



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

AMOS 5:14-15, 18-27

LESSON: A REBUKE FROM THE LORD—November 19, 2023

INTRODUCTION:

A Call to Repentance:

¹Amos shocked his listeners by singing a funeral song for the northern kingdom of Israel (5:1-3). The Israelites believed that their wealth and religious rituals made them secure, but they were doomed for an untimely destruction. Furthermore, those who attempted to protect Israel from this doom that awaited them would themselves be destroyed regardless of their might (5:3).

The Lord's people could only find life by seeking Him (5:4). They could not find it by performing prescribed rituals at traditional religious sites such as Bethel and Gilgal, for these cities had become the center for idolatry (5:5-6). The courts of law should have been places of justice, but instead they had become places of greed and injustice (5:7). Pleiades and Orion are star constellations (Job 9:9). The stars were worshiped by many ancient people, but they are created objects, not gods (5:8-9).

The elders and judges of the city officially met "*at the gate*" where legal transactions took place (5:10-13). "*One who rebukes in the gate,*" refers to an honest judge. A society is in trouble when those who try to do right are hated for their commitment to justice. They would not benefit from any of their labors because they had denied justice to the poor, who could not pay the bribes.

LESSON: I. A GODLY LIFESTYLE AMOS 5:14-15

5:14 Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. This constitutes another call to repentance. Israel had gone insane seeking evil in multitudinous forms. In true repentance they are to seek good, and the result will be life. The prophet recognizes, however, that in all probability Israel has gone too far, and her case is irreversible. A person does not need to seek God if He has already revealed Himself to Him. Thus, seek means "*to turn*" to Him in repentance, not necessarily "*to look for.*" "*Seek*" is a way of saying, "*Set aside your time and life for God.*" What ruins you, avoid it; and what helps you, cleave to it. Be good, flee evil, and live, and God would always be with them, and will be ready to help them under any circumstances.

5:15 Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: It may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph. If Israel swept away the corrupt system of false accusations, bribery, and corruption, and insisted that only just decisions be given, this would show their change of heart. The prescription for the avoidance of these terrible judgments is given here. Hate the evil, love the good, then work it out in the gate (openly and in the public square); justice in the place where "*causes*" are tried. God was gracious to Joseph, maybe He will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph who repents.

NOT APART OF THE LESSON: VERSES 16-17

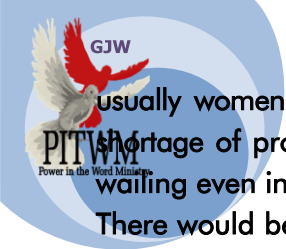
The prophet does not anticipate that Israel will take advantage of God's offer of life through their repentance, therefore in verses 16-17 he prophetically sets forth God's judgment—the sorrow that they will be theirs. ²Failure to honor the dead was considered horrible in Israel. So loud wailing was common at funerals. Paid mourners,

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/amos-51/>

² <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/the-day-of-the-lord/>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>





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usually women cried and mourned loudly. Amos said there would be so many funerals that there would be a shortage of professional mourners, so farmers would be called from the fields to help (5:16-17). It would be wailing even in the vineyards. The only one who will profit from this judgment will be the professional mourners. There would be a great demand for their services. All this will happen because Jehovah Himself will pass through the land in judgment as He has promised.

BACK TO THE LESSON

II. A FEARFUL TIME AMOS 5:18-20

5:18 Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. "Woe" meant deep sorrow, grief, misery, and trouble. When God declares "Woe" through His prophets, it is impending judgment before any prosperity and blessings to come—they would be torn down to be built up again. Amos had already told them in 4:12 "...prepare to meet your God, O Israel." It seems the Israelites were desiring God to appear on their behalf in a great day of vindication, bringing justice to the world. However, they surely don't want to ask for that day to come for them. They don't understand the true nature of that day. Here, "*the Day of the Lord*" means the imminent destruction by the Assyrian army. For those that were seeking the "*Day of the Lord*", it will be darkness and doom—no light. This foreshadows the future Day of the Lord's Judgment. This future judgment would be worse than the judgment coming by the hands of the Assyrians.

5:19 As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Amos graphically illustrates as he pictures a man who successfully escapes from a lion and while doing so, meets a bear from which he also successfully escapes to the supposed safety of his house, only to be bitten and mortally wounded by a snake, and in exhaustion he leans against the wall to recover from his escapade. He compared the people of Israel to a fugitive who runs away from one threat only to find another. Can't you see us today, if we're doing evil, we're in one calamity and then right into another? God is the only One who has our plan of escape, when He gets our attention. In this illustration, does God have your attention?

5:20 Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?—³The people of Israel perceived the "*the Day of the Lord*" as a day of victory for themselves; a day they might be spared of judgment, and a day of judgment for their enemies. Amos corrected their thinking by pointing out that the Day of the Lord would be a day of judgment. Amos asks this question to drive the point home. "*The Day of the Lord*" will offer no hope for evildoers, only certain doom!

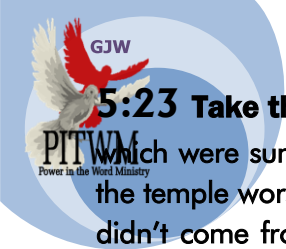
III. A REJECTED WORSHIP AMOS 5:21-24

5:21 I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. The Israelites kept "*feast days*," attended sacred assemblies. Here, God hates and despises Israel's religious feast days—their pretense—their hypocrisy of honoring God. They were unimportant and unnecessary in His sight. He won't even take part to receive anything they presented, for it wasn't even a pleasing odor or flavor, nor a sweet savor unto His nostrils in their solemn assemblies to Him.

5:22 Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. The Israelites offered "*burnt offerings*" but neglected justice and righteousness. God does not hate worship, but He hates false worship by people who do it out of pretense or for show. It reminds me of our past Sunday School Lesson in 1 Corinthians 13:1 "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*" That's what their burnt offerings and their meat offerings felt like to God. He says he will not accept them.

³ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/the-day-of-the-lord/>
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5:23 Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. ⁴Songs which were sung to God were a sweet, sweet sound in His ear. Music, both instrumental and vocal, was used in the temple worship—another way of praising God. The "viol" they used was like a lyre or small harp. Songs that didn't come from the heart, no matter how lovely they sound, was noise to the Lord—a tinkling cymbal. Their psalms and hymns of praise were mere noise in God's ear, and wearied Him.

5:24 But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. If justice and righteousness are not right, nothing else will flow right. God wants justice; act justly in their offerings. Let it run down; flow down like waters, not imitated. After worship, do better in regarding the poor and needy for it reflects you honoring God. Let righteousness as a mighty stream flowing from you, that you will seek good, and not evil. You will hate the evil, and love the good. It is to give people what they are due in the eyes of God's Law; to honor their divinely given rights, rather than taking advantage of them or oppressing them, and always in a righteous manner. God's judgment will always be right and righteousness will always be the way.

IV. A DESERVED RECOMPENSE AMOS 5:25-27

5:25 Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?— Israel's problem is not new; they haven't changed. They were infected with idol worship from the very beginning when God brought them out of Egypt into the wilderness. Going back forty years in the desert they made and sacrificed unto God, the golden calf.

5:26 But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves. They "*have borne the tabernacle*" means they have made and carried these idol images along with them in the wilderness; making shrines and booths for them. Moloch and Chiun were false heathen image gods; the star of their god in which they were really interested in, so they made them for themselves. Throughout its history, Israel made the mistake of thinking that both idols and Jehovah could be worshiped.

5:27 Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord, whose name is The God of hosts. This is what the Lord will do. He will cause them to go into captivity beyond Damascus. Beyond Damascus was complete exile from their homeland. It was their only remedy. Amos ends it with who sends this message—the Lord—The God of hosts.

SUMMARY:

Amos speaks to Israel on behalf of the Lord, and gives the command to seek good and not evil, that they may live so the Lord will be with them. Secondly hate the evil, love the good, and establish judgment in the gate and maybe God will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph (**5:14-15**).

⁵Woe unto those that desire the Day of the Lord's judgments, that wish for times of war and confusion; as some who long for changes, hoping to rise upon the ruins of their country! But this would be a great desolation, that, nobody could gain by it. The Day of the Lord will be a dark, dismal, gloomy day to all unrepentant sinners. When God makes a day dark, all the world cannot make it light. Those who are not reformed by the judgments of God, will be pursued by them; if they escape one, another stands ready to seize them. A pretense of piety is double iniquity. The people of Israel copied the crimes of their forefathers. The law of worshipping the Lord our God is Him only that we must serve. Israel could not get around it, and would be exiled; held in captivity beyond Damascus (**5:18-27**).

⁴ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/amos/05.html>

⁵ http://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhcc.v_1.html?scrBook=Amos&scrCh=5&scrV=7#v_1-p9.1

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

