

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

Text: Micah 7:18-20

men have always had false notions concerning God

INTRODUCTION: Bishop Oxnam: God is a dirty bully!

People want to know what God is like--in hours of sorrow and trial. "Why did God let this happen?" Actually are asking, "What is God like?" *the quest of Job.*

Jesus? Jesus came to reveal what God is like. Parable of the Prodigal Son is not a parable of the prodigal son, but of the Father. Jews had misconception of what God was like...Jesus was telling them.

Jonah? Jonah had a misconception. *Narrow & prejudiced & we make our own image.* Micah closes his prophecy with a doxology, describing the triumph of Grace. His name means, "Who is like God?" He tells what God is like.

Two reasons for this doxology: (1) The people are protected and shepherded in the pasture of the Lord; (2) the enemies of God and His people are terrified in the presence of God.

God reveals what He is by what He does. *He continually doing this*

I. HE IS A GOD OF FORGIVING LOVE. (Verse 18)

1. What human needs are here explained in "iniquity"; "transgression"; and "sin."

(1) **INIQUITY:** One of the strongest terms for sin, denoting perverseness, crookedness which makes man guilty, a debtor before God, with no possibility of ever ridding himself of that guilt.

Nature

a. Righteousness means "straight," iniquity, "crooked." God is straight, man crooked. We know what sin is by what God is.

Ill-Plumbline to see if wall is straight, checking line with T-square

b. This refers to nature--it is the depravity which sin works--it is the guilt which results from sin.

(2) **TRANSGRESSION:** Rebellion, revolt. This is the meanest thing you can do. Putting your foot and saying, "I won't do it."

Acts

a. This refers to acts of disobedience. Breaking away and going beyond. *fatal blow*

We have broken away from God and gone beyond His righteous requirements.

III- bolting horse, runaway child, criminal .

b. This is sin in its most hideous form--man sets up his own will in opposition to the known will of God and acts in disregard of God's plain commands.

Issue of faith

(3) SIN: missing the mark--God set a target, we missed it, intentionally. It is FAILURE. To strike out, down for the count of 10.

2. God does the marvelous thing no man can do.

(1) He PARDONS iniquity.

Load of sin makes us crooked

To lift up, relieve a burden; to bear sin, suffer punishment for sin. Taken off or away, as a burden is lifted or barrier taken away.

He places it upon Himself John 1:29

The Hebrew participle denotes that God is continually doing this It points to His nature.

(2) He PASSES OVER Transgression.

He does not stop to deal with them--spares judgment--EGYPT.

(3) DELIGHTS IN MERCY--explains the former--↑

"I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." The pleasure of God is to show mercy.

MERCY: more than love and pity--It is pity plus action; God's yearning love in its active quality. God loved the world and did something about it.

II. HE IS THE GOD OF REDEEMING POWER. (Verse 19)

1. SUBDUE: Trampling under foot--conquer their power and tyranny by His compassion. As oft as sin raises its accusing voice against a child of God, so often does God take that sin, hurl it to the ground, and trample it under foot.

He subdues our worst enemy--we were subdued--sin had trampled many under its iron heel.

Gen. 3:15--Jesus bruised head of serpent--fatal blow.

Text: Romans 7:10-12

2. CAST ALL our sins into the sea--complete severance

III-Pharaoh's army in the sea--
Ex. 15:10--they sank like lead--danced on the shore, they are gone.

Some feared the Egyptians, some fear sin, but God is able to overcome them. Christ's blood has covered them.

III. HE IS THE GOD OF PERPETUAL FAITHFULNESS. (Verse 20)

Hebrew-"Grant" emphasizes the utter lack of merit on the part of the recipient. God's keeping of faith with man is altogether independent of any worthiness in man. It is a free gift.

Promise: the key to O.T., N.T. under sin.

Considering the threatening judgment upon his people, Micah is able to utter this doxology only because of his faith in God. God had sworn and He would fulfil His oath. Heb. 6:18-20

Vs. 20--Jacob and Abraham: they were dead; He is God of the living--Life after death--

Job

I. MAN IS SINNERS (Verses 10-12)

A great... that... individuals... it is an... condition.

1. UNCONSCIOUS:

The... of... the presence of sin. Paul's... of... sin.