

Amos 8:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north
even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of
the LORD, and shall not find it.

Analysis

**And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east,
they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it**

v'na'u miyam ad-yam
umitzafon v'ad-mizrach y'shot'tu l'vakeish et-d'var YHWH v'lo yimtza'u)—The verbs intensify desperate search: נוֹעַ (nua, 'to wander'), שׁוֹטֵט (shotet, 'to run to and fro'), בָּקֵשׁ (bakash, 'to seek earnestly'). Yet לֹא יִמְצְאוּ (lo yimtza'u, 'they will not find')—God's Word becomes unavailable.

This describes spiritual famine worse than physical starvation (Amos 8:11). Those who despised God's Word when available will desperately seek it when removed. This prefigures Jesus's warning: 'The night cometh, when no man can work' (John 9:4). Opportunity for repentance doesn't last forever—God's patience has limits. When judgment arrives, it's too late to seek what was previously rejected.

Historical Context

After Samaria's fall and exile, prophetic voice ceased in the northern kingdom. No more prophets arose; God's Word fell silent. For generations, they'd rejected prophets like Amos—then when judgment came, no prophetic word offered hope or guidance. Hebrews 12:17 describes similar irreversible loss: Esau 'found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.'

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does rejecting God's Word when it's available lead to its removal when desperately needed?
2. What warning does this give to churches or nations that increasingly silence or ignore Scripture?
3. How should the possibility of irreversible spiritual famine motivate urgent response to God's Word now?

Interlinear Text

וְנָעוּ And they shall wander H5128	מִן הַיָּם from sea H3220	וְעַד הַיָּם from sea H5704 H3220	וּמִצָּפֹן וְעַד and from the north H5704 H6828
מְזָחַח even to the east H4217	וְיָשׁוּטוּ וְעַד they shall run to and fro H7751	לְבַקֵּשׁ to seek H1245	אֶת דְּבַר יְהוָה the word of the LORD H853 H1697 H3068
וְלֹא יִמְצְאוּ and shall not find H3808 H4672			

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 12:30 (Parallel theme): He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

Daniel 12:4 (Word): But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

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