

## Discussion Questions February 25, 2018

### Hope in a God Damned World (Revelation 8:8-9:21, 11:15-19)

(Is there anything you are currently asking God for (or contemplating asking God for) but you wonder if it's too much to ask?) (Is there anything you are afraid to hope for, maybe for fear of feeling disappointed?)

Revelation 8 and 9 reveal an outpouring of difficulties upon the earth. When we read about them, we can't help but ask, "Why are these things happening?" Read Revelation 8:1-6.

- What is it that causes the peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and the earthquake mentioned in verse five and then, the sounding of trumpets and all that follows in that chapter?
- When you pray, do you feel like it makes a difference in this world? If yes, why? If not, why?

In his sermon, Peter points out that God doesn't always answer our prayers in the ways we think He should: "You prayed that you would be saved, right? You prayed in Jesus' name and that name means 'God is Salvation.' You would hope that God saves us from earthquakes, *but* the Bible never says that God saves you from earthquakes—*actually* there are quite a few places where He saves folks with earthquakes..."—Peter Hiatt

- How has God answered your prayers in sometimes unexpected and even (at times) unwanted ways, yet, in the end, you saw His love in it?

"In Jericho, there was a harlot named Rahab. Rahab and those with her were devoted to Yahweh, but not for destruction—at least not in that way and at that time...Rahab welcomed the Israelites and the Kingdom of God. And even married an Israelite named Salman. Rahab welcomed the Judgment of God.—Peter Hiatt

The answer to her prayer came as a destruction of the world around her and her walls, but it also came as life in her womb as she carried the seed of the Promised Seed, the hope of the world.

- In what ways have you welcomed the Judgment of God—Love, but often the "tough love"?
- Have you seen any fruit from His Judgment in your life? If so, what?

When Joshua entered the Promised Land, just before he came to Jericho, He encountered the Angel of *Yahweh*—the God-Man. Joshua asked, "Whose side are you on? Ours or theirs?" The God-Man said, "No." But, "As the commander of the Lord's armies I have come." And yet He's bearing a drawn sword—He's battling something. It's not Canaanites on one side of the walls of Jericho. And it's not Israelites on the other side of the walls of Jericho...it's the walls of Jericho He is battling.

The enemy attempts to keep us walled off from each other and walled off from God—walled off from the Body of Christ. But Jesus does battle against our walls.

- What attempts at walling yourself off would you like to surrender to Christ?
- What areas in your life or realm of influence would you like to welcome the Judgment of God?
- In what relationships would you like to see more love flowing out and less walls of defense?

Go back to the hope you shared at the beginning, the one that you might be afraid to ask your Heavenly Father for. Take a moment to share it with Him, & all the emotions that come with it.

Now listen to these words: "There is no way you could hope more for yourself than your Father has already hoped, wished and willed for you—before the very foundation of the world."—Peter Hiatt