

The Rejected Worship

Modeling Worship by the world rather than “The Word”

We see a perfect example of this in the Old Testament.

God Rejects Worship

Amos 5:21-24 (NLT)

- 21 “I hate all your show and pretense—
the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies.
22 I will not accept your burnt offerings and grain offerings.
I won’t even notice all your choice peace offerings.
23 Away with your noisy hymns of praise!
I will not listen to the music of your harps.
24 Instead, I want to see a mighty flood of justice,
an endless river of righteous living.

Mark your bibles:

- 1Kings 12:25-33
- Matthew 7:21
- Amos 4 & 5

How did they get there? (Background/Context) – go back 170 years

- We begin back in Solomon’s day. Solomon, though he built God’s temple, and God blessed him with wisdom (and was sought after by kings & queens for that wisdom), he eventually chose his pagan wives over the Lord and turned to idol worship.
 - **Solmon asks for wisdom:** Reference 1 Kings 3:1-15
 - **Solmon turns from God:** Reference 1 Kings 11:1-13
 - Because of this, God raises us an adversary to rule over the 10 Northern tribes.
 - NOTE: God retains Judah to inherit David’s line in keeping His promise to David. (God never breaks promises)
- Jeroboam, was a servant to Solomon. God sends Ahijah to tell him that he will rule 10 kingdoms & if he follows God’s ways, God will bless him and the kingdom. (Reference 1 Kings 11:26-14:20)
 - 1 Kings 11: 40 Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.
 - NOTE: “Egypt” in a TYPE of “the world” in the bible. So Jeroboam received a promise from God, then fled to the “world” and lived “in the world” learning the “ways of the world” until Solomon died.
 - The Bible is not specific on the length of time. Some scholars believe this might have been about 10-12 years.
- After the death of Solomon, the kingdom Splits. Jeroboam rules the Northern 10 Tribes, and Solomon’s son Rehoboam rules Judah in the South (which includes Jerusalem where the temple is)

- Politics prioritized over God’s Instructions:
 - Jeroboam’s Golden Calves: **Read 1Kings 12:25-33** (~930 BC)
 - **Motive:** Political. Jeroboam doesn’t want his people going down to Jerusalem because they may favor the King of the South (and then kill him)
 - **The Pitch:** “Hey, this is *way* more convenient for you. You don’t need to travel *all that way* to worship, we will setup temples here, closer.”
 - **The Counterfeit:**
 - Jeroboam attempts to “copy” the feasts & rituals that normally happened in Jerusalem.
 - He makes his own priests to copy the Levites.
 - But he mixes this with what he learned in Egypt. (i.e. “what the people of the world would like/relate to”) – The Golden Calf
 - He was taking the “will of the people” and mixing it into the “worship of God” to draw & keep people where he wanted them.
 - **The False Model Established:** We end up with temples in Bethel & Dan
 - There was a PROPER model of worship to God established *by God* and placed in Jerusalem (by God).
 - We see this counterfeit & corrupted model created *by man* and placed (*by man*) in Bethel & Dan

Where do they end up? (Fast Forward to ~ 760 BC, approximately 170 years later)

- By all accounts, Life looks Great to the 10 Northern tribes. They are prosperous & living large.
 - This is the danger of measuring progress by *worldly* fruit rather than *spiritual* fruit.
 - i.e. Our worship and our deeds *must* be acceptable to God because look how blessed we are!
- So, God calls Amos (a lowly fig-picking sheep herder) to Prophecy against these 10 tribes.
 - “Amos” means “burden”. (He will be a burden to Israel).
 - Fun Fact: Amos, a minor prophet, has a very short ministry. Some say it could have been about 2 weeks, but most agree it was less than 4 years.
- Amos 3:3 hits the nail on the head for everything we see here... (And what we see today)
 - “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?”
 - Walking with God = Good Fruit
 - NOT walking with God = Bad Fruit

Turn to Amos Chapter 4 & 5

(Amos 4:1-3) When people move away from the Word of God, their actions/ways veer far from God’s ways.

- Their “moral compass” is off (Oppressing the poor & crushing the needy)
- Their “vision” becomes blinded (That must be ok with God because look how many earthly things He continues to give us)

(Amos 4:4-5) God uses SARCASM

- “For this you love”, meaning, they were worshiping God *their way*, the way *they like* it.

	What God said to do	What they were doing
Daily Sacrifice	Exodus 29:38-42 Each day, offer two lambs that are a year old, 39 one in the morning and the other in the evening .	Amos 4:4 “every morning”
Tithes	Deuteronomy 14:22-29 They were to bring their tithes every YEAR, <i>unless</i> , their place of worship was too far away, <i>then</i> they could store up the money of their tithes & bring it every 3 years	Amos 4:4 They built temples “close” to them & still waited 3 years to tithe.
Offering of Thanksgiving	Leviticus 7:12-15 Un leavened bread	Amos 4:5 Leavened Bread (reminder, “Leaven” in the bible represents Sin)
The Feast of Weeks	Deuteronomy 16:9-12 1. Give a tribute free will offering according to God’s blessings 2. Rejoice before the Lord God (together) 3. Remember, God brought them from slavery in Egypt	Amos 4:5 The Proclaimed (rejoiced) at their free will offering.



Reflect & Consider:

1. What warnings or examples could we as a Worship Team take from this?
 - a. Has Worship Culture cut God’s Worship down to a fraction?
 - b. Has Worship Culture created loopholes that *appear* to be what God said, but still NOT what God said?
 - c. Where has leaven (sin) infiltrated modern worship culture?
 - d. Has worship become more focused on the Offering than on the One that we offer it to?
 - i. How/How Not?
 - ii. Why/ Why Not?
2. What Patterns or Models has modern worship culture formed over time that may have shifted the model of worship itself?

(Amos 4:6-13)

- They didn't look to God in the GOOD times
- They didn't look to God in the BAD times.

(Amos 5:1-9) God Answers his Sarcasm from Amos 4:4

- Given the context of the rejected *acts* of Worship in Chapter 4, and God here saying "Seek Me", It is very clear that true worship is about Seeking God, not going through the motions or doing *things*.

(Amos 5:10-15) True Worship (walking WITH God) brings Positive life changes. False worship brings evil times.

- The people have told the prophets to shut up (they don't want to hear it)
 - They afflict (make fun of, attack) the people trying to walk in God's ways
 - See Amos 2:4 & 12
 - They despised God's Law
 - Their lies led them astray
 - The forced corruption on the Holy people of God (Nazirites)
 - They told the prophets to be silent
 - So here, the Righteous people remain SILENT. (5:13)



Reflect & Consider:

1. Is this any different than today?
 - a. Pressure on Pastor's to say what people want to hear (and NOT say what they don't?)
 - b. People get mad or offended by God's words?
 - c. People staying silent to keep the peace?
 - i. Or staying silent out of defeat?
 - d. People trying to corrupt or slander others who *are* walking with God?

(Amos 5:16-20) People think they are "good" and they are looking forward to the day of the Lord thinking they will be saved. (Complete lack of self-awareness & ignorance of God's Word)

- But God is saying, They have chosen sin over God and therefore, they should fear that day.



Reflect & Consider:

1. Is this any different than today?
 - a. In what ways do we see this today in Christianity?
 - b. Could this be an Example of what Jesus was talking about in [Matthew 7:21](#) ?

(Amos 5:21-24) God rejects worship

- The quality of the burnt offering cannot make up for the lack of Spiritual Integrity (Time/preparation)
- The size of the assembly (butts in the seats) can't bring honor
- No amount of Money (Tithe/offering) can make a difference
- The best music humans can produce is just “noise” in empty worship (And God hits the MUTE button)
- What God WANTS:
 - Justice & Righteousness

(Amos 5:25-27) God addresses their pagan idols. (Sikkuth & Chiun), both of which were “star” gods (Specifically, Saturn), and were often the counterfeit “god of hosts” (little “g”).

- God reiterates that HE is the God of hosts. (big G), commander of Heaven’s Army

NOTE: These star idols were a counterfeit worship of the True God of heaven & likely over time, their worship methods/rituals/traditions started to blend together with what God commanded & the result would be this false, worldly worship that was NOT pleasing to God.

Summary

1. God’s way matters
2. God will reject worship that doesn’t meet His standards
3. Worship should point TO GOD
4. Worship is FOR GOD

Other Points to Takeaway?

5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____