

## A Famine By Choice

**Amos 8:11- 12** 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: 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].

I relate to Amos... 8th Century prophet who blistered the social problems of his nation::: HE HAD A STRONG SENSE OF WHAT IS RIGHT!

**Amos 7:12- 15** Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: But prophesy not again any more at Beth-el: for it [is] the king's chapel, and it [is] the king's court. Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I [was] no prophet, neither [was] I a prophet's son; but I [was] an herdman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.

There is something powerful about a man/women who just falls in love with God more than anything! I JUST WANT TO KNOW YOU GOD! **HEAR YOUR WORD!**

He began to prophecy misery to the nation... basket of Summer Fruit & God's Plume line ==> pretty outside, but rotten inside

\*\* He blistered the inflationary economy that took advantage of the poor!

**THEY DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON AMERICA!**

A nation drunk with pleasure & greed & selfishness! A congress who talks of a greedy decade while writing enormous bad checks! S&L's Junk bonds ==> Health insurance scandals ==> Welfare frauds ==>

**Amos 8:4- 5,7** Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?

The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works.

**GOD SAYS ==> I WILL NEVER FORGET!**

**Romans 12:19** Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

**Amos 8:10- 12** And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only [son], and the end thereof as a bitter day. 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: 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].

Part of Judgement was a famine of HEARING the word of God!

THE MOST TRAGIC TIME OF HUMAN HISTORY FOLLOWED ==> **400 yrs of Silence**

I can do w/o many things... But I must have a word from God!

THANK GOD FOR THE HOUR WE LIVE : **There is no famine of God's word!**

CHRISTIAN: churches, books, tapes, schools, clubs, **EVERY SERVICE!**

\*\*\* But there is a famine of hearers of the word! ( **anybody listening** )

**Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Never has a generation been so knowledgeable, and so knowledgeable at the same time!

**HOW IS THAT?** maybe we need to investigate what happens once the word comes from the pulpit or the page.... to our spirit. (a wall)

\*\*\* Does it meet a friendly smile, or a cold shoulder of stubbornness? \*\*\*  
does it meet the snobbishness of preconceived religion?

\*\*\* or does it meet plain old rebellion & stiffneckedness?

Jesus spent an entire lesson on this subject!

**Matthew 13:1- 9** The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some [seeds] fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

**Matthew 13:10- 16** And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and [their] ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with [their] eyes and hear with [their] ears, and should understand with [their] heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed [are] your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

So you see hearing is not just an issue of being preached to...

IT IS A MATTER OF YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE WORD!

Do you hunger after it... or do you want a simple snack?

1. seed fell by wayside for fowls to eat
2. stony soil no deep soil, sun withered **4 TYPES OF SOILS**
3. thorns sprung up and choked them
4. Good ground with fruit

**Matthew 13:18- 23** Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth [it] not, then cometh the wicked [one], and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth [it]; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

EXPLAIN 4 SOILS

1. Casual observer
2. Start good / no depth
3. cares of world / deceit of riches
4. good ground

**WHAT KIND OF SOIL ARE YOU?**

Do a soil test! Look at your spiritual walk to date? any good?

KEY TO GOOD SOIL : not only understand... but bear fruit!

**James 1:21- 26** Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth [therein], he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion [is] vain.

superfluity: more than necessary

Naughtiness: disobedient, improper IN OTHER WORDS ==> **GROW UP!**

Meekness: mild mannered

**I Corinthians 13:11** When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. KARTEGEO = cast off, put away sharply

**THE POINT?** THERE IS NOT A SHORTAGE OF GOD'S WORD... OR GRACE!

**Psalms 119:89** For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

BUT THERE IS A FAMINE OF HEARERS ... WHO BECOME DOERS

**Colossians 1:21, 23** And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in [your] mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled ...If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and [be] not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, [and] which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

**Acts 24:24- 25** And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; **when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.**

SOMETIMES I THINK GOD WEARIES OF OUR SLOW RESPONSE TO HIS WORD!

**Acts 24:27** But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

**COME NOW!** Not when your feeling board... tried everything else

**Psalms 119:105** Thy word [is] a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

**Psalms 119:9- 12** {Beth.} Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by **taking heed [thereto] according to thy word.** With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed [art] thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.

**Proverbs 30:5** Every word of God [is] pure: he [is] a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

**Matthew 4:4** But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

**Mark 7:13** Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

So often I marvel at how we can hear so much preaching, yet have so many struggles?! THIS IS A FAMINE BY CHOICE!

**Romans 10:13- 26** For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. But I say, Did not Israel know? First

Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by [them that are] no people, [and] by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people. I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, [of] the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to [the image of] Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

**WE MUST MAKE A CHOICE TO END THE FAMINE OF GOD'S WORD IN OUR LIFE!**

Stop killing prophets! ( notice difference between Baker / Dohmer? )

**LET'S ASK GOD FOR A FRESH NEW LOVE FOR HIS WORD!**