

Making Ourselves Sick Over Sin and the Lost Jimmy Gee

In Amos 6:4-7 the NASB95 translation says: “Those who recline on beds of ivory and sprawl on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall, who improvise to the sound of the harp, and like David have composed songs for themselves, who drink wine from sacrificial bowls while they anoint themselves with the finest of oils, yet they have not grieved over the ruin of Joseph. Therefore, they will now go into exile at the head of the exiles, and the sprawlers’ banqueting will pass away.”

The context is the Lord’s rebuke of the luxurious lifestyles that the people were living while their sin went on unchecked without repentance. Israel was headed for destruction and few were concerned about it, neither on an individual nor national level. They were apathetic / indifferent to their own sinful condition and that of others. It would lead to them being at the “head of the line” when the exile took place.

In verse six we find something very interesting in the original language. The NASB has “they have not grieved over the ruin of Joseph.” The word “grieved” literally means “to make oneself sick.” It is from the Hebrew word *chalah*. There is at least one other time in Scripture it is used in this way. That passage is Daniel 8:27. In this context Daniel has received a vision concerning Greece and Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The angel explains to Daniel that this king would be very destructive and would kill many of the people of God. The news of this destruction, because of the sins of the people, made Daniel sick, the same word used in Amos 6:6.

While the same Hebrew word is not used, the same sentiment is found in many other passages in the Old Testament, some of which are:

Psalm 119:136

“My eyes shed streams of water, because they do not keep your law.”

Jeremiah 13:16-17

Give glory to the Lord your God, before He brings darkness and before your feet stumble on the dusky mountains, and while you are hoping for light He makes it into deep darkness, and turns it into gloom. 17 But if you will not listen to it, my soul will sob in secret for such pride; and my eyes will bitterly weep and flow down with tears, because the flock of the Lord has been taken captive.

Ezekiel 9:4

The Lord said to him, “Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst.”

As we live and work in this world, what is our attitude toward sin? What is our attitude toward the lost and the fact that the destruction and wrath of God will come upon them if they do not obey the Gospel? Does sin and the possible loss of untold millions of souls make you “sick?”

If not, why not? Could it be the fact that, just like the people of Amos' day, we have become complacent in our luxurious lifestyles and thus apathy and indifference have taken hold of our lives? If so, repent of such attitudes and begin doing something to tell the world of the saving power of the blood of Jesus. Get sick over sin and the lost of this world.