

Hope Found  
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Micah 7:1-20

No one wants to wait! Do you ever fast forward through a TV show? Have you ever paid extra at a theme park so you could skip the line for your favorite rides? I'll admit that I love being able to pay at the pump instead of waiting in a line and more and more we will pay for a meal through the restaurant's online payment feature rather than wait for the server to bring back the card and receipt. No one wants to wait.

Can you think of things for which you do not mind waiting? What are examples of things that are "worth the wait?" When waiting is inevitable, how do you deal with it? When someone gives you a promise without a timetable, why are you willing to wait patiently on one person and be impatient with another?

We might say impatience has become an epidemic in our society. Often those who are frustrated by having to wait do unwise things instead of being patient. Can you think of any examples? [Illustration: Susan's "game" she plays on the freeway watching impatient drivers.] No one wants to wait and sometimes their impatience leads to dangerous actions.

The nation of Israel in Micah's time had a patience problem. While waiting on the promised Messiah they would become impatient and do stupid things like worshipping idols. They inherited this impatience with God's timetable from their ancestors. Remember when the Israelites grew impatient waiting on Moses to come down from Mount Sinai? *"This is taking too long, let's make a golden calf to save us!"* Impatient people can do stupid things when they don't want to wait.

The old saying "patience is a virtue" is NOT in the Bible, but it does have some biblical truth. Why does God sometimes make us wait?

Here's the point: God's timetable is perfect and one of the marks of faith in Him is our willingness to wait hopefully, expectantly, confidently, and patiently for Him to fulfill His promises. Israel's problem was they wanted an "express lane."

Let's read these twenty verses to get the full picture then "zoom in" to see how they not only apply to the nation of Israel, but to every follower of Christ as well. We'll see in these first few verses that God's prophet Micah was very discouraged and fed up with the people in the nation of Israel.

**Micah 7:1–20 (NLT) — 1** How miserable I am! I feel like the fruit picker after the harvest who can find nothing to eat. Not a cluster of grapes or a single early fig can be found to satisfy my hunger. **2** The godly people have all disappeared; not

one honest person is left on the earth. They are all murderers, setting traps even for their own brothers. **3** Both their hands are equally skilled at doing evil! Officials and judges alike demand bribes. The people with influence get what they want, and together they scheme to twist justice. **4** Even the best of them is like a brier; the most honest is as dangerous as a hedge of thorns. But your judgment day is coming swiftly now. Your time of punishment is here, a time of confusion. **5** Don't trust anyone— not your best friend or even your wife! **6** For the son despises his father. The daughter defies her mother. The daughter-in-law defies her mother-in-law. Your enemies are right in your own household!

**[Then, verse seven is a pivot point as Micah shifts his gaze from the sins of the people to the promises of God.]**

**7** As for me, I look to the Lord for help. I wait confidently for God to save me, and my God will certainly hear me. **8** Do not gloat over me, my enemies! For though I fall, I will rise again. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light. **9** I will be patient as the Lord punishes me, for I have sinned against him. But after that, he will take up my case and give me justice for all I have suffered from my enemies. The Lord will bring me into the light, and I will see his righteousness. **10** Then my enemies will see that the Lord is on my side. They will be ashamed that they taunted me, saying, "So where is the Lord— that God of yours?" With my own eyes I will see their downfall; they will be trampled like mud in the streets. **11** In that day, Israel, your cities will be rebuilt, and your borders will be extended. **12** People from many lands will come and honor you— from Assyria all the way to the towns of Egypt, from Egypt all the way to the Euphrates River, and from distant seas and mountains. **13** But the land will become empty and desolate because of the wickedness of those who live there. **14** O Lord, protect your people with your shepherd's staff; lead your flock, your special possession. Though they live alone in a thicket on the heights of Mount Carmel, let them graze in the fertile pastures of Bashan and Gilead as they did long ago. **15** "Yes," says the Lord, "I will do mighty miracles for you, like those I did when I rescued you from slavery in Egypt." **16** All the nations of the world will stand amazed at what the Lord will do for you. They will be embarrassed at their feeble power. They will cover their mouths in silent awe, deaf to everything around them. **17** Like snakes crawling from their holes, they will come out to meet the Lord our God. They will fear him greatly, trembling in terror at his presence.

**[Now Micah shifts to a doxology of sorts, praising God for Who He is]**

**18** Where is another God like you, who pardons the guilt of the remnant, overlooking the sins of his special people? You will not stay angry with your people forever, because you delight in showing unfailing love. **19** Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean! **20** You will show us your faithfulness and unfailing love as you promised to our ancestors Abraham and Jacob long ago.

- If we summarized this chapter we would see:
  - Micah lamented that corruption was so rampant in Israel he couldn't find one honest person.
  - Yet, God's promises of deliverance for Israel had not changed.

- One day, God will pardon the “guilt” of a “remnant” of Israel.
  - One day, God’s anger will be removed forever. He will have compassion on Israel (and all people); He will trample their sins (and ours) underfoot and throw them into the depths of the ocean!
- When the world seems beyond repair and evil abounds, how do we wait for God’s promised salvation for His people? Verse seven is the key: **Micah 7:7 (NLT) — 7** As for me, I look to the Lord for help. I wait confidently for God to save me, and my God will certainly hear me.
  - If you read that verse in the ESV or the KJV, the language is simple and elegant: **Micah 7:7 (ESV) — 7** But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.
  - *“I look, I wait, God will hear.”* That is simple yet solid truth.
  - The NLT adds two helpful adverbs, wait “confidently” and “certainly.”
  - The translators could add those words based on the original Hebrew:
    - The word for wait is **yâchal**, *yaw-chal*; a prim. root; to *wait*; by impl. to *be patient, hope*:—(cause to, have, make to) hope, be pained, stay, tarry, trust, wait.
    - We can wait on God with patient, confident, hope.
    - The word for hear is **shâma**, *shaw-mah*; a prim. root; to *hear* intelligently...attentively, ...× carefully, × certainly, ...× diligently.
    - We can wait “confidently” for God’s deliverance and salvation because God hears attentively, diligently, and certainly.
  - Micah called on Israel to wait confidently for God to deliver them from their enemies and give them salvation through the promised Messiah.
  - The problem was the nation of Israel wasn’t good at waiting. They wanted God to move on THEIR timetable. They wanted an express lane and there is no express lane for God’s perfect timing.
  - We can almost hear them pushing back on God’s prophet: *“Micah, we HAVE been waiting! We’ve been waiting on the Messiah. We’ve been waiting on God to deliver us from our enemies. How can you be so confident and so certain that God WILL deliver us?”*
  - We can learn something about Micah’s confidence in God’s promises by looking at the meaning of his name: *“Who Is Like the Lord?”*
  - Micah’s name would be a good title for a worship song! Micah was so confident in God’s promises that he broke out in worship to God:

**Micah 7:18–20 (NLT) — 18** Where is another God like you, who pardons the guilt of the remnant, overlooking the sins of his special people? You will not stay angry with your people forever, because you delight in showing unfailing love. **19** Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean! **20** You will show us your faithfulness and unfailing love as you promised to our ancestors Abraham and Jacob long ago.

- The promise in verse seven can be relied on because of the truth in verses 18-20. When “I look to the Lord for help” I can “wait confidently” for Him and know that He “will certainly hear me” because I know God.
- I know His character; I know His track record, and that is why I can patiently wait on Him with hope, with confidence and with certainty.
- I can sleep at night knowing that my patience will be rewarded by His deliverance. I know that because there is no one like Him!

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- Micah said, “As for me, I look to the Lord for help. I wait confidently for God to save me, and my God will certainly hear me.” What a promise!
- One thing we are NOT waiting on is God’s eternal salvation.
- The good news of the gospel is we are not waiting on the promised Messiah because He already sent His Son Jesus to pay our sin debt and give us eternal life. There is no waiting line to the foot of the cross. We have instant access to saving grace.
- Even if we are saved, we still have times when we must patiently wait.
- Warren Wiersbe commented, *“Few passages in Scripture contain so much “distilled theology” as Micah 7:18-20...[t]he better we know the character of God, the more we can trust Him for the future. The better we know the promises and covenants of God, the more peace we will have in our hearts when things fall apart. When Micah wrote this confession of his faith, the future seemed hopeless; yet he had hope because he knew God and fully trusted Him. No matter how dark the day, the light of God’s promises is still shining. No matter how confusing and frightening our circumstances, the character of God remains the same.”*
- I don’t know what has you waiting on God in this season but based on this passage we can wait on Him with patience, confidence, and certainty because of Who He is and His track record of faithfulness.