

Amos 5:18

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BIG SANDY, Texas—On Nov. 14, I began a series of articles about the book of Amos. The first article was titled “Overview of the Book of Amos.”

Since that time, I chose to write about various verses from the book of Amos. This article will discuss Amos 5:18.

Reason for choosing

Someone could ask: Why did you choose to write about Amos 5:18?

My answer: I wanted to caution friends and associates to be careful about how they view the subject of prophecy.

See what it says

Let’s see what Amos 5:18 says.

Amos 5:18—“Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good is the day of the LORD to you? It will be darkness, and not light.”

Although the New King James Version is accurate and clear, let’s notice another Bible translation and one paraphrase.

James Moffatt translation: “You long for the day of the Eternal? Ah, what will that avail you, so eager to avert the evil day, so keen upon injustice?”

The Living Bible (paraphrased): “You say, ‘If only the Day of the Lord were here, for then God would deliver us from all our foes.’ But you have no idea what you ask. For that day will not be light and prosperity, but darkness and doom! How terrible the darkness will be for you; not a ray of joy or hope will shine.”

Gleeful about calamity?

It is understandable when some Bible students seem eager for the arrival of the Day of the Lord—because they view the events of the Day of the Lord as bringing the world closer to the return of the Son of God.

Bible students are aware of the biblical pattern of calamity preceding restoration. Therefore, they want the calamity of the Day of the Lord to come so that the world can receive the restoration of the return of the Son of God.

Yet, Bible students should be careful when contemplating how God will deal with evil.

- Bible students may long for the destruction of evil governments and evil systems.
- But Bible students should avoid being gleeful over the prospect of people being punished for doing evil behavior.

Back to the context

To notice the context of what Amos said in Amos 5:18, let's return to the surrounding verses.

Amos 5:16-20—"Therefore the LORD God of hosts, the LORD, says this: 'There shall be wailing in all streets, and they shall say in all the highways, 'Alas! Alas!' They shall call the farmer to mourning, and skillful lamenters to wailing. In all vineyards there shall be wailing, for I will pass through you,'" says the LORD. Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good is the day of the LORD to you? It will be darkness, and not light. It will be as though a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him! Or as though he went into the house, leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him! Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light? Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?"

Additional descriptions

There are other descriptions in the Old Testament about the Day of the Lord. Here are three additional sections of Scripture.

- Joel 2:1-11—A day of darkness and gloominess
- Joel 2:12-17—A day of fasting and repentance
- Zephaniah 1:14-18—A day of trouble and devastation

Four positive traits

Zephaniah 3:1-2 mentions four traits that displease God. When a Bible student recognizes the opposite traits of the four, he can see characteristics that please God.

- Obey His voice.
- Receive correction (and instruction).
- Trust in the Lord.
- Draw near to your God.