A FAMINE IN THE LAND
Amos 8:11-14

INTRODUCTION:
1. Our lesson at this hour will be on the subject of “A Famine in the Land” and our text will be Amos 8:11-14.
2. Our aim in this lesson will be to examine the text and apply it to Israel, to whom it was written, and then to us today.
3. At the time of the preaching of Amos, Israel was going through a period of prosperity.
   A. There was much injustice, greed, ease and luxury.
4. Their religious background was much like ours today.
   A. There was an abundance of religious rites but little righteousness.
   B. Idolatry at Dan, Beersheba, Gilgal and Bethel.
   1. As a whole there was a state of moral decay in Israel.

BODY:
1. Due to the disregard of the teachings of the prophet Amos the Lord now expresses to Israel concerning the upcoming famine.
   A. It would not be a famine due to the lack of food or drink.
   1. Although He does not say that there was not to be such a famine also.
   B. But, that this famine dealt with spiritual things rather than physical things.
      1. Man, in his times of great need or distress, has always turned to the Lord.
      2. But now the Lord says there would be no more messages from Him via the prophets.
2. They had cast out and despised the prophets as they set out to proclaim the word of the Lord.
   A. Now when Israel turned to them for direction there would be none coming.
3. How tragic that really was!
   A. Imagine, if you would, what it would be like to turn to the Lord and He not be there to answer.
   B. Israel, in all of their self-sufficiency had turned the Lord completely away from them.
4. In verse 12 it states: “...they shall wander from sea to sea...”
   A. The word “wander” is used to describe the unsteady seeking of persons bewildered.
      1. Those that are looking for something that they do not know where to find.
      2. Thus Israel is described as a bewildered, befuddled people going from sea to sea, to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord.
   A. But being unable to find it.
   B. A similar idea is seen in Ephesians 4:14.
   B. Perhaps with the easy availability of the Word of the Lord it might be hard for us to understand this.
      1. But when we look at it from a physical point of view we get a different picture.
      A. If we look at it in view of food or drink perhaps we will understand it
more easily.

5. As we look at our text and look around us we see another famine in the land today.
   A. Not one imposed by God, or even natural elements, but one brought upon our own selves.
      1. Although we have not yet reached the point wherein we are unable to find the Word of the Lord.
      2. We are definitely starving when it comes to spiritual matters.
         A. And especially when it comes knowledge of the Word of God.
   B. Again and again we hear people say, “I can’t understand the Bible.”
      1. But when we look back we see that their parents and grandparents had no trouble understanding it.
         A. And they were, in many cases, not as well educated as those who claim to not be able to understand the Bible.
      2. From what I see it is not a matter of “can't” but “won't” when it comes to understanding the will of the Lord.
   C. We have self-imposed a famine in the land.
      1. We are a malnourished world when it comes understanding the Word of God.
      2. We have quit:
         A. “...hiding the word of God in our hearts.” - Psa. 119:11.
         B. “searching the scriptures” - John 5:39.
         C. “searching the scriptures to see whether those things are so” - Acts 17:11.
         D. “studying to show ourselves approved” - 2 Tim. 2:15.
   D. And because of this we are biblically malnourished.

6. The only way that we can correct this problem is to again become people of the book.
   A. In years past the Lord's people were recognized for their degree of Bible knowledge.
      1. It is not that way anymore!
   B. The reason for this is that we spend more time with the daily paper or the TV Guide than we do with the Bible.
      1. And as long as we continue this there will always be a famine in the land.
      2. A famine that is not only going to affect us eternally, but also our children, our grandchildren and our great grandchildren

CONCLUSION:

1. Let us become people of the book.
   A. Students of the Word.