

"Being at Ease in Zion"

Key Verses: Amos 5:24 – Amos 6:1

This study as most of these studies in the Prophets are exhorting us to contend for the true faith and not be overtaken by a lazy or lascivious spirit. The sooner we take to heart how the Lord's grace works, the sooner we will overcome and move onward to maturity. A "que sera sera" aka "whatever will be will be" attitude, can mistakenly apply the Lord's sovereignty and lead us into captivity. We are still learning the sum of the Lord's sovereignty which includes:

Rom 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, (scourging, chastening, rebuking) grace did much more abound:

Jude spoke of "certain men" who are those outside ourselves as indeed many false prophets have gone out into the world. Yet these men are also you and me, God's very people who have been ordained to live by every Word God spoke (Mat 4:4) including these.

Jud 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Jud 1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, **ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness**, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The deceitfulness of sin that hides our fleshly hearts will deceive us and snare us in bondage to sin and unbelief while we claim to serve and obey the Lord. We are so much in need of the Body as our safety and refuge to keep our faith strong and to get the help we need including strong rebukes in times of trouble. I hope this message is an exhortation to all who read it as it was to me as I prepared it.

Heb 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Heb 3:14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

We continue in Amos and see more of the Lord's controversy with us His people.

Amo 5:24 But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

Amo 5:25 Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?

Amo 5:26 But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.

Amo 5:27 Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, whose name is The God of hosts.

Amo 6:1 Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!

When judgment is on the house of God, it shall not fail to roll and the purifying waters shall continually be bringing righteousness to our heavens and our earth. It's all the Lord's work, it is His zeal for His people by which the Lord performs and establishes judgment in His kingdom.

Isa 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Php 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Righteousness is learned only by enduring judgment (Isa 26:9) and bearing the trials the Lord sends and standing on His Word through the affliction. The rushing waters are the torrent, the fiery Word that come against our house to try our faith and expose what is not built on faith so only that which is of faith shall remain (Luk 6:47-49). These waters flow out of the Words that the Body of Christ is speaking to those prepared and gathered to hear.

Joh 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Jer 5:14 Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

We should be striving to learn the lessons of the Lord and hastening the coming of the Lord within us (2Pe 3:12). If we don't learn the lessons and do not move on to maturity (Heb 6:3), we are bound to repeat the lessons until we do. Israel was led around for forty years with many trials (4 x 10, the whole perfection of flesh) but was not given to cross over and enter into and possess the land.

Amo 5:25 Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?

Like physical Israel, the Lord's Elect in every age are first unable to cross over and overcome and we repeat the lessons. Until grace is poured out in our day of judgment, we are unable and instead offer outward sacrifices and offerings to the Lord while claiming His Name.

Luk 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Heb 10:8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;

The Lord does not want outward obedience and rituals. He is looking to our hearts and He demands all of it be given to Him as a living sacrifice. The joy of the old man is turned to gloom and the mourning of the new man to joy as we endure major spiritual heart surgery.

Psa 40:8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart.

Mar 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: *this is* the first commandment.

Our time wandering in the wilderness is our time of testing that follows our initial baptism into the truth (1Co 10:2). This precedes the second coming of Christ within us for salvation apart from sin (Heb 9:28). Like our Lord experienced (Mat 4:1-2) and Paul (Gal 1:7) we too, must be tested to be made ready for ministry and service. Unlike our spotless Lord, we will be unfaithful and fall down our appointed "seven" times. As we die to the flesh we are being saved and gain dominion over sin the more we look to our new life, becoming a living sacrifice.

Joh 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man (Jesus Christ and His Christ) be lifted up:

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

As we abide in faith and stand in the grace of God, in DUE TIME, we are being made partakers of Christ. The Lord is grieved by our sins and keeps us in torment (Rev 14:11) to destroy all faith in ourselves and instill faith in Him alone. Israel of old could not and Israel of today, the spiritual Jews cannot enter into because of unbelief.

Heb 3:17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

Heb 3:18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

We are being made into a living sacrifice by the blood of the Lamb as we are made to drink and partake in judgment. This turns our faith into an active faith evidenced by our works. The Body of Christ is the second sacrifice (the scapegoat) along with our Lord that are used to bring salvation to all mankind as saviours and The Savior, respectfully (Oba 1:21).

Amo 5:26 But ye have borne the tabernacle (covering) of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.

The law for the lawless and self-righteous has us covering ourselves with our own works which is not of faith. Instead of offering pleasing sacrifices we are committing fornication and spiritual incest with our flesh. This is how we bear the tabernacle of Moloch (who is the God of Ammonites) and the false god of Chiun [H3594] which is another name for our self-righteous beast that does many good works in seeking glory.

H3594, kî yu[^] n, *kee-yoon'*

From **H3559**; properly a *statue*, that is, idol; but used (by euphemism) for some heathen deity (perhaps corresponding to Priapus or Baal-peor): - Chiun.

Rev 13:14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

Job 27:6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.

The Word for tabernacle is H552 is found once in Scripture per the KJV Concordance.

H5522, sikku[^] th, *sik-kooth'*

Feminine of **H5519**; an (idolatrous) *booth*: - tabernacle.

A religious self-worshipping beast (Rev 13:11) is certainly an idolatrous booth or house. But the point I want to make here is that this image to the beast we setup is about covering ourselves with righteousness and taking away God's reproach. The Lord's true coverings, the true garments of salvation are knitted together only as we endure through many tribulations being crucified with Christ.

Going back to the root of the root, we find H5526, which primarily speaks of **our covering** which we know is what makes us acceptable and presentable to the Lord.

H5526, sakes / s´a`kak

Total KJV Occurrences: 23

covered, 8

cover, 5

covereth, 2

covering, 2

defence, 1

defendest, 1

What is really being said here is we are putting on self-righteousness and spiritual clothing that is our own works as we worship the idols and image of the beast. Such a mindset is a defiled wedding garment that needs to be uncovered and is in our day of judgment at the wedding feast (Mat 22:11).

Jas 5:2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

Rev 18:16 And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

Salvation is of the Lord (Jon 2:6) and we must be GIVEN our garments (Isa 61:3) from the Lord. White washed robes and the “fine linen” worn in spiritual Babylon are defiled garments that are being exposed and re-washed/remade in the afflictions and suffering (the blood, the dying daily) the Lord has and is appointing us to endure (Phi 1:29).

Rev 7:14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, **and made them white in the blood of the Lamb**.

The Lord is faithful to finish the good work in us which means He is/will complete our judgment which will be completed in full which is how we are saved from our sins. Our beasts and the false prophets are being destroyed in the age-abiding fire that we as His sons are enduring now (Rev 19:20) and the rest of mankind will endure in the lake of fire.

Amo 5:27 Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, whose name is The God of hosts.

Damascus is the capital of Syria (Isa 7:8) and spiritually represents our flesh and the lineage of where our old man and our father Abraham’s physical family has come from.

Gen 25:20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethune the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

Going beyond Damascus is going beyond just our flesh and into the territory of the Assyrians. Assyria is likened to the land of Spiritual Babylon (Jer 51:18, 2Ki 17:23-24) and these nations are the rod of the Lord’s anger sent to Israel (The Elect) that are hypocrites (Isa 10:5-6). The falling away does not lead us back to Egypt but instead takes us into spiritual Assyria.

Hos 11:5 He shall not return into the land of Egypt, **but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return**.

Hos 11:6 And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour *them*, because of their own counsels.

Hos 11:7 And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him.

Being captives to the Assyrians is being turned over to our fleshly lusts and the pride of life, and being led to fornicate with the many lies of the harlot. We are being shown in our judgment that nothing good dwells in our flesh and that we truly are the chief of sinners without the headship of Jesus Christ (Rom 7:24, 1Ti 1:15). In due time this brings about a change in our heart as we cry out for deliverance.

The entire phrase “Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity” comes from one Hebrew word galah H1540. The use of this word in itself shows that becoming “captive” from the negative perspective, is being enslaved to our sin and having our nakedness (sinfulness) uncovered.

H1540, ga^ˆla^ˆh

Total KJV Occurrences: 217

carried, 34

captive, 24

uncover, 22

discovered, 18

away, 17

revealed, 11

discover, 10

uncovered, 10

captivity, 9

open, 6

revealeth, 3

published, 2

uncovereth, 2

Here are some examples of being led “into captivity” with H1540 galah.

Lev 18:6 None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, **to uncover** [H1540] *their* nakedness: I *am* the LORD.

Eze 23:18 So she **discovered** [H1540] her whoredoms, and **discovered** her nakedness: then my mind was alienated from her, like as my mind was alienated from her sister.

There is a purpose in the Lord revealing the shame of our nakedness. This is how He is making known His power to us as the first marred vessel (Jer 18:4) and is now being destroyed.

Rom 9:21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

Rom 9:22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to **make his power known**, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

Rom 9:23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

Beyond Damascus puts us deep into the Assyrian/Babylonian Empire where the Lord has us in captivity to not only our flesh but also the lies of the spiritual harlot. We are this harlot bound to the world, having all the godly gifts, all the knowledge but still fornicating with the kings of this earth and making merchandise of the Lord's treasures.

Rev 17:4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.

Rev 18:7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

When the Lord returns as a thief in our spiritual night, we will be found at ease in Zion having buried our talents, including our gift of faith in the earth.

Amo 6:1 Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!

Entering into the rest of Jesus Christ does not mean we don't work. We rest from our own works but not from the Lord's work. Here is the Lord's work which is a demonstration of our faith IN ACTION which never ceases.

Joh 6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, **This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.**

Joh 5:17 (NKJV) But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

Knowledge before the baptism by fire comes is making us slothful thinking we have arrived. But when the fire comes we see more clearly and are given some wise counsel.

Rev 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

Rev 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Believing is work, it requires us to make judgments and stand on the Word and not rely on our own works or the wisdom of this world. These words from James apply inwardly as well as outwardly. They complement rather than negate the words of John 6:29.

Jas 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

The charge to come out of her (the harlot) my people (Rev 18:4) and truly separate from the world and the heathen ways within and without, is a serious commandment if we plan to make the first resurrection.

2Co 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

2Co 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

2Co 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

2Co 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

Trusting in the mountain of Samaria is trusting in ourselves and leaning on our carnal understanding and the ways of the world and its chief nations (the strongman within).

Exo 23:32 Thou shalt **make no covenant with them**, nor with their gods.

Exo 23:33 They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee

That is what ancient Israel did many times in going to the “chief nations” (the strong man within) to seek treaties and covenants with them to take away the reproach of the world and make their lives easier. We live out those words as these disobedient kings and go to the chief of the nation’s instead of standing in faith. Here are just two examples.

1Ki 15:18 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Benhadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

1Ki 15:19 **There is a league (covenant) between me and thee**, and between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

1Ki 20:34 And Benhadad said unto him (Ahab), The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then said Ahab, I will send thee away with this covenant. **So he made a covenant with him**, and sent him away.

These covenants with the chief of the nations are covenants with death and the carnal mind (Rom 8:6). Such covenants will be disannulled in our day of the Lord.

Isa 28:18 Your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; When the overflowing scourge passes through

Being at ease in Zion is failing to stand on the Word and fight the good fight of faith. Who wants to carry a cross and stand in faith, when it’s far easier for our flesh to make a peace treaty and compromise the Word of God and go along to get along? An obvious example of this is the outward keeping of days, times and years. Yet this “weak of faith” spirit afflicts us all in our immaturity as our man of sin is always looking for ways to lessen the burden than bear the reproach of Jesus Christ. The narrow way requires work, it requires us to stand in the face of great opposition from the heathen nations within and in the outside world.

Joh 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

We have a good example of faith in action via a maturing King Hezekiah. He stood on the Word of God against the threats covenant promises of the Assyrians. Despite much carnal fear and a doom and gloom prognosis Hezekiah stood in faith. Yet Israel was delivered by their faithfulness (2Kings 18-19) and obedience to the king’s command not to answer back the Assyrians or enter into any covenants.

The Lord is sore displeased with those unfaithful to the Word and doing evil while claiming His Name. In His mercy, the Lord returns to save us from our sins and rebuilds His Temple within by the plumbline of His Word.

Zec 1:15 And I am very sore displeased **with the heathen at ease**: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction (“RA” H7451 - EVIL).

Zec 1:16 Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.

While it is true that “the Lord is doing it” as it relates to our disobedience and obedience as all things are of Him (Rom 11:36); we are never to lose sight of why the Lord is doing it. He is causing our erring so we will stop doing it and thereby learn righteousness (Isa 26:9, Exo 6:6). We are admonished to ALWAYS strive, labor, contend, and engage in the good fight of faith.

Luk 13:24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

We are to labor for the things of the Spirit and seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. This is the work of faith and how we lose our life to gain it.

Joh 6:27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

Faith without works, is faith without fighting. To lay hold on eternal life we engage in the war and fight the good fight of faith all the way to the very end (Mat 24:13, 2Ti 4:7).

1Ti 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

The spiritual battles and the greater war can only be fought successfully by trusting (putting on) in the whole armor of God. The Word of God will not fail in the end and we need to learn patience and to trust in the Lord.

Eph 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Eph 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Next week Lord willing, we will see more details of our journey “beyond Damascus” where the Lord is taking us deeper into captivity. Here is the first verse of Part 17 where we will see the theme of pride/self-exaltation develop as our self-righteousness is exposed as filthy rags.

Amo 6:2 Pass ye over to Calneh and see, and go thence to Hamath the great, and go down to Gath of the Philistines, Are they better than these kingdoms? Greater is their border than your border?

The Lord will put focus on our feasting on meat and drinking lots of wine but not tending to the weightier matters of Godly Love.