

# Amos: God's Call to His People

Visions of Destruction and the Promise of Hope

Lesson 4

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## Goals

1. To put into practice an Amos attitude about our world around us
2. To be able to summarize God's judgments in Amos, and what we need to be warned of
3. To be able to state clearly what the gospel is in the book of Amos (though it has very little!)

## Rebuke with a dash of hope (7:1-17)

- God gives Amos the first few visions of the overturn of Israel.
  - A false prophet seeks to stop God's Word from getting out.
1. Why would Amos, a preacher of God's law, beg for Israel's safety despite all their wrongdoing (7:2,5)?
  2. With what attitude should we approach our vile, sinful world? How do we find a proper balance? See Ezekiel 18:32 - *For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!*
  3. What is God's point in the vision of the plumb line? What does that remind us about God's expectations for us?
  4. What is noteworthy about the picture of the plumb line when compared to Amos' reaction to the locusts and the fire?
  5. What is Amaziah's principle beef with Amos? See 7:10ff.
  6. What some things we can we learn from Amos' response when we face similar criticisms?

## From bad to worse (8:1-9:10)

- Amos continues to receive visions picturing the judgment against Israel in different ways.
  - God warns about a famine, not of grain, but of the Word of God.
7. The Hebrew words for *summer fruit* and *end* sound alike. Just as the summer fruit is ripe, Israel is ripe for judgment. List 3 points how the merchants in Israel were conducting their business that also serve as lessons for us.
  8. God predicts the earthquake he will allow to happen (8:8) that Amos referenced at the start of the book (1:1) and that the people will continue to talk about at least for another 200 years (see Zechariah 14:5). What can be so traumatic about an earthquake?
  9. Why would we say that the picture becomes so dark when people forsake their God?
  10. Martin Luther said: *"The preaching of the gospel is not an eternal, lasting, continual teaching, but it is like a passing shower which travels on. Some ground is watered and another place stays dry. It does not return and also does not stand still. Then the hot sun comes and licks up the moisture that remains."* Why would God threaten to send a famine of his Word? What possible good would come from that?
  11. In 9:5-6, this is the third time we've seen Amos interject what seems to be a hymn verse into his message. Why do you think he chose to do this?
  12. What's your reaction to this?: To say, "I am an orthodox Christian" or "I am a Bible-believing Lutheran" as if God must pay attention and bless us is as foolish as the Jews' claim, "We are descendants of Abraham," or "The Lord brought our fathers out of Egypt."
  13. How does the gospel begin to show itself in 9:8? What can we learn from God's continued patience with Israel?

## **The promise of future blessings (9:11-15)**

- In the promise of the restoration of David's tent, we all find hope in the grace of our God and Savior.

14. Let's list gospel promises Amos ends with in the closing verses of the book.

## **During the week**

- Note what blessings you have because you are connected to your Savior. What has he brought into your life that was his gift to you as part of the New Testament "Israel" that you wouldn't have without this gift?
- Be on the look out for ways you may take your Christianity and God's Word for granted, maybe even ways that are subtle in causing you to backslide in your faith.