



"Freedom is not procured by a full enjoyment of what is desired,  
but by controlling that desire."  
—Epictetus

**07-Oct-16**

## **Are These Your Feasts? (Part Two)**

As we closed Part One, we saw that Jesus Himself requested of the Father that His disciples, which we are, be sanctified:

I do not pray that You should take them out of [the world](#), but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. ([John 17:15-19](#))

A perfect example of such sanctification is happening right now, as modern-day Israel is headed toward the ultimate ruin of [sin](#). Driven by the insane mind of [Satan](#), whom [God](#) has allowed to deceive the whole world ( [Revelation 12:9](#)), the nations are violently splintering. But God is using this time of great turmoil as a step toward achieving His purpose, not just in the world, but also in the lives of His people. He did not need to create the conditions of this chaos and confusion. To accomplish His purpose, He has, however, carefully controlled its population under the leadership He chooses for our good, as the apostle Paul tells us in [Romans 13:1-6](#).

So we find ourselves living in these days, when a world propelled by Satan's twisted mind is in utter chaos, and the choices of its leaders, as well as their lives and words, represent the very sins of the citizens! We may live in this world, but because we have been called out of it and into God's rule, we have no right to interfere with its administration.

In other words, we can recognize that the things going on in this country are insane, but we are not free to interfere with how the asylum is run. Our freedom of choice lies in submitting to God's Word and applying it within what may look like a hopeless situation. Most importantly, because we have been separated from the world and placed within the precious Body of Christ, we must apply our freedom of choice wisely in our interactions with our brethren, who are priceless in the eyes of God.

Through the prophet Amos, God gives us an example to consider, which at this particular time should be of grave concern to all who, through [Jesus Christ](#), have been blessed with citizenship in His Kingdom and with true free-moral agency. Among such people, God's final judgment has begun ([I Peter 4:17](#))! This vivid illustration for us today appears in [Amos 8:9-14](#):

"And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord GOD, "that I will make the sun go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in broad daylight; I will turn your feasts into [mourning](#), and all your songs into lamentation; I will bring [sackcloth](#) on every waist, and baldness on every head; I will make it like mourning for an only son, and its end like a bitter day. 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. 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. In that day the fair virgins and strong young men shall faint from thirst. Those who swear by the sin of Samaria, who say, 'As your god lives, O Dan!' and, 'As the way of Beersheba lives!' They shall fall and never rise again."

This passage contains a few vital points that deal with Israel's ruin, then and now. God speaks through Amos of a famine, not of food, but of hearing

God's words. He also describes a proud people, living under the blessings of God but standing firm in their sins, and as a result, they scuttle about like ants in every direction except the right one.

A map of Israel and Judah shows that Amos depicts Israel with the Dead Sea in the east, the Mediterranean Sea in the west, and the nation of Israel in the north. At the time Amos prophesied, the only place where truth was taught was in God's Temple to the south, but the people refused even to wander in that direction in case they would happen to stumble on the truth! Like most people today, the Israelites of Amos' day were caught in a triangle of sin: They had "a form of godliness" syncretized with Satan's original lies, which made them spiritual captives, denying them true free-moral agency!

We are now in an election season, when people think they are freely choosing leaders who will align more closely with their own group in this prison asylum of disobedience. What is more, they seem willing to fight to the death about it!

We are also in a festival season, when God is giving those who have ears to hear, eyes to see, and spiritual minds to understand a clearer vision of His plans and purposes, as laid out through His [holy days](#). However, living in this world and still subject to the intimidation of the most violent inmates, are we more concerned with the elections and societal events that have already been determined by our sovereign God for our good? Or are we using our gifts of free-moral agency in deciding how to turn God's holy days from being *our* feasts—ones that satisfy only our Satanic prison-mentality—into holy time that pleases God and profits the Body of Christ?

There truly is a famine in the land of hearing the words of the Lord. The strongest in the world are flailing about, attempting to protect their territory in the prison. Will we mimic them or make a concentrated effort to learn and live God's way of life? Are we really striving to be separate from the insanity of this self-centered society, so we can live in unity with God and each of His precious children? Have we given those who walk toward the [Kingdom of God](#) with us a reason for [joy](#)? What can we do to enrich their hearing and understanding of the truth of His Word?

When a [famine of the Word](#) of the Lord covers the land, only a few have the God-given free-moral agency to choose to be fed the truth and walk in it. Are we making the proper choices? For instance, have we done all that we can to be in the place God wants us to be to hear the truth of His Word, adding our voices in songs of praise before Him? Have we met the needs of a particular widow or needy family? Have we given of what we have so that a brother or sister in the [faith](#) can attend the Feast where God has placed His name? Will we serve our own needs and desires in the place God has chosen for us, or will we serve the Body of Christ?

If we have been using God's gracious gift of free-moral agency to serve rather than be served, then the Body of Christ will certainly be enhanced. By choosing to keep these holy days in service to God and one another and not in service to ourselves, we will bring glory to God.

- Mark Schindler

---

## From the Archives: Featured Sermon

---

## From the Archives: Featured Article

### [Choosing the New Man \(Part One\)](#)

by Charles Whitaker

The Bible describes many men, but one of the most important is the new man. What is this new man? Charles Whitaker explains that the new man is a creative effort of renewing our minds in cooperation with God.

---

If you would like to subscribe to the C.G.G. Weekly newsletter, please visit our [Email Subscriptions page](#).

---