

Gleanings of Grace

Amos 5

Lesson 36

Amos was a herdsman and a cultivator of sycamore trees when the LORD called him to be a prophet. God called him to give a powerful word to the people of Israel. Making money was more important than worshiping God; the rich exploited the poor, the judicial system was corrupt, and injustice flourished. As you study, may you not only see the parallels to our nation today, but be personally touched and stirred to *seek the LORD*.

OBSERVATION: Amos 5

1. Read Amos 5 using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns/titles that refer to *LORD*.

Key Words: *LORD* and *seek*

3. The term of conclusion, *therefore*, is used four times in Amos 5. Mark the word. Choose one instance of its use and record what it is based upon.
4. The contrasting words *but* and *yet* are used four times in Amos 5. Mark the words. Choose one instance of their use and record what is being contrasted.
5. Using the key word *seek*, make a list of what God told them to *seek*/not to *seek*.

Seek	Not Seek

Background:

1. Amos was not what we might call a professional prophet. It seems that Amos had no “formal” theological or prophetic training, though there was a “school of the prophets” known as the *sons of the prophets* at that time (2 Kings 4:38). What do we learn about his calling from Amos 7:14,15?

a. Consider the fact that God calls ordinary people to do His extraordinary work. What are your thoughts?

2. Amos served during the days of King Jeroboam, son of Joash. What other prophets served at this time?

Hosea 1:1

2 Kings 14:25

3. Using 2 Kings 14:23-29, describe the reign of King Jeroboam.

a. The nation of Israel was flourishing in many ways. Yet, how does 2 Kings 14:26 describe what the LORD saw?

1.) What kind of *helper* do you think the nation of Israel needed?

4. Scan Amos 6:1-7 and summarize the attitude of those who were *at ease* (materially prosperous) in Israel at this time.

a. In what way does prosperity of any kind promote this kind of thinking and behavior?

Read Amos 5:1-7 – A Call to Repentance

1. Amos called the people of Israel to *hear the lamentation that was taken up against her*. He referred to her as a *virgin*, meaning she has so much potential ahead of her, but would lose it. What does verse 2 declare about the nation of Israel?

2. The once strong and vibrant nation was about to suffer in helplessness. Speaking of those who would go out to war, what does verse 3 declare?
 - a. God warned them in Deuteronomy 28:62 of this consequence of their disobedience. What does it say?

3. Describe the helplessness you have felt when God has taken His hand off of you because of your disobedience.

4. God's desire was not to forsake them. What was His plea to them in Amos 5:4?
 - a. Record David's sweet response in Psalm 27:8.

 - b. Describe David's plea in Psalm 27:9.

 - c. In practical terms, what does it mean to *seek the LORD*?
 - 1.) How does Isaiah describe *seeking the LORD* in Isaiah 55:6-7?

5. Even the cities of special blessings or significance like Bethel, Beersheba, and Gilgal would not be safe. Consider the things or people you might have a tendency to see as your refuge other than God. In the light of God's intentions, why might they be futile?

Read Amos 5:8,9 - The LORD is His Name

1. Israel had forsaken the Lord. In these verses, Amos broke into praise of the LORD as a reminder to them that He is worthy to be followed. Make a list of what Amos declared.

2. *The LORD is His name.* This is not the first time Amos encouraged them in the character and name of the LORD. What did he write in Amos 4:13?

3. What attributes of the LORD would you choose to share with a child of God who was in rebellion?

Read Amos 5:10-15 – Hate Evil, Love Good

1. This section of Amos recounts some of the sinful actions of the people. What is the first one?

- a. What did Solomon warn against in Proverbs 5:12-14?

- 1.) Why do we tend to *hate* it when someone points out something in our lives that needs to be corrected?

2. Scan Amos 5:11-15 and record:

some of their *evil* deeds

the consequences of their *evil* deeds

God's instructions to them as the best alternative to the consequences

3. Ponder the two phrases, *they abhor the one who speaks rightly* and *the prudent keep silent at that time*. Godly rebuke was rejected. What does Proverbs 9:8 remind us?

- a. Much of Israel's error was the rejection of godly advice and warnings. Lest we concentrate only on the delivery of godly advice and warnings, how should we personally handle godly rebuke?

3. Notice the phrase in verse 14, *so the LORD God of hosts will be with you, as you have spoken*. Consider these words as you read Micah 3:11. What is wrong with this thinking?

- a. Isaiah 48:1 amplifies this thinking. Write this verse as you would say it to someone today.

Read Amos 5:16-20 - The Day of the LORD

1. The people of Israel were eagerly anticipating the *day of the LORD*. They viewed this day as the day God would make things right; the day God would take care of evil. They did not see themselves as evil. Using verses 16-20, what did God say the *day of the LORD* would be like for them?
2. These people were not unlike many Christians today who view the coming of the LORD as an escape from pain more than the wonder of seeing their Savior. What are you looking forward to when Jesus comes again?
3. Amos was a farmer. Thus, he often associated the judgments of God as they related to a farmer. A custom in Israel was to hire people to *mourn*. Verse 16 indicates there would be so much pain that there would be a shortage of *skillful lamenters* and they would have to hire *farmers*. How did Amos describe this *mourning* in Amos 8:10?
4. Consider the judgments Israel would face if they did not *seek the LORD*. What are some things that prevent people from *seeking the LORD* even when they are warned of His judgment?

Read Amos 5:21-27 - Sacrifices and Offerings

1. Amos addressed several examples of what the people considered forms of worship in Amos 5:21-23. What were they?
2. Record and reflect upon the words of:
Proverbs 15:8

Proverbs 21:27

a. What is an example of *wicked intent*?

Proverbs 28:9

3. Ponder and list the words and phrases used to express God's reaction to their hypocritical sacrifices and offerings. Amos 5:21-23

4. Describe the kind of offerings and sacrifices that please the LORD.
Challenge: Use Scriptures to support your answer.

5. What word does the LORD use to describe their *songs* in verse 23?
 - a. Relate this to 1 Corinthians 13:1

 - b. What do you think God desires from us when we *sing*?

REVIEW: Amos 5

1. In what ways might a person's evaluation of their security and well-being be off base?

2. What are your thoughts when you consider God's plea to His people to *seek Him* and His promised response to our obedience?

3. What is your favorite thought about this chapter?

*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him;
and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*
- Isaiah 55:7

Observation Worksheet

Amos 5

Hear this word which I take up against you, a lamentation, O house of Israel: ² The virgin of Israel has fallen; she will rise no more. She lies forsaken on her land; there is no one to raise her up. ³ For thus says the Lord GOD: "The city that goes out by a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which goes out by a hundred shall have ten left to the house of Israel." ⁴ For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel: "Seek Me and live; ⁵ but do not seek Bethel, nor enter Gilgal, nor pass over to Beersheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nothing. ⁶ Seek the LORD and live, lest He break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, with no one to quench it in Bethel-- ⁷ you who turn justice to wormwood, and lay righteousness to rest in the earth!" ⁸ He made the Pleiades and Orion; He turns the shadow of death into morning and makes the day dark as night; He calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth; the LORD is His name. ⁹ He rains ruin upon the strong, so that fury comes upon the fortress. ¹⁰ They hate the one who rebukes in the gate, and they abhor the one who speaks uprightly. ¹¹ Therefore, because you tread down the poor and take grain taxes from him, though you have built houses of hewn stone, yet you shall not dwell in them; you have planted pleasant vineyards, but you shall not drink wine from them. ¹² For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: afflicting the just and taking bribes; diverting the poor from justice at the gate. ¹³ Therefore the prudent keep silent at that time, for it is an evil time. ¹⁴ Seek good and not evil, that you may live; so the LORD God of hosts will be with you, as you have spoken. ¹⁵ Hate evil, love good; establish justice in the gate. It may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. ¹⁶ Therefore the LORD God of hosts, the Lord, says this: "There shall be wailing in all streets, and they shall say in all the highways, 'Alas! Alas!' They shall call the farmer to mourning, and skillful lamenters to wailing. ¹⁷ In all vineyards there shall be wailing, for I will pass through you," says the LORD. ¹⁸ Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good is the day of the LORD to you? It will be darkness, and not light. ¹⁹ It will be as though a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him! Or as though he went into the house, leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him! ²⁰ Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light? Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it? ²¹ "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I do not savor your sacred assemblies. ²² Though

you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them, nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings. ²³ Take away from Me the noise of your songs, for I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments. ²⁴ But let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream. ²⁵ "Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? ²⁶ You also carried Sikkuth your king and Chiun, your idols, the star of your gods, which you made for yourselves. ²⁷ Therefore I will send you into captivity beyond Damascus," says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts.