

“God is our Only Hope”

(Micah)

Introduction

➤ One of the amazing aspects of Scripture, as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, is the fact that it is ever-relevant and ever-applicable. Even Scripture that was written thousands of years ago, to a different culture and society, has immediate and profound applications to our lives. This is just one of many reasons why we hold the conviction that the Bible is God’s Word.

This is wonderfully evident as we turn to the book of Micah this morning. Although the book of Micah was written almost three-thousand years ago (c. 735 B.C.), it covers many relevant (universal) issues like: societal (cultural) godlessness and injustice, religious hypocrisy and idolatry, false teachers and corrupt (political/spiritual) leaders, God’s name blasphemed and His will rejected.

Sound familiar? Although vastly separated by time and culture, the book of Micah addresses many contemporary issues plaguing our country and Christianity – an increasingly godless society, rampant social, religious and political injustices, a corrupt government and dishonest governmental leaders, and false teachers and immorality in the church.

On the positive side, Micah also addressed the greatness and graciousness of God, and His sovereign plan to save all who worship Him (alone) as God. He revealed that God is merciful, showing steadfast love, to those who belong to Him.

➤ As we turn to the book of Micah, we come to the halfway point of our study of the minor prophets (six of twelve; known as “minor prophets” because the books are much shorter than those of the “major prophets”). The book of Micah was written by the prophet Micah (see 1:1; 3:8). In this book, he is self-identified not by his family lineage but by where he lived [“*of Moresheth*” (1:1; a small, rural town about twenty-five miles south of Jerusalem)] and when he lived [“*in the days [reigns] of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah*” (1:1; making him a contemporary of other eighth century (B.C.) prophets like Isaiah (in the south; i.e., “Judah”) and Hosea (in the north; i.e., “Israel”)].

Micah boldly and faithfully preached to the southern kingdom of Judah at a time when God’s people were acting immorally and idolatrously. Therefore, much of Micah’s prophetic message was the pronouncement of God’s judgment. Yet, through it all, he continued to declare God’s saving grace to those who believe and repent. Consequently, many scholars refer to the book of Micah as “The Gospel According to Micah.” In fact, Micah’s name means “Who is like LORD (Yahweh)?” which appears at the end of this book as a rhetorical question affirming God’s abundant mercy and grace (7:18).

Main theme of Micah:

God will condemn all unrepentant sinners (those who reject Him as God), and God will save all those who come to Him in faith through Jesus Christ.

Key verses in Micah:

“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.” (Micah 5:2)

“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

“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.” (Micah 7:18)

➤ Micah is a challenging book to preach in one sermon, not only because of its length (seven chapters) but also because of its composition. Rather than having a linear progression, the book of Micah is more circular (or cyclical). In fact, many scholars believe that the book of Micah is actually a collection of three separate oracles (or prophesies). Consequently, I have chosen to highlight a few themes that we find repeated throughout this book. In this sermon, I want to highlight the three Gospel truths that run throughout the book of Micah.

I. The NEED for God's saving grace

- One truth that is immediately and repeatedly clear in the book of Micah is that no one is good enough, or can do enough good, in order to be saved apart from God's grace. It is abundantly clear (throughout Scripture as well as in the book of Micah) that a self-righteous morality cannot save anyone. Salvation is not ours to earn (by good works), nor is it something we deserve (by goodness). On our own, apart from God's saving grace, we are all justly condemned as sinners with no hope of salvation. Truly, God is our only hope (always has been, always will be)!
- The book of Micah records a strong prophetic message warning of the coming of God's judgment against the people of Samaria (ch.1-2), and Judah (ch.3-5), and of Israel (ch.6-7). Each of these ("three cycles") is identified by the command to "*Hear*" (1:2; 3:1; 6:1). Micah warned that God would allow the Assyrian empire to take out the north and ravage Jerusalem, and that after them, Babylon would bring even more destruction.

A courtroom motif occurs in the book of Micah. Certainly, God is the presiding Judge (over all creation), and He alone will hand out the ruling (sentencing) of His judgment. In this book, however, the courtroom analogy depicts God as the plaintiff filing a lawsuit against "*His people*" (3:8) and indicting Samaria and Jerusalem for their sins (see 1:2-7 and 6:1-8).

Mic 1:2-7 ~ "**Hear**, you peoples, all of you; pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it, and let the Lord God be a witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. ³For behold, the Lord is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. ⁴And the mountains will melt under him, and the valleys will split open, like wax before the fire, like waters poured down a steep place. ⁵All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? ⁶Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country, a place for planting vineyards, and I will pour down her stones into the valley and uncover her foundations. ⁷All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces, all her wages shall be burned with fire, and all her idols I will lay waste, for from the fee of a prostitute she gathered them, and to the fee of a prostitute they shall return."

- God is righteously angry about Israel's idolatry. They were called to be a light to the nations – a living billboard of God's nature and character (as the one true God). Instead, they were relentlessly and unashamedly blaspheming God and worshiping false gods. Even though God miraculously revealed Himself to them many times, even though God graciously protected and delivered them from their enemies, and even though God abundantly provided for all their needs, they still rejected God and rebelled against Him. They chose the fleeting pleasures of this world, rather than the eternal covenant with God. They defied and disobeyed God. They worshipped created things rather than the Creator (Rom.1:18-32).

Oftentimes in Scripture, idols were placed on "*high places*" (1:3, 5), in order to be easily seen and as a vain attempt to exalt them as gods. God, however, is referred to as the "*Most High*" or "*highest*" God. As the one true God, God alone is worthy of worship and He alone is to be exalted as God. To punish Israel for their idolatry, God would destroy all the shrines to false gods and reduce their idols to "*heap*" of rubble (1:6-7; see Amos 4:12-13).

Mic 2:1-5 ~ "Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in the power of their hand. ²They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them away; they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance. ³Therefore thus says the Lord: behold, against this family I am devising disaster, from which you cannot remove your necks, and you shall not walk haughtily, for it will be a time of disaster. ⁴In that day they shall take up a taunt song against you and moan bitterly, and say, 'We are utterly ruined; he changes the portion of my people; how he removes it from me! To an apostate he allots our fields.' ⁵Therefore you will have none to cast the line by lot in the assembly of the Lord."

- A natural byproduct of false worship, and also the underlying reason for it, is immorality and injustice. In their rejection of, and rebellion against, God, Israel engaged in various forms of sexual immorality, corruption, “*wickedness*” and “*evil*” (2:1). The sins against God always lead to sins against others. Consequently, God pronounced on them a judgment of “*Woe*” (2:1; impending doom or disaster, condemnation, wrath), and set Himself “*against*” Israel (2:3).
- Similarly, the second command to “*Hear*” (3:1; cf. 1:2; 6:1) is another oracle of woe, particularly to those who were in positions of spiritual leadership (3:1). It describes these rulers as those who “*hate the good and love the evil*” (vs.2), and graphically – gruesomely – equates their sinful behavior as cannibalistic (3:2-3)! They were supposed to be godly (“*to know justice*”; 3:1) but instead their practices all kinds of injustices and immoralities – “*evil*” (3:4). Consequently, God would “*hide His face from them*” (3:4), refusing to “*answer them*” (protect or deliver them) in their time of need (3:4).

Mic 3:1-4 ~ “And I said: **Hear**, you heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel! Is it not for you to know justice? – ²you who hate the good and love the evil, who tear the skin from off my people and their flesh from off their bones, ³who eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones in pieces and chop them up like meat in a pot, like flesh in a cauldron. ⁴Then they will cry to the Lord, but he will not answer them; he will hide his face from them at that time, because they have made their deeds evil.”

Mic 3:9-12 ~ “Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who detest justice and make crooked all that is straight, ¹⁰who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity. ¹¹Its heads give judgment for a bribe; its priests teach for a price; its prophets practice divination for money; yet they lean on the Lord and say, ‘Is not the Lord in the midst of us? No disaster shall come upon us.’ ¹²Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height.”

- The third command to “*Hear*” (6:1; cf. 1:2; 3:1) is much like the previous two. The Lord accused Israel of wickedness and idolatry, and Israel was guilty as charged. They could not plead their innocence, or call witnesses to defend them. They had sinned against God, and they knew it (Rom.1:20). Now they would have to “*contend*” (6:2) with God and stand trial for their sins.

Mic 6:1-2 ~ “**Hear** what the Lord says: Arise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. ²Hear, you mountains, the indictment of the Lord, and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the Lord has an indictment against his people, and he will contend with Israel.”

- The applications to these passages are manifold and incredibly self-evident. Israel’s sins are our own. For everyone is guilty of sinning against the Lord, and everyone – apart from God’s saving grace – will stand guilty before God in judgment and face His eternal condemnation.

Today we see our culture trying to suppress the truth of God, reveling in immoralities and injustices, and spiraling into depravity. Sin is the true “deadly” epidemic in our world; it always has been, and it always will be – and there is no human immunity or cure.

Rom 1:18-20 ~ “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”

Rom 3:10-18, 23 ~ “as it is written: ‘None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹²All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.’ ... ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (see Rom.5:12; Eph.2:1-3)

1 John 1:8 ~ “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

➤ Since everyone has sinned, and since no one can be good enough or do enough good to be righteous, we all stand in desperate need of God's saving grace.

2. The PROMISE of God's saving grace

➤ Thankfully, throughout the book of Micah – woven among the prophecies of rebuke and judgment – are promises of forgiveness and salvation. While Israel is clearly guilty of sinning against the Lord, and is unwilling and unable to live righteously, God is gracious (giving them what they do not deserve) and merciful (not giving them what they deserve) to them.

Mic 2:12-13 ~ “I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob; I will gather the remnant of Israel; I will set them together like sheep in a fold, like a flock in its pasture, a noisy multitude of men. ¹³He who opens the breach goes up before them; they break through and pass the gate, going out by it. Their king passes on before them, the Lord at their head.”

➤ God portrays Himself as Israel's Shepherd (2:12) and King (2:13). Even though Israel continually forsook the Lord, the Lord will not forsake His redemptive covenant with them. God will not be – indeed, cannot be – break His promise or be unfaithful to the covenant He has made (Rom.3:3-4; 2Tim.2:13; Tit.1:2; Heb.6:18). Even for a “remnant” of His people, God will fulfill the promises He has made (Rom.9:27-29; 11:7; see 1Kngs.19:9, 18).

God promises to deliver and to lead (the remnant of) His people.

Mic 4:1-7 ~ “It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, ²and many nations shall come, and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. ... ⁵For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.

⁶In that day, declares the Lord, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away and those whom I have afflicted; ⁷and the lame I will make the remnant, and those who were cast off, a strong nation; and the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion from this time forth and forevermore.”

➤ In the midst of all the wreckage of God's judgment upon Israel – all the desolation and destruction from God's just wrath – is a beautiful ray of hope; the salvific fulfillment of His divine purpose established before the creation of the world (Eph.1:4; 1Pet.1:20). God will indeed gather all those who truly belong to Him. With undeserved mercy and amazing grace, God will redeem His children; He will save all who truly worship Him alone as God. This has always been true and is definitely still true today.

Rom 11:5 ~ “So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.”

1 Peter 2:9-10 ~ “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

➤ God will never forsake His covenant nor fail to keep His promises. Even today He is gathering, protecting, and redeeming His remnant. Not matter how bleak and how dark this world may become, we can be assured that God will save all those who belong to Him.

3. The PROVISION of God's saving grace

➤ Contrary to what is commonly declared and embraced in our society, God's love is neither permissive nor pampering. God is neither ignorant nor tolerant of sin. He demands obedience and requires faithfulness.

Mic 6:6-8 ~ “With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? ⁷Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? ⁸He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

➤ Notice that the prophet did not declare that God wants to do whatever is right in your own eyes, to simply follow heart (or gut), to live your own truth, to be politically correct, to just be yourself, or that it does not matter what you believe as long as you are sincere. Quite the contrary. God demands that we practice (promote) “*justice*” (6:8; contrast 3:1), that we “*love kindness*” (6:8; or “love mercy”; contrast 2:1-5; 3:1-4), and that we “*walk humbly*” with Him (6:8; “live obediently”; contrast 1:7).

Matt 5:20 ~ “For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Matt 5:48 ~ “You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

1 Peter 1:15-16 ~ “but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’” [Lev.11:44]

Mic 6:11-13 ~ “Shall I acquit the man with wicked scales and with a bag of deceitful weights? ... ¹³Therefore I strike you with a grievous blow, making you desolate because of your sins.”

➤ God will not lower this humanly unattainable standard of righteousness. Since God is absolutely holy, He cannot condone or ignore sin nor reward sinful behavior,

Mic 7:2-6 ~ “The godly has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among mankind; they all lie in wait for blood, and each hunts the other with a net. ³Their hands are on what is evil, to do it well; the prince and the judge ask for a bribe, and the great man utters the evil desire of his soul; thus they weave it together. ⁴The best of them is like a brier, the most upright of them a thorn hedge. The day of your watchmen, of your punishment, has come; now their confusion is at hand. ⁵Put no trust in a neighbor; have no confidence in a friend; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your arms; ⁶for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.”

Jesus, when commissioning His disciples:

Matt 10:34-38 ~ “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. ³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” (see Matt.10:21-22; Lk.12:51-53)

Mic 7:7-9 ~ “But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. ⁸Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me. ⁹I will 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; I shall look upon his vindication.”

Mic 7:9 ~ “I must endure the Lord's anger, for I have sinned against him. But then he will defend my cause, and accomplish justice on my behalf. He will lead me out into the light; I will experience firsthand his deliverance.” (NET)

➤ Micah knew that he was a sinner deserving God’s just and eternal wrath. But he also knew something else. He knew that God is loving, merciful, and gracious. Micah is confident of his salvation, not because he believes he is so good but because he knows that God is faithful! Micah understands that he cannot save himself, and he knows that God will forgive those who believe in Him (those who truly repent and worship Him alone as God). And Micah also knows that God will provide a sufficient atonement for sin for all those who believe. Micah knows that God will be faithful to His redemptive covenant.

Mic 7:18-20 ~ “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. ¹⁹He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. ²⁰You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.”

Pss 130:1-4 ~ “Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord! ²O Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy! ³If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? ⁴But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.”

➤ But God’s grace and mercy are not unconditional. To be sure, they are free and cannot be earned but they are not unconditional. Salvation is by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Everyone who has ever been saved, and everyone who will ever be saved, is saved through faith in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament saints were saved by their faith in the Messiah who was to come, and we are saved by faith in the Messiah who has come (and will come again).

Through the prophet Micah, God revealed that the Savior (the Shepherd-King) would come from Bethlehem. This is clearly a reference to Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Son of God (see Jn.1:1-3, 14; Col.1:15-20; 2:9; Heb.1:1-4).

Mic 5:1-5 ~ “Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops; siege is laid against us; with a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek. ²But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. ⁵And he shall be their peace.”

Matt 2:3-6 ~ “When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet [Micah 5:2]: ‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

Matt 1:22-25 ~ “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet [Isaiah 7:14]: ²³‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.”

➤ As prophesied, Jesus was born of a virgin (Is.7:14; Matt.1:23), born from the line of David (Matt.1:1ff; 1Sam.17:12), born of the tribe of Judah (Mic.5:2; Matt.2:6), born in the small town of Bethlehem

(Mic.5:2; Matt.2:1-6), and born in abject humility (Mic.5:2; Phil.2:7-8; e.g., born to ordinary and poor “parents” [Lk.2:24], born in a place where animals were kept, and laid in a manger (or feeding trough). These are just a few of the literally hundreds of prophecies Jesus fulfilled in His earthly life and ministry. In Scripture, it is abundantly clear that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah, or “anointed one” of God). Jesus is the one and only Son of God and the one and only Savior from God!

John 14:6 ~ “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”

Acts 4:12 ~ [Peter:] “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

John 3:36 ~ [John:] “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”

Rom 3:23-25 [Paul:] ~ “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. ...”

Rom 5:8-11 ~ “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.”

Rom 6:23 ~ “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Rom 8:1 ~ “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

1 Cor 6:9-11 ~ “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

➤ Jesus is the main theme and the very fulfillment of all Scripture – both Old Testament and New (see 2Cor.1:20). “The OT as a whole, through its promises, its symbols, and its pictures of salvation, looks forward to the actual accomplishment of salvation that took place once for all in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ” (*ESV Study Bible*; “Overview of the Bible”). A person cannot truly believe the Bible and not see Jesus as the Incarnate Son of God, and the Savior of the world.

John 5:39-40 ~ “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, ⁴⁰yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.”

Luke 24:25-27 ~ “And he said to them [the two disciples on the road to Emmaus], ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?’ ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”

Luke 24:44-47 ~ “Then he said to them [the “eleven” (vs.33) and others who were with them], ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.’”

Conclusion

➤ Our only hope for salvation is God and that hope comes through His one and only Son, Jesus, whom He sent into the world to be the Savior of all who believe. Jesus is the only one to live a perfect, sinless, live. As we saw required in Micah 6:8, Jesus is the only one who lived justly (or righteously), the only one who loved God faithfully, and the only one who obeyed God perfectly.

In addition, Jesus bore the full penalty of our sin in His substitutionary death on the cross. He died in our place and for our sins, and imputed to us His righteousness (sinlessness) so that we could be truly, fully, forgiven and able to stand perfectly blameless before God.

Isa 53:4-6 ~ “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned – every one – to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

2 Cor 5:21 ~ “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (see Rom.8:3; Gal.3:13; 1Pet.2:24; 3:18; 1Jn.2:1-2).

➤ Jesus is the one and only Son of God, and the one and only Savior sent from God. Since He was sinless, Jesus never needed a Savior; but could be our Savior. He died on the cross not for His own sin, but for the sins of all who would ever believe. This is referred to as His “substitutionary death” (or the “substitutionary atonement” of Christ). Meaning, Jesus died in our place for our sins. He bore “*the indignation of the Lord*” and He will “*bring ... out to the light*” all those who receive Him as Lord and Savior (Mic.7:9). God treated Jesus as if He had lived our sinful lives, and God treats those who are saved as if they lived Jesus’ perfect life.

➤ Micah reveals Jesus as the promised Shepherd-King. Through His sinless life, Jesus lived the life we could not live. Through His substitutionary death on the cross, Jesus laid down His life for the sheep (Jn.10:15). Through His supernatural resurrection, Jesus conquered sin and death for all who believe. Salvation is by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.