

Prepare to Meet Your God

Text: Amos 4:12

Introduction

1. The ending of one calendar year and the beginning of another is a time of both reflection and anticipation.
 - a. It also should be a time of preparation and purpose for it is not enough to anticipate the new year.
 - b. To live a worthwhile life, we cannot live aimlessly.
2. This time of year we make plans and preparation for the coming year.
 - a. We review the past year and note not only the things we have accomplished but also those things we have failed to accomplish.
 - b. We look to the future year and reflect on how we can achieve more, gain more, and make our lives more comfortable and happier.
 - c. We make resolutions to do better and live better and to give up some bad habits.
3. Since we are already thinking along these lines, I would like to discuss a kind of preparation that is far more important than preparing for a new year — preparing to meet our God.
 - a. The need for this preparation is universal. (Heb. 9:27; Acts 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10)
 - b. It seems many are interested in going to heaven but few are willing to make the necessary preparation to go there.
 - 1) Someone has said, “Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.”
 - 2) One does not stumble into heaven or get there by accident.
 - 3) We must make preparation in this life for the life to come.

I. The Context and Setting of Our Lesson Text - Amos 4:12

A. The context.

1. The text is a solemn warning to the people of the Northern kingdom of Israel.
2. Though issued to those people in the long ago, its principle is one to which we should give attention because we must remember that what happened to the people of God back then can happen to us today. (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11)

B. The time.

1. The date of the text is about 755 B.C.
2. It was during the reign of Jeroboam II who ruled over Israel from 793 to 753 B.C.
3. It was a time of prosperity and expansion in Israel because Jeroboam II was a powerful and able king.
 - a. He regained much of the territory that had been lost to other nations bringing the kingdom near to its size during the reign of Solomon.
 - b. Some have described this time, though, as the “Indian Summer” of Israel—a brief time of prosperity before their fall.

C. The setting.

1. Israel’s material prosperity had not been matched spiritually.
 - a. As a nation they had forgotten God.
 - b. There was, therefore, a need for Amos’ warning.
2. Israel had an outward form of worship which had no influence on their lives.
 - a. They only superficially went through the motions of worship.
 - b. Their religious and social conditions were very similar to what we see in our society today.
 - c. There was justification for God to be angry with them and disapprove of their lives.
3. God had punished Israel in order to bring about their repentance by sending a drought, famine, pestilence, and an earthquake. (Amos 4:6-11)
4. God sent Amos to warn Israel of the coming judgment and doom.
 - a. God gave them time to prepare.
 - b. Sadly, it was all to no avail for they were overrun and destroyed by the Assyrians, who served as God’s instrument to execute His judgment upon Israel, in 721 B.C.

D. As Israel was warned to “Prepare to meet your God,” so is man today.

II. New Testament Warnings Which Indicate Now Is the Time to Prepare for Eternity

- A. Matthew 25 contains three accounts that illustrate this life is a time of preparation.
1. The ten virgins. (1-13)
 2. Talents. (14-30)
 3. Judgment. (31-46)
- B. Consider the teachings of Matthew 6:19-20; Titus 2:11-15; and Hebrews 2:3.

- C. Now is the time for preparation for there will be a time of reckoning and recompense when all must stand before God. (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12)
- D. In spite of warnings in Scripture, how sad it is that the majority of people:
 - 1. Live without God.
 - 2. Have no fear of God.
 - 3. Set at naught God's authority.
 - 4. Do not observe God's works or mark His judgments.
 - 5. Live and act as if there were no God.

III. The Kind of Preparation Needed: Scriptural

- A. Scriptural preparation is essential to be properly prepared to meet God.
 - 1. One cannot properly prepare to meet God if he will not prepare in accordance with God's way. (Matt. 7:21; Jer. 10:23; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3)
 - 2. One cannot mix his ways, or the ways of other men, with the way of God (Rev. 22:18-19)
- B. Scriptural preparation consists of:
 - 1. Faith in Christ. (Heb. 11:6; John 3:16; 8:24)
 - 2. True repentance. (Acts 17:30)
 - 3. Confession of faith in Christ. (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10)
 - 4. Baptism for remission of sins. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38)
 - 5. A life of faithful service. (Rom. 12:1-2; Rev. 2:10)

Conclusion

- 1. You can make no better resolution for the new year than to live each day in accordance with the will of God so that you will be prepared to meet Him when the time comes.
- 2. Ask yourself, "Am I prepared to meet God?"
- 3. If not, why not begin your preparations today?