**THE LION ROARS**

**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF AMOS**

**(The Desire For The Day of the Lord)**

Main Idea: Following idols brings about spiritual blindness to the truth. But ignorance of the law is no excuse and God will judge his children even when they are deceived by their own blindness.

Amos 5:18 – 27 Lesson 9

Introduction –

* In the closing verses of this chapter God had to use Amos to correct the misperception that Israel had concerning “*The Day of the Lord*.” They thought it referred to God’s blessings coming on them when in sad reality it was a reference to God’s judgment upon them. God continues to show the reasons for their judgment.

1. **WHAT IS THIS “DAY OF THE LORD?”** Vs. 18 - 20
   1. God tells us in **Joel 2:11**  And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp *is* very great: for *he is* strong that executeth his word: for *the day of the LORD* *is* great and very terrible; and who can abide it? Joel references this “*day of the Lord”* several times throughout his book.
   2. This day of God’s judgment is followed by great blessings that would fall on God’s people *after* He had judged the wicked for their utter rejection of Him. They had clung to their idols and lived for their own pleasure and *if* God was in their thoughts at all, he was only a token god to them, like a rabbit’s foot that they would take out and rub for good luck. But after the wicked were judged, God would bless His people... and *this* was why Israel was *desiring the Day of the Lord* (vs. 18).
   3. So, Amos peels away their blindness in vs. 18 and tells them ... “*the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.*” Contrary to popular opinion, contrary to what all the polls were saying, contrary to the prevailing views of society... this was not going to be a day of blessing and light but rather a day of God’s curse and darkness for them.
   4. Amos goes on to give illustrations how that day of judgment is going to be for them. He gives the example of how a man would spot a lion that was bounding toward him and just when he thinks he may be getting away from the lion... he runs into a bear! (Any examples of lion or bear attacks on men). And if the man is able to escape both the lion and the bear and makes it into the safety of a house, panting from his near escape, he would lean upon the wall to rest and a poisonous snake would strike him... bringing a slow and agonizing death.
   5. These were all illustrations of how the Chaldeans and the Persians would all but consume the Israelites in spite of their best efforts to avoid their destruction and captivity.
   6. Verse 20 makes it clear that they were *utterly* wrong about this “Day” being *any* kind of a bright spot for them. Not only will there be absolutely *no* brightness whatsoever, the darkness... the judgment will be fierce and without hope.
2. **GOD POINTS TO THEIR HYPOCRISY AS THE REASON FOR THEIR DARKNESS,** vs. 21 - 26
   1. Israel had been acting toward God like a husband who came in and handed his wife a dozen roses but his wife has already found out that he had been secretly seeing another woman. Those flowers would be disgusting to her! They would be no more than a mockery of his fake love to her. So, God explains to Israel how their “*roses”* or their service to Him was revolting.
   2. In Verse 21 – It would appear that Israel, though they were worshipping idols, were also, in one form or another, observing some of the holy days that God required of Israel. Those sacrifices were intended to be a picture of the great sacrifice Christ would one day make for the sins of His people. God describes His sacrifice in **Ephesians 5:2**  And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a *sweetsmelling savour*.
   3. So, the sacrifices were supposed to be a sweet smell to the Lord, but knowing they worshipped other gods... God told them He would not smell in their solemn assemblies. (Ever smell a rotten potato?) God *hated... despised* their feast days... they were just a hypocritical mockery of Him.
   4. In Verse 22 God tells them He rejects their meat offerings. Whenever Israel would offer their meat offerings it would be like a boss watching an employee come to work and “clock in” and then walk across the street to work for his competitor. God is clear... there is something much more important to Him than an animal sacrifice. **1 Samuel 15:22**  And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in *obeying the voice of the LORD*? Behold, *to obey is better than sacrifice, and* to hearken than the fat of rams.
   5. Verse 23 – In this verse God tells them that their music may have melody to the ears but it’s like scratching your fingers on a chalkboard when you play it with a heart that’s devoted to idols.
   6. That speaks to the Christian today who sings or plays or serves God with more devotion to the things of the world than to the holy God who rules heaven and earth.
   7. Verse 24 – Once God tells them to “*take away the noise of their songs”* He then turns it around and says to them to *bring in* *judgment and righteousness*. What God desires is what He said in **Micah 6:8**  He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?
   8. In Verse 25 – God reminds them that even as their forefathers wandered the wilderness for forty years... they had divided hearts even then. They worshipped Jehovah but had their little pocket idols they worshipped too. Acts 7:42, 43 sheds light on the meaning of this verse.
   9. The idolatry of the ten tribes was the revival of the idolatry of the wilderness wanderings.
   10. He tells them in Verse 26 that they were unfaithful to him with Moloch, the god who they would sacrifice their children to; and Chiun which was more than likely an image of either a star or a planet of their god. These were the *mistresses* that Israel truly loved while faking their devotion to Jehovah God. What an abomination!
3. **GOD GIVES THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR IDOLATRY AND HYPOCRISY,** vs. 27
   1. Babylon was to be their captor. If they were going to worship the gods of the lands surrounding them, God would send them to one of those lands with nothing but false gods. If they didn’t really want to worship the true God in the first place, then He will show them what it will be like in a land without that true God.
   2. He states to them just who it was that would send them there. That name, “The God of Hosts,” means that He is the God of ALL hosts. He’s the God of the host of armies, He’s the God of the host of heaven and any other *host* that’s in the world. Sadly, it’s like telling them, “The God who you rejected was the true God all along!”

**Discuss:**

1. What was Israel hoping for that showed their blindness concerning God’s blessings and His judgment? How could that apply to the attitude of America today... or even to Christians in general today?
2. Israel had a *show* of worshipping God but why was it so disgusting to God.
3. Notice in verse 23, God calls their songs... *noise*. Apparently there was a melodious sound to them. God even tells us in **Ephesians 5:19**  Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making *melody* in your heart to the Lord; Why then did God call their melody “*noise?”*
4. What is the carryover for us in this principle.
5. What one thing would God rather see from us today than a long list of areas we serve in?