

It's the End of the World as We Know It...and the Art of the Impossible

June 23 & 24, 2018

Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Jeremiah 23:16-24

- Why did God tell the people not to listen to the prophets (16)? What sorts of things did these false prophets say to those who were not faithfully following the Lord (17)? Consider these warnings in light of this series on the Minor Prophets, which are often brimming with harsh judgment and doom. There is no false hope to be found. Pray their words, even the harsh ones, would sink in and help you in your journey toward Christlikeness.
- What does true prophecy look like (18, 22)? What do you think it means to stand in God's council? Picture it in your mind's eye. This week, even in the midst of routine tasks, keep an ear turned toward the voice of the Lord. Ask him for opportunities and guidance to proclaim what he speaks to you.
- Contrary to the false assurances of a false prophet, what will God actually do (19-20)? What makes the Lord an expert at identifying false prophets, and everything else under the sun (23-24)?

Day Two: Amos 5

- What is Israel's condition (2)? What are the repercussions (3, 8-9, 16-17, 27)? Describe the escape plan God offers (5-6, 14-15). Meditate on verse 15. We can't make the Lord respond a certain way, but we should never stop pursuing his mercy. Consider this in light of "fallen" aspects of your life. God says to you, "Seek me and live." What might this look like? Respond to the Lord.
- What are some of Israel's particular offenses (7, 10-12). What are the consequences of perpetrating oppression (11-13)? How does Amos describe "the day of the Lord" (18-20)? In other parts of the Bible it's depicted positively. Why is Amos' account so dark?
- Describe the type of religiosity God hates (21-23, 25-26). What is of eternal worth to him (24)? Martin Luther King, Jr. quoted this verse in his *I Have a Dream* speech. Join him by asking God to move again like this today: tell him about injustices in need of his response. How can you partner with him in these efforts?

Day Three: Jonah 3-4

- What happened after Jonah fled from God and was swallowed by a fish (3:1-2)? Describe his newfound obedience (3-4). Recall times you've disobeyed or resisted the Lord, only to eventually surrender. What have you learned from those experiences?
- What was Nineveh like, and how did the people respond to Jonah's proclamations (3:3, 5)? What about the king in particular (6-9)? Notice verse nine's similarity to Amos 5:15. Do you seek God's mercy with optimism and open-mindedness, feeling certain of his goodness? If not, how can you grow in this direction?
- How did the Lord respond to the Ninevites' repentance (3:10)? What did Jonah think of this (4:1-3)? Summarize God's way of conveying Nineveh's worthiness (4-11). Like Jonah, we can get it wrong when it comes to justice and mercy. Ask God to speak to you about the limitless perfection of his justice and mercy.

Day Four: Romans 3:9-20

- Why does Paul insist Jews have no advantage over Gentiles (9)? How does it feel to be on this level playing field of sin? Summarize the scriptures Paul quotes to argue that no

one is righteous (10-18). Where do you see yourself in these vignettes? Where do you see the church? What about those entities (nations, institutions, etc.) that have power? How is God asking you to respond?

- Whom does the law speak to (19)? Whom does it impact (19)? Imagine being in a courtroom, attempting to defend yourself for every sin you've ever committed. How much headway do you think you could make? Invite the Lord into this exercise.
- What purpose does the law actually serve (20)? It opens our eyes but we are still helpless in the face of evil, a reality Amos and the other Minor Prophets constantly highlight. Only God can bring freedom and empower us to do the impossible. Allow this consciousness to spark action. What's the first move you'll make?

Day Five: Revelation 3:14-18

- To whom is this letter addressed (14)? How does Jesus describe himself (14)? In this moment, which of these attributes seem most apparent about Jesus? What does he know about the church in Laodicea (15)? In an area lacking a fresh water supply, Jesus used a familiar physical problem to illustrate a spiritual one. When has God used the physical to communicate the spiritual to you?
- What will Jesus do in response to Laodicea's lukewarm nature (16)? Some translations more accurately use the word "vomit." The hard but true reality is that some churches or expressions of so-called Christianity disgust Jesus. What is God speaking to your heart as you consider this? Respond to him.
- What makes Laodicea so unappealing to Jesus (17)? He urges the church to forsake pride and do some serious self-assessment. How, specifically (18)? If you feel at all complicit in Laodicea's crimes, repent and pursue the course laid out in verse 18.