fall on deaf ears. But the Lord himself will listen and answer them.

[14 : 29] The Lord will hear Micah's cry of faith as he stands faithfully in a crooked world. And he'll save him. Because the Lord isn't distant from him. He's not distant from us.

But he knows everything we're going through. And will save us in the end. This section shows us what we might face in this world.

How we are to endure in a world that is under God's judgment. But what's going to happen further down the line? What is the Lord doing through this? And what will the Lord do with his small but faithful remnant?

That's what our second section in verses 8-17 answers. As we see hope in restoration. So Micah is part of this small but faithful remnant. Showing faith in the midst of seemingly hopeless times.

But these verses give us real hope. These verses are here to strengthen the resolve of the remnant. To stop them panicking when they think everything's gone wrong.

[15 : 28] By setting their eyes on the finishing line. This section has three scenes. Each pointing forward to vindication for God's people. And judgment for God's enemies.

And we're going to look at each of them in quickfire fashion. Seeing both vindication and judgment in each. As the world as we know it is going to be turned on its head. So firstly verses 8-10 depict the upturn in fortunes that the faithful remnant will experience.

After exile. We see vindication in their future deliverance that Micah is patiently waiting for. That's why he can say in verse 8.

Rejoice not over me. Because he's patiently looking forward. Past the peasant struggles God's people would endure. Verse 9. He knows that he will bear the judgment of God.

Since he's part of the covenant people about to go into exile. But even as he sits in darkness. The Lord is still his light. The Lord is still the one he looks to for hope and salvation.

[16 : 34] Because end of verse 9. The Lord will vindicate his people. He will vindicate those who are faithful to him. Bringing them out into the light. Displaying to the whole world who belongs to him.

And saving them. But a necessary part of vindicating those who belong to him. Is exposing those who do not.

That's where we see the Lord's judgment on his enemies. Once the faithful are vindicated. Verse 10. Then my enemy will see. And shame will cover her who said to me.

Where is the Lord your God? Israel's enemies would have mocked them in their defeat. Where is your God? What can he do about us destroying you? He's not helping you, is he?

But Micah makes it clear that God's enemies will in time see the vindication of the Lord's people. And they'll be ashamed of themselves. They'll regret their cruel taunts.

[17 : 32] And end of verse 10. They'll be eating dirt off the ground. This scene encourages the faithful remnant. Because soon enough. Their enemies who have been taunting them.

Will be eating dirt. Next we have our second scene. In verses 11 to 13. Where we see vindication. And that the people of God. They're only going to grow.

In size. Both in terms of people. And land. Micah promises that the people will have their day for building walls. So the kingdom will grow. The boundary will be far off.

Israel would be growing in terms of its place. In terms of its size. But more importantly. It would be growing in terms of its people. Verse 12 says that the nation was going to experience great expansion numerically.

But these aren't just random places Micah's picked out of a hat. These are places which show God's power and grace at work. It shows his mercy at work. Micah says that they're going to come from all over.

[18 : 37] But specifically mentions that they will come from Assyria. The great enemy of Micah's day. And they'll also come from Egypt. That ancient foe who once held God's people in slavery.

Because even they are not beyond the reach of the Lord's mercy. And this shows the fulfillment of what Micah promised in chapter 4. That the nations would be flocking to Jerusalem.

Because God's there. But verse 13 shows the Lord's judgment. As many still don't flock to the Lord and to his people. Instead of coming into his light.

They prefer the darkness. Many from the nations will indeed come to the Lord. But many will choose not to. Some will come to a saving submission.

But others will experience a painful judgment. Because of their stance against the Lord. And against his people. This scene encourages the remnant. Because even if they feel terribly small.

[19 : 38] And terribly weak now. The Lord will grow them into a great people. Inviting in even those from enemy nations. Who bow the knee to the Lord. And our third scene.

Comes in verses 14 to 17. God's remnant is vindicated. As these few verses are pointing forward. To the great fulfillment of chapter 5. Where there's perfect peace.

Promised to the believing remnant. Through the Lord's promised shepherd. In verse 14. Then Micah prays that the Lord would shepherd his people. Bringing them protection. And provision through his rule.

He asks that the Lord would protect them. As he shepherds them with his staff. Playing the role of the strong shepherd. Actively caring for his sheep. And he also prays for provision. That the Lord would let them graze in lush places.

Like Bashan and Gilead were. And to bring this about. The Lord is going to verse 15. Save them miraculously. In the same way he saved his people from Egypt.

[20 : 41] It will be that type of jaw-dropping. Wonderful, powerful salvation for the people. When the Lord saves his faithful remnant. He will do so.

With all the style. All the skill. All the swagger. Of the Exodus redemption story. And verses 16 to 17. Those who don't come to the Lord.

Will experience judgment. The translation of verse 16 in our Bibles. Is slightly unhelpful. As it makes us think that the nations will be mighty. But the verse actually means.

That Micah is praying for these nations to be. Emptied. Of their might. That's because they've lost their military. Might. They would be ashamed. And they would be shown up to be the powerless enemies.

Of God that they are. And this is in response to seeing God's mighty hand at work. The nations see God. And then they are. End of verse 16.

[21 : 38] They're speechless. And they stick their fingers in their ears. Pretending they can't hear the Lord's victory. They'll come out of these strongholds. Not so that they can come to the Lord in a saving submission.

But coming to him purely out of selfish self-preservation. Which won't be welcomed. As a result of all of this. They'll be eating dirt again.

And realize that their strongholds. Have no power over the Lord and his might. And this encourages the remnant. By reminding them that. The victory in the end.

Is theirs. Their enemies don't stand a chance. Even if it looks like they might have Israel on the ropes. To illustrate this.

We're going to go to the weird and wonderful world. Of American sports halftime entertainment. It may not be where you expected this to lead. But please humor me. For American sports.

[22 : 34] It's almost about the entertainment around the sport. More than the actual sport itself. And the baseball team. The Atlanta Braves. They're no exception to that. When they have a break in the innings.

They have a race called Beat the Freeze. And it's honestly amazing. It's so much fun to watch. They pick out an athletic looking person from the crowd. Usually a fairly cocky.

Arrogant guy in his twenties. And he has to race their runner. The Freeze. A former college athlete. And if they beat him. They get \$500. The race is around half the field.

About 160 meters long. And the person from the crowd. Is given a 60 meter head start. More than a third of the race. Gone before the Freeze.

Is even allowed to run. And every time the guy's running his heart out. You think he's going to win. But the Freeze catches up. And on the home straight. Makes the guy look very ordinary.

[23 : 30] But there's one race in particular. Where the guy's running as fast as he can. He's miles ahead of the Freeze. And then he starts celebrating on the home stretch. He's trying to get a shout from the crowd. And he starts whipping up his hands. To get him to cheer him on.

When he's only 10 meters from the finish line. But as soon as he does that. And his moment of celebrating his victory over the Freeze. He catches a glimpse over his shoulder.

Of this blue thing. Just breezing past him. And crossing the finishing line. At which point the guy loses any coordination he ever had. Gets tripped up on his own legs.

And ends up falling face first. Into the dirt. Without even finishing the race. He's lying in the dirt. He can't bear to get up. And have to face the world after it.

Because the Freeze always wins. No matter how unlikely it looks. He's got it in the bag. Even if his opponent has already started celebrating. But this is like the picture Micah paints for the faithful remnant.

[24 : 29] He's saying to them that even if the Assyrian army has already destroyed the northern kingdom. Even if the Babylonian army will one day come and take you into exile. And you think you've lost.

Well the race isn't over yet. The Lord and his people will win in the end. Victory is in the bag. And it's only a matter of time until everyone in the world sees that.

And that was to be such encouragement for the faithful remnant. Micah wants us to know that God's plan hasn't gone all wrong. Despite the way it might appear to people on the outside.

Even as his own people are heading off to live in exile. Under his own judgment. And his enemies are celebrating wildly over it. But the race isn't over.

Because the Lord is still building his church. And the gates of hell will not prevail against her. There may be dark days ahead. But there is real cause for great hope.

[25 : 31] As the Lord builds his church. Well how would you respond to this news. That the Lord is building his people into a great nation. That victory is in the bag.

That's a question I'd love you to ponder. As we hear from the band now. As they give us a preview. Of how Micah responds to this news. By proclaiming that God's mercy is more.

What love could we remember. No wrongs we have done. A man shins are knowing. He can't snout their son.

Thrown into a single flag. At boat to our shore. Our sins they are many. As mercy is more.

What patience will we dance. We constantly roam. What father so tender. Is calling us home.

[26 : 43] He welcomes the weakest. He welcomes the weakest. The vilest. The poor. The poor. Our sins they are many. His mercy is more.

Praise the Lord. His mercy is more.

Stronger than darkness. Heal every born. He's still every born. Our sins they are many. His mercy is more.

What riches of kindness. He lavished on us. His blood was the payment. His life was the cost.

We stood beneath the debt. We stood beneath the debt. We could never afford. Our sins they are many. His mercy is more.

[27 : 45] Praise the Lord. His mercy is more. His mercy is more.

His mercy is more. Stronger than darkness. Heal every born. Our sins they are many. His mercy is more.

Praise the Lord. His mercy is more. Praise the Lord. His mercy is more. Stronger than darkness.

His mercy is more. His mercy is more. Our sins they are many. His mercy is more. Let's join our passage again as we see verses 18 to 20.

The hope of perfect purity. These verses give the faithful remnant the ultimate assurance that the Lord will save his people.

[28 : 56] For he is a God of mercy. And Micah, he cannot contain himself. He just bursts out in praise of who God is. He's part of a people bound for exile who will endure the Lord's judgment.

Yet there is a small believing remnant who will wait for the Lord. Assured that he will deliver them, restore them, and grow them exponentially. And Micah just cannot contain his praise for the Lord.

His heart is filled with thankfulness. Micah speaking to the faithful remnant saying, Join me in praising our wonderful Savior. Come, let us adore him. And he does that by asking a simple question.

Who is a God like you? It's a play on words as Micah's own name translated means, Who is like the Lord? Let's read verse 18 and 19 together.

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.

[30 : 11] He will again have compassion on us. He will tread our iniquities underfoot. He will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

Transgression passed over and sin cast into the sea. Never to be seen again. Sin and transgression, they're very Micah words.

They appear right the way through his prophecy and they're always grouped together as Israel's sin is the reason for God's judgment on the people. If you briefly flick back to chapter 1 and look at verse 5 with me, you'll see that Micah says about the Lord's judgment on the people.

He says this in chapter 1 verse 5. All this, the Lord's judgment, all this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel.

And if you flick forward a page to chapter 3 verse 8, Micah describes the singular job he's given by the Lord. 3 verse 8. The problem of the people breaking the covenant all stems from their sin and transgression against the Lord.

[31 : 34] Micah's been calling them out on this for decades with no apparent joy, but here he proclaims that the Lord will redeem his people. He will save them from their sin and transgression. He will show mercy on those from the believing remnant, the remnant of his inheritance.

Wonderfully for the people, this exile isn't something they're going to have to experience again in an endless cycle because their sin is going to be cast into the depths of the sea, never to surface again.

Every wrong, selfish, presumptuous thought or deed will be washed away, wiped clean forever. But why does the Lord do this?

He gives two reasons. Firstly, look at the end of verse 18 with me. Because he delights in steadfast love.

Not because he feels like he should or because Israel have somehow forced his hand into it. He doesn't feel compelled to do this. He can't compel God to do anything. He shows mercy because he delights in it.

[32 : 50] He delights in displaying his steadfast love, his covenant love to his people. It's who he is. And there's no one else like him.

And secondly, verse 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 will be faithful to his own word as he has sworn to his people. He is the covenant God. That's why Jacob and Abraham are mentioned.

It's because they were the first recipients of the covenant promises that the Lord would be their God and they would be his people in relationship together. Despite the great sin of the people, the Lord hadn't forgotten or abandoned his promises, but was and still is gladly bound by his own word that he will be God to his people.

He will be God to those who humbly turn to him in faith and ask for his forgiveness, for him to cast their sin into the depths of the sea. Who is like God?

[34 : 03] No one. Because he is the one and only God who forgives sinners like you and like me. In that truth lies our hope for the future, the only hope that will get us through these strange times that we live in.

He is the God who will judge sin fairly, but will also delight in showing mercy to those who love him. This chapter and the book of Micah as a whole give us two big points to take away.

Firstly, have confidence that the Lord will build his church. Micah spent much of his prophecy speaking about the judgment and exile of God's people, but in this last chapter he gives great hope and assurance that the Lord will ultimately vindicate and deliver them.

One day, the church will be vindicated. She will be shown to be the faithful remnant of the Lord. And we should all be looking to that day, to the finish line, when the Lord arrives both as judge for the unbelieving and saviour for those who belong to him.

But it doesn't feel like that quite often, does it? That feels very far off. When we look around at God's covenant people, we see a small group in the middle of a crooked generation that quite frankly appears to be winning most of the time.

[35 : 28] Most people I speak to in the congregation are the only Christians in their workplace, whether that's a school or the ward of a hospital or in a classroom.

And it can feel very lonely and intimidating being the only Christian wherever you are. You constantly feel like you're on the losing side because while you're so outnumbered and while progress is slow, and the unrelenting march of eroding Christian values in society just feels unstoppable, like we're never going to win.

People aren't becoming Christians at the rate you'd hope they would, and it can feel like fighting a losing battle. But don't let that discourage you because right now, the unbelieving world is just like the guy celebrating before the victory is won while the freeze is coming up, blazing past him, about to beat him.

The Lord is building his church, and we are on the winning side. He just hasn't yet made it clear in his jaw-dropping, everyone-taking-notice, Exodus-style salvation yet.

So we can keep going. We can keep being distinct, patient, and assured that the Lord will bring in his kingdom. We can keep inviting people to read the Bible with us.

[36 : 46] We can keep inviting people to come and see what happens at church because we know the end result. Well, it's in the bag. We've got nothing to fear, so we won't lose heart.

We'll keep going together. Secondly, we are to rejoice in God's wonderful mercy. The Lord's people just don't deserve his kindness, do they?

Mike has spent several decades, his whole life basically, spelling out how sinful the Lord's people can be, and we know that in our own hearts only too well. But the Lord will be the salvation of his people because of his great mercy.

And we as Christians standing on this side of the cross see the great lens that his mercy extends to. We see God himself, Jesus Christ, come to earth and die so that we might receive mercy and so that the victory of the Lord would be secure forever.

So I'd like to ask you directly, are you thankful for the Lord's mercy? Are you rejoicing in just how kind God is to you?

[38 : 01] Maybe you've been a Christian for decades and you've heard it all before, but Micah doesn't want us to go away and just learn chapter 7 like it's some dry theological truth. He wants us to see this for the wonderful mercy that it is.

He wants us to pick up his prophecy, read the first six chapters and think, why on earth would the Lord show mercy to this group of people? None of them deserve it.

Why would he be so kind to them? I can't see into your heart, but I know mine. And I know deeply how much of a wretched man that I am.

I know how little I deserve his kindness and that I don't at all. We might live in a world that constantly tells you that you deserve better, but that's just not true if we're honest with ourselves.

We all deserve far worse than the treatment we receive from the Lord. God's mercy. And only by considering how little we deserve God's mercy will our hearts be driven to rejoice in the wonderful, steadfast love he displays to us, most fully in the sending of his only son to die on a cruel cross so that we might have life in his name.

[39 : 20] this is pure grace that should hit us straight in the heart no matter how many times we've heard it before. why does the Lord delight in showing sinful people like me and you mercy?

I can't really answer that with anything other than it's just who he is. He loves doing it and there's none like him.

He is the God of mercy and faithfulness. So let's rejoice in him together. Let's pray. Our Father God, we thank you for who you are.

We praise you for your great mercy which you so kindly shower on us despite how little we deserve any kindness at all. Please, Father, fix our eyes on your victory to come.

Help us not to look around at the world we live in in despair. Help us not to panic but to wait patiently for your victory to come. Please, Father, help us to rejoice in your wonderful mercy and give you all the glory.

[40 : 49] In Jesus' name. Amen.