

A FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH

Proverbs 14:34 states a foundational truth about sin. Find that verse and write it in the parchment.



Then use this picture →
to suggest what will happen
if this foundation is not main-
tained; jot ideas below ↓



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SINS: THEN AND NOW

God used the prophet Amos to condemn the sins of Israel and Judah. From today's text, list five sins Amos identified as being of special concern in his day. Then identify similar sins in our own culture.

Sins in the Culture of Amos

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Sins in My Culture

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What does the similarity of the two lists imply to you? Check off any of the following generalizations with which you would agree.

- Sin is sin at any time, in any place.
- The temptations that arise remain consistent.
- God hates sin and will punish the unrepentant.
- A responsibility for God's servant in any age is to confront sin.
- All have sinned and come short of God's glory.
- The words of Amos condemn also my own sin.

* Are any boxes left unchecked? If so, why?



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WHY, GOD?

Amos 5:27 is a statement of coming doom, and 2 Kings 17 tells us why. Look at that text, especially verses 7-17, and list some reasons below. (You may not need all the lines, or you may need to add more.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____



Now condense those reasons down to a single three-letter word: _____

A WORSHIP PRINCIPLE

1. Summarize the worship principle found in 1 Samuel 15:22, considering its larger context of verses 1-23.



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2. How is that same principle reflected in today's lesson text?

3. How does that principle apply to us as we assemble for worship or in our private times of devotion and praise?



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NO CONCERN? NO COMFORT!

Amos has something to say about the comfortable dwellings of the insensitive and sinful Israelites. In Amos 3:15 (not in today's lesson text), he refers to four kinds of homes and their future disposition. List those below.

1. _____ 3. _____
 2. _____ 4. _____

How does the above compare and contrast with what Amos 6:11 says? Jot your ideas below.



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How was the present and future status of those homes a good representation of the present and future status of the nation of ancient Israel itself? Jot your ideas below.

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COMFORTABLE OR CONCERNED?



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Amos begins chapter 6 with the condemnation, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!" Check the boxes below to rate your "at ease" level for each issue.

	Very Comfortable	Very Concerned
Regarding world poverty	□ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □	□ ··· □
Regarding other religions	□ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □	□ ··· □
Regarding sexual immorality	□ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □	□ ··· □
Regarding corruption	□ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □	□ ··· □
Regarding unsaved people	□ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □ ··· □	□ ··· □

What evidence supports your self-ratings? What changes do you need to make, and how will you do so? Jot ideas here. →

VISIONS

Today's text describes a divine communication that we might call *a vision*. Look up the texts below that describe visions given to various people by God. Note the recipient of each and summarize the vision's content.

	Who had the vision?	What was communicated?
Genesis 15:1-6	_____	_____
Ezekiel 1:1-2:8	_____	_____
Daniel 7	_____	_____
Acts 10:9-20	_____	_____
Revelation 1:9; 9:17-21	_____	_____

One understanding of *vision* in modern culture is that of "a picture of what your organization's future makeup will be and where you are headed," with regard to strategic planning. How is the Bible's depiction of *vision* or *visions* different from this?



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GOD'S CALL AND DECLARATION

The book of Amos may be seen as God's call for justice and His declaration of ways He will see that justice prevails. Skim back through the texts studied this month and identify two text references you think best represent these two truths, one each.

God's Call for Justice



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God's Declaration of How Justice Will Prevail

WHO, ME?

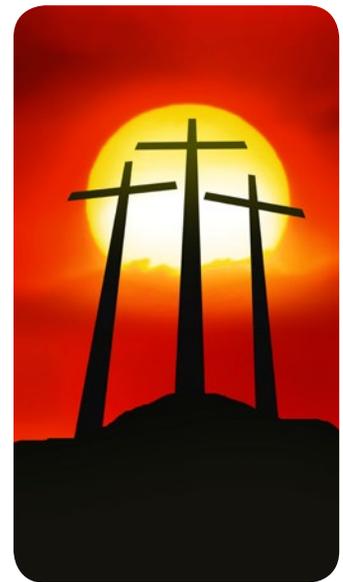
Even though it's easy for us to condemn the Israelites for their wickedness, it is possible for us to drift into their same sinful patterns of thinking and behaving. Read the hypothetical comments of the Israelites on the left and suggest a modern parallel that presents a danger for the Christian to avoid.

OLD TESTAMENT ISRAELITES	NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANS
<i>"I'm tired of Micah's gloom and doom prophecies! I'd much rather listen to that new prophet, Joab, who says God wants us to be happy!"</i>	
<i>"I couldn't sleep last night remembering how my neighbor cheated me on that worthless set of oxen. But I finally figured out a way to get even!"</i>	
<i>"When the prophet confronted me about my sin, I told him to mind his own business and keep his opinions to himself!"</i>	
<i>"I just don't understand why my life has to be so hard! How can Micah say God is a merciful God when He lets me suffer so much?"</i>	
<i>"So what if she's a widow with a bunch of kids? If she can't keep up her payments, then she shouldn't have put up her house as collateral."</i>	

MERCY RECEIVED AND PRACTICED

How does the following statement apply to your life? Jot ideas below.

✧ To whom much mercy is given, much mercy is required. ✧



Hemera

WHAT DID MICAH SAY?

Read through the following summaries of Micah 3:5-12. Find the incorrect words or phrases and replace them with the correct ones.

Verse 5a. Micah had a word to say about the false prophets who caused the people to leave.

Verse 5b. The false prophets were willing to go to war against anyone who would not give them land.

Verse 6. Night was going to come upon these prophets, when they would see many visions.

Verse 7. The seers would be ashamed when they receive an answer from God.

Verse 8. Because Micah was full of power by his own spirit, he would declare to the Israelites their sins.

Verse 9. The heads of the house of Jacob loved judgment and upheld all that was right.

Verse 10. The bad leaders tore down Zion and Jerusalem with blood and iniquity.

Verse 11a. The corrupt leaders of the Israelites were in it for the praise they received.

Verse 11b. The greedy leaders believed that some evil would come upon them.

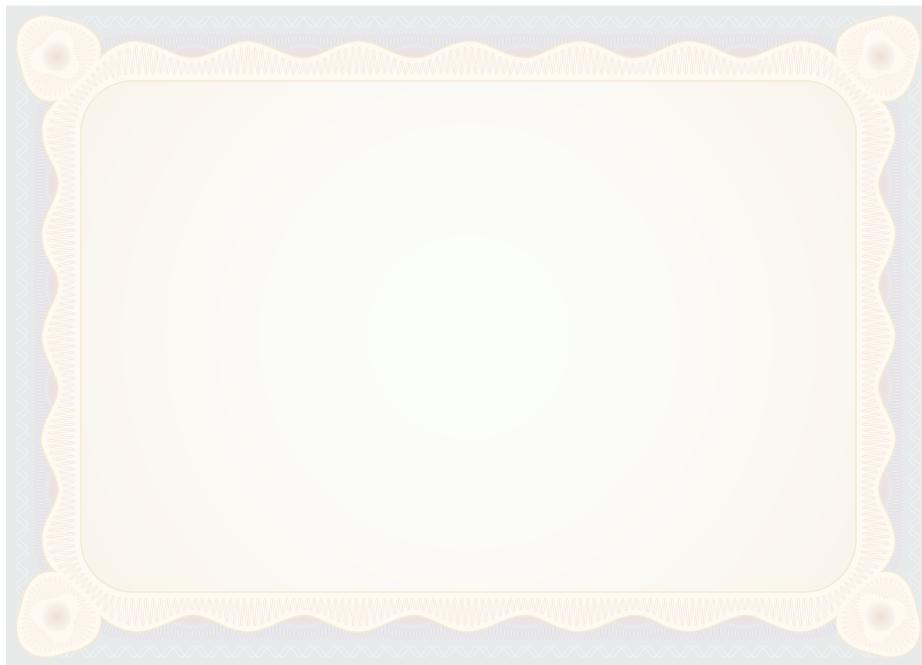
Verse 12. Zion would be plowed as a field, and the temple would become heaps.

WHAT WILL YOU SAY?

Select a church leader who has had a positive impact on your life. Use the space at the right to jot a note of appreciation to that person. Then clip it out and put it in the mail!



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REMEMBERING HISTORY

Without looking in your Bible, see if you can match the historical references in today’s lesson with the passages that provide the details. Then check your Bible for the correct answers.

- ___ 1. “I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt” (Micah 6:4a).
- ___ 2. “I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam” (Micah 6:4b).
- ___ 3. “What Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered” (Micah 6:5a).
- ___ 4. “From Shittim unto Gilgal” (Micah 6:5b).

A. Exodus 3–14. B. Joshua 3:1–4:19. C. Numbers 22–24.
D. Exodus 4:29; 15:20 (also Numbers 26:59).

JUST, MERCIFUL, OR HUMBLE?

Check the one quality that best illustrates the following scenarios. Then answer the questions below.

Scenarios	Just	Merciful	Humble
1. You allow someone else to take the credit for a project on which you did most of the work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Following the death of someone who mistreated a family member, you provide a meal for his or her family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When a teller gives you an extra \$20 bill by mistake, you return the money to the bank.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You allow a car that previously cut you off to enter your lane during a traffic jam.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When working with your life group to clean the church, you cheerfully accept the job of scrubbing the toilets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. You write an encouraging letter to someone who is in prison for stealing your car and wrecking it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Following a traffic accident that was your fault, you truthfully answer all the investigator’s questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. When your boss is criticizing a coworker for a mistake that you made, you speak up and take the blame.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From these eight scenarios, select one that would be the hardest for you to do. What would have to happen to make the proper response just “second nature” to you as a Christian? Jot ideas below:



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WHO IS A GOD LIKE YOU?

Break the code to discover thoughts from today's text that tell how great our God is! When you have identified a word, use the known letters to help decode the other words in the phrases below. (Clues: Each phrase has the letter *s* two or more times; five phrases have exactly one *i*; three words in the six phrases have the letter *e* doubled.)

cppbw drw wdpph

bpfrqdjw ju wduy tpioz

wduyw trinofpw

dnw outhnwwrug

hnibugw wrg

spphw hiutrwpw

MESSAGE OF HOPE FOR TODAY

Micah used imagery familiar to his audience: a shepherd tending sheep. How would you rewrite his message of hope for a modern audience that is not familiar with agrarian language? The images below can give you some ideas.

For Micah's audience: God is like a shepherd, who feeds His flock and protects them in various ways.

For a modern audience:

"God is like _____, who _____"

"God is like _____, who _____"

"God is like _____, who _____"



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☞ Student Reproducible Page for Lesson 8, "God's Matchless Mercy" (Micah 7:14-20, KJV) ☞

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JUSTICE AND MERCY

Find the words associated with today's text from the box at the right in the puzzle below. Then categorize each word as being associated primarily with justice or mercy in today's text.

H U F G M K E F D U O R A
 B O G E C K K O E X G E X
 O S F T L G O H Z A R C T
 S A Q A N L L L V O R O K
 W S E L F A C H S R B M L
 D I S P L E A S E D G P Y
 I Q M T D F E O X A F E F
 B F Y S L C O T R N U N T
 G W O A R C Y M E T R C D
 S G P E R L E M A M Y E H
 W Q T R M N I C F G L V Y
 O N Q B T R E M E E D E R
 I Q E S H L T R U T H H H

Cloke	Breastplate
Fear	Displeased
Garments	Flood
Intercessor	Helmet
Redeemer	Repentence
Fury	Truth

Words associated with justice: _____

Words associated with mercy: _____

INTERCESSORS TODAY

Isaiah notes the Lord's dismay that there was no one to intercede on behalf of God. Write below the name of at least one Christian (and nonpolitical) organization today that does so. Then write a prayer for them. Use this prayer in your personal devotion in the week ahead. Before next Sunday, research other such organizations and pray for them as well.



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Organization(s)

My Prayer

THE POWER OF WORDS

The people in Jeremiah’s day needed to learn that words lead to behavior that results in consequences. In the boxes on the right, enter the consequences that were to result from the words and behavior on the left.

LYING WORDS, SINFUL BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES
<p>The temple of the Lord protects us! (vv. 4, 8)</p>	<p>A.</p>
<p>As long as we show up for worship, we’re free to do as we please! (vv. 9, 10)</p>	

TRUE WORDS, HOLY BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES
<p><i>Thoroughly amend your ways!</i> (vv. 5, 6, 9)</p>	<p>B.</p>
<p>CONSIDER THE FATE OF SHILOH AND EPHRAIM! (vv. 14, 15)</p>	

START WITH TRUTH

Now let’s try it the other way around: start with truth, then predict lies that would attempt to replace it.

Truth That Is Firm

“Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13, 14).

“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).

Lies That Oppose the Truth

A SCRAMBLED MESS

Unscramble the words below from Ezekiel 18:1-13. Then identify them as the actions of a righteous man (R) or a wicked man (W). *Hint:* the words are in the correct order, but the letters are not.

___ 1. llwuaf nda trigh (v. 5)

___ 2. dreshed fo dlobo (v. 10)

___ 3. neeta puno het tonumsina (v. 11)

___ 4. fielded shi beginhour's fewi (v. 11)

___ 5. stordeer ot het dretob ihs pledged (v. 7)

___ 6. eving hsi beard ot eht yurghn (v. 7)

___ 7. pressdope hte ropo nad denye (v. 12)

___ 8. boberr (v. 10)

___ 9. reevdoc het daken (v. 7)

___ 10. pekt ym jutmendgs (v. 9)

___ 11. slidepo yb loncieve (v. 12)

___ 12. cutexdee rute tmnedguy (v. 8)

___ 13. ledkaw ni ym stuttaes (v. 9)

___ 14. ditefl pu sih seey ot hte solid (v. 12)

START FROM SCRATCH

Think about excuses you may be using as a rationalization for not following God's Word. Complete the blanks below and commit yourself to change.



Hemera

God's Word says I should _____
_____,
but instead I blame _____ or use
_____ *as an excuse not to do what*
I know I should. Dear God, today I commit myself
to following Your Word by _____
_____.

JUSTICE, MERCY, COMPASSION

God expects judgment (that is, justice), mercy, and compassion to characterize His people's dealings with one another! Complete the acrostics below with words or phrases that identify what these can entail. One has been completed in each to get you started.

J
U
D
Honor agreements
M
E
N
T

M
E
FoRgive wrongs
C
Y

C
O
M
P
A
S
Share grief
I
O
N



DON'T BE A PHARAOH!

“Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also” (Exodus 8:32). Are you a Pharaoh? Identify one area where you may be hardening your heart against God. Write a prayer below to confess this behavior to God and to commit to change.

Heavenly Father,

I confess that I have been unyielding in my response to you concerning _____
_____. Forgive my hardness of heart and help me to submit to your will! My plan for change is to _____
_____.



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MY OFFERING OF PRAISE

Read the verses below responsively as an offering of praise to God for all His blessings.

Group 1: O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Group 2: The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

Group 1: He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.

Group 2: He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

Group 1: The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.

Group 2: They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

Group 1: He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.

Group 2: O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Group 1: One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

Group 2: They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

Group 1: The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

Group 2: The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Group 1: Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

Group 2: Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

All: O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

(Scripture taken from Psalms 107, 111, and 145.)

Lesson 1

A Foundational Truth. The picture of the leaning tower of Pisa should suggest eventual collapse.

Sins: Then and Now. The sins to be listed in the Amos column are found in verses 6b-8 of the lesson text. Learners may count the sins differently if some sins are seen as mere variations of others.

Lesson 2

Why, God? Answers are sins listed in 2 Kings 17. The three-letter summary is *sin*.

A Worship Principle. 1. God wants obedience, not the mere “going through the motions” of religious ritual. 2. Connection is with Amos 5:22. 3. Going through the motions of the Lord’s Supper, etc., means nothing to God if the worshipper lives in disobedience to Him. (Learner responses may be worded in various ways.)

Lesson 3

No Concern? No Comfort! The four kinds of homes in Amos 3:15 are 1–winter; 2–summer; 3–ivory; 4–great.

The similarity is that comfortable surroundings will be destroyed; the contrast is that the four houses of 3:15 are distilled down in 6:11 as “great” and “little.” The destruction of seemingly secure houses would signal destruction of seemingly secure Israel.

Comfortable or Concerned? Calls for personalized responses.

Lesson 4

Visions: Genesis 15:1-6: Abram (Abraham) received promise of offspring; *Ezekiel 1:1-2:8:* Ezekiel saw four living creatures, etc.; *Daniel 7:* Daniel saw four great beasts representing kingdoms; *Acts 10:9-20:* Peter saw “unclean” animals that God declared were already “clean,” challenging Peter’s definition of clean/unclean; *Revelation 1:9; 9:17-21:* John was given information about the end times.

Lesson 5

Many responses are possible on both activities.

Lesson 6

What Did Micah Say? 5a: change *leave* to *err*; 5b: change *land* to *food* (or *payment*); 6: change *many* to *no*; 7: change *an* to *no*; 8: change *his own spirit* to *the spirit of the Lord*; 9: change *loved* to *abhorred* and *upheld* to *perverted*; 10: change *tore down* to *built up*; 11a: change *praise* to *money*; 11b: change *some* to *no*; 12: change *the temple* to *Jerusalem*.

Lesson 7

Remembering History: 1-A; 2-D; 3-C; 4-B.

Just, Merciful, or Humble? 1-humble; 2-merciful; 3-just; 4-merciful; 5-humble; 6-merciful; 7-just; 8-just. (Note: disagreements among learners will make for good discussion.)

Lesson 8

Who Is a God Like You?

feeds His sheep	delights to show mercy
shows miracles	has compassion
pardons sin	keeps promises

Lesson 9

Justice and Mercy

+ + + + + E F D + + R +
+ + + E + + K O E + + E +
+ + + T + + O + + A R C +
+ + + A + L L + + O R O +
+ + + L F + C + S + + M +
D I S P L E A S E D G P +
+ + + T + + E + + A F E +
+ + + S + C + T R + U N +
+ + + A R + + M E + R C +
+ + + E + + E + + M Y E +
+ + T R + N + + + + L + +
+ N + B T R E M E E D E R
I + + S + + T R U T H + H

Words associated with justice: breastplate, displeased, fear, flood, garments, recompence, truth, wrath

Words associated with mercy: helmet, Redeemer

Could go either or both ways: intercessor, cloke.

(Note: responses that differ can lead to good discussion.)

Lesson 10

The Power of Words

A. Entries should summarize consequences listed in verses 12-15.
B. Entries should summarize consequences listed in verse 3.

Start with Truth: Opposing Matthew 7:13, 14 can be the lie that “a loving God will save everyone.” Opposing John 14:6 can be “there are many ways to God.” Opposing Ephesians 2:8 can be insistence on “works righteousness.” Many other answers are possible.

Lesson 11

A Scrambled Mess: 1–R, lawful and right; 2–W, shedder of blood; 3–W, eaten upon the mountains; 4–W, defiled his neighbour’s wife; 5–R, restored to the debtor his pledge; 6–R, given his bread to the hungry; 7–W, oppressed the poor and needy; 8–W, robber; 9–R, covered the naked; 10–R, kept my judgments; 11–W, spoiled by violence; 12–R, executed true judgment; 13–R, walked in my statutes; 14–W, lifted up his eyes to the idols.

Lesson 12

Justice, Mercy, Compassion: Many responses are possible.