

#1785  
Cf. #486

Amos 7:10-17<sup>1</sup>  
Amos prophesies against  
a godless nation & false prophets.  
8<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
Supplementary Lectionary Series "B,"  
Old Testament

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Elders & Church Council

<sup>10</sup> Then Amaziah the Priest of Bethel sent a message to Jeroboam King of Israel: "Amos is raising a conspiracy against you in the very heart of Israel. The land cannot bear (endure) all his Words. <sup>11</sup> For this is what Amos is saying:

"Jeroboam will die by the sword,  
and Israel will surely go into exile,  
away from their land."

<sup>12</sup> Then Amaziah said to Amos, "Get out, you Seer! Go back to the Land of Judah. Earn your bread there, and do your prophesying there. <sup>13</sup> Do not prophesy anymore at Bethel, because this is the King's Sanctuary and the Temple of the Kingdom."

<sup>14</sup> Amos answered Amaziah, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a herdsman, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. <sup>15</sup> But the LORD took me from being a herdsman and said to me, 'Go! Prophesy to my people Israel!' <sup>16</sup> Now then, hear the Word of the LORD. You say,

"Do not prophesy against Israel,  
and stop preaching against the House of Isaac.'

<sup>17</sup> "Therefore this is what the LORD says:

"Your wife will become a whore in the city,  
and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword.  
Your land will be measured and divided up,  
and you yourself will die in a pagan country.  
And Israel will certainly go into exile,  
away from their land."

THE LORD CALLS AMOS TO PROPHECY  
I. TO PROPHECY DESTRUCTION  
II. TO PROPHECY DELIVERANCE

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<sup>1</sup> *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984.  
All Scripture references are taken from this translation unless noted otherwise.

In the Name of Jesus who, through his Word, warns us of destruction and promises deliverance to those who believe in him, Dear Fellow-Redeemed,

The messages which Amos as well as Hosea brought to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, can best be described as that of gloom, doom, despair, devastation and destruction. One needs to look carefully for any hope or promise proclaimed by these prophets to this kingdom.

There were not many true prophets in the Northern Kingdom of Israel during the time of Amos. Hosea was already mentioned as a contemporary of Amos. The time of the ministries of the prophets Elijah and Elisha had passed. Overall, the Northern Kingdom of Israel was infiltrated by false prophets – false prophets like Amaziah, who is featured in our text. False prophets abounded in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, so the LORD called a man from the Southern Kingdom of Judah to deliver his message – his Word in truth and purity – to the unrepentant Northern Kingdom of Israel. The LORD called Amos.

The LORD called Amos to prophesy to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We still hear the true Word of the LORD spoken through Amos in this Old Testament Book that bears his name – The Book of Amos. Listen now, for ... THE LORD CALLS AMOS TO PROPHECY. THE LORD CALLS AMOS TO PROPHECY ... I. TO PROPHECY DESTRUCTION; and, II. TO PROPHECY DELIVERANCE.

## THE LORD CALLS AMOS TO PROPHECY I. TO PROPHECY DESTRUCTION

Amos was called to prophesy destruction to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, but he also prophesied destruction to other kingdoms. These prophecies make an interesting and effective use of numbers. Each kingdom is condemned with the following pattern.

***This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Damascus, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath (1:3).***

***“For three sins of Gaza, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath.” (1:6a).***

***“For three sins of Tyre, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath” (1:9b).***

***“For three sins of Edom, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath” (1:11a).***

And so the pattern of numbers repeats, “For three sins ... even for four, I will not turn back my wrath.

In 1:3 through 2:5, Amos prophesied the destruction of Arameia, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and Judah – seven nations in all. When the Northern Kingdom of Israel heard the

condemnation to destruction of the seventh kingdom, Judah, they may have taken a brief breath. The number seven was often associated with God and with completeness. Israel could breathe easier, for they were not mentioned in these seven. But then, Amos prophesied an eighth time. Amos' eighth prophecy predicted the destruction of Israel – the Northern Kingdom. The LORD proclaimed through Amos, "For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath" (2:6a). Amos stepped out of the pattern of numbers to proclaim the destruction of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The Book of Amos elaborates on the reasons for this coming destruction.

Israel was full of arrogance, deceit and self-righteousness. Amos described the prideful and haughty women of Israel as "cows of Bashan on Mount Samaria, ... women who oppress the poor and crush the needy and say to your husbands, 'Bring us some drinks!'" (4:1). The entire kingdom was guilty of oppressing the poor, perverting justice and bribing officials. And there was complacency.

Israel was a successful nation at this time. Israel had extended its territory so it that covered lands similar to the time of Solomon when the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah were united. There was success and prosperity ... and complacency. Israel forgot the LORD (Deuteronomy 6:12; 8:10-14; 19,20).

Oh, there was religion in Israel, all right! But, it was a religion mixed with paganism. There was an empty ritualism. There was beautiful liturgical music, but it was empty, for the hearts of the people, their priests and leaders, were not repentant. The LORD would not tolerate this (cf. Deuteronomy 6:12-15; 8:10-14; 19,20). The LORD sent Amos.

Amos denounced all of these sins and wickednesses and perversions of Israel. Amos proclaimed gloom, doom, devastation and destruction. And, his proclamation was disturbing.

Amos' Words – the LORD's Word – were disturbing. So, Amaziah, the High Priest of the idolatrous altar in Bethel of Israel, confronted Amos.

***<sup>10</sup> Then Amaziah the Priest of Bethel sent a message to Jeroboam King of Israel: "Amos is raising a conspiracy against you in the very heart of Israel. The land cannot bear (endure) all his Words. <sup>11</sup> For this is what Amos is saying:***

***"Jeroboam will die by the sword,  
and Israel will surely go into exile,  
away from their land'" (7:10,11).***

Amaziah does correctly summarize Amos' message of destruction. Amos' message was disturbing. Amos' message was disturbing the complacency of the land. Amaziah was comfortable. The King, Jeroboam II, was comfortable and successful. The rich were getting richer, but the poor were getting poorer. So Amaziah "tattles" to King Jeroboam about what Amos was saying. Amaziah wanted Amos out of the country.

***12 Then Amaziah said to Amos, “Get out, you Seer! Go back to the Land of Judah. Earn your bread there, and do your prophesying there. 13 Do not prophesy anymore at Bethel, because this is the King’s Sanctuary and the Temple of the Kingdom” (7:12,13).***

The arrogance! The haughtiness! The unmitigated gall of this false prophet, Amaziah! Amaziah repeats a pattern true of all false prophets. When confronted by the truth of God’s Word from a true prophet of the LORD, Amaziah tries to silence and get rid of the true prophet. “Get out! Go back to where you came from!” And, arrogantly, Amaziah boasts about the established, pagan-infiltrated religion of Israel. “Bethel ... is the King’s Sanctuary and the Temple of the Kingdom!” This place was sacred ... but it was infested by the maggots of deceit and lies and false doctrine. Amos answers.

Amos’ answer to Amaziah as well as to all the Northern Kingdom of Israel has four aspects: 1) his background; 2) his divine call; 3) the summary of his prophecies; 4) the application of these prophecies both to individuals and to Israel as a nation.

Amos says, “I was neither a Prophet nor a Prophet’s son, but I was a herdsman, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees” (7:14). Amos did not have the background of a standard prophet. When he refers to himself as not being “a Prophet’s son,” he is referring to the fact that he had not attended one of the “schools of the prophets” that existed in the Southern Kingdom of Judah at this time. Amos was basically a farmer – a herdsman and orchard-keeper. But Amos had received a divine call.

Amos said, “But the LORD took me from being a herdsman and said to me, ‘Go! Prophecy to my people Israel!’” (7:15). Amos received a direct call from the LORD – an immediate call. Instead of herding animals, the LORD wanted Amos to herd and shepherd people. Instead of being an orchard-keeper, the LORD wanted Amos to nurture and care for souls. Then, Amos summarizes the prophecies of the LORD he has been proclaiming.

Amos says, “Now then, hear the Word of the LORD. You [Amaziah] say, ‘Do not prophesy against Israel, and stop preaching against the House of Isaac’” (7:16). Amos uses the same words which the false prophet Amaziah had used to summarize Amos’ words against the Northern Kingdom of Israel – here referred to as “the House of Isaac.” Now Amos applies those words of gloom, doom, devastation and destruction individually and nationally.

Amos refers, first of all, individually to Amaziah and his family. Amos says,

***17 “Therefore this is what the LORD says:  
“Your wife will become a whore in the city,  
and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword.  
Your land will be measured and divided up,  
and you yourself will die in a pagan country”” (7:17a)***

The invasion and defeat of successful and complacent Israel would come. The result for Amaziah would be that his wife would become a whore. In order to survive, this once “fat cow of Bashan” would have to sell herself to be able to eat. Amaziah’s children – his wonderful, beloved children – would be slaughtered in the invasion. Amaziah’s estate, lands, moneys, investments – would be plundered. Amaziah himself would be taken into exile and die far away from Israel in a pagan land. Then, Amos applied the gloom, doom, devastation and destruction nationally.

Amos said, “Israel will certainly go into exile, away from their land” (7:17b). Israel would be carried off into exile. This would happen first by the Assyrians and later by the Babylonians. The nation of Israel would be no more.

The nation of Israel had plenty of opportunities to repent. Throughout the centuries of its existence after the time of Solomon, the LORD had sent prophets to them to call them to repentance. Now, however, the LORD said, “I will spare them no longer” (7:8b). The LORD said, “I will never forgive anything they have done” (8:7b).

#### APPROPRIATION

Amos’ prophecies ring in our ears today, for many of the sins committed by Israel at the time of Israel, are being committed around us and by us today. What about complacency? Oh, we can gripe and complain about the economic situation in our country, but we have a place to live, clothes and shoes to wear, and groceries to eat. Like Israel, our lives and thinking are infiltrated by materialism. How many of us would not like the *Publishers Clearing House* people to knock on our door and promise us a check of \$5,000 a month for the rest of our lives – and now, I hear, for the rest even of one of our children’s lives? How many of us do not dream and fantasize about having money to do those things that we would like to do? How much money is enough? Just a little bit more! And, there is empty religion and ritualism in our country, and we can be sucked into it.

State funerals have been conducted in the National Cathedral. What grandeur! What wonderful music! What stunning building, architecture, and art-work! What elaborate clergy vestments! But, what empty messages! You and I are tempted to think that this is acceptable to our only LORD God. It is not!

The 911 ecumenical service at Yankee stadium was to unite this nation in prayer. Prayer to whom! God does not hear and will not answer the prayers of those who do not believe in Christ alone! Likewise, the ecumenical community services held for those children murdered in Connecticut, are unacceptable to the only LORD God. Destruction is coming.

Destruction is coming. It may come directly upon our nation. If it does, you and I may be affected personally as was Amaziah, “Your wife will become a whore in the city, and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword. Your land will be measured and divided up, and you yourself will die in a pagan country” (7:17a). For sure, destruction is coming on the Last Day.

The Apostle Peter states,

**<sup>10</sup> But the Day of the LORD will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare...**

**<sup>12b</sup> That Day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat** (2 Peter 3:10,12b).

Destruction is coming! We cannot say when, but it is sure and certain. Is there any hope for us? Was there any hope for Israel?

THE LORD CALLS AMOS TO PROPHECY  
I. TO PROPHECY DESTRUCTION; and  
II. TO PROPHECY DELIVERANCE

As we review this text from Amos, we might think that there is no hope for deliverance from the doom, gloom, devastation and destruction that was going to come upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel. But, listen again to the divine call which the LORD extended to Amos.

Amos records, “the LORD took me from being a herdsman and said to me, ‘Go! Prophesy to my People Israel!’” (7:15). Do you hear what how the LORD referred to Israel? The LORD said to Amos, “Go! Prophesy to my people Israel!” The LORD said that Israel was his people.

Even though the Northern Kingdom of Israel was infiltrated with sin, wickedness and idolatry, the LORD refers to them as “my people.” This is a revelation of God’s grace alone. In addition, look at who called and sent Amos to be a prophet to Israel.

“The LORD took me from being a herdsman and said to me, ‘Go! Prophesy to my people Israel!’” (7:15). Amos refers to God as “The LORD.” This LORD is the God of free and faithful grace. This LORD is the God who forgives those who deserve his temporal and eternal wrath. This LORD is the One who revealed his Name to Moses as

**<sup>6</sup> ... “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, <sup>7</sup> maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation”** (Exodus 34:6,7).

This LORD is the One God who punishes sins but also forgives sins. And, there is only one place in the entire history of the world – of the universe – that these two aspects of the One True God, the LORD, come together: At the foot of the cross of Jesus.

Yes, Amos knew of the Messiah whom God promised to send into the world. Amos knew what this Messiah would accomplish, and how this Messiah would forgive the sins of all people and bring into his Kingdom all who believed in him. Christ Jesus would come into the world. Christ Jesus has come.

#### APPROPRIATION

Here, in Jesus, is the only hope for our nation. Here, in Jesus, is the only hope for you and for me. Gloom, doom, devastation and destruction must be proclaimed, so that we will not trust in any of our merit, works, efforts or goodness. Forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation, are found only in Jesus. God gave to Israel and Judah faithful prophets to proclaim his Word in truth and purity to the people of that day and time. God gives faithful pastors and teachers to continue to proclaim his Word in truth and purity today. God has given that Word in truth and purity to you – to you, not only to hear but also to speak to others.

Destruction and devastation will come. Our nation and all the nations and kingdoms will perish. But the Kingdom of our LORD and Savior, Jesus Christ, will endure forever. By faith in Jesus alone – without any merit, works, or effort on our part – we are part of that eternal Kingdom. Let us then continue in God's Word in truth and purity. Let us continue in faith in Jesus alone as our Savior through that Word. Let us proclaim that Word to others.

#### CONCLUSION

Amos prophesied gloom, doom, devastation and destruction to an unbelieving and unrepentant Israel. He also prophesied deliverance for those who were brought to repentance.

Destruction will certainly also come upon us. Repent! Believe in the LORD Jesus Christ, and we will be saved eternally. Amen.