

What On Earth Is Happening? Hopeful Insights From Amos

Bad News, Good News

Amos 9:1-15

Sunday Evening Bible Study – November 5, 2017

Amos 1:1–2:3: Amos starts with good news that God will judge Israel’s hostile, sinful neighbors.

Amos 2:4–16: But Israel is shocked to learn that God will judge them as well.

Amos 3:1–15: By failing to love God and neighbor, especially exploiting the poor and neglecting justice, Israel has earned God’s severe punishment.

Amos 4:1–13: Even Israel’s wealthy, self-indulgent women will not escape, as they join their husband’s stubborn resistance against God’s tough love.

Amos 5:1–27: Though Israel was sending rivers of ritualized and manipulative worship to God, what God really wanted was for Israel to send rivers of justice to their fellow citizens.

Amos 6:1–14: Boastful leaders of Israel, living self-indulgent lifestyles at the expense of people they should be protecting, and trusting in their own exaggerated achievements, incite God to raise up another nation to oppress and humble Israel.

Amos 7:1–17: Through three visions, God shows Amos his future judgment, but mercifully postpones it when Amos intercedes for Israel. God measures Israel by the “plumb line” of his unchanging Word and finds them out of line. Amos is falsely accused by Amaziah, the false priest, who flatters and panders to Jeroboam, the corrupt king.

Amos 8:1–14: After his ministry in Samaria (political center) in chapters 1–6, Amos travels to Bethel (religious center) to bring them the same message: God’s patience has come to an end, just like fruit at the end of the summer. Israel is ripe and will now be picked off the vine to be devoured (1–2). They have made a god in their own image who approves of their sexual immorality, demeaning the marriage covenant, killing babies to save money, loving money, and depriving the poor of justice.

Amos 9:1–15: Amos’ Final Vision

Part One—The Bad News: Because God Is Just, All Sinners Deserve Punishment (9:1–10)

- 1-4 The judgment of God will be thorough, from the capital (header) of the door to the threshold, and there will be nowhere to hide from the earthquake and the exile. The temple at Bethel with its false worship, will be utterly destroyed.
- 5-6 The God who judges is the one true God who is absolutely sovereign and omnipresent. He is not a local or national deity like Baal.
- 7-8 The nations of the earth rise and fall at the command of God and he controls immigration patterns over borders. Israel will not get an exemption from judgment.
- 9-10 God will separate the small remnant of true believers in Israel from the majority of “sinners” who reject him, as a farmer sifts grain from chaff and rocks.

Part Two—The Good News: Because God Is Merciful, Some Sinners Will Escape Judgment (9:11–15)

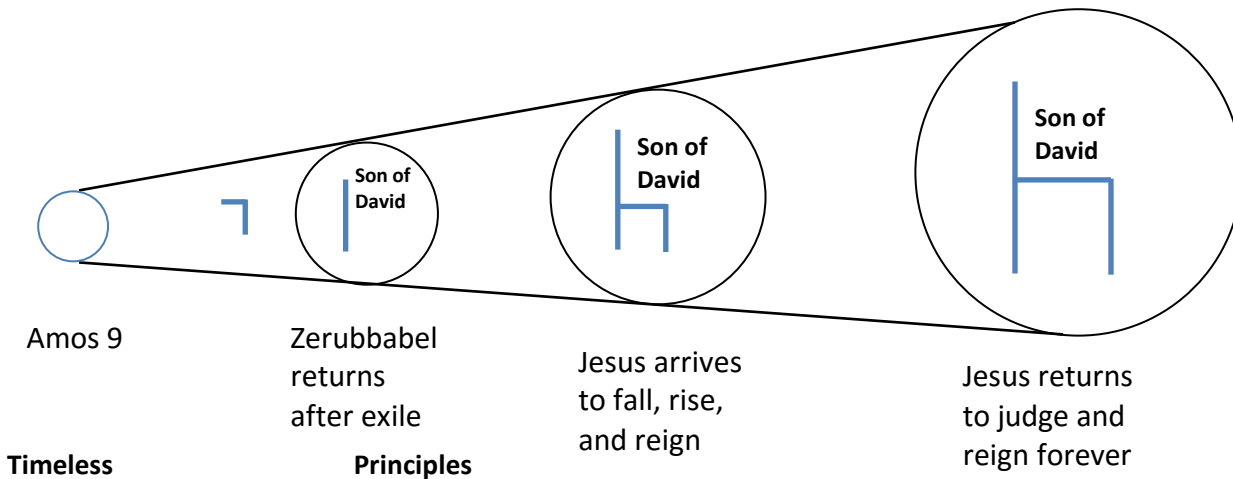
- 11a The fragile reign of Davidic kings in Jerusalem will fall and the temple will be destroyed (586 BC).
- 11b But God will return a Davidic leader to Jerusalem (Zerubbabel, grandson of King Jehoiachin, Mt. 1:12) who will serve as Governor and oversee the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah) and the temple (Ezra).
- 12 God will reach the nations (Gentiles) and include them through synagogues established among the nations during the exile (12).
- 13-14 God will return fortune (peace and prosperity) to Israel after the exile (post-exilic period).
- 15 God will gather Israel and plant it back in the promised land.

Problem: While post-exilic Israel experienced some restoration, it is limited and they are still subject to Persia, then Greece, then Rome. Then they are uprooted again in 70 AD when the temple is destroyed by Rome.

Solution: Prophecies in Scripture are often fulfilled in stages “telescopically.” Acts 15:16–17 is an interpretive key.

Acts 15:16–17 Positions Amos 9 In A New Light

1. Jesus, Son of David, will live in a tent as the God-man. This is the doctrine of *incarnation* (John 1:14).
2. Jesus' "tent" will fall when he dies on the cross for sins and is buried, providing the basis for a just God's forgiveness. This is the doctrine of *penal substitutionary atonement* (Ro. 3:23–26).
3. Jesus' "tent" will be raised from the dead. This is the doctrine of the *resurrection* (Jn. 2:19–21).
4. Jesus will reign from heaven and reach the nations (Gentiles) through his church. This is the doctrine of *the supremacy of Christ* and it is why we do *missions* (Mt. 28:18–20; Eph. 1:20–21).
5. Jesus will return to defeat his enemies and reign from Jerusalem, restoring perfect peace and prosperity to Israel. This is the doctrine of the *Second Coming of Christ* (2 Tim. 4:1; Rev. 21:2).
6. Jesus, in establishing his earthly reign, will gather the nations (Gentiles) who are included in his church, and are grafted into Israel to share in his blessings he promised to Abraham, never to be uprooted (Gen. 12:1–3; Gal. 6:16; Ro. 11:17–24; Rev. 5:9).



1. The central message of the Bible has two main categories: The Bad News (Law) and the Good News (Gospel).
3. Fulfilled prophecy increases our confidence in the reliability of Scripture.
5. Nothing escapes the "eyes of the Lord" (8).
6. Most people who are on the path to hell think they're going to heaven (10).
7. The judgment of God is a grand reversal of fortune (14).
8. God uses persecution and immigration to reach out and include the nations (7).
9. Adversity rarely makes sense in the present, but always makes sense in hindsight.