



[Amos 5:15](#)

(15) Hate evil, love good;
Establish justice in the gate.
It may be that the LORD God of hosts
Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.
New King James Version

Consider modern America. Are we not the greatest "Christian" nation that has ever graced this earth? Have we not distributed Bibles all over [the world](#)? Have we not given more money for charitable works than practically all the nations in the world combined? We feel we are a separate, distinct, and greater nation than others. The Bible was deeply ingrained in the thinking of our people until this last generation or so. Surely the Lord is with this nation!

But Amos injects an element of doubt into this line of reasoning for both us and ancient Israel. "It *may* be that the Lord [God](#) of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph" ([Amos 5:15](#)). God was with their father Joseph, but was He with his descendants? They went to church and the feasts, but such actions do not necessarily impress God.

Because of his earlier reference to Beersheba (verse 5), Amos mentions Joseph, whom God blessed even in slavery. God told [Abraham](#), [Isaac](#), and [Jacob](#) in Beersheba, "I will be with you." To Israel, the shrine in Beersheba represented God being with them, an idea that is equally important to us. Does God really walk with us as He did with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph? Can we look forward to the future with great [hope](#)? Will we sail right through this life into the [Kingdom of God](#) and avoid the Great Tribulation? If God is really with us, do we not have His promise, "I . . . will keep you from the hour of trial" ([Revelation 3:10](#))?

Or are we, as a nation or as a church, complacently *assuming* that He is walking with us? Have we considered that He may not be? The people of Israel assumed it, and Amos announced very plainly that God was *not* walking with them. They were deceived!

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The Israelites were wallowing in wealth and power. They were supporting their religious institutions and attending worship services and festivals. But in God's eyes, they were "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked"—just like the [Laodicean](#) church ([Revelation 3:17](#)). In reality, God was not in their lives, though He wanted to be. Through Amos, He was knocking on their door (verse 20).

Should we allow ourselves to relax because we are part of God's church? The Jews in Jeremiah's time relied on the presence of the Temple to give them security ([Jeremiah 7:1-4](#)). Not long thereafter, Nebuchadnezzar's army carted the nation into slavery in Babylon. The Jews of [Jesus'](#) day felt secure because they were born under the Old Covenant and could trace their ancestry back to Abraham ([John 8:33](#)). Within forty years Rome reduced Jerusalem to a pile of rubble.

Is it possible, then, that even though we consider ourselves Christians, our future may not be a time of serenity and hope but of great testing? Are we not fast approaching "the time of Jacob's trouble" ([Jeremiah 30:7](#))? Now is no time to rest either on our oars or our laurels!

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Prepare to Meet Your God! \(The Book of Amos\) \(Part Two\)](#)

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