

# A Famine in the Land

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Amos 8:11-14

God has given us His word to reveal His will and guide us through this life. This is an incredible blessing! Yet too often, His word is neglected and ignored – mostly by the world at large, but we can do this too. What happens when we neglect the word of God? We have a description in our text.

## **The Necessity of God's Word (v. 11)**

- This passage compares God's word to food – both sustain us (physically vs. spiritually); the New Testament also compares God's word to food (1 Peter 2:1-2; Hebrews 5:12-14); it causes growth
- A spiritual famine works like a physical one – we become weaker and weaker over time; eventually leads to death
- We must never neglect God's word – it is too important; we use it to reach the lost (1 Thessalonians 1:8); we use it to build up one another (Acts 20:32); we study it to grow stronger ourselves (1 Peter 2:2)

## **First Result: Confusion (v. 12)**

- Once the people realized that “something” was missing, they tried desperately to find it – God's word shows us the path to take (Psalm 119:105); too many people want to follow their own path (Proverbs 14:12)
- The religious world is filled with people seeking for purpose and direction, but not looking in the right place – they look to their emotions, which is dangerous (Jeremiah 17:9; 10:23); they look to religious leaders, yet there are many false teachers (1 John 4:1); they look to society, yet most will be lost (Matthew 7:13-14)
- They may be very zealous in this – but zeal without knowledge of God's will is useless (Romans 10:1-3)

## **Second Result: Falling Away (v. 13)**

- This passage talks about young men and women falling – physically, they should have been the strongest; this famine has the potential to affect everyone; there is a real possibility for any Christian to become unfaithful (Hebrews 3:12-13)
- The knowledge of God's word helps us from being led astray (2 Timothy 3:13-14) – the church has been set up to help as well (Ephesians 4:11-16); this is why we need to emphasize the word of God (cf. Acts 20:27; 2 Peter 1:10-13)

### **Third Result: Lack of Respect for Bible Authority (v. 14)**

- Without God's word, the people were acknowledging false "gods" as being equally legitimate – when we forsake the Bible, every other way begins to seem equally valid; as a result, many think it does not matter what we believe or practice; yet the Bible shows us otherwise
- We need to respect the authority of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20) – this is the basis for evangelism and discipleship; we are to do all things by His authority (Colossians 3:17); His will is expressed in His word (1 Corinthians 2:10-13); the Scriptures equip us for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- If we want a solid foundation, we must hear the Lord's word and do it (Matthew 7:24-27, 21-23)

### **Conclusion**

- God's word is essential for our spiritual well-being – it helps us to avoid confusion, keeps us from falling away, and shows us why we must respect God
- We are blessed to have the written word of God that we can read and study anytime – let us not squander this blessing by neglecting it, either in our personal lives or as a church