

Truth about the Day of the Lord

International Bible Lesson

Amos 5:10-27

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“But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream” (Amos 5:24—KJV).

“But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (Amos 5:24—NRSV).

Many nations today follow the pattern that the northern Kingdom of Israel followed before its destruction. Most of the wealthy nobles, judges, priests, prophets, and business leaders had become so corrupt that God said they had come to “abhor the one who speaks the truth” (Amos 5:10). They did not want to hear an authentic word from the LORD, so they forbid the preaching of the true prophets of God. Therefore, God had to send Amos from the southern Kingdom of Judah to warn the wicked leaders in Israel to stop afflicting the righteous, to stop giving and receiving bribes, to stop pushing aside the needy, but to “let justice roll down like waters.” God saw the wicked trample on the poor and steal their produce and farmland through bribery and exorbitant taxation so they could build huge homes of hewn stone and enlarge their vineyards for more wine to drink. Unless called by God to speak out, God advised, “The prudent will keep silent in such a time; for it is an evil time” (Amos 5:13). Amos preached that the wicked had become so deluded that they looked forward to the “Day of the LORD,” when they thought God would give them the land and property of their neighboring nations. But God warned that the Day of the LORD would be a day of darkness and gloom for them, because they would forfeit their huge homes and never drink the wine from their vineyards. Yet Amos gave hope to the repentant and righteous, “Seek good and not evil, that you may live; and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you” (Amos 5:14).

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Thinking Further

1. Why do you think God sent Amos from the Kingdom of Judah to preach as a prophet in the Kingdom of Israel?
2. Did God condemn all wealthy people through Amos message? Give a reason for your answer.
3. Why did many of the political and religious leaders in Israel keep looking for the promised “Day of the LORD” with eager expectation?
4. What did Amos say the “Day of the LORD” would mean for Israel?
5. What hope did Amos the repentant and righteous?