

Title: When They Can't Speak For Themselves, Who Will?

Main Scripture: Amos 8:4-5

2 ...Then the Lord said to me: "The end has come upon My people Israel; I will not pass by them anymore. 3 And the songs of the temple Shall be wailing in that day," Says the Lord God—"Many dead bodies everywhere, They shall be thrown out in silence." **4 Hear this, you who swallow up the needy, And make the poor of the land fail, 5 Saying: "When will the New Moon be past, That we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, That we may trade wheat? Making the ephah small and the shekel large, Falsifying the scales by deceit, 6 That we may buy the poor for silver, And the needy for a pair of sandals— Even sell the bad wheat?"** (NKJV)

2 ...Then the Lord said to me, "The end has come for My people Israel. I will spare them no longer. 3 The songs of the palace will turn to wailing in that day," declares the Lord God. "Many will be the corpses; in every place they will cast them forth in silence."

4 Hear this, you who trample the needy, to do away with the humble of the land, 5 saying, "When will the new moon be over, So that we may sell grain, And the sabbath, that we may open the wheat market, To make the bushel smaller and the shekel bigger, And to cheat with dishonest scales, 6 So as to buy the helpless for money And the needy for a pair of sandals, And that we may sell the refuse of the wheat?" (NASB)

Discussion Tools

- Amos was not a prophet nor was he the son of a prophet but yet he knew the affairs of God and God's business concerning the unheard voices of the poor and the injustice that was being done to them.
- Poverty is an existing problem which has always been this way and will continue until Christ returns and the World ends.
- Poverty comes from a variety of sources: circumstances, incapacity, and sometimes even by choice.
- The instructions throughout the Gospels and the New Testament letters are to individual Christians to care for the poor through visiting, compassion, action, empathy (not sympathy), sacrifice, sharing God's blessings, and generosity to all even enemies. That doesn't mean that command relieves a church body, which is the collection of individual Christians, of being concerned and taking action in their local communities and societies. Nor does it relieve individual Christians of their responsibilities to the poor (both saved and unsaved) since as baptized believers they make up a church.
- Even though we are not to be of this World the Bible tells us that we are still to remain in this World until Christ returns for us. Galatians 6:9-10 tells us not to get tired of doing good and that good should be done to everyone especially to fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Jesus doesn't want people to be too Holy that they are no longer any Earthly good. The parable of the Good Samaritan is a perfect example of this (Luke 10:25-37).

- Jesus said that the poor we will always have with us in this World but He didn't say it so that we would ignore them since there's no way to ever help all of them. His point was to His immediate audience to understand that He will not always physically be in their presence so don't be more concerned with physical things that you neglect Spiritual things (which is a greater lesson for us today on all levels).
- He was also quoting from Deuteronomy which in context displays a much larger outlook between those that have and their responsibility to those that don't have in Deuteronomy 15:7-11.
- The primary focus of a church body must be to proclaim Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection until He comes, to keep the saved saved, and to seek and save the lost. Certain aspects of Christianity can only be carried out individually and some aspects can only be carried out collectively. But God loves a cheerful giver and its every Christian's responsibility to continue to do good to everyone (saved and unsaved, enemies and friends) and that includes helping the poor.

Reference Verses

- Matthew 26:10-11
- Deuteronomy 15:7-11
- Jeremiah 49:11
- Psalm 113:7
- Exodus 22:22-23
- John 14:18
- Psalm 68:5
- Isaiah 49:15-16
- Psalm 10:14
- Psalm 140:12
- Deuteronomy 10:18
- Psalm 68:5-6
- Psalm 82:3
- Hosea 14:3
- Psalm 146:9
- 2 Thessalonians 3:10

Study Questions

1. Are we as a congregation fit to fight for the things God is already fighting for? Please explain.
2. In what ways are we easily distracted throughout the week that causes us to forget about God's Kingdom business? Be specific.