

Commentary on Amos 5, by Chuck Smith 3.27.24

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March memory verse Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

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Hear ye this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation (Amo 5:1),

Weeping over the house of Israel now.

The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up (Amo 5:2).

Now some people use this verse and interpret it as though God has now cast off Israel forever and that there is to be no restoration by God of divine favor in the last days. This is to deny the whole body of scripture. This is speaking of Israel at that time to be cut off. They were going into captivity to Syria; they were to be dispersed throughout the world. But yet, all of the prophets, and even Amos here in the last chapter, speaks about God's dealing and working with His people in His restoring of His love and favor in the last days. There was none to raise her up, she could not raise up herself, others would not raise her, but the Bible tells us that in the last days God is going to raise her once again to a position of glory and honor, as He takes her once more as a bride that has been disobedient, but yet now returned to her husband.

For thus saith the Lord GOD; The city that went out by a thousand shall leave a hundred (Amo 5:3),

They will be decimated. a hundred will leave ten of the house of Israel (Amo 5:3).

So the great decimation that would take place, and did take place in Israel.

For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live (Amo 5:4):

Even still God is holding out an offer of help, an offer of hope to them, "If you'll just seek Me it can be changed. You don't have to go into judgment, you don't have to go into captivity. If you'll just seek Me things will be different." But yet they would not seek Him. But God is saying,

Don't seek Bethel (Amo 5:5), Don't seek the calf and the pagan worship in Bethel.

nor in Gilgal, pass not over to Beersheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel will come to nothing. Seek the LORD (Amo 5:5-6),

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Again it is repeated. 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 Bethel (Amo 5:6).

The house of Joseph referring to Ephraim who was the biggest tribe of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth, Seek him that makes the seven stars and Orion (Amo 5:7-8),

The seven stars are the seven sisters, also known as the constellation of the Pleiades. Unfortunately, living here in this megapolis with all of the lights and all, it's difficult for us to really appreciate much of astronomy and of the stars, and of the constellations. But if you go out, no tonight it's cloudy, and even on a clear night in this area, it's, unfortunately, hard to see. But the Pleiades is that little cluster of stars in the... well, it is out in the center of the heavens, a winter constellation that is often called by novices and those who do not know the constellations, it's often called the Little Dipper. People so often look up at the Pleiades, and it is shaped like a little dipper, they say, "Oh, well there's the little dipper." No, the Pleiades is not the Little Dipper though it may look like a little dipper, it is not the constellation known as the Little Dipper. The constellation of the Little Dipper is actually up in the north, and the North Star comprises a part of the Little Dipper constellation. But the Pleiades is that little cluster that looks like a dipper in the center of the winter skies. So when you're up at the conference center and all in the wintertime, you can look up and you can see. Or, you're out in the desert, you can look up and see the Pleiades, a very attractive constellation, and one of the easiest of the constellations to identify, along with Orion another winter constellation.

Orion is in the southern sky and it is shaped sort of like a square. You have to use your imagination a little bit, but you can see the shoulders of Orion, and you can see the bow that he is holding out in front of himself. As you look at... well, he's not taking a good aim, he's ready to draw a bead down I guess, because the bull that he is getting ready to shoot is below him, and you can see the horns of the bull. And then if you look carefully, you can see his dogs chasing him through the winter sky as each evening Orion goes across the south, his dog's chasing him, and he's pulling down his bead on the bull down here on the southern skies of the northern hemisphere. But, again, Orion is a very fascinating constellation, and an easy one to spot among the winter constellations.

Now here's a guy who's a shepherd, and you know he just, he lives close to nature, out of doors so much of the time, living close to nature he speaks of the seven stars, the seven sisters, the constellations of the Pleiades and also of Orion. "Seek Him who made these constellations, seek Him who made these stars." In the constellation of Orion, the left shoulder of Orion is the star Betelgeuse. Betelgeuse four hundred and fifteen million miles in diameter. If you could carve out the center of Betelgeuse, leaving a crust a hundred million miles thick, you could put the sun inside of Betelgeuse and let the Earth rotate around it and you'd have a few million miles to spare. The Lord who made Orion, Betelgeuse, is just the left shoulder of Orion, the Lord who made the

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Pleiades and Orion, seek Him. There are no help in these little golden calves that you have made. There's no help in your pagan worship in the idols that you've formed, in the gods that you've created in your own imagination. But there is help in the true and the living God, the Creator of the heaven and earth, seek Him. "Seek Him that made the seven stars and Orion."

and turns the shadow of death into morning, and makes the day dark with night: and calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out upon the face of the earth: Yahweh is his name: That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come out against a fortress. They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly. Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and you've taken from him the burdens (Amo 5:8-11):

They were ripping off the poor people. The rich were ripping off the poor. What a terrible thing. And because you're doing this, the Lord said,

you have built your houses of hewn stone (Amo 5:11),

You've built your own glorious houses by robbing the poor, so God declares,

because of this you will not dwell in your houses; you have planted pleasant vineyards, but you will not drink the wine of them (Amo 5:11).

They had come to the zenith of their glory and power in the Northern Kingdom, but they weren't to enjoy its benefits.

For I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins: for you afflict the just, and you take bribes, and you turn aside the poor in the place of judgment. Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time. [God said,] Seek good, and not evil, that you may live: so the LORD, the God of hosts shall be with you, as you have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good (Amo 5:12-15),

So here we are exhorted to seek the good and not evil, and then hate the evil and love the good. You remember again when Satan came before God with the sons of God in the book of Job? God said unto Satan, "Where have you been?" He said, "Going up and down throughout the earth, to and fro through it." God said, "Have you considered My servant Job, a righteous man, perfect and upright in all his ways, a man who loves good, and hates evil?" (Job 1:7-8) The Bible says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Then it declares, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."

Now we are living in an age where there's all kinds of liberal pressure to not hate evil, but to tolerate evil. You're put down as some kind of an Archie Bunker type if you hate evil. You're made to look like some kind of a fool, a bigot if you hate evil. Yet God's Word declares that that's the beginning of wisdom. But we're living in an age of fools. People who love evil, people who flirt with evil, people who tolerate evil. But to hate evil

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is really what the fear of the Lord is all about. Because I fear the Lord, I hate evil. So, "Hate 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 ([Amo 5:15](#)).

Who knows, it may be God will be gracious. If you'll turn around, if you'll change, it could be that God will be gracious. But boy, you're about ready to go down the tubes. Turn, change, seek justice.

Therefore the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord says this, Wailing shall be in all the streets; and they shall say in all the highways, Alas! Alas! ([Amo 5:16](#))

Now that is a term that is one of just total despair. You say, "Alas, alas," that means, "We've had it." That's just total despair. We don't use that term anymore, but it's one that just signifies, really, the end of the world.

and they shall call the husbandman to mourning [that is the farmer], and such as are skillful in lamentation to wailing ([Amo 5:16](#)).

Now they had people who were professional wailers. They were very skillful in wailing. So if you had a funeral service, you would hire these professional wailers who would come and just wail like everything. So people would say, "Oh my, he must have been a very loved person, because listen to how they're wailing." So those that were skillful in wailing.

Now my wife used to be skillful in screaming. It worked for some advantage. Whenever we would... in the days of the Long Beach Pike, we'd go over and ride the roller coaster. From the moment that thing would start down the first decline, she'd start screaming, and she wouldn't quit until we pulled up to a stop at the, you know, at the gate there. And always they'd say, "You kids go again." We got three or four free rides because she'd attract the attention of everyone on the Pike to the roller coaster. So, man, I've ridden that thing so many times. Finally it almost lost its thrill because you go on it so many times you get used to it. But she used to get us more free rides by her skillfulness at wailing.

And in all vineyards shall be wailing: for I will pass through thee, saith the LORD. Woe unto you that are desiring the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? for the day of the LORD will be darkness, and not light ([Amo 5:17-18](#)).

Here they were longing for the day of the Lord, but because of their lives, their sin, the day of the Lord wasn't gonna be glory for them. It was gonna be for them the day of judgment and the day of darkness. And so is the day of the Lord. For those who are the servants of the Lord, it's a glorious day that we anticipate, the establishing of His glorious kingdom. And so there is this dichotomy involved with the day of the Lord. There are those that, there are those scriptures that speak about a day of judgment and

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wrath and so forth, which it will be to those who love evil, to the wicked. But unto the righteous, a glorious day of glory, the day of the Lord. It's something that we do look forward to. But unto them, because of their sins, a woe to them when the day of the Lord will come.

Now it will be as though a man was going down the road and a lion attacked him, and he escaped from the lion. And he didn't go very much further until a bear attacked him. And he escaped from the bear and he finally gets home exhausted, having run from the lion and run from the bear, and he gets home and he just is exhausted. He leans up against the wall of his house, and a snake bites him and he dies. I mean, you're going from the frying pan into the fire. That's the figure that Amos uses here.

As if a man did flee from a lion, and then a bear met him; and then when he came to his house, he leaned his hand on the wall, and the serpent bit him (Amo 5:19).

I mean, you can't escape it. Just when you think that you've escaped, whammo, you get wiped out.

Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, no brightness in it? (Amo 5:20)

Now God declares,

I hate, I despise your feast days (Amo 5:21),

Now the feast days were the times when they were supposed to come and fellowship with God. That was the whole idea. You see, during the feast days they were days of great fellowship with God. You would bring your sacrifice, and the priest would offer the fat of the lamb as a burnt offering unto the Lord. But then the rest of it was barbecued and you'd sit there, and you would eat with the Lord. The whole idea was feasting with the Lord as you ate the shish kabob. Just the whole idea was fellowshiping with God and feasting with Him. The people would assemble before the Lord, but God came to the place where He said, "Look, I hate, I despise your feast days." They would burn the fat of the lamb and the smoke ascending is just, oh man, it smells so good. The idea was to be a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord, that God might smell the marvelous smell of the lamb fat as it is being burned or roasted.

God says,

I will not even smell it. Though you offer me the burnt offerings and your meal offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of the songs; for I will not hear the melody of the viols (Amo 5:21-23).

God is not interested in the outward observation, or the outward observances. God is interested in a heart that is repentant towards Him. Notice that in the offerings that they

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were offering God, they did... He didn't make any mention of sin offerings. Still offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, and the meal offerings, but no mention of sin offering. That's the thing that God was interested in, that they be repentant for their sins; that they turn from their iniquity. "Can two walk together unless they be agreed?" Can a man really have fellowship with God while he's still walking in sin? The answer has to be, no! So all of the rest of the religious trappings are just so much wasted effort if your heart isn't truly repentant towards God.

There are too many people who are going through the motions of religion. As Jesus said to the church of Ephesus, "I know thy works and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou hast borne, and how you've been able to discover those that said they were prophets, and were not. You've put them out, and your labor," again He mentions it, but He said, "I have this against you, because you've left your first love." They had all the motions but they had lost the emotion. God was more interested in the emotional aspects than He was just the pure motion aspects of religion. Many people today are going through the motions of religion, but there is no real heartfelt emotion towards God. God is looking for that heart that is filled with love, love towards Him, love towards good, love towards the people of God. He wants that emotional aspect. He doesn't want just religious trappings, and religious surroundings, and religious works, and religious forms, but He wants a heart that's on fire for Him. So God says, "I won't listen to your music. I won't smell your offerings. I won't accept your offerings."

But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream ([Amo 5:24](#)).

That's what I want. I want you to start living right. I want you to start being just; start being honest and just, and righteous, that's what I desire.

Have ye offered to me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch [these false gods] Chiun and your images, and the star of your god, which you have made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus ([Amo 5:25-27](#)),

And they did go into captivity beyond Damascus; they went into captivity all the way to Assyria.

saith the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts ([Amo 5:27](#)).

Now at this time Assyria was no threat to them. Syria was the threat; Damascus was the threat at this time. Hazael the king was the big threat to them now, but yet God says, "Look, they're not gonna be the ones. You're gonna go into captivity beyond, even to Assyria." Again, the marvelous Word of God so true, you can count on it.