

God The Righteous Judge

Amos 7:1-17

- In the last four chapters Amos has documented the reasons for God's judgment upon Israel > religious hypocrisy, Idolatry, material indulgence, legal injustice, economic exploitation of the poor, and boastful complacency. Because of these spiritual and moral violations God is now going to speak to Amos through visions detailing exactly what was going to happen to both the Southern-Northern Kingdom.

V1-17

- In these visions we are going to see the Lord deal with Israel's **Land**, then its **buildings**, and finally the **people** themselves, it's interesting how God knows how to touch the things that we are holding above Him in order for us to hear and see Him clearly. If you are putting a job above Him The Lord will touch that job, a relationship it will begin to crumble, finances, they start to dissolve, whatever is in the way of you and I seeing and surrendering to Him The Lord will systematically remove it from you
- **V1-3 the first vision is of Locusts-** Amos says this will happen after the King has taken his portion of the people's crops and just as the second crop for the nation and the people begin to sprout then the Locusts will come and devour everything. Its interesting that just like now before you get what you've worked for the government comes and takes its portion, then what's left belongs to you, and if there is ever a problem the government always gets its share, and leave you short.
- When Amos saw this his response was one of compassion and grief, for not only did Amos love God he also loved the people, so it grieved him that he had to tell both Israel and Judah that judgment was coming. He cries out "O Lord God forgive I pray, Oh that Jacob may stand, for he is small". Amos intercedes for the nation asking that God would spare them of this horrible event, as people would starve to death.
- This shows that life as a prophet was not one that people volunteered for, it was hard and painful, as not only did you need to stay close to God but also live amongst those whom you may have to tell that terrible things was heading their way. If that gives anyone pleasure to tell people bad news then that is not the heart of God, doctors don't laugh telling patients their sick, their dying, if so they are in the wrong profession, and I know people who seem to want to tell others your in trouble.

- **V3** because of Amos plea the Lord relented in response to the prophets prayer, this is why prayer is so vital, we don't know how The Lord will respond upon hearing from His people as we ask Him for mercy for others. Here we see although the nation wasn't forgiven of their sins this particular punishment was withdrawn, so by his prayers Amos was able to affect what form of judgment would take place.
- **V4-6** Amos is shown another **vision** where **fire** rises up and consumes the entire land of Israel, and upon seeing this Amos again cries out to God asking for mercy understanding that if this happens Israel would be destroyed. Notice he calls the nation "small" I like that, in comparison to God everything in our life, that we hold dear, is small to God, He holds these things in His Hands, to do with them as He pleases. The Lord listens to Amos prayer and relents and takes it away.
- God controls both the insects and the elements, nothing is out of His power, which is why we need to go to Him about everything, there is nothing too small or too great for Him to deal with > **Philip 4:6-7** says not to be anxious about anything because we take everything not just some things, to God in prayer. So all my concerns and needs I should bring to God through prayer having gratitude for all His blessings toward me.
- **V7-9** the third vision in this chapter is about a plumb line- a plumb line was a cord with a lead weight used by builders to test whether a wall was straight and true. They also used it to see if existing walls had settled and tilted, or needed to be torn down before it fell. A man would stand on top of the wall drop the plumb line with the weigh attached to it down and by matching the line to the wall the workers could tell if the wall was upright and straight or crooked and tilted.
- In this vision God is saying His Word is the plumb line and He measures His people to see how true they are to the pattern of The Word, having upright character and conduct, or are they crooked and tilting over, about to fall, and therefore need reconstructing. In holding the plumb line to Israel we see that they've become crooked and tilted, how everything they've constructed needs to be torn down from the sanctuaries to the palaces, and the leaders, it all needs to be laid to waste.
- **V10-13** the priest of Bethel hears what Amos has prophesied and he doesn't like it, Bethel was one of the Northern Kingdoms main places of idolatrous worship, so of course being in charge of that false worship center he would be angry unless he was ready to repent which he wasn't. Anytime anyone hears truth and they fight against you its not you they are resisting, it's the truth that they don't want to bend to.

- He sends a message to the king Jeroboam II telling him that Amos is conspiring against him and trying to turn the people away from following him. He also says that Amos is saying you are going to die by the sword and we are going to be taken into captivity, and these words “**are too hard**” that the land is not able to bear his words.
- So they tell Amos to go back to Judah the Southern Kingdom where he came from and eat, live and prophesy there because we don’t want to hear what you have to say here. Again this shows their unwillingness to listen to truth because they don’t want change to happen, they are satisfied with the way things are, as they are prospering in the immorality and sinfulness, so to them why make a change?
- **V14-15** I love Amos’ response as he tells them that he didn’t ask to be a prophet, and that he is just a lowly farmer who would gladly go back to his days of caring for the Sycamore trees and sheep, but God has called him to speak out against what is happening. By declaring that he wasn’t out of the school of prophets neither a son of a prophet, coming from a prophetic family, so he is not political or in the religious system, therefore it doesn’t make any sense for him to conspire against the king.
- **V16-17** God in response to Amaziah the priest that the calamity that he wanted to silence Amos from speaking will now come upon him and his household. That his wife will be taken and abused, his children will be killed by the sword, speaking of when the Assyrians come and enslave, plunder the nation. But you Amaziah will not die here but be taken into a foreign territory and there you will die while Israel is led away into captivity, so silencing Amos is not going to stop the judgment from coming.