

When God Calls The Common: Amos

Amos 5:8-9

What or whom will we worship?

Seek your Maker.

Jesus Himself was tempted of the Evil One to bow down and worship him—and thereby be able to access and enjoy all that the world system would offer:

Matthew 4:8-9

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

And since the fall of humankind in Genesis, the two options and objects of worship for each of us has been the world (1 John 2:15-17) and God. Satan has poured out much of his evil strategy and power tempting us—as He did Jesus—in order to have us give our hearts over to worship the world system and not God, who made the world. The world system is best described here in 1 John:

1John 2:15-17

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

We learn from these verses that what we love, we worship and obey. God's Word makes it clear that we must choose what or whom we will worship—the world or God. While Satan's tools of temptation are carnal and sensual, attuned to our fallen flesh, God appeals to us with His Word, which once we are born again in Christ, becomes our weapon against Satan and through our obedience to it becomes the way to right relationship with God and eternal life with Him. And what does the Living Word—Jesus—say?

Luke 4:4

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

It is true that the Word of God is our spiritual food. My prayer is that we at The Teaching Room might be one of your feeding stations to fortify your walk and witness for Jesus.

This week in the Book of Amos, we see how far Israel has strayed from the worship of Yahweh. How did this happen? We know that rampant, unrepentant sin does not permeate a nation—or indeed a race—overnight. This passage in Romans addresses how we as a race fell away from the one true, living God:

Romans 1:18-32

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore, God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Not only does this dark portrait of humanity remind us of Amos-period Israel, it is a horrifying reflection of humankind today in 2022! If Satan could not tempt us into the blatant debauchery of the world, he smartly found a Plan B in tempting us to worship God's creative works—anything besides our love and obedience to God and His Word, and the gift of eternal life with Him.

During the days of Amos and his prophetic declaration of God's coming judgment, Israel had already given themselves over to myriad idols, including God's own work of creation. They had forgotten Whose they were, and that God their Father would never forget or forsake His children (Genesis 1:27; Psalm 139; Hebrews 13:5).

Amos 5:8

(KJV) 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:

(NIV) He who made the Pleiades and Orion, who turns midnight into dawn and darkens day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out over the face of the land— the LORD is his name.

Seek the Maker. Seek your Maker. This is God's heart and desire, not only for Israel, but for all His human masterwork, for all time. Seek him! Seek the maker of these amazing

stars Pleiades (seven stars) and Orion. Amazingly, God alone takes credit for creating these creative constellations in Job 9:9 and Job 38:31. Seek the God who turns the shadow of death (or the densest darkness) into the merciful light of morning. Seek him who throws a canopy of darkness over daylight. Seek him who draws water into clouds of righteous rain in order to bless and irrigate our land.

Israel...Today's World—seek Him! Seek your Maker!

And since Israel had forgotten and forsaken their God, Amos 5:8 reminds them:

The Lord is His name. Jehovah God. Self existent. Eternal. God of the Jews. God of the Gentiles. Your God. My God.

Or is He?

What we truly love we invest in with our our time, money, energy, attention, and affection.

Matthew 6:19-24

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

So, it is quite evident what or whom we love and worship by where we are laying up our treasures. If an outsider were to take a casual look at our lifestyle, they would probably catch a glimpse of what or Whom we love.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Do you believe that anyone who might take a look at your lifestyle would see Whom you worship—namely your one true Father God? Why or why not? What would have to change in your life to see more of Jesus made visible? Ask God today to change your heart within.

The first two of the ten commandments in Exodus 20 command us to worship God only, and to not make and worship idols. Could God's instructions be any clearer? No! However, Satan's militant thrust against God began subtly in Genesis 3:1 when he said to Eve:

Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

Beloved, doubt is demonic because doubt and confusion is where Satan wants us to land as a result of his subtle invitations to question God and His Word. That is how humankind

fell in the Garden. And there is no question that Israel in our two verses this week has gone spiritually AWOL over years of doubting, questioning, rebelling, and finally hardening their hearts (Hebrews 3:12) from the very God that set them apart for His witness among the nations and for His glory. Knowing that God is long suffering (2 Peter 3:9), we know on the other side of Biblical and secular history that we will never be justified in blaming God for being impatient or petty with his disobedient children whom He loves.

2Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

There it is. He is long suffering. He does not want any to perish. He desires that all repent.

Why, then, is Israel being punished? As difficult as it is for us to understand, God holds a high degree of accountability over Israel, while tenaciously protecting His covenant promises to them. Now their hearts are reprobate and their love is far from God. He will not accept their false worship—no more than He would accept yours or mine.

Amos 5:21-27

I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. 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. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, whose name is The God of hosts.

*STUDY POINT: Where in the New Testament do we find God's condemnation of false teachers? Where do we find His condemnation of false worship?

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Why do you think God takes issue with falsehood of any kind? How might this revelation change the way you walk with Him?

Which brings us to the prophetic utterance of Amos that proclaims the coming punishment by God:

Amos 5:9

(KJV) That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress.

(NIV) With a blinding flash he destroys the stronghold and brings the fortified city to ruin.

God's long suffering may last decades, but His judgment will come in a flash.

Folks, whether you believe it or not, Jesus is returning. Though our precious waiting time seems to not end, the return of Jesus Christ will happen in a flash.

Luke 21:25-28

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: How does the promise of Jesus' return affect your day-to-day walk with God? Or does it? What about those in your sphere of influence—how might they come to know about the coming judgment of God? Ask God to send labourers into His harvest, and to send you (Matthew 9:38)!

Beloved, I pray for you and yours today.

Seek Him.

Seek your Maker.

~ Reverend Darren McClelland