

## Amos: Lesson 9 Homework

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1. Dr. Constable's Notes- pages 54-69  
The Old Testament Library- Amos- A Commentary by James Luther Mays- pages 102-123  
The Anchor Bible- Amos- A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary by Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman- pages 519-548
2. Something that was compelling to learn this week was God's true heart behind ritual sacrifices. "It is when they establish justice in the gate that the Lord will be gracious (v 15); when righteousness rolls down Yahweh will listen, look, smell, and accept their worship (v 24)" (Andersen and Freedman 529). Behind the ritualistic sacrifices of Israel, God has always been concerned with the heart of His people. When righteousness and justice are neglected in the community, God sees everything, and He will confront and stand against things that displease His heart. To go further, Dr. Constable shares, "Amos viewed the sacrifices as objects of God's hatred because they furthered the spiritual ignorance of the people by giving them a false sense of security" (57). These sacrifices were a way to cover up the Israelite's wicked hearts, and God saw right through everything. And God hated these sacrifices because the Israelites used the sacrifices to further their ignorance rather than truly practicing God's ways.

It is important to note what kind of worship God accepts then. It must be built upon a community that treats everyone in God's love and ways. "In this Woe-saying Amos sketches the well-being enjoyed by the upper classes in the capital cities, the splendid society that was built upon the misery of the weak and poor" (Mays 114). The joy that the rich had was built on the foundation of the abuse and mistreatment of the weak and poor. "Likewise the Israelite's implicit argument was ludicrous: 'I keep Yahweh's covenant. I misuse and abuse others only some of the time and otherwise faithfully worship Yahweh'" (Constable 59). A covenant that is faithful to Yahweh is one that treats others right all the time and not using religion to excuse one's unjust practices. Just that the Israelites gave good ritual sacrifices to God while abusing fellow neighbors was not acceptable even though it was only 'some of the time'. "God is not pleased by acts of pomp and grandeur but by wholehearted devotion and complete loyalty" (Constable 60). This wholehearted devotion and complete loyalty must be expressed in right neighborly relationships all the time also.

3. How can mourning play a key part in restoring Israel's true heart of worship?