

Amos 5:18-27

Amos 5:18 – “Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!

Why would you have the day of the Lord? It is darkness, and not light,

1. If Amos is written 762 BC then Amos is the first of the prophets to use phrase “Day of the Lord”
2. Those that followed:
 - a. **Isaiah** 13:6 (740-681 BC) – “Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; as destruction from the Almighty it will come!”
 - b. **Isaiah** 14:9 (740-681 BC) – Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it.”
 - c. **Zephaniah** 1:7 (630 BC) – “Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the LORD is near; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests.”
 - d. **Zephaniah** 1:14 (630 BC) – “The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there.”
 - e. **Jeremiah** 46:10 (627-580 BC) – “That day is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, to avenge himself on his foes. The sword shall devour and be sated and drink its fill of their blood. For the Lord God of hosts holds a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.”
 - f. **Obadiah** 1:15 (586 BC) – “For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it shall; your deeds shall return on your own head.”
 - i. Here in Obadiah the Day of the Lord is Edom’s doom and Israel’s salvation
 - g. **Ezekiel** 13:5 (593-573 BC, here it is September 592 BC) – “You have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel, that it might stand in the day of the LORD.”
 - i. The prophets have failed to prepare Israel for the Day of the Lord
 - h. **Ezekiel** 30:3 (593-573 BC, here it is January 587 BC) – “For the day is near, the day of the LORD is near; it will be a day of clouds, a time of doom for the nations.”
 - i. **Malachi** 4:5 (430 BC) – “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.”
 - j. **Joel** 1:15 (357 BC) – “Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, and as destruction from the Almighty it comes.”
 - k. **Joel** 2:1 (357 BC) – “Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming; it is near.”
 - l. **Joel** 2:11 (357 BC) – “The LORD utters his voice before his army, for his camp is exceedingly great; he who executes his word is powerful. For the day of the LORD is great and very awesome; who can endure it?”
 - m. **Joel** 2:31 (357 BC) – “The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.”
 - n. **Joel** 3:14 (357 BC) – “Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.”
 - i. Joel shows the Day of the Lord is judgment on Israel and on the nations
 - ii. The Day of the Lord is God’s final vindication of himself and his faithful people
3. Amos explains to Israel what the Day of the Lord is really like
4. The concept of the Day of the Lord likely existed throughout ancient cultures where they anticipated their god would deliver them from their enemies and their problems.
 - a. The god would win the military battle in a single day

- b. This was common in ancient Near Eastern eschatology with cosmic catastrophes. In the Bible also this day includes cosmic upheavals.
 - c. It would be assumed that Israel's God, Yahweh, would do the same for his people. This could be what took place in:
 - i. Isaiah 22:1-14 in 701 BC vs Sennacherib
 - ii. Jeremiah 46:2-12 in 605 when Babylon defeated Egypt at Carchemish
 - iii. Fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC
 - d. Amos shows here that Yahweh's people and Yahweh's enemies are the same in these verses.
 - e. This, of course, was shocking news to Israel
 - f. "Day" is more likely to be understood as a period of time or a time period.
5. Amos had already shared (and, would continue to share) some teaching that was a reversal of Israel's contemporary theology:
- a. Amos 3:2 – "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."
 - b. Amos 5:14 – "Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said.
 - c. Amos 6:1-8 – "Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the first of the nations, to whom the house of Israel comes!... The Lord God has sworn by himself, declares the Lord, the God of hosts: "I abhor the pride of Jacob and hate his strongholds, I will deliver up the city and all that is in it."
 - d. Amos 9:7 – "Are you not like the Cushites to me, O people of Israel?" declares the Lord. "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?"

Amos 5:19 – "As if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him."

1. Two metaphors reveal Israel's misjudgment or misunderstanding of the Day of the Lord.
 - a. Flee a lion only to meet a bear...Fleeing the lion was to be deliverance, but it was not.
 - b. Enter your house for security only to be bit by a serpent...The place entered for security was actually the most dangerous.
2. Israel thought the Day of the Lord would be their deliverance and place of security, but instead it would be their captivity and harm.
3. Their leaders probably preached peace and safety on the Day of the Lord, along with blessing and prosperity today from the Lord. But, this was a false message based on a false concept.

Amos 5:20 – "Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it?"

1. Redefining the Day of the Lord or correcting the theological concept of the Day of the Lord by Amos:
 - a. Day of the Lord is darkness, not light
 - b. Day of the Lord is hopeless with no promise or rescue.
 - c. The Hebrew words for "darkness" and "gloom" are metaphors for devastation. The Day of the Lord will be devastation, not deliverance.

Institutionalized Worship Rejected

Amos 5:21 – “I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.”

1. 5:21-24 – Rejection of the religious system of Northern Israel
 - a. The Lord despises. He will not:
 - i. Delight
 - ii. Accept
 - iii. Look
 - iv. Listen

Amos 5:22 – “Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them.

1. God will not LOOK

Amos 5:23 – “Take away from me the noise of your songs; To the melody of your harps I will not listen.

1. God will not LISTEN
2. Music was part of the OT worship:
 - a. Psalm 150
 - b. 1 Chronicles 15:16-24 – “David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint their fellow Levites as musicians to make a joyful sound with musical instruments: lyres, harps and cymbals...”
 - c. 2 Chronicles 5:13 – the cloud filled the temple when the instruments played and the singers raised their voices

Amos 5:24 – “But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

1. Israel’s worship did not undo their immoral and unethical character
2. Yahweh was not like the Pagan gods who were satisfied with committed worshippers who engaged in worship and ritual with regularity and enthusiasm.

Amos 5:25 – “Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings during the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?”

1. The sacrifices and offerings were initiated in the wilderness, but the rituals were recorded and prepared for a future day when Israel was settled in the land.
 - a. Exodus 34:23-24 – “Three times a year all your men are to appear before the Sovereign Lord, the God of Israel. I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your territory, and no one will covet your land when you go up three times each year to appear before the Lord your God.”
 - b. Numbers 15:2 – “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘After you enter the land I am giving you as a home...’”
 - c. Numbers 18:24 – “Instead, I give to the Levites as their inheritance the tithes that the Israelites present as an offering to the Lord. That is why I said concerning them: ‘They will have no inheritance among the Israelites.’”
2. The forty years in the wilderness was not a time of ritual, but instead a time of learning obedience and following the Lord.

3. What placed the people in right standing with the Lord was not the rituals, but the obedience.

Amos 5:26 – “You shall take up Sikkuth your king, and Kiyyun your star-god – your images that you made for yourselves,”

1. Israel had replaced obedience with ritual. And, this was idolatry.
2. In verse 5:26 Israel is carrying their idols, but in 5:27 Yahweh is carrying his people away. So, Amos is mocking their religious procession as being a procession into captivity far from the land of Yahweh
3. Contrasting wilderness worship with idolatry in the land:
 - a. Jeremiah 2:2-8 –
4. These idols were carried around on the top of standards
5. Sikkuth, your king – an astral deity from Mesopotamia is identified as Ninurta or Saturn, one of the head gods of the pantheon of Mesopotamia. The title “your king” is Sikkuth’s standing among the gods
6. Kiyyun, your star-god – means “the steady one” is another name for Saturn which makes this mean, “Kiyyun, the star of your god Sikkuth (Saturn)”
7. Amos’ audience considered themselves the progressives compare to the ancient wilderness generation.

Amos 5:27 – “and I will send you into exile beyond Damascus,” says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.”

1. “past Damascus” fulfills the warning in Deut. 29:14-29 and ends with Deut. 29:28 – “in furious anger and in great wrath the Lord uprooted them from their land and thrust them into another land, as it is now.
2. The full name of the Lord: “LORD, God of the Armies” or “Yahweh, God Almighty”
3. Israel will not be saved by:
 - a. Their worship services (Amos 5:21-26)
 - b. Their extravagant wealth (Amos 6:1-6)
 - c. Their previous military success (Amos 6:13)