

# M I D - W E E K D E V O T I O N

Biblical prophets are my favorite because they never shy away from hard truths. They speak plainly about the problems in the world. They weep and mourn for the brokenness, the pain, and the suffering that they witness—especially Jeremiah (he wasn't called the weeping prophet for nothing). Jeremiah noticed the ways that the world was not as it should be. He saw the world through tears. Yet he also saw something sacred shining through.

Long before the birth of Christ, Jeremiah predicted his coming, and he told everyone: "The days are coming...they are coming" when someone will come whose very name means truth and justice and love and compassion and peace and safety to make all things right (a paraphrase).

Niceties and platitudes like "everything happens for a reason" or "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger" attempt to make people feel better, but they do not hold up when our lives have come undone, when our hearts break, or when our faith wavers.

We need truths that can stand the test of time (...like, say, 2000 years or so) because we live in the already-but-not-yet. Like Abraham being shown the stars in the sky that will outnumber his offspring (Genesis 15:5), or God declaring creation good (Genesis 1:31), or Jesus declaring the mighty reversals of the Kingdom of God (Matt 5; Luke 4:16-22), we are given a portrait of the work God is doing in the world, but we don't experience it fully. Jesus came to be with us and began working toward the restoration of the world. We see glimpses of peace, healing, grace, and goodness, but we still endure pain, suffering, and sorrow. This is the duality we must learn to live in as we wait for the day when God restores the whole world.

Adapted from "Everything Happens for a Reason" by Kate Bowler

# When Someone Hurts You

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. Matthew 18:15a



Based on Matthew 18:15-20 (NIV)

N Z P H S N J P L Q T I T G A  
N M G N E I T C D I R X R P R  
S O I V Q S C N H J S P W E M  
C S A U N F I C R U N T H W K  
O E N I G B F E F G R T E F Z  
H U A Q W R H D A M A C Y N C  
R G C C W T T T U F G N H T S  
A E Z S O I K E L W S V C E I  
L D F R A C T J T O H Q H S Y  
O N B U Z G X N N Y O U Y T N  
O E I X S N R O E A W O N I E  
S K R L Q E B E S S X A B M A  
E K V J Q U S M E D S K P O R  
Z Z D Z H C T R U T H E X N T  
J G H E A V E N Z F W B S Y H

TRUTH  
AGAINST  
CHURCH  
YOU

HEAVEN  
EARTH  
WITNESSES  
AGREE

BIND  
SINS  
REFUSES  
TESTIMONY

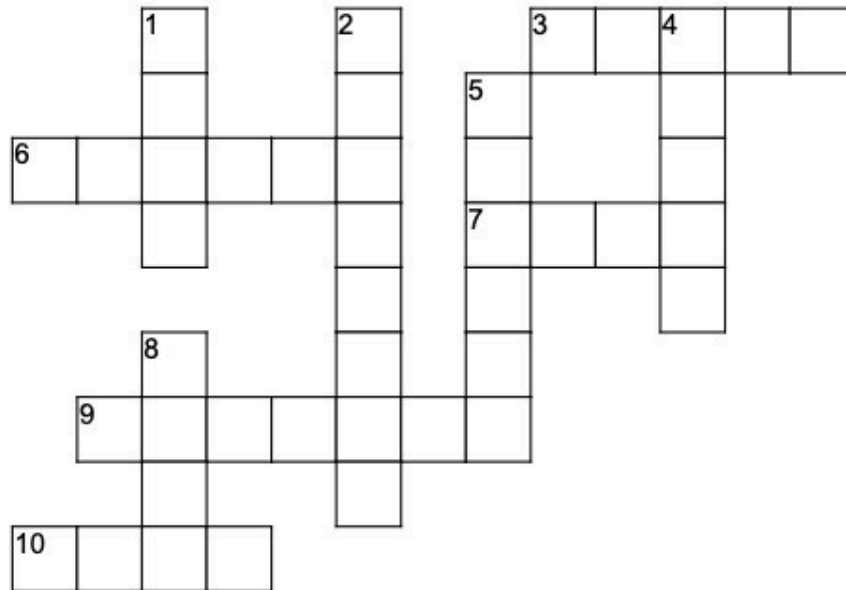
FAULT  
LOOSE  
HEAVEN  
WON

FATHER  
SHOW  
LISTENS  
BROTHER

# Feed the Children

"If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday." Isaiah 58:9-10 (NIV)

Puzzle is based on Isaiah 58:9-12



## ACROSS

- 3. The opposite of dark
- 6. To make a reply to a question or request
- 7. Something that is necessary; a requirement
- 9. To fulfill or meet a desire or need
- 10. To give assistance to someone

## DOWN

- 1. To increase in strength
- 2. The absence of light
- 4. To show someone the way by leading them
- 5. To feel a need or desire for food
- 8. To say or announce in a loud voice

LIGHT	RISE	SATISFY	GUIDE	HUNGRY
ANSWER	DARKNESS	NEED	CALL	HELP