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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Amos 7.

(2014)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

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Amos 7.

Topics.

- Amos first vision of warning.
- Amos second vision of warning.
- Amos third vision of warning.
- The history of Jeroboam.
- Amos tells Jeroboam he will die.
- Assyria and Babylon.

INTRODUCTION: Amos has three visions of warnings his name means burden bearer and his prophetic ministry occurred during a time of great prosperity for the Northern Kingdom (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria), approaching in character the "Golden Age" of David and Solomon. With the threat of war removed, a cultural, social and economic revival took place, but prosperity was accompanied by an almost unprecedented degree of social corruption. Three times Amos has a vision of the LORD about to destroy Israel. In the first two visions Amos pleads with the LORD to forgive Israel and the LORD relents, but the third time the LORD tells Amos Israel will be made desolate and the house of Jeroboam will be destroyed.

NOTE: for information of people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

First Vision of Warning.

Amos 7:1-6 ----- ¹This is what the Lord GOD showed me (Amos): behold, he was forming locusts when the latter growth was just beginning to sprout, and behold, it was the latter growth after the king's mowings. ²When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said, "O Lord GOD, please forgive! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" ³The LORD relented concerning this; "It shall not be," said the LORD.

The characteristics of the locust is quite remarkable, they will eat almost anything; they travel in huge numbers capable of destroying entire fields of cultivated plants and any nearby vegetation. Approaching swarms create an ominous hum and sometimes are large enough to block out sunlight.

A swarm of locusts is an unstoppable moving cloud of flying grasshoppers that may number in the millions. Their wings make a clattering sound as they travel. Locusts are normally shy, solitary creatures, but in a swarm they become a menace, capable of stripping fields of crops in a matter of hours.

Even today millions of locusts have swarmed across several countries presenting major problems in the Middle East and many South African Nations, in some swimming pools thousands of dead locusts have been found piled up. Amos in his first vision sees that the LORD is growing locust to bring on the land of Israel to destroy all their crops, but Amos in the vision intercedes for the people of Israel and the LORD relents.

Second Vision of Warning.

Amos 7:4-6 ----- ⁴This is what the Lord GOD showed me (Amos): behold, the Lord GOD was calling for a judgment by fire, and it devoured the great deep and was eating up the land. ⁵Then I said, "O Lord GOD, please cease! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" ⁶The LORD relented concerning this; "This also shall not be," said the Lord GOD.

Amos in his second vision sees that the LORD is about to bring fire on Israel to destroy their land and their farms, but Amos in the vision intercedes for the people of Israel and the LORD relents.

Third Vision of Warning.

Amos 7:7-9 ----- ⁷This is what he (the LORD) showed me (Amos): behold, the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass by them; ⁹the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

A plumb line: literally represents a straight wall, in the context of the vision of Amos it means God is going to restore the corrupt and divided Kingdom of Israel and Judah to what He originally called them to be. The LORD tells Amos he has relented and forgiven Israel and Judah twice, but he will not pass by them again. The high places, the sanctuaries, and the house of Jeroboam will be destroyed by war.

The History of Jeroboam.

Jeroboam 1 established the ten tribes in the land of Samaria. Jeroboam 2 who followed him became king in Samaria and reigned forty-one years. He followed the example of Jeroboam 1 in keeping up the idolatrous worship of the golden calves. Many successful wars brought great riches and wealth to Jeroboam and his nobles, but the prophet Amos, contemporary with Jeroboam in his later years, twice stated that the needy were sold for a pair of shoes, thus side by side the luxury there was also great poverty. Sadly no-one, was grieved for the afflictions of the poor or was distressed for the drunkenness, licentiousness, and oppression that prevailed in the land, corruption went unrebuked by the religious hierarchy.

Amos states that a person who prostrates themselves before altars clothed in religious garments to pray and perform religious duties because they have dedicated their life to religious service is no substitute for doing the right thing and treating people with respect and decency. The prophets Hosea, Joel, Jonah, and Amos lived during the reign of Jeroboam 2.

Amos tells Jeroboam he will Die.

Amos 7:10-11 ----- ¹⁰Then (after God gave Amos the vision of the plumb line) Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words. ¹¹For thus Amos has said, "Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.' "

How terrifying this must have been for Jeroboam to hear that the prophet Amos has said he will die by war and his kingdom (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) will go into exile to a foreign nation.

Amaziah the priest of Bethel: the LORD had told Jacob to build an altar at Bethel. This altar was not built as an altar for sacrifice, but to be a monument that God had appeared to Jacob there. Many years later Jeroboam built a worship center there containing a golden calf, and an altar to offer sacrifices to God on. Jeroboam established it to be a gathering place for the people of Israel (the ten tribes) so that they would not return to Jerusalem.

Amaziah speaks to Amos.

Amos 7:12-13 ----- ¹²And Amaziah (the priest of Bethel) said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, and eat bread there, and prophesy there, ¹³but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's (Jeroboam 2) sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

Amaziah the priest of Bethel tells Amos to go and flee to the land of Judah, and prophesy there.

Judah: (Judah means Praised) Judah is the name of the Hebrew tribe descended from the man Judah and King David was a member of the tribe of Judah. Both David and Solomon succeeded in unifying the Hebrew tribes, but when Solomon died, all of this came to an end. Ten tribes broke away from the kingdom and became known as the Northern Kingdom called Israel while two tribes known as the Southern Kingdom called Judah remained at Jerusalem. It is difficult to isolate Judah and Israel because the accounts of Israel and Judah are intertwined with Israel (the ten tribes) predominating.

Amos replies to Amaziah.

Amos 7:14-15 ----- ¹⁴Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, "I was no prophet, nor a prophet's son, but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs. ¹⁵But the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

God called Amos to be a prophet for the Northern Kingdom of Israel (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria). Notice Amos had a specific calling, the application of this today means, find out what your gift is and then maximise it, no-one can do everything, no doubt Amos would have been concerned for Judah, but his calling was to the Northern Kingdom and that is what he focused his time and attention on.

Amos reply to Amaziah continued: -

Amos 7:16-17 ----- ¹⁶Now therefore hear the word of the LORD. "You (Amaziah) say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac.' ¹⁷Therefore thus says the LORD: " 'Your (Amaziah's) wife shall be a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be divided up with a measuring line; you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.' "

Because Amaziah would not listen to the words of God's prophet Amos, Amaziah is told his wife will end up a prostitute, his children will be killed by war, the Northern Kingdom of Israel (the ten tribes) will be divided up and Israel will go into exile. This is all a natural result of not heeding God's word. The LORD through the prophets has constantly been telling Israel they will be invaded by a foreign power (Assyria) if they do not repent and turn from their wicked ways.

Assyria and Babylon: Assyria invaded the Northern Kingdom of Israel (the ten tribes) in the land of Samaria and took them captive. Later Babylon's armies surrounded Jerusalem and after a bitter siege of a year and a half the city fell to Nebuchadnezzar and was destroyed. Zedekiah was blinded and carried to Babylon, and the great bulk of the population was taken there with him (587 B.C.).

Archaeologists have found that all of the cities of Judah were completely destroyed at this time, thus ended the glorious kingdom of David and Solomon. Observers would have said that the Hebrew nation was annihilated and indeed, the other nations conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians did cease to exist, but the prophets proclaimed a better hope for the chosen people. "A remnant shall return" Isaiah had said, and in time this remnant, purged and returned, became the basis on which a new Israel would be built.

End.