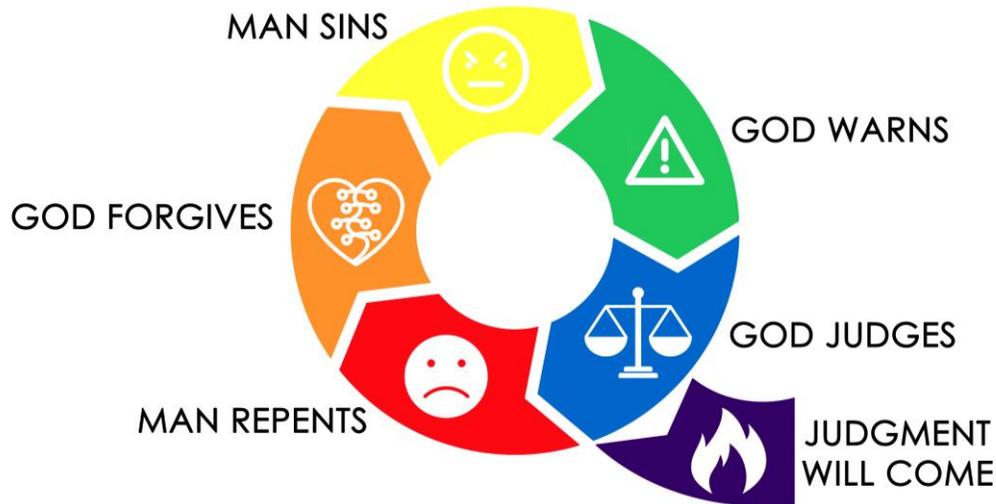


Finding Joy in the Words of Amos



God through Amos accuses the people of Israel of practicing religion without repentance or reformation; of hating and oppressing seekers of the truth; oppressing and taking advantage of the poor; of taking for granted God's grace and provision; and not seeking Him. The Day of Judgment is coming, as it has in the past, and death is so sure the dirge has been composed and is being sung already. (Motyer, 798–801)

I. Jesus is the source of True Joy.

“When it comes to true joy, Jesus was deadly serious. He tells his disciples, ‘These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.’ His words are the key to experiencing fullness of joy in our lives. But the words of Jesus are not merely what the Gospels record him saying. Jesus makes it clear that in some way everything in the Bible relates to Him — His life, death, and resurrection, and His message of repentance and forgiveness.” (Harmon)

A. All scripture speaks of Jesus.

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” [Luke 24:27]

1. Jesus is the second member of the Triune God.

“When the universe was created God the Father spoke the powerful creative words that brought it into being, God the Son was the divine agent who carried out these words, and God the Holy Spirit was active...if all three members of the Trinity are equally and fully divine, then they have all three existed for all eternity, and God has eternally existed as a Trinity...He cannot be other than He is.” (Grudem, 241)

II. Seeing the character of Jesus in Amos.

A. See the perfect, unwavering, comprehensive, and utmost **HOLINESS** of Jesus.

“Holiness is the quality which makes God what He is. It is first that which makes Him God, and secondly that which makes Him a particular sort of God, and distinct from any other possible claimants.” (Motyer)

“Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? [Ex 15:11]

“There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God.” [1 Samuel 2:2]

“And one [seraph] called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!’ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of Him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.” [Isaiah 6:3–4]

B. See the **HORROR** of sin that Jesus died to propitiate.

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us— for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.” [Gal.3:13]

C. See the perfect, divine **JUDGMENT** of Jesus on the world.”

“Hear this and testify against the descendants of Jacob,’ declares the Lord, the Lord God Almighty. ‘On the day I punish Israel for her sins, I will destroy the altars of Bethel; the horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground. I will tear down the winter house along with the summer house; the houses adorned with ivory will be destroyed and the mansions will be demolished,’ declares the Lord.” [Amos 3:13–15]

“‘I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places, yet you did not return to me,’ declares the Lord. ‘I also withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest; I would send rain on one city, and send no rain on another city; one field would have rain, and the field on which it did not rain would wither; so two or three cities would wander to another city to drink water, and would not be satisfied; yet you did not return to me,’ declares the Lord. ‘I struck you with blight and mildew; your many gardens and your vineyards, your fig trees and your olive trees the locust devoured; yet you did not return to me,’ declares the Lord. ‘I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt; I killed your young men with the sword, and carried away your horses, and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils; yet you did not return to me,’ declares the Lord. ‘I overthrew some of you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a brand plucked out of the burning; yet you did not return to me,’ declares the Lord.” [Amos 4:6–11]

“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from His presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.” [Rev. 20:11–14]

D. See the infinite and breathtaking cost of our **SALVATION**.

Only the death of a perfect sacrifice...the death of God Himself...would satisfy the justice of God.

“God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.” [Romans 5:8–10]

“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” [1 John 4:10]

E. See the perfect, unwavering, comprehensive, and utmost **MERCY** of Jesus.

1. Righteousness is rewarded in the Covenant of Works, but mercy is given in the Covenant of Grace.

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” [Gen. 2:15]

“Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’” [Gen. 12:1–3]

2. God's mercy is doubly displayed with Abram.

“When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, ‘To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.’” [Genesis 15:17–21]

3. God's mercy in the physical curses: Amos 4:6–13

4. God's mercy is found in the call to repent.

“Hear this word that the Lord has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt: ‘You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.’” [Amos 3:1–2]

“Does a lion roar in the thicket when it has no prey? Does it growl in its den when it has caught nothing? Does a bird swoop down to a trap on the ground when no bait is there? Does a trap spring up from the ground if it has not caught anything? When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the Lord caused it?” [3:4–6]

“Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, ‘Bring, that we may drink!’ The Lord God has sworn by his holiness that, behold, the days are coming upon you, when they shall take you away with hooks, even the last of you with fishhooks. And you shall go out through the breaches, each one straight ahead; and you shall be cast out into Harmon, declares the Lord. Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression; bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days; offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which is leavened, and proclaim freewill offerings, publish them; for so you love to do, O people of Israel!’ declares the Lord God.” [Amos 4:1–5]

“Seek me and live...Seek the Lord and live...Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said. Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.” [Amos 5:5a, 6a, 14–17]

5. God's mercy is found in the incarnation of Jesus.

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” [John 1:14]

6. God's mercy is extended to you in Jesus.

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” [Ephesians 2:4–7]

7. God's mercy is extended to Israel in Jesus.

“Many Samaritans from that town believed in [Jesus] because of the woman's testimony, ‘He told me all that I ever did.’ So when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His word. They said to the woman, ‘It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.’” [John 4:39–42]

III. So what...

“When we discover that our thoughts are not His, nor His ways ours, then let us take a note and be ready to reform our thoughts and our ways of thinking, our values and our canons of appraisal. Where it is natural to scoff (at worst) or turn complacently aside (at best), we need to goad ourselves into repentance and bow before the Lord our God.” (Motyer)

IV. But how...

- A. Remember that your salvation is a work of an omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient Trinitarian God.

“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” [John 14:16–17]

1. God gave you to The Son.

“My Father, who has given [you] to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.” [John 10:29]

2. The Son secured a place for you in Heaven.

“We have [assurance of salvation] as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on

our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." [Hebrews 6:19–20]

3. The Spirit applied Jesus' good work to you.

"And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." [Philippians 1:6]

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