



[Amos 8:11-12](#)

(11) "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD,
"That I will send a famine on the land,
Not a famine of bread,
Nor a thirst for water,
But of hearing the words of the LORD.
(12) They shall wander from sea to sea,
And from north to east;
They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD,
But shall not find *it*."

New King James Version

Verse 12 describes people wandering about in a vain attempt to regain the word of the Lord. Some of the people seem to realize that something is missing. They wander and even run "to and fro," but they do not find it. Part of the reason is that they are unwilling to look in the right place. Notice where they are willing and not willing to wander: They go "from sea to sea"—probably meaning from the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea—so they will go from east to west. They will also go "from north to east." The only direction they will not go is toward the south. Why?

Amos prophesied to the northern tribes of Israel. Shortly after Israel broke from Judah, King Jeroboam of Israel feared that Israel would reunite with Judah, because Judah was where Jerusalem and the Temple were. He therefore devised his own religious system, leading the northern ten tribes into gross [idolatry](#). He appointed his own [priesthood](#), established his own feast days, and created his own centers of worship, removing the need for the northern Israelites to travel south to Judah.

The Israelites were willing to expend some effort in seeking the words of [God](#), but they were unwilling to go where they actually needed to—where the Temple was. To a degree, they wanted the [truth](#), but on their own terms. They were not so hungry for it

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that they would sacrifice for it. They wanted it, but not if they had to humble themselves and go to the Temple, where God was. As a result, they could not find the words of the Lord again.

This same process happened in the modern [nations of Israel](#), particularly in America. Though America has never been a true Christian nation, at its founding God's Word was held in high regard, and biblical principles were considered to be essential to the success of the Republic. However, during the mid- to late-1800s, bits of secular humanism began creeping into the larger culture. As the nation prospered because of God's promises to [Abraham](#), it acted out exactly what God predicted in [Deuteronomy 32:15](#): It grew fat and kicked, and forsook Him.

Gradually, the words of the Lord were edged out of the picture, and each succeeding generation arose with a diminished regard for the Bible. This nation began with a President, George Washington, who wholeheartedly believed, and was willing to proclaim, "It is impossible to rightly govern [the world](#) without God and the Bible." Now, however, it is illegal to pray in schools, to speak warmly about Christianity or the Bible in a school or government office, and to post the [Ten Commandments](#) in a courthouse.

As the Word of God was neglected and rejected, it began to be replaced. What bits of truth this nation had are quickly falling out of favor. Even the worldly, syncretistic Christianity—with its [Sunday-worship](#), [Christmas](#), [Easter](#), pagan trinity-god, and other false doctrines—is being rejected. It is being rejected, not because of its falsehoods, but because of the bits of truth within it that still call people into account, directly or indirectly.

Journalist and novelist G.K. Chesterton observed, "When people stop believing in God, they do not believe in nothing. They believe in anything." *Something* will fill the belief void. Even atheism is a belief system. To put it another way, a starving man will eat whatever is at hand—even if it is slow poison. Thus, we have seen rapid growth in secular humanism, Eastern religions, Islam, and Wicca and New Age religions. Apparently, an increasing number of people are even claiming "Jedi" as their belief system!

Nominal Christianity has become so weak that in Britain, more people attend each week in a mosque than in a church. God's words, even in a watered-down form, are not being heard, and while some may still be searching for truth, they are not willing to seek out the true spiritual Temple that can actually provide nourishment.

— David C. Grabbe

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