

The Day of the Lord – Part 1

The Current Crisis

Joel 1

Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of conscience by His holiness, the nourishment of the mind with His truth, the purifying of the imagination of His beauty, the opening of the heart to His love, the surrender of the will to His purpose.

-William Temple

I. The Summary

II. The Situation

Reflection

1. As we go through the minor prophets, there are four major themes that will come up again and again. We will see that God is sovereign, holy, just, and merciful. As you reflect on the book of Hosea that we just completed, how were these attributes of God on display? What parts or passages remind us of these core tenets of what God is like?
2. The book of Hosea reminded us that God takes sin seriously. His people were called to repent and turn from their rebellion in order to find restoration and blessing. What are some things that characterize genuine repentance? Psalm 51 might be a helpful text to look through.
3. Reflecting on sin in the book of Hosea, it would be easy to leave it at arm's length. Those were Israel's problems from so long ago. However, God still takes the sins of his people seriously. As you reflect on your own life, are there areas of sin or compromise that you are tolerating? Why is it so dangerous to allow "small" sins to go undealt with? What tools has God given us to deal with sin?

Response

4. Joel uses a terrible locust infestation to begin talking about the Day of the Lord. The people needed to be reminded that trouble in the nation was a spiritual reality and not just a physical reality. What are some tools that God uses to get our attention? How can we be sensitive to those things in our lives?

5. One of the reasons that we gather together as believers is to stir one another up to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24). How does God use the body to keep us sensitive to sin and open to opportunities to obey in our lives? Can you think of a time when the small group or even a specific believer helped you make a specific change in your life?

For Families

6. Part of being in a family is working through discipline. In the minor prophets, we see God discipline his people regularly. Talk together about why discipline is ultimately a loving thing to do, even when it is difficult. Help you kids connect discipline with your care for them and talk as spouses about the goal of your discipline. Are we looking to modify behavior, or are we looking to train the heart?