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BIBLE STUDY

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

601 NW 2nd Street, Gainesville, FL 32601; 352.336.7602

Web Site: www.RefugeGainesville.com

**Elder Michael Williams, Supply Pastor**

**Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

***BUT LET JUDGMENT RUN DOWN AS WATERS, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS AS A MIGHTY STREAM***

**Amos 5:1-27**

***Amos 5:1 "Hear ye this word which I take up against you, [even] a lamentation, O house of Israel."***

Amos is so sure this is going to happen, that he brings a funeral message of mourning against the house of Israel.

***Amos 5:2 "The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; [there is] none to raise her up."***

Israel had been God's love. Israel did not give love in return to God. Even though God had protected and taken care of all of Israel's needs, they were not loyal to God. They went after strange gods. This is as if God has forsaken Israel. This is like a bill of divorcement. God was the only One for Israel. Now, there is no one to lift her up.

***Amos 5:3 "For thus saith the Lord GOD; The city that went out [by] a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth [by] an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel."***

Only one out of ten will be saved. The rest are totally destroyed. It will not matter whether the city is small, or large. Only 1/10 of those will return.

***Amos 5:4 "For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:"***

We see one more plea for them to repent and turn to God. If they would heed the warning and turn to God, even now, they would live.

***Amos 5:5 "But seek not Beth-el, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Beth-el shall come to nought."***

In a previous lesson, we saw these cities mentioned, here, were changed into evil cities, where worship of their false gods was practiced. Both Gilgal and Beth-el are already condemned of God.

***Amos 5:6 "Seek the LORD, and ye shall live; lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour [it], and [there be] none to quench [it] in Beth-el."***

The false gods of Beth-el would not be able to help them.

***Hebrews 12:29 "For our God [is] a consuming fire."***

***Deuteronomy 9:3 "Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God [is] he which goeth over before thee; [as] a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee."***

God needs no assistance. He can destroy by fire whatever He chooses. God was always fond of Joseph, but even Joseph's descendents could not get away with worship of false gods.

***Amos 5:7 "Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth,"***

The word "wormwood" means bad water. Even their judgment was corrupted. The wormwood plant gave a terribly bitter taste. Their judgment, then, was bitter, instead of being righteous.

***Amos 5:8 "[Seek him] that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD [is] his name:"***

The seven stars are, possibly, the constellation of the Pleiades. The number seven is not to be taken literally, but speaks of the completeness of the stars that God created. Probably, this shepherd was used to seeing the ones mentioned here. The mention of "death turning into the morning" has to do with darkness being turned into the Light that God provides. We are all condemned to death, until the Light of God shines into our lives and brings us everlasting life. We remember, that God turned the day into darkness at the crucifixion of Jesus. God can bring a flood, or a drought, at His call. The LORD is Ruler of it all.

***Amos 5:9 "That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress."***

God can stop the strong, and give them over to the spoiled in the fraction of a second. He speaks, and it becomes. God caused a little shepherd boy to kill the giant, Goliath. It is nothing for God to cause the oppressed to win over the oppressor.

***Amos 5:10 "They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly."***

The one who rebuketh in the gate was, probably, the prophet. They did not want to hear his message, so they hated him. They felt they were above rebuke.

***Amos 5:11 "Forasmuch therefore as your treading [is] upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them."***

They had no compassion for the poor, so God had no compassion on them. They had literally robbed from the poor, by the tribute they required them to pay. Stone houses were the sign of wealth. They had lived in luxury, and took no thought for the poor. God will take it away from them. They will not have a chance to live in those houses.

***Amos 5:12 "For I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate [from their right]."***

Their sins were against their fellowman, as well as against God. They were not honest. They took bribes, and had their judgment tainted by those bribes. They oppressed the poor every chance they had. They were respecters of those who could bribe them.

***Amos 5:13 "Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it [is] an evil time."***

This is a time of such moral decay, that even the prophets could not sway them away from their sins. It was no use to try to warn them. It was wise to just say nothing.

***Amos 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."***

Amos did not take his own advice. He kept trying to reach all that he could. He continued to tell them to seek good, and not evil. He was warning them, so they could save their own lives. They thought, because of their covenant relationship with God, they could do whatever they wanted to do, and get away with it.

***Amos 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."***

Hate for evil, and love for good, was a condition of their hearts. This would be having your heart right with God. Their judgment should be based upon truth. The descendents of Joseph were Ephraim and Manassah, or the 10 tribes of Israel.

***Acts 8:22 "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."***

***Hebrews 1:9 "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, [even] thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."***

***Amos 5:16 "Therefore the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus; Wailing [shall be] in all streets; and they shall say in all the highways, Alas! alas! and they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing."***

The LORD prefers to bless them. They will not do as Amos has told them from God, and therefore, God has no choice but to punish them. God has punished them in several ways to get them to repent. They repented not. God has no choice, but to allow His judgment to come upon them. They will feel great sorrow and despair, but they have gone too far.

***Amos 5:17 "And in all vineyards [shall be] wailing: for I will pass through thee, saith the LORD."***

Generally, the vineyard brought great joy to the owner of the vineyard. Now, there is great despair. They will weep for the failure of the vineyard.

***Amos 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."***

They thought "the day of the LORD" would be a restoration to them. They thought the punishment would be against their enemies. They had never imagined the punishment would have been on them, for their sins. Amos explains to them, here, this judgment is against them. It is not a day of the Light coming to them, but a day when God withdraws from them and darkness prevails. This darkness is a spiritual darkness, when the Light of the world is gone from them.

***Amos 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."***

They felt secure in the fact that they were God's chosen. They felt sure, they had been freed from all danger, when in fact, the danger to them had increased. They were like the man, thinking he was safe from the lion, and was destroyed by the bear. He was, also, like the man that went into the safety of his house, and then was bitten by a serpent. There was no safe place to hide from the judgment of God.

***Amos 5:20 "[Shall] not the day of the LORD [be] darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?"***

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:" Any time a person, or a nation, has gone completely away from God, is a day of darkness.

***Amos 5:21 "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies."***

God was very aware, that their worship of Him had fallen to just a formality. They were not in love with God at all. The desire of their hearts was to follow after false gods. God hated their form of religion.

***I Samuel 15:22 "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD [as great] delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey [is] better than sacrifice, [and] to hearken than the fat of rams."***

God did not want their sacrifices, He wanted their loyalty and love. The fact that he would not smell, meant that He would not accept their sweet smelling savour. The following Scripture is what He really wants.

***Mark 12:33 "And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love [his] neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."***

***Amos 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."***

They had mixed their idolatry with the worship with sacrifices and burnt offerings. This was an abomination to God.

***Luke 16:15 "And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."***

***Amos 5:23 "Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols."***

Songs which were sung to God were a sweet, sweet sound in His ear. They were another way of praising God. Songs that did not come from the heart, were noise to the Lord. A "viol" was like a lyre.

***Amos 5:24 "But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."***

Judgment will come as rain falls from heaven. God's judgment will be under His control alone. God's judgment is, also, righteous.

***Amos 5:25 "Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?"***

God is showing them, that even from the very beginning, they did not worship God in sincerity. Their worship, even then, was out of obligation, instead of because of their pure love for God. They have never changed.

***Amos 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 had worshipped false gods all along. They physically carried these idols with them wherever they went. God was carried in their hearts, but they would not accept God as their only Lord. The star is, possibly, Saturn. There was much worship of false gods associated with stars. Moloch was, also, a false god, as were these images {chium}. We have said it over many times, that things you can create with your own hands are not Gods. God is Spirit. If you can see Him with physical eyes, it is not God. The True God is Spirit, and is taken on faith.

***Amos 5:27 "Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, whose name [is] The God of hosts."***

Now, we see the punishment for their unfaithfulness to God for worshipping false gods. They were taken to Damascus as captives. This happens, because God has judged them, and found them guilty of worshipping false gods. God brings the captivity.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What type of message does Amos bring?
2. The city that went in by the thousand shall leave an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. What is verse 4 pleading with them to do?
4. What do Beth-el and Gilgal have in common?
5. What sin had Joseph's descendents committed, that God would not overlook?
6. What does "wormwood" mean?
7. The wormwood plant gave off a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ taste.
8. What does "death turning into the morning" have to do with?
9. When is a specific time, when God turned the day into darkness?
10. God caused a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ to kill the giant, Goliath.
11. Who lived in houses of hewn stone?
12. What were some of their transgressions?
13. Why was it wise to just say nothing?
14. Seek \_\_\_\_\_, and not \_\_\_\_\_\_, that ye may live.
15. Hate for evil, and love for good, was a condition of their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
16. Who were the descendents of Joseph?
17. The day of the Lord is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
18. There was no safe place to hide from the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of God.
19. Why would God not accept their offerings?
20. Songs are another way of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God.
21. What is a "viol"?
22. Their worship of God, even in the wilderness, had been out of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
23. Things you can create with your own hands are not \_\_\_\_\_\_.
24. The True God is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and is taken on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
25. What will happen to them in punishment for their sins?