

# **RESTORATION IS COMING**

## **ATTENTION GETTER/OPENING**

Light & Life family, I want to begin our time tonight by asking you a question: What do you do when God allows something to fall apart?

Not when life is inconvenient. Not when you had a hard week.

I mean — what do you do when something actually *comes apart*?

When the relationship fails. When the dream dies. When the marriage grows cold. When the anxiety doesn't lift. When the habit you thought you conquered comes back. When the ministry that once felt like a calling starts to feel like a burden. When you wake up one day and realize — *I am not who I thought I would be by now.*

What do you do when life doesn't just feel difficult... it feels *ruined*?

I believe that most of us can handle struggle if we believe it's temporary. We can endure pain if we trust healing is coming. We can endure pruning if we believe fruit is on the other side.

But what do you do when something breaks deeply enough that you begin to wonder:

*Can this even be restored?*

Can God restore wasted years? Can He restore what sin damaged — what compromise destroyed? Can He provide when every door seems to be closing? Can He restore joy that's gone quiet, faith that's gone cold, a heart that's slowly gone numb?

Maybe this isn't your season of rubble. Maybe you're genuinely in a good place right now — and that's real, and I don't want to take that from you.

But every one of us either knows this feeling, loves someone who's in it, or will walk through it at some point.

So lean in. This is for all of us.

Now... if you've been with us these past few weeks you know that this book is not a light read. Amos is heavy, direct, uncomfortable. It tears down excuses. It confronts empty religion. It pulls the mask off a society that looked successful but was spiritually sick. If we only read chapters 7 and 8, we might expect the whole thing to end in rubble.

But there is hope tonight — at the very end of — God starts speaking differently.

Not like a destroyer standing over ruins.

Like a Restorer *walking into them*. Saying:

*"I will raise up. I will repair. I will rebuild. I will restore. I will plant."*

And that is where we are going tonight.

For God does not tear down and walk away. That is not who He is. He tears down *so He can rebuild*. The demolition is never the destination — it is always the preparation.

And if you are in God tonight... if you've given your life to Him, I need you to know that restoration is not a maybe. It is not a possibility.

It is a promise.

**BIG IDEA:** God's final word is not judgment—it's restoration.

Now, before we get to the restoration — we have to walk through the rubble that precedes it. And I want to do that honestly tonight, because I think the reason restoration doesn't always feel real to us is that we've never let the weight of the alternative sink in. So open your Bibles to Amos 7. We're going to let this book do what it was written to do.

## EXEGESIS

We're covering three chapters tonight — Amos 7, 8, and 9. And I want to be honest with you: there is a lot of text. So rather than read every verse, I want to walk you through the movement of each chapter, pause where we need to, and then land together on the final verses of chapter 9 — because that is where everything breaks open.

Before we get into the text, let me give you a little context. Because the story of Amos only hits as hard as it should when you understand who he is and who he's talking to.

Amos is not a priest. He is not a trained prophet. He is a shepherd and a fig farmer from a small town called Tekoa — a place nobody cared about. An ordinary man that God taps on the shoulder and says: *Go. Speak. Say the thing nobody wants to hear.* And he goes — not to a small audience, but to the northern kingdom of Israel. A nation that, by every external measure, was thriving. Strong economy. National security. Packed worship centers. Prosperous lives.

And they had made the most human mistake imaginable.

They confused God's patience with God's approval.

They looked at how well things were going and assumed it meant God was pleased. Sound familiar? We do this too. When life is going well, we assume we're on good terms with God. When it's hard, we assume He's disappointed. Amos shows up to dismantle both assumptions.

External success is not the same thing as spiritual health.

And with that — let's get into the text.

### I. GOD RESTRAINS JUDGMENT

Chapter 7 opens with two visions. And both of them are terrifying in their severity.

First, God shows Amos a swarm of locusts — poised to strip the land completely bare. Then He shows him a consuming fire — ready to devour everything in its path. Both are catastrophic. And given everything Amos has already said about Israel's injustice and hollow worship — both are deserved.

And then Amos does something that I think is one of the most important and overlooked moments in this entire book.

He doesn't step back. He doesn't fold his arms and say, *"Well, they had it coming."*

He falls on his face before God and cries:

*"O Lord GOD, please forgive! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!" (Amos 7:2)*

And God relents. He pulls the judgment back.

This happens twice. Two rounds of catastrophic judgment held back because one man refused to stop interceding.

I need you to see something here. Amos is not a detached prophet who enjoys announcing bad news from a safe distance. **He is wrecked for the very people he is warning.** He loves them. He carries them before God. He holds the truth in one hand — and God's heart for people in the other.

And he is not alone in Scripture.

**Moses** throwing himself before God after the golden calf — *"Forgive them. And if not — blot me out."* (Exodus 32)

**Abraham** standing before God, negotiating for Sodom — *"What if there are fifty righteous? Forty? Ten?"* (Genesis 18)

**Jeremiah** — weeping over the people who rejected him, who threw him in a pit, who wanted him silenced. He couldn't stop loving them.

And ultimately — there is **Jesus**.

Who doesn't intercede from a safe distance. Who doesn't send a message from heaven saying "*Father, forgive them*" while staying removed from the cost. But who walks into the darkness, absorbs the judgment completely, and makes forgiveness possible from the inside out.

And here is what I never want you to forget: He is still interceding for you. Right now. Tonight. Hebrews 7:25 tells us that Jesus *always lives* to make intercession for those who come to God through Him.

He has not grown tired of praying for you.

For some of you — that is the most important thing you will hear tonight. A lifeline. A truth to hold on. Jesus, God Himself, is praying for you.

### **MINI-APPLICATION:**

So let me ask you...Who are you carrying before God right now?

Not just thinking about. Who are you bringing before the throne with the kind of urgency and love that Amos brought for a people who didn't even want his help?

It is easy to announce what's wrong with the people around us. It is much harder — and much more Christlike — to weep for them. To intercede for them. To refuse to give up on them even when they've given every reason to.

Prophetic love holds the truth and the tears at the same time. It does not choose between honesty and compassion. It carries both — all the way to the throne.

### **TRANSITION:**

Now, not everyone in chapter 7 responds to the word the way Amos does. In fact, the next person we meet is almost his exact opposite — and his story is a warning we need to take seriously.

## The Plumb Line — and the Problem of Amaziah

In the middle of chapter 7, God gives Amos a simple image: a plumb line. A weight on a string that builders used to determine whether a wall was truly straight — truly vertical.

God holds it up beside Israel.

The walls are crooked.

And then we meet **Amaziah** — the head priest at Bethel, the most prominent religious center in the northern kingdom. The man in charge of the whole operation. And when Amos shows up with a word from God, Amaziah doesn't receive it. He doesn't wrestle with it. He doesn't even push back on the theology.

He just tells Amos to leave.

*"Go, flee away to the land of Judah... but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom." (Amos 7:12-13)*

Now stop right there. Did you catch that last line?

***The king's sanctuary. A temple of the kingdom.***

Not God's house. The king's. Not a place of surrender. A place of national identity. Worship had been quietly repurposed. It no longer existed to serve God — it existed to serve the system. The music was still playing. The offerings were still burning. The calendar was full of religious activity.

But the whole thing had been hollowed out from the inside.

Can I tell you tonight that **Christianity that is used to serve a kingdom is no Christianity at all**. The moment the gospel becomes a tool for any agenda — political, cultural, personal, national — it has already ceased to be the gospel. Jesus does not exist to endorse our kingdoms. We exist to advance His.

Amaziah is what Scripture calls a false prophet. Not necessarily someone standing up front preaching obvious lies — but someone whose message has been shaped more by what people want to hear than by what God is actually saying. Someone who has traded the uncomfortable truth for a comfortable position. Someone who usurps the truth for self-gain.

And here is the sobering word: **the priest who silenced God's word would watch the very system he protected collapse around him.** His family. His land. The altar he spent his life defending — all of it gone.

False prophets don't just hurt themselves. They hurt everyone who trusted them.

Church, there are voices today — in culture, online, and yes, even in pulpits — that have done exactly what Amaziah did. They've softened every sharp edge. Made Jesus popular and palatable and, in doing so, made Him powerless. They've built platforms on telling people what they want to hear.

Don't follow those voices.

Follow the Amoses. The people who love you enough to tell you the truth even when it costs them something. Even when it's uncomfortable. Even when you don't want to hear it. That is the voice worth listening to.

### **MINI-APPLICATION:**

Let me ask you something honest — and I'm asking myself the same question.

Are there places in your life where you have been listening to the wrong voice? Where you have gravitated toward the teacher, the podcast, the friend, the inner narrative that tells you what you want to hear rather than what you need to hear?

And maybe the harder question: are there places where *you* have been Amaziah? Where you have silenced the word of God in your own life — not

dramatically, not publicly, but quietly — because it was asking something of you that you weren't ready to give?

God is holding the plumb line up tonight. Not to shame you. Not to condemn you. But because He cannot rebuild what He is not first allowed to measure.

Let Him measure. Let Him in to the places you've been keeping Him out of. The crooked walls don't have to stay crooked.

## **TRANSITION:**

Chapter 7 showed us a God who restrains judgment out of mercy — and a people who responded by silencing the very voice calling them back. Chapter 8 shows us what happens when that pattern continues long enough. And the judgment that comes is not what most of us would expect.

## **II. GOD EXPOSES WHAT IS RIPE**

*(Amos 8)*

Chapter 8 opens with a vision of a basket of ripe summer fruit. And in Hebrew, this is a devastating piece of wordplay — the word for *ripe fruit* and the word for *end* sound nearly identical. God is using the image to say: *Israel, you are ripe. The end has come.*

Their feasts are about to become funerals. Their songs will turn to mourning. The sun will go dark at noon. The earth will shake.

But the judgment that stops me every single time I read this chapter is not any of that.

It is verse 11:

*"Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "when I will send a famine on the land — not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD."*

Not a famine of food.

A famine of God's *voice*.

They will wander from sea to sea, searching desperately for a word from God — and they will not find one.

This is what happens when a people spend long enough ignoring God's voice. Eventually, the voice they kept pushing away becomes the voice they can no longer reach. Not because God stopped speaking — but because they spent so long choosing not to listen that they lost the ability to hear.

The most devastating judgment in this chapter is not fire or earthquake or darkness.

It is silence.

This is not God being cruel or arbitrary. This is God being honest about the consequence of a thousand small indifferences — every quieted conviction, every ignored prompting, every time we chose our way over His — slowly accumulating into a famine.

But here is the word of hope I need you to hold onto:

As long as you can hear His voice tonight — the famine has not found you.

Because in Jesus, the famine is broken. He is the Word made flesh. (*John 1:14*) Every prophet, every vision, every desperate cry of "*how long, O Lord?*" in the Old Testament was leaning forward toward the moment when God stopped sending messages and *became* the message Himself.

If you are in this room and you can still hear — don't waste it. The door is still open. The voice is still speaking.

### **MINI-APPLICATION:**

I want to ask you something that only you can answer honestly.

When is the last time you actually heard from God? Not just attended something where God was talked about — but genuinely sat still long enough to hear His voice for yourself?

Because I think one of the greatest dangers for people who grew up in church — people who know the songs, know the language, know how to look spiritually engaged — is that we can go long stretches of time without actually hearing from God personally. We outsource it. We let the Sunday sermon be our only point of contact. We stay just busy enough that the quiet never comes.

And slowly, almost imperceptibly — the voice gets harder to hear.

Don't let the drift continue. This week — before you open social media, before you fill the silence with noise — open your Bible. Sit with it. Ask God to speak. He has not gone quiet. But He will not compete indefinitely with everything else we fill our lives with.

The famine hasn't found you. Don't let it.

### **TRANSITION:**

Chapter 8 ends with silence — with a people searching for God's voice and unable to find it. But chapter 9 opens with something unexpected. God has not disappeared. He hasn't gone quiet because He stopped caring. He is present — and He is about to do something that will change everything.

## **III. GOD RESTORES WHAT SIN HAS BROKEN**

*(Amos 9)*

Chapter 9 opens with one of the most striking images in the entire book. God is standing beside the altar.

And He is not there to receive worship.

He is there to bring the whole structure down.

*"Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake, and shatter them on the heads of all the people." (Amos 9:1)*

This is God dismantling a religious system that had His name on the outside and nothing of Him on the inside. Empty ritual. Hollow performance. Worship that had become more about the worshippers than the God they claimed to worship.

He tears it down.

Now before Amos reaches the restoration — and he will — he pauses. And he reminds his hearers of exactly *who* is doing this. Verses 5 and 6 tell us:

This is the God who touches the earth and it melts. Who builds His upper chambers in the heavens. Who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them across the face of the earth.

He is not a small god. He is the God of the cosmos — sovereign over every empire, every nation, every moment of history that has ever unfolded.

And this cosmic God...

**This is the God who wants to restore you.** Not a distant, disappointed deity watching you from across the room. The God who holds the stars in place — He is the one who says, in verse 11:

*"In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old."*

The dwelling of David — fallen. Breached. In ruins.

And God says: *I am going to raise it.*

This is so significant that James quotes it directly in Acts 15, when the early church is wrestling with whether the gospel is wide enough — whether it really reaches the people who seem too far outside, too far gone, too far from where they should be. And James stands up and says: this is what the

prophets always promised. Restoration was never meant to be small. It was always meant to reach further than anyone imagined.

The final image of Amos is not rubble. It is abundance.

Grain so plentiful the harvest hasn't finished before it's time to plant again. Mountains dripping with new wine. God planting His people — and promising they will never be uprooted again.

That is the last word of this book.

Not judgment. Not silence. Not ruins.

*Restoration.*

***Unpack more 11-15 here***

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### **MINI-APPLICATION:**

So let me ask you the most important question of the night.

What has God been trying to tear down in you — that you have been trying to hold together?

Because I think some of us have been so afraid of the demolition that we have spent enormous energy protecting structures in our lives that God has already declared finished. Relationships built on the wrong foundation. Identities rooted in performance. Versions of faith that look active on the outside but have quietly gone cold on the inside.

And here is what I want you to hear — not as a warning, but as an invitation:

God is not tearing those things down because He is done with you. He is tearing them down because He is not done with you. The demolition is not the destination. It is the preparation.

Stop holding together what God is trying to rebuild.

Let the fallen things fall. Let Him in to the ruins. Because the same God who spoke abundance over a broken and exiled people — the same God who raised the fallen booth of David — is standing in whatever is broken in your life tonight, saying the same thing He said through Amos:

*I will raise up. I will repair. I will rebuild. I will restore. I will plant.*

And what God plants — He promises will never be uprooted again.

## **APPLICATION**

Let me bring this home.

We've walked through a lot of text tonight. Locusts and fire. A plumb line held up against crooked walls. A priest who silenced the word of God. A basket of ripe fruit. A famine of hearing. An altar brought to the ground.

And if that's where Amos ended — we would leave here devastated.

But it doesn't end there.

And neither does your story.

I want to ask you something directly:

### **What is God tearing down in you right now?**

Not to be harsh. Not to expose you. But because I think some of us have been so afraid of the demolition that we've been quietly protecting the very walls God is trying to take down. We've been defending the crooked places. Holding the broken structures together with our own strength because we're terrified of what the rubble will look like.

Can I tell you something that I believe with everything in me?

### **God does not tear down what He does not intend to rebuild.**

The broken season you are in is not the end of your story. The discipline you have been walking through is not rejection — it is the hand of a Father

who loves you too much to leave you the way He found you. The rubble around you is not a verdict. It is a foundation being cleared.

Nothing — *nothing* — is wasted on God.

Not the years that felt lost. Not the sin that felt disqualifying. Not the failure you replay in your mind. Not the season you are ashamed of. Not the version of yourself you wish you could go back and change.

He is the God who raises fallen things. Who repairs what is breached. Who rebuilds what sin has ruined. And He is not finished with you.

### **From the Altar to the Streets**

Now here is where I want to land us — because I don't want you to walk out of here tonight with restoration as just a concept you found comforting for an hour.

I want it to change how you live tomorrow.

The altar is not just this room. Because of Jesus, the altar is anywhere you choose to meet with Him honestly. Your car on the way to work. Your kitchen table before the house wakes up. The moment you drop to your knees in the middle of the mess and say — *God, I can't do this without you.*

Wherever you choose to be honest with God — that is holy ground.

And what happens there does not stay there.

Because here is what Amos 9 shows us: God does not restore people so they can simply feel better about themselves. He restores people so they become part of what He is rebuilding in the world around them.

### **Restored people become restoring people.**

The marriage God puts back together becomes a testimony that changes someone else's mind about whether to walk away from theirs. The faith

God reignites in you becomes a flame someone else warms themselves beside. The story of what God did in your rubble becomes the very thing that gives someone else the courage to stop protecting their crooked walls.

You are not just being restored for yourself.

You are being restored for the people around you who are still in the ruins — who need to see that restoration is not just a promise in an old book, but a reality in a real life.

Your life.

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## **RESPONSE**

Three things to carry out of here tonight:

- 1. Intercede for someone you've quietly given up on.** Amos loved the people he was warning. He pleaded for them even as he announced judgment. Who in your life have you stopped praying for? Write their name down this week. Bring them back before God. Don't give up on them yet — because God hasn't.
- 2. Come back to His voice before the silence grows.** If you have been drifting — not dramatically, just slowly — come back. Open your Bible this week not to check a box, but to hear from someone who loves you and has not stopped speaking. The famine hasn't found you. Don't let it.
- 3. Stop protecting the crooked walls.** We all have them. The places in our hearts that have God's name on the outside but something else entirely on the inside. Pride. Control. Bitterness. Comfort we've quietly made into an idol. Let Him put the plumb line there. It will be uncomfortable. And it will be the beginning of something being made right.

## **RESPONSE**

I want to close by going back to where we started.

We opened tonight with a question: *What do you do when God allows something to fall apart?*

Here is the answer Amos gives us.

You trust the Restorer.

You trust that the God who holds the stars in place — the God who touched the earth and it melted, who commands the seas and they obey — that this God has not looked at what is broken in your life and walked away.

He is standing in the ruins.

And He is already rebuilding.

So if you came in tonight wondering whether God is done with you — He is not. That is not who He is. His final word over your life is not a verdict of condemnation. It is a hand extended. It is a Father who has been watching the road — and who, the moment He sees you turning back toward home, does not wait for you to arrive.

He runs.

And if you want to respond to that tonight — if something in your heart has been stirred, and you want to say yes to the God who rebuilds — I want to give you a moment to do that right now.