

# When God Calls The Common: Amos

## Amos 5:14-15

When your ship is going down—think Titanic—and water is rapidly filling the vessel, now up to your neck, you better believe in God through Jesus, or look up over your head to see an escape hatch!

From Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

Definition of escape hatch

- a hatch providing an emergency exit from an enclosed space

Beloved, God is gracious and merciful and understands that we come from dust and our lives are but a vapour.

### **James 4:14**

*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

Our cries for help in times of trouble—whether trouble we ourselves brought about, or trouble God simply allowed to draw us back to Him—would likely be ignored if Satan were our father. After all, we are just vapour and dust! But if God is our Father He hears us with fatherly love and mercy and He is aroused to action. A life-saving mission is activated. He is our strong tower!

### **Proverbs 18:10**

*The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*

In times of trial and terror, God does not turn a deaf ear to His kids, no more than responsible parents would ignore the cries of their children needing help. Also, and importantly, God is merciful when we are standing at the precipice of temptation.

### **1Corinthians 10:13**

*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

There it is. He makes a way of escape.

Today on the Teaching Room: GOD'S GREAT ESCAPE HATCH.

(Introduction)

## **Amos 5:14**

*(KJV) 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.*

*(NIV) Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is.*

Think of this verse as a verbal escape hatch, emanating from the mouth of our prophet, Amos. Israel, if you seek good and turn from extortion and oppression of the poor, you will live. And all of your religious ritual will mean something to God. He will be your God, and you will be His people (Jeremiah 30:22). From your obedience to the Word of God, you will find God merciful. He will spare your lives.

What if Israel does not respond in obedience to God's verbal offer of escape from certain destruction?

Well, if you are a seasoned Bible reader, you know that God will not force His hand. We all have daily choices to make in response to God's clear commands in Scripture.

Israel did too.

## **Romans 2:6-8**

*God "will repay each person according to what they have done." To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.*

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: How do you view Scripture in regards to its place in your life—is it a divine suggestion or a holy command? Why do you think this distinction matters? How might your view of God's Word affect your obedience to it—and ultimately your relationship with its Author?

\*STUDY POINT: In the Old Testament, find three narrative examples of obedience to God's Word, and then three examples of disobedience to Scripture. Note the outcomes of each, and how different attributes of God were revealed in each instance. Any takeaways?

## **Amos 5:15**

*(KJV) 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.*

*(NIV) Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.*

This verse confronts the unjust judges that take bribes and plot pre-determined sentences against the disadvantaged. They also charge dirty taxes on the wheat and grain of the poor. God cannot stand by idle. The word perhaps and the phrase it may be do not exactly exude much confidence that Israel will bow a submissive knee to Yahweh. Amos is speaking here with threadbare mercy—delivering what's left of God's long suffering for His long disobedient children.

I love what Vernon McGee comments on this verse:

In our day, a man who is liberal and supported by some rich organization can betray our government and escape any penalty (in fact, he is even made a hero), while some poor fellow who is espousing an honest cause does not stand a chance of gaining a hearing. God says, "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." In other words, Amos says, "It's a slim chance, but there is hope for you."

Amen, Mr. McGee—God extends hope and mercy to every man, woman, and child on earth. His great escape hatch is as obvious and open as in the time of Amos.

Jesus!

***John 3:16-17***

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

Hallelujah!

~ Reverend Darren McClelland