

Amos 8:11-12

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of Dec. 26, 2020.

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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 8:11-12.

Reason for choosing

Someone could ask: Why did you choose to write about Amos 8:11-12?

My answer: I wanted to remind friends about the concept called by many "the famine of the Word."

What does it say?

Let's notice exactly what Amos 8:11-12 says.

Amos 8:11-12—"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. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD, but shall not find it." "

- Amos 8:11 says that the words of the Lord cannot be found.
- Amos 8:12 says that people search diligently for the words of the Lord.

Question: Why would people have trouble hearing the words of the Lord?

My answer includes two possibilities.

- Will preaching be shut down?
- Although preaching may continue, will the preaching avoid the words of the Lord?

Preaching shut down

Someone could ask: How could the preaching through modern technology be shut down? There is the Internet with websites, YouTube, Zoom, Facetime, Facebook, Twitter, podcasts and much more.

My answer: Although I believe that this scenario of shutting down preaching seems unlikely, let's see how it could be possible.

- Genesis 11:1-9—God previously separated the contact among people at the tower of Babel. Although separating people today would be harder than separating people at that time, nothing is impossible with God.

- An electromagnetic pulse (called an EMP) could disrupt preaching on the Internet and could disrupt electricity that allows preaching on mobile devices playing DVDs, CDs or cassette tapes.
- Censorship by atheistic countries (like Russia and China) is already restricting the person-to-person preaching of Christianity. Christians in these countries have already been secretly meeting to discuss the gospel of the Bible.
- Censorship by non-Christian countries that promote other religions (Muslim, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.) is already restricting the person-to-person preaching of Christianity. Christians in these countries have already been secretly meeting to discuss the gospel of the Bible.
- Censorship by professing-Christian countries (including the United States) is beginning to restrict the person-to-person preaching of Christianity. As secularism grows in professing-Christian nations, censorship of Christian ideas is increasing.

Even as the preaching of Christianity is being restricted, I don't believe that this is the main lesson of Amos 8:11-12.

Not preaching the Word

What if preaching is occurring, but the words of the Lord are not being preached?

I believe that this is a more likely scenario.

People may still be talking about Bible lessons, but they are not preaching truth. Consider the following verses.

Isaiah 5:20—"Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

Isaiah 5:21—"Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"

Jeremiah 23:1-2—" 'Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!' says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: 'You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,' says the LORD."

Jeremiah 23:16—"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; they speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the LORD.' "

Jeremiah 23:21—"I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied."

Ezekiel 34:1-6—"And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, "Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were

sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.' "

Romans 16:18—"For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple."

1 Corinthians 1:12-13—"Now I say this, that each of you says, 'I am of Paul,' or 'I am of Apollos,' or 'I am of Cephas,' or 'I am of Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

1 Corinthians 3:1-5—"And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, 'I am of Paul,' and another, 'I am of Apollos,' are you not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?"

Ephesians 4:14-15—"That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ."

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11—"The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie."

Titus 1:10-11—"For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain."

Hearing and doing

Let me leave you with some verses that mention the importance of finding good preaching and the importance of accepting the true Words of God.

Matthew 7:24-27—"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."