

Feast or Famine

All Scripture is KJV: Amos 8

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY?

People all through the ages have always embraced some kind of belief structure. In that they have always felt that there must be a higher or greater power above them, who was responsible for making everything that is called life.

Even though they don't like to retain the knowledge that there is a God, they will acknowledge that something was the cause of creation.

Even the big bang theory is a cause in itself and that they say brought about the world and everything that is in it. But even this theory or belief involves a greater power to produce whatever it took in the first place to bring about life.

So whichever way they look at it, they have to come to a conclusion that there is a supreme power at work in the universe.

- Having said that. People do believe in something at the end of the day.

But when we take into consideration that it was God who was responsible for creation we acknowledge his Word and what he has said in it.

Prior to having his written word in the way we have it today, it was recorded by Gods prophets in the OT and then the Apostles in the NT.

- During these periods Gods word was written down and recorded for Gods people.

Thousands of years have passed by, and still we have the exact Word of God written down and used by Gods people in all this time.

Today we have the Word of God in several languages that every person may have the opportunity to know the true and living God.

- But is that the reality today.

Let me ask this question: "Is there a Feast or Famine" in God's word today?

1. Just because we have a "feast" of the written word of God available so freely today, does not mean that we have people familiar with who God is today.
 2. Just because there are so many bibles available either in paper form or electronic form, does not mean that people are actually reading the bible.
- **"That's why we come to the title of the message this morning Feast or Famine?**

God told Amos in the OT that there would come a time, that people would not be able to get the true word of God. Not because there was no written word out there. But because there would be know one preaching it out there.

This was true then, and it is even true now.

Amos 8: ¹¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:

¹² And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.

1. During the time of Jeremiah the Prophet he would preach and warn Judah about the coming days of Israel's destruction if they would not turn back to God.
2. God had sent Jeremiah to preach to Judah and to warn them, but Judah had hardened their heart towards the Lord.
3. Therefore as a result they would be lead into captivity by the Babylonians.

Again we are reminded in the NT that there would come a time when the people would not endure sound doctrine, but that they would heep to themselves "teachers" having itching ears.

2 Timothy 4 King James Version (KJV)

1. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

² Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.

³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heep to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

⁴ And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

- But as Amos warned the people, that at some point, they would cease to be able to find the true word of God being preached.

✚ It does not mean that Gods true word is not available, it means that "people" will not be able to find those "true messages" being preached any more.

✚ It's one thing to have KJV bible, but it's another thing to listen to the KJV being preached.

1. One of the causes of this is because despite there being adequate KJV bibles around, people as well as preachers have opted for other bible versions to be their source of God's word.
2. Preachers have compromised just so that they could tickle the ears of their congregations to please them in what they want to hear.

3. Hard preaching has been thrown out of the pulpits of the churches to be replaced by feminine and watered down preaching.

a. The bible says to us that “these things were written for our own admonition”.

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

- a. Why? – so that we could learn by the mistakes of others?
- b. So that we can know what Gods action would be as a result of not doing what he told them to do?
- c. So that we can know how God is going to act towards us if we don't turn to him?
- d. Because one day everyone will be judged.

The destruction of Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity is recorded by Jeremiah in the Book of Lamentations. And in Chapter 4 Jeremiah records the famine of Jerusalem, and equates it to the famine of not having Gods word anymore.

Jerusalem (daughter of Zion) had fallen, and all her people in it. They had fallen because of a spiritual famine, and this eventually lead to their physical famine.

- b. Jeremiah used words of tarnished gold to describe how Gods word which was more precious than gold, in how Gods word had become dull gold and the people had departed from it.

Lamentations 4 (King James Version (KJV) – We see a spiritual comparison.

1. **How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!** the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street.

2 The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!

3 Even the sea monsters draw out the breast, (*whales*) they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.

4 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them. (*talking about a physical famine*)

5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.

6 For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.

7 Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire: (*but now they were nothing*)

⁸ Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

⁹ They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field.

¹⁰ The hands of the pitiful women have sodden (means boiled) their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people. *(they were supposed to teach their children)*

❖ Lamentations 2:20 illustrates this.

Lamentations 2: ²⁰ Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom thou hast done this. Shall **the women eat their fruit, and children of a span long?** shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?

- ❖ Loving mothers had resorted to this practice during starvation: they ate their child.
- ❖ The famine after the destruction of Jerusalem caused the mothers to kill boil "sodden" and eat their own children for food.

¹¹ The LORD hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof. *(Jerusalem destroyed by fire)*

¹² The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem. *(like today the unsaved and sodomites entering into the house or church of God). Would that have been believed 30 years ago.*

¹³ For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her,

¹⁴ They have wandered as blind men in the streets, they have polluted themselves with blood, so that men could not touch their garments.

¹⁵ They cried unto them, Depart ye; it is unclean; depart, depart, touch not: when they fled away and wandered, they said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn there.

¹⁶ The anger of the LORD hath divided them; he will no more regard them: they respected not the persons of the priests, they favoured not the elders.

¹⁷ As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have watched for a nation that could not save us.

¹⁸ They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets: our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for our end is come.

¹⁹ Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.

²⁰ The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.

1. (the Jews) living under the heathens shadow.
2. Pit – is referring to a trap.
3. They thought that **THEY COULD LIVE AMONG THE WORLD AND THAT EVERYTHING WAS GOING TO BE OK.**

²¹ **Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz;** the cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.

²² The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; he will no more carry thee away into captivity: he will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom; he will discover thy sins.

1. So as we look at Lamentations as recoded by Jeremiah, the prophet Amos also tells us that there will be a time when others just like Israel, will turn their backs and become stiff necked.
2. That there will be a time, in that even though Gods word can be found written down, people will not be able to find it preached truthfully from the pulpits.

Amos 8 ¹¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that **I will send a famine in the land**, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, **but of hearing the words of the LORD:**

¹² And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.

3. So it is the Lord who will send the famine. It will be the Lord who will send the famine of “hearing the words of the LORD”.
 4. It is going to be the LORD who is going to prevent them from hearing it. Even though they run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord they will not find it.
 5. So according to God, it is going to get harder and harder for people to find the truth in these coming days.
 6. Is that not what we see today?
 7. Truth is not being preached. People are not being warned. God’s word is getting harder and harder to find.
- And sometimes it is the old Christians who have been saved for such a longtime that they are not growing in the Lord. And when you preach hard they tend to get upset, and don’t like it.
 - Whereas the new Christians who have only been saved for a short while want to hear hard preaching so that they can grow.

1 Peter 2: 1-2. ¹ Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, ² **As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word**, that ye may grow thereby:

- Young Christians the bible says want to hear the word of God. They desire to hear the word of God.
- Whereas old Christians sometimes just sit with their arms folded listening to a message, and want to know when is the preacher going to finish.
- ❖ But God gives a warning to those people who want to ignore what he says, as was the case in the days of Amos and Jeremiah. And therefore God sent them into captivity.
- ❖ **If you desire the world – God will send you back into the world.**

Amos 5

Hear ye this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, **O house of Israel.** **The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise:** she is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up. For thus saith the Lord God; The city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel.

- ❖ If you don't read your bible often, then soon you will forget what it says, and you will be inclined to embrace any bible version that comes along, and get sucked up into its mistruths and you will become less effective for God.
- ❖ How are you going to defend yourself from the enemy if your sword of truth is not sharp?

We saw from Lamentations that the servants of God went from being golden vessels ready to be used by God, to earthen pitchers which could not be used for anything because they had forgotten the word of God.

Matthew 13:16 King James Version (KJV)

¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.....