

Famine

“Thus the Lord GOD showed me: Behold, a basket of summer fruit. And He said, "Amos, what do you see?" So I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the LORD said to me: "The end has come upon My people Israel; I will not pass by them anymore. And the songs of the temple Shall be wailing in that day," Says the Lord GOD—"Many dead bodies everywhere, They shall be thrown out in silence." Hear this, you who swallow up the needy, And make the poor of the land fail, Saying: "When will the New Moon be past, That we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, That we may trade wheat? Making the ephah small and the shekel large, Falsifying the scales by deceit, That we may buy the poor for silver, And the needy for a pair of sandals—Even sell the bad wheat?" The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: "Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall the land not tremble for this, And everyone mourn who dwells in it? All of it shall swell like the River, Heave and subside Like the River of Egypt. "And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord GOD, "That I will make the sun go down at noon, And I will darken the earth in broad daylight; I will turn your feasts into mourning, And all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth on every waist, And baldness on every head; I will make it like mourning for an only [son], And its end like a bitter day. "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD." (Amos 8:1-11 NKJV)

Amos predicted the end of Israel. He compared them to a basket of summer fruit, a fruit that would not last. The stated reason for God's judgment is their indifference to Him and their exceeding greediness. They would prey upon the poor to fill their coffers with unjust gain, and God had reached the end of His patience with them.

There are a number of physical calamities the prophesy mentions that lead some to believe that this is a reference to the time when Christ gave up His spirit on the cross.

“Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,” (Matthew 27:51 NKJV)

“Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.” (Mark 15:33 NKJV)

This certainly seems likely since this was the point when Israel was broken off and the Gentiles were grafted in. The cross did away with the Old Covenant and ushered in the New (Hebrews 9-10).

Now look carefully at the end of the verses above. He said, “I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.”

Presumably, this was to be understood of Israel. However, we need to hear the heart of God in this prophecy. God will not continue to grace a people that refuse to hear His words. He will draw back from them and give them over to their lust as a righteous judgment against them. Compare the following verses in the book of Romans.

“Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man----and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also

gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,” (Romans 1:22-24 NKJV)

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.” (Romans 1:26 NKJV)

“And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;” (Romans 1:28 NKJV)

Could this be the condition of our nation? We have much light and continue to walk in darkness. Let us pray that God will again send forth His spirit and turn us from our wicked ways.

Father, we are in a desperate condition. Heal our land we beg you. Will those who hate you and serve idols stand and laugh at a people whose God forsook them? Oh, Lord we as a nation likely deserve your just condemnation, but for your great name’s sake, send your Holy Spirit once more. Set our feet on solid ground we pray. We have seen your loving kindness. We know how gracious you may be. Please extend your hand of mercy, and glorify yourself by sending a great revival among your people. Let each heart fall prostrate before you this day that grace may abound over sin. We ask this in the name of Christ, amen.