

SCRIPTURE: Amos 9:11-15.

TEXT: Amos 5:24 --"..let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry."
(Good News Bible, Today's English Version, 1976)

TOPIC/TITLE: A Stream of Justice and a River of Righteousness.

Date written: August 21, 1981.

OVER, FOR DATES & PLACES USED:

INTRODUCTION:

1. Many things on which we can depend, necessary to life and/or which enrichen it: *OR PERHAPS FRUSTRATE US*

- a. sunrise and sunset
- b. the seasons (even in south Florida or Hawaii, where "always the same), for growing foods, flowers, colorful leaves
- c. air to breath
- d. bodies to use
- e. human nature, with emotional needs common to all.

4. garden - bugs & weeds

2. The text of today speaks of 2 important aspects in living on which a person needs to be able to depend:

JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. *To understand the text we*

DATES & PLACES PREACHED:

AUG. 23, 1981 - CHAPEL OF

DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER ARMY
MEDICAL CENTER, AUGUSTA, GEORGIA.

AUG. 30, 1981 -- ALDERGATE UNITED

METHODIST CHURCH, AUGUSTA, GA.
8:30 and 11:00 A.M. SERVICES.

3. ~~Need to know something of circumstances which caused this Biblical passage to be written, if to have in us concepts and feelings of what justice and righteousness are, and as Christians to commit ourselves to living by these concepts as Jesus taught and demonstrated them.~~

I. The chief concern of the Book of Amos is that God's concepts of justice and righteousness be carried out among all the people.

1. Amos was first prophet of the Bible whose message was recorded at length. He preached to the people of the (northern) kingdom of Israel, about 800 years before Jesus. It was a time of great prosperity, notable religious piety, and apparent security.

2. But Amos saw that prosperity was limited to the wealthy, and that it fed on injustice and on oppression of the poor. Religious observance was insincere, and security more apparent than real.

3. With passion and courage Amos preached that God would punish the nation. He called for "justice to

flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry."

Then, he admonished, "Perhaps the Lord will be merciful to the people of this nation who are still ~~left~~ alive (5:15). The Scripture (not our text) is Amos' vision, his message, from God about the good times that come to God's people who turn to justice and righteousness.

4. Although justice and righteousness are words which can be defined almost as synonyms, they do have different meanings. Each word speaks of something uniquely important in life.

II. Justice is the impartial assignment ~~and~~ of merited awards or punishments based on facts and reason. It is a necessary and basic ingredient in good human relationships.

1. Linell: good grades, top of ~~Junior~~ high school class. My father's comment: "she did US justice." He felt that our family members have learning abilities equal to the best, and that ~~to~~ be fair to herself and the whole family each person should do his or her best to achieve the highest possible level of learning and recognition. Perhaps my Dad has too

For like a stream, and righteousness
 like a river that never runs dry."
 Then, he answered, "except the Lord
 will be faithful to the people of this
 nation, they are still left alive (1:1).
 The Scripture (not our text) is about
 vision, his message, "on about
 the good times that come to the
 people who turn to justice and
 courage."

Although justice and righteousness
 are words which can be defined
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 ferent meanings. Each word speaks of
 something uniquely important in life.

Justice is the impartial stan-
 dard of right or wrong or
 judgment based on facts and reason.
 It is a necessary and basic ingredient
 in good human relationships.

1. Daniel: Good grades, too of
 high school class. My father's
 comment: "and his justice."
 felt that our family members have
 learned additional counsel to the best,
 and that we be fair to ourselves and
 the world. Only each person should do
 his or her best to achieve the highest
 possible level of learning and
 cooperation. Perhaps you had had too

~~much~~ egotism, or snobbishness, or ^{AN} unreal assessment of our family intellects; but he is right in that to be fair and/or just to ^{OURSELVES AND} others who love us we should do our best.

2. As an Army recruiting slogan puts it, each of us should be ~~the~~ ^{FULL} ~~most~~ that we can be. That is a form of justice to ourselves, and to others.

3. Recently there have been some terrible murders in the CSRA. Two men were shot and killed, apparently when they returned home and found their place being burglarized. Soon after, an older lady and 2 small children were killed at her home, evidently by ^{THE SAME BURGLAR} a burglar also. Investigation by law enforcement officers led to an arrest. The accused person has refused food for ^{SEVERAL DAYS} a while, saying he wants to die, which indicates a sense of guilt. His sense of justice is ^{PARTLY} ~~evidently~~ coming into play. Justice demands that people be protected from such violence, so criminals who perpetrate it should not be freed. Punishment is indicated as a possible deterrent to others who might be tempted to do such criminal acts,
 PUNISHMENT WHICH IS JUST AND FITS THE CRIME

... or snobbishness, or ...
assessment of our family ...
but his right in fact to ...
and or just to others who love ...
should be our best.

... as any ...
... each of us should be ...
... that ...
... to ourselves, and to others.

... recently there have been some
... in the ...
... and killed, apparently
... and found
... being ...
... and I will
... at her home,
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... enforcement officers
... to an arrest. The accused person
... for ...
... which indicates a
... of guilt. His sense of justice
... into play. Un-
... that people be protected
... no criminals who
... it should not be ...
... as responsible
... who shall be
... such critical acts.

4. In an effort to protect innocent people who might be wrongly accused of criminal actions, our courts of justice sometimes seem to have gone too far, so that the wealthy or shrewd, cruel, crooked and murderous person often is set free to rape and rob and kill again. Legal technicalities which were conceived ~~of~~ as instruments to insure justice are often misused. Criminals can often afford to hire smart attorneys who use every possible legal and emotional device to keep their clients from being treated justly. This was something of the situation seen by Amos: the wealthy and powerful went free, but the poor were punished for their crimes. ~~AND SAID,~~ Justice for all must prevail, forever, like a stream which flows continually.

5. Justice is something with which everyone is involved. Helping law enforcement people do their jobs, and insisting (through letters, phone calls, voting, etc.) that the courts act in accordance with reason and facts, are ways to be involved in the administration of social justice. On a person-to-person, one-to-one basis justice demands of each of us an open, non-judgmental, non-accusing attitude toward each other, toward

ALONG WITH JUSTICE,
AMOS ~~WROTE~~ WROTE THAT "RIGHTEOUSNESS
LIKE A RIVER THAT NEVER GOES
DRY" SHOULD PREVAIL.

BY DEFINITION, RIGHTEOUSNESS
IS BEING RIGHTEUS, WHICH IS
TO BE GODLY, UPRIGHT, VIRTUOUS,
MORAL AND JUST.

A RIGHTEOUS PERSON IS TRUTHFUL,
HONEST, DEPENDABLE, KIND, FORGIVING,
COMPASSIONATE, ETC.

A RIGHTEOUS PERSON REALLY LIVES
BY THE 12 BOY SCOUT LAWS, WHETHER
HE KNOWS THEM OR NOT!

RIGHTEOUS IS A WORD SOME (JESSE) DISLIKE,
BECAUSE SOMETIMES PEOPLE WHO CLAIM
TO BE RIGHTEOUS ARE INTOLERANT
~~AND~~ UNPLEASANT, UNFOLLOWING.

AMOS 7:11-15
everyone, unless the facts and reason point undeniably to branding the person as crooked or cruel or callous,

~~AS~~ GUILTY.

III. Righteousness is the best basis for personal living and the foundation on which justice must be built.

AN EVERYDAY ILLUSTRATION CAN BE SEEN IN A STORY

1. Each of us objects immediately when he realizes that a cashier is overcharging him for something. The greater the overcharge, the quicker I am to voice the objection. Are we equally quick to object if we are undercharged or given too much money in change? Your honesty is determined not by protecting yourself from being taken advantage of, but by how you look out for the just welfare of those with whom you deal. A righteous person is just as quick to hand back the excess change or to point out the undercharge as he is to look out for his own interests.

2. Your attitude that causes you to look out for another's money rights also causes you to be careful not to hurt another persons feelings by false accusations, or impolite and brusque treatment, NOT TO HURT ANOTHER PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY OR EMOTIONALLY.

everyone, unless the facts and reasons
of the situation to warrant the
person as a whole or a part of it.

11. Honesty is the best policy
for personal living and the foundation
on which justice must be built.

1. Honesty is an object immediately
when we realize that a teacher is
overcharging him for something, the
greater the overcharge, the quicker
we are to voice the objection. We are
equally quick to object if we are
undercharged or given too much money.
In honesty - our honesty is determined
not by protecting yourself from being
taken advantage of, but by how you
look out for the best welfare of
those with whom you deal. A dishonest
person is just as quick to hand back
the excess change or to point out the
overcharge as he is to look out for
his own interests.

2. Our attitude that causes you
to look out for another's money rights
also causes you to be careful not to
hurt another person's feelings by
false accusations, or insinuations and
slandering treatment.

3. The rule ~~behind~~ ^{IF} being ^{SO} concerned for others is called The Golden Rule, and was given us by Jesus: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

4. When most of the people of an area, city, county, state, nation or group of nations, really try to practice the Golden Rule then indeed righteousness is "like a river that never goes dry."

CONCLUSION:

1. Because our bodily animal instincts basically tend to be selfish, we have to have strong ^{DEEP-FELT} convictions and ^{INTELLECTUAL} emotions in order to override them if we are to be righteous people.

2. We need help. ~~We who try to~~ Christians, believe that ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ Jesus Christ God gave us the help that we need. Jesus' teachings, example, sacrifice on the cross, and his resurrection tell us that righteousness should and will prevail.

3. Jesus' wants and needs people, you and me, to practice righteousness. We can do it ^{more} easily when things are good for us. [^] The testing is if we

...the world being concerned
...others is called the "other side"
...and we give us by name; do into
...others as you would have them do unto
...you."

...When most of the people of an
...state, city, county, nation or
...group of nations, really try to prac-
...tice the Golden Rule then indeed
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...never goes dry."

Conclusion:

1. - because our bodily animal
...instincts naturally tend to be self-
...ish, we have to have a non-covet-
...tious and egoless in order to over-
...ride their laws and to be righteous
...people.

2. - we need help. We need to be
...institutions, believe that in Jesus
...Christ of gave us the help that we
...need. Jesus' teachings, example,
...sacrifice on the cross, and his
...resurrection tell us that righteousness
...should and will prevail.

3. - Jesus' love and needs people,
...you and me, to practice righteousness.
...We can do this only when Jesus and
...God are in our hearts.

can be righteous, fair, just, loving, when things are tough. It is most important when things are bad to turn to righteousness. That is the test of our sincerity and ^{SHOW OUR} real selves.
^

4. Personal righteousness stemming from a love of God that motivates you to want to please and serve him is the stuff from which justice is built. When most of us strive for righteousness, then ~~indeed~~ the words of our text are true. Justice flows like a stream because the river of individual righteousness never runs dry.

DO YOU WANT JUSTICE?

THEN LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY

CHRIST ~~WILL~~ HELP YOU IF YOU WILL
LET HIM.

can't... This, that, loving...
when things are tough... it is most
important when things are bad to turn
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... personal righteousness stemming
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the start from which justice is built.
... of us strive for righteousness -
... then tested the words of our
... that the true... justice flows like
a stream because the river of individ-
ual righteousness never runs dry.

SCRIPTURE: Joel 1:16-20
2:12-14
2:18-19
2:28-29

TEXT: Joel 2:28:.."..I will pour out my spirit on everyone; your sons and daughters will proclaim my message; your old men will have dreams, and your young men will see visions."

TOPIC/TITLE: When God Pours Out His Spirit on You.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Two contemporary fascinations:
 - a. With past: shown by history-theme restaurants & amusement parks, antique booming sales, national registry of historic sites, etc..
 - b. With future: Inventions to prolong and improve life, and research therefor.

2. Today's Scripture shows similar fascination from about 500 years B.C.

I. BACKGROUND OF JOEL, and outline of its circumstances and message, as shown from our selected readings.

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1. DISASTER: locusts, drought, famine, suffering, death grief (1:16-20)

2. GOD STILL CARES and gives chances (2:12-14)

3. GOD SHOWS MERCY AND BLESSES (2:18-19)

4. WITH HIS BLESSINGS GOD POURS OUT HIS SPIRIT and gives a sense of mission (2:28-29).

II. PEOPLE RESPOND TO GOD'S SPIRIT, each person according to his personality, understanding & abilities.

1. OLD MEN will have dreams when they feel God's spirit.

a. Old people need more rest and sleep, so do dream more.

b. Usually they dream of the past.

c. Even if not dreaming of particular past events, dream in terms of more-familiar and customary.

2. YOUNG MEN HAVE VISIONS:

a. Dreams usually when asleep.

b. Visions can be in dream form or when awake, but revelation or special insight is received.

J. J. ...
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c. Young men have energy and daring to act on visions, to try to make them come true.

d. Vision may be in many arenas of life: architecture, societal structure, (brotherhood, peace), religion (proclaiming God's new plans or love)

II. YOU CAN SERVE GOD THROUGH YOUR RESPONSE TO HIS SPIRIT.

- 1. Dreamers CONSERVE the good and the beautiful (want it like it WAS).
- 2. VISIONARIES PUSH for needed but painful growth and changes.
- 3. PROCLAIMERS (preachers, news people) keep people aware of what is happening and interpret its meaning.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. No matter what has happened, is happening, does happen TO YOU, God knows, cares, and can make use of you and your dreams, visions and insights.
- 2. When God pours out his Spirit on you, accept it. LET HIM move you and use you
- 3. THEN life becomes meaningful, worthwhile, purposeful, satisfying.

