

13 REASON TO HOPE

KEY TEXT: MICAH 7:1-10,18-20

CENTRAL truth

It's always best to go to God with important matters. He knows everything, never makes mistakes, and can be trusted to follow through on His promises (see Ps. 18:30; 145:13). Even when we don't deserve His loyalty, God is faithful (see 2 Tim. 2:13). We may feel hopeless sometimes, but **those who trust God have reason to hope.**

key question

According to Micah, how was God different from the false gods Judah had been worshipping? How is God better than other things that demand our time and attention?

The false gods weren't capable of compassion because they weren't real or alive. Even if they had been, they were believed to be cold, fickle, and limited in power. By contrast, God showed grace, mercy, power, and unmatched compassion to His people by preserving those who remained faithful to Him. He also planned to provide for the greatest need of all—rescue from sin—through Jesus. Like those false gods, much of what we invest in today fails to love us back, but God offers us the same unconditional, everlasting love He offered Israel.

keep in mind

The idea of spending eternity with God in heaven, where there won't be any pain or tears, may sound great, but it may also feel like a distant reality to your students. Even if they are looking forward to Jesus's return, they probably want to experience some good things here on earth first.

Explain that God's kingdom isn't just a far-off place called Heaven. God's kingdom is His rulership. If we put our faith in Jesus, God's kingdom exists in the here and now. The more we cooperate with the Holy Spirit, the closer to God we will feel (see James 4:8). As we learn to live in awareness of God's presence and to submit to Him in all things, ordinary days and events will take on eternal meaning. Life will become more exciting and rewarding, whether or not it goes the way we want or we get to cross everything off our bucket list.

application

What encouragement can we draw from the compassion God showed Judah, despite their faithlessness? How should we respond to that encouragement?

the win

FOR THE STUDENT: Students should understand that God has provided us with a safe haven in Jesus and a true comforter in the Holy Spirit. If we put our faith in Jesus, our souls are free and safe. God will never leave or forsake us, no matter how bad things get, before we get to stand in His presence and see Him as He truly is.

FOR THE LEADER: Refrain from assuming anything about God's judgment or intentions regarding specific people groups or nations and focus instead on how He plans to bless the faithful. Help students see that it is possible to follow God even when it seems everyone else has stopped following Him.

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