

## FEAST OR FAMINE

-Ryan Parsons-

Not long ago, the Covid-19 pandemic caused our nation's supply chain to be disrupted, and food and other essential items became scarce or non-existent. Some locations were worse than others, but most people in the nation got an idea of what bare grocery store shelves look like. While many of those items are now freely available, the scarcity is not far from our memory. It was a far cry from a famine, but it is probably the closest thing we will ever experience in our lifetime.

Famines were not uncommon in biblical times (Genesis 26, 41-46; Ruth 1; 2 Samuel 21; 1 Chronicles 21; 1 Kings 18; 2 Kings 6, 8; Jeremiah 14). They aren't that uncommon in today's world either, although here in the US we are pretty well insulated. Isn't it interesting that at the first sign of scarcity in our very secure lifestyle, people began fighting for things, traveling far distances to get necessary items, and stockpiling the strangest items.

God through the prophet Amos predicted a famine. Because God's people had ignored His word, he was going to send a different kind of famine. This time, the essential item that would become scarce would be God's word.

Amos 8:11-12

*"Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord God,  
"when I will send a famine on the land—  
not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water,  
but of hearing the words of the Lord.  
They shall wander from sea to sea,  
and from north to east;  
they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the Lord,  
but they shall not find it.*

How hungry and parched they must have become. What a catastrophe! Yet, God in his grace didn't let the famine go on forever.

This is why Jesus showing up was so significant.

John 1:14

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Moreover, He reminded the people of a truth declared in Deuteronomy 8:3.

Matthew 4:4

*But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.""*

With all the copies of different translations we have sitting all around us every day and the digital copies accessible at a fingers swipe and click, it doesn't feel anything like a famine. However, we can create our own famine by ignoring what is so freely available and so precious. The questions for us are: Do we appreciate what we have? Are we feasting daily upon the essential bread? Are we making sure there is plenty in the storehouse of our hearts should everyone else forsake His word?

May we always be able to declare...

Job 23:12

I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.