**THE LION ROARS**

**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF AMOS**

**( ISRAEL ATTENDS THEIR OWN FUNERAL)**

Amos 5:1 – 17 Lesson 8

Main Idea: Though God is a God of justice, He is also a merciful God; it’s been said, God is a God of the second chance. But His justice cannot be trampled on forever and Israel must return to Him or face annihilation.

Introduction - This chapter, at least the first seventeen verses, is a funeral dirge, a song about the death of Israel. It’s like God pulls up a chair and has Israel seated in front of Him and then plays out their funeral right in front of them. In some ways it’s a eulogy about a nation already dead. What a wake-up call this should have been!

**I. THE COMMAND OF GOD, vs. 1 - 3**

1. This is the third of the three “*messages”* God delivers to Israel that’s set apart by the wording or the command to... “*Hear this word.”*
2. He calls this message a *lamentation*. A lamentation means “*elegy, or dirge,”* which is a mournful song or *a dirge for the one who is dead.*
3. God describes the corpse in the casket in verse two. She is described as a young woman called a virgin. God says four things about this young virgin: 1. She is fallen. 2. She will not be revived 3. She is forsaken. 4. There is no one who will raise her up. This is a description of a funeral that God would rather avoid!
4. In verses two and three God is talking about Israel as if judgment has already taken place. Their destruction is complete. The virgin Israel has fallen without any hope of recovery or of anyone coming to help pick her up. God goes on to tell them that Israel will be wiped out in battle down to just a tenth of them left. God has always promised that there would be a remnant of His people left even during His judgments on them. **Rom 9:27**  Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, *a remnant shall be saved*: This is promised in numerous other prophesies as well. God is a God of justice but also a God of great mercy!

**II. THE COUNSEL OF GOD, vs. 4 – 9**

1. God tells them, this funeral doesn’t have to happen. Just seek after ME! Compare Jeremiah 29:11 – 14.
2. He tells them to stop going over into Gilgal and Beersheba and Bethel. These were the territories where they would go to worship at the great images of their false gods. This idol worship was their death… spiritually.
3. In verses 6 – 9 God sets His omnipotence (His Almighty Power) before them to show the shame and foolishness of trusting their idols and their dead gods.
4. In verse 6 He warns them of the judgment of fire that would surely come on those who refuse to acknowledge Him as the Almighty. The *house of Joseph* in this verse is just another reference to Israel.
5. In verse 7 He describes their injustice as *wormwood* or as something very bitter to His taste and then exposes how they cast what is good and right to the ground. They trample on the righteousness of Almighty God.
6. In verses 8, 9 God reminds them just Who it is that has done the great things they see on a regular

basis but have failed to consider the Author of these great wonders. (Look at each of these examples).

1. **Psalm 8:3** When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; vs. 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?
2. God tells them to seek the only one with true power… the One, Self-existent, Unchangeable God... “The LORD is his name:”

**III**. **THE COUNSEL REJECTED**, vs. 10 – 13

1. The *gate* was where *court* was held in those ancient cities. But when someone tried to speak the truth they would put them down. When Amos preached his message of truth they told him to get out of town.
2. We see that being the case today just like God told us would happen. **2 Timothy 4:3**  For the time will come when *they will not endure sound doctrine*; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;
3. God tells them they won’t get to live in their fancy houses or drink from their lush vineyards *because of their exaggerated debts and taxes they levied on the poor.* [**James 2:13**](verseid:59.2.13) For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.
4. They would take bribes from the rich to get judgements to rule in their favor and against the poor.
5. Verse 13 – Those who had any true wisdom at all knew that without money or position, they had no bargaining power and so they just kept their mouths shut. It would just be *casting their pearls (true wisdom) before the swine (the unjust judges).”*
6. Relate America’s rejection of repentance of her national sins! America doesn’t want to reject her addiction to recreation and alcohol and drugs and sexual perversions. America wants to scrutinize the messages of the pastors to be sure special interest groups are not offended. America needs to repent, not reject God’s counsel! The same is true for each individual, whether they be Christian or lost.

**IV. GOD’S COUNSEL REPEATED**, vs. 14, 15

* Earlier God had counseled them to *seek Him and live*. But they rejected Him.
* Now again, compassionately God challenges them to come back to Him, to hate what is wrong and to search out the good! God has always been a God of the *second chance*.

**V. THE CONCLUSION OF THE LORD,** vs. 16, 17

* Look at all the places mourning will take place… places where there should be happiness… everybody is mourning the death that is all around them.
* The reason of it is because *God will pass through them…*  Just like He did with the Egyptians with the last of the ten plagues.
* I watched a documentary of one of the world wars. One city had been decimated and mothers could be seen searching through the rubble weeping as they were searching for a missing child or loved one. It was a heart wrenching scene to see and to hear their cries.
* This is the picture God is painting for Israel if they will not choose to turn from their evil ways and follow Him alone.

**Discuss**

1. If you could write your own eulogy (the story of your life at a funeral), how would you like it to read? What changes would you have to make in your own life for it to tell about a godly life?
2. In America, who would need to make the necessary changes in order for God to bless this nation. Now compare 2 Chronicles 7:14 to your answer!
3. Does getting rid of what is evil make one holy? What is the full process of becoming holy? Remember this simple definition of *holiness:* Holiness is... “*The absence of what is wrong and the presence of what it right.”* It’s like a two-sided coin... you don’t have one without the other. You can live a *moral* life and not be *holy*. Lost men do this all the time. Moral men can avoid the evil of the day and yet without the actions of a Spirit-filled life they are just *good, even moral... lost men.*
4. Christian... are we doing more than just avoiding evil. Are we consciously adding the spiritual disciplines in our lives on a regular basis? Remember... a basketball team that only plays *defense,* will never score any points.